

# **News sharing on Facebook:**

Which factors trigger opinion leaders to share news articles?

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### ABSTRACT

The news industry is facing a problem, social media is driving traffic to news sites, which decreases the advertising revenues of the news companies, who operate these sites because visitors spend less time on their site. Simultaneously, it became evident after the emergence of online news platforms, that readers spend less time reading stories about politics, public affairs or local news and more time on 'soft' news about business, entertainment or crime. There the paradox stands. From the societal point of view it is important that such topics get high quality coverage. Meanwhile, stories about public affairs or politics are not so financially beneficial for media to cover in comparison with soft news. Sales and subscription revenues exceeded the revenue derived from advertising for news companies the first time in this century in 2014. Therefore, the financial incentive shifted from the satisfaction of advertisers' needs to the satisfaction of readers' needs. As Facebook is the most prominent social media channel for sharing news products, this paper concentrated on the following research question: which factors of a news product trigger opinion leaders to share news articles on Facebook? The focus of this study was opinion leaders, as they are able to access much of the society through their suggestions on social media. This paper investigated the problem qualitatively by conducting twelve in-depth interviews among the opinion leaders of Estonian public sphere and proposing grounded theory on the basis of their claims. In order to provide real world context and examples as they were enacted by participants, a document analysis was conducted, which included the analysis of 161 sharing actions of the interviewees. The constant comparative method was utilized throughout and document analysis allowed for triangulation between the words and actions of participants in order to provide reliable results. The results of this study must be interpreted in the context of Estonian news industry and Estonian society. However, similar societies may find similar patterns. There are two main conclusions of this study. First, opinion leaders will assess the news products based on the perception of proximity, perception of quality, perception of irritation and perception of novelty. Second, although entertaining content and stories about crime, sports and business are popular for the audience as a whole, opinion leaders tend to share stories about politics or public affairs, which have high level of abstraction, are convenient to follow and include important information for the peers in their social media network. In addition, the practical implications for news organizations in terms of marketing and public service are discussed.

**KEYWORDS:** news sharing, Facebook, opinion leaders, news industry, SPIN model

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## 1. Introduction

The Buggles published a hit single “Video Killed the Radio Star” in 1978, which became a symbol illustrating the agony of an old medium crumbling because of a new medium. Specialists argued, whether the old media will become obsolete or not, but the debate began long ago. Scholars started to speculate about the obsolescence of radio in 1950s, as the substitute service emerged in the form of television (Hausman & Benoit, 1995). Although the role of radio declined, the new medium did not “kill” it, because both mediums have distinctive features. One could not watch television shows while driving a car, taking a sunbath or laboring the garden – in certain situations, consumers adhered to radio as a more convenient medium (Hausman & Benoit, 1995).

Considering the threat of substitutes, news industry is in a similar situation (Porter, 2008), like radio was in 1950s. The shift from paper to screen has occurred rapidly, particularly for younger news consumers (Costera Meijer, 2007). It is not clear if physical newspapers will find a niche and continue in the traditional form, but clearly this will not provide the main source of revenue to support news reporting. Although, Mitchelstein & Boczkowski (2010) proposed, that online news consumption does not substantially differ from consuming the news via conventional newspapers – their study was made during pre-social media era. By now, consumption patterns have to be different at least from the perspective of reaching the news, as 75 percent of BuzzFeed’s traffic is derived via social media (Isaac, 2014). Porter’s (2008) model of five competitive forces indicates, that internet shifts bargaining power to end consumers. Hence, the essence to satisfy the needs of end consumers is increasingly more important for the industry. Ironically, it nowadays applies to radio as well. Nearly ten years ago, Berry (2006) argued whether iPod kills the radio star, conclusively referring that radio has to adapt to the growing expectations of the listeners. The growing expectations are also relevant in the context of news industry.

Regarding the expectations of consumers, it has been found since in 1940s, that the audience is more interested in entertainment than information (MacGill Hughes, 1940). This issue is currently more salient than ever before, as after the adoption of online news platforms, it became possible to track that people spend more time reading stories about business and sports (Tewksbury & Althaus, 2000). Simultaneously, the audience tends to spend less time on public affairs, political stories and local news (Tewksbury & Althaus, 2000). Schaudt and Carpenter (2008) conducted a quantitative study to study this matter, indicating that content focusing on business or entertainment is indeed significantly more popular compared to politics. However, the most popular stories were related to crime (Schaudt & Carpenter, 2008). Therefore, the reading interests of consumers shifted away from politics right after the adoption of online news platforms or they just became evident after the emergence of the internet. Both of these options are negative from societal point of view, because industry is less motivated to produce hard news, as audience is more interested in entertaining content and this now impacts the bottom line for news organizations.

Tewksbury & Althaus (2000) are not the only scholars reflecting the problem. Moreover, Prior (2005) indicated that after the rise of new media, consumers are enabled to become more selective, which might affect democracy in a negative way. Simultaneously, it is a logical development of industry, as the barriers for entering markets have dropped (Porter, 2008). Thus, lower production costs enable news companies to rely on smaller audiences, which are interested in niche issues like politics (Nie, Miller, Golde, Butler & Winneg, 2010). However, as the number of competitors increases, the overall profit margins in industry

decrease (Porter, 2008). Simultaneously, several studies have noted that online news uses lower quality standards compared to print news (Paterson, 2008; Poler Kovačič, Erjavec & Štular, 2010; Smith, Amanda & David, 2005), which links with the suggestion of Tang, Sridhar, Thorson and Mantrala (2011), that online platforms are hunting clicks in order to gain more advertising revenues. Hence, the question remains, how to increase profitability by offering hard news and not ground the business on click hunting entertainment content. As from one side, news industry faces the challenge to derive more advertisement revenues, recent developments suggest that news industry needs to focus more on the needs of their audience, as revenues from subscription and newspaper sales exceeded advertisement revenues in 2014 (Kilman, 2015). Therefore, the revenue model of news industry is shifting from the satisfaction of advertisement needs towards the satisfaction of readers' needs. Fifteen years ago, it was a common knowledge, that news industry needs to design their online platform in a way, which enables to gather as much advertisement revenues as possible, because the majority of revenues came from advertisement sales not from subscription sales (Baye & Morgan, 2000). It is worth mentioning, that 2014 was the first time, when such phenomena emerged, that subscription and sales revenues exceeded advertisement revenues in this century (Kilman, 2015). In addition, it needs to be mentioned that the role of conventional news outlets is in decline, as there are other competitors entering the market. Apple has already announced, that they will launch a novel news app this autumn, which will optimize content according to the interests of reader (Benton, 2015). This may cause the situation, that the role of mediocre news products decreases as the audience gets the chance to focus more on the topics, that they actually care about. Therefore, in case the user chooses not to optimize the app for the hunt of entertainment, then it will not be assisted to the user. However, this might transform the advertisement revenue model for news outlets, as conventional news outlets may regularly assist sensational entertaining content in order to gather clicks. Therewith, the story might not provide any additional value for the reader except a promising headline, which gets the consumer pulled away. Despite the reader might not gain any profit for such clicks, the news outlet gains profit as online advertisements are generally sold for a certain number of clicks (Richardson, Dominowska & Ragno, 2007). In addition, news outlets from smaller domestic markets may be finally motivated to write important stories on international scale or publish their best stories in English, as they have access to a wider market, whereas Apple enables a substantial advertising profit for the publishing channels (Benton, 2015).

From the societal point of view, it is important that the business models grounded on the correspondence of politics, remain sustainable. In addition, the industry itself should preferably stay less fragmented to avoid the polarization of public sphere. One possibility to increase the reach of channels is offering soft news instead of traditional hard news (Baum, 2002). Although citizens are ideally expected to consume hard news in order to be well-informed and make balanced evaluations towards policies, their preference of soft news should not be constituted as totally negative, as soft news enable to engage politically uninterested individuals into the debate (Baum, 2002). The quantitative study of Schaudt and Carpenter (2008) also refers, that soft news are significantly more likely to be read compared to hard news. As increasing the reach is expected to affect news organizations positively, because media companies highly rely on advertising revenue (Wirtz, Pelz & Ullrich et al., 2010), one possibility of relieving the problem of small audiences is producing soft news content, which may be positive also from societal point of view, as it is important to amplify the dissemination of political information and it may be accomplished by different

measures (Baum, 2002). As this paper will focus on the research by the example of Estonian media landscape, it should be noted that advertising expenditures in newspapers dropped by one third only between 2005 and 2010 (Loit & Siibak, 2013) and the circulation of three most circulated daily newspapers has dropped by 25 percent since 2005 (Estonian Newspaper Association: Circulations May, 2005; Estonian Newspaper Association: Circulations, May, 2015).

Given the situation of polarizing information spheres, decreasing profit margins in news industry and increasing role of social media in everyday lives – it is essential to look at factors, which could potentially increase the distribution of digital news products which are not necessarily entertaining for everyone, because the internet is the most important gate from which consumers access media (Dimmick, Chen & Li, 2004). As social media emerged during the end of past decade, only a few studies have been conducted regarding the linkage of the news industry and social media channels. Lerman & Hogg (2010) highlighted, that even the specialists struggle to forecast which news stories become viral on social media, due to the lack of research in this field. Leckovec, Adamic and Huberman, (2008) held a research studying viral marketing with the connection of two-step flow communication model claiming, that highly connected individuals carry an important role. However, they suggested that scholars should focus on the topology and interests of particular social networks more narrowly in order to develop normative strategies (Leckovec et al., 2008).

The study of Lee & Ma (2012) relies on uses and gratifications theory, which grounds on the assumption that customers are trying to derive emotional benefits or social gratifications by consuming services or products. As one of the most salient features predicting news consumption is the entertaining character of the product (MacGill Hughes, 1940; Bell, 1991; Golding & Elliott, 1979), it should not be directly applied regarding the prediction of sharing actions. Within a scarcity of studies conducted in this field of research, scholars have indicated that driving forces for consuming the articles do not completely overlap with the driving forces for sharing the articles in social media (Sian Lee & Ma, 2012; Ma, Sian Lee & Hoe-Lian Goh, 2013). Recent research indicates, that the most salient factor predicting news sharing is opinion leadership (Ma et al., 2013). Hence, this paper will critically look at the features triggering key individuals to share, in order to rationalize and demystify the distribution of digital news products *via* sharing actions on social media. The focus was chosen, because there is an evident gap in previous research. It could be illustrated by the fact that 75 percent of BuzzFeed's traffic is derived *via* social media channels (Isaac, 2014). More narrowly, the concentration will be on Facebook, because several sources indicate that it is the most popular social media channel regarding news sharing actions (Gordon & Johnson, 2012; Matsa & Mitchell, 2014; NewsWhip, 2014; Rayson, 2014).

In general, the question is – what motivates opinion leaders to share news products on Facebook? For understanding it, it is important to obtain knowledge about the decision making process of opinion leaders. Opinion leaders are considered as essential links for amplifying the distribution of news and for predicting the popularity of news products (Ma et al., 2013). Although Bandari et al. (2012) suggested future researchers to study the influence of individual propagators in order to predict the popularity of news products more precisely, the impact of these propagators does not matter, if products are not triggering these key individuals to share articles. Lerman (2007) claimed, that social media is becoming increasingly important for distributing the news, as users may then redistribute the stories in social media network.

Newman (2012) even highlighted, that social media networks are nowadays competing with search engines as a gate towards further consumption.

Subsequently, social media channels are becoming salient distribution channels, transforming the traditional value chain of news industry. Initially, Albarran (2010) associated profit recession in news industry with internet, as it enables to transform the market closer to the situation of perfect competition. Before the emergence of internet, barriers to enter the market were higher, as companies also needed to provide distribution services for the end consumers (Albarran, 2010). Relating it with Porter's five competitive forces (2008), profit margins drop because the competition drives the price down. Moreover, as news industry operates on two-dimensional market, because a portion of revenues comes from sales of content and another portion is derived from ad-sales (Wirtz et al., 2011), then the competition is not higher just because of the emergence of new rivals on content production, but also in form of online websites and search engines with high traffic levels (Jeon & Esfahani, 2012; Newman, 2012). Simultaneously, although social media channels enable to reach wider audiences for news outlets by sharing actions, social media channels are also additional innovative competitors on advertisement market decreasing the overall income of conventional advertisement sellers, as social media channels enable to personalize advertisements better than before (Athey, Calvano & Gans, 2013; Vejacka, 2012). Hence, comprehensive knowledge about the mechanism of sharing actions is inevitable for news industry to compensate initial profit recession, which has been caused by the emergence of the Internet, which has enabled novel businesses to enter the market (Porter, 2008).

Although there is no scientific research about referrals from Facebook through websites, there is relevant data. Shareaholic is a social media research company, which has been cited by various quality magazines and news outlets like *the New York Times* (Miller, 2014), *The Forbes* (DeMers, 2015) and *The Atlantic* (Meyer, 2014). According to their data, websites derive 25 percent of traffic through Facebook (DeMers, 2015). Therefore, the understanding about sharing mechanisms is primarily important for practitioners, whose businesses are directly tied with cross-media production. More narrowly, it would enable the practitioners to adapt opinion leaders into the distribution plan for the products, as news products could then be respectively designed. Furthermore, it could cause the transformation of strategies for news companies operating in the field of cross-media production. Journalists and executives of media landscape would have better understanding, which features trigger opinion leaders to amplify the distribution, as opinion leaders could be triggered to share their content (Ma et al., 2013).

As this paper researches news sharing on social media, it particularly concentrates on Facebook. This choice was made, because Facebook is presently the leading social media platform for news sharing (Matsa & Mitchell, 2014). Recent studies have demonstrated, that the two-step flow communication model applies for Facebook (Ma et al., 2014), enabling to look further into the triggering features for opinion leaders. As research issues related to viral marketing are suggested to be implemented with narrowly determined social networks (Leckovic et al, 2008) in order to develop normative strategies, this study will focus on the perceptions of Estonian opinion leaders on political matters. This choice has been made due to the fact, that researcher holds previous experience working as an investigating journalist for Estonian most circulated daily newspaper *Postimees*, which enables to approach prominent individuals, who can clearly be constituted as opinion leaders. The latter enables exclusive contribution to the research in this field, as opinion leaders

are persons who are often difficult to address due to their position or working duties. Simultaneously, it would be complicated to prepare interviews with opinion leaders from other countries, as the interviews incorporate specific context about particular events, persons, domestic affairs and background information, which could not be understood properly, if the researcher and interviewee have not lived in the same society. In order to put this research into particular context, Estonian media landscape along with the polarization issues of Estonia, will be briefly introduced as follows.

Estonia is a small country with a population of 1.3 million (Statistics Estonia, 2015). The country belongs into the European Union and adopted Euro currency in 2011 (European Union: Estonia, 2014). In context of this study, it is important to point out that Estonians are very keen to consume nationwide daily newspapers. Only three nationwide newspapers operate in Estonia, while two of them have a circulation of 50 000 or more (Estonian Newspaper Association, 2015). Such circulation numbers are rather uncommon considering the ratio of circulation and the population of Estonia. In comparison, Norway is considered the country with highest newspaper circulation numbers per capita (Press Reference, n.d.). According to most recent data available, newspaper circulation of Estonia per thousand inhabitants is 0.191, which means that only fifteen world countries have higher ratio regarding this matter (Statinfo, 2011).

Online newspapers emerged in 1995, when Estonian daily newspapers (i.e. Eesti Päevaleht, Postimees, Äripäev) started to publish the copy of print edition online (Rebane, 2007). Conventional online news sites emerged in Estonia in 1999, when Delfi launched an online news site, which was followed by the same action in 2000 by Postimees and Eesti Päevaleht (Rebane, 2007).

Social media emerged in Estonia during 2002, when Andrei Korobeinik founded social networking site Rate.ee (Teesalu, 2012). The popularity of this site has been in decline for long, as Estonians now use international social networking sites (Angioni, 2010; Luts, 2010; Teesalu, 2012). Surprisingly, Facebook was not the one, which stole the leading position of Rate.ee, but Orkut was by far the most popular social media channel among Estonians until 2010, as 26 percent of Estonians used Orkut, 16 percent used Rate.ee and 12 percent used Facebook (Angioni, 2010; Luts, 2010). Facebook became the most popular social media channel among Estonians in 2011 (Kahu, 2011) and has recently strengthened its position as 39.9 percent of Estonians used Facebook in 2014, which means that Facebook penetration among Estonians is slightly higher in comparison with France or Italy but slightly lower than in Finland or Hungary (EconomyWatch, 2014). The influence of social media and media over politics is rather uncommon in Estonia. In spring 2014, former EU commissioner Siim Kallas was holding the negotiations to form a new government. He was the candidate for prime ministers position, but gave this responsibility away for Taavi Rõivas after severe allegations published in media (Kangro & Kund, 2014), which accused him for making harmful financial decisions, while he was the director at Bank of Estonia in 1990s (Pihl & Roonemaa, 2014). Another example illustrates social media influence in Estonian internal politics, as less than a year ago, a long serving Estonian finance minister Jürgen Ligi resigned after his Facebook post, which insulted a fellow minister (Kroet, 2014).

Next, the polarization of Estonian information sphere will be introduced. The problem of polarization has become emergent in Estonia mostly because of the occupation by Soviet Union after the World War II, as the percentage of Estonians living in Estonia dropped from 88 percent in 1934 to 62 percent in 1989 (Aasmäe, Tõnso & Aasmäe, 2007). Although the percentage of Estonians living in Estonia, increased from



62 percent to 69 percent by 2010 (Aasmäe, Tõnso & Aasmäe, 2007), the issue of polarization is still evident. Only 80 percent of Russian minority in Estonia understands the necessity of speaking Estonian (Krusell, 2008). Although Estonian is the only official language in Estonia, nearly 50 percent of Russians in Estonia do not speak Estonian (Aasmäe, Tõnso & Aasmäe, 2007). Their inability to integrate has triggered a political gamble. A far-right party reached the parliament after the elections in 2015 (Käsper, 2015), which is a clear indication of polarization, because the leader of the party has been accused in russophobia (Remsu, 2015). Moreover, the youngest parliament member, who belongs into this far-right party made a very controversial tweet during the Estonian basketball championship finals. He tweeted: "I was watching Kalev play Rock and during the final break the girls danced to a song in Russian. I left. #absurd (Oll, 2015)." Although this tweet became the symbol of stupidity in Estonian media, 6 percent of Estonian voters still support this party after the controversial tweet (TNS Emor, 2015). In sum, the polarization of Estonian information sphere has been caused by Soviet occupation and the issue is now causing the fragmentation of Estonian society.

In order to reach the understanding about the factors triggering opinion leaders to share news products, the theoretical framework relying on empirical findings about sharing actions and causes will be provided. Secondly, the overview of methodological aspects along with explanations and detailed insights will be described. Next, the paper continues with results and discussion, which will be followed by conclusion. In the following, I would like to propose the main research question.

***RQ1** Which factors of a news product trigger opinion leaders to share news articles on Facebook?*

## **2. Theoretical framework**

Social media channels are becoming increasingly important for the distribution of news products (Ma, et al., 2013), as they are accessed and shared *via* various online platforms including social news websites, blogs or social networking sites (Lee & Ma, 2012). In sum, previous research indicates that driving motivational factors for news sharing on social media are information seeking, socializing, entertainment and status seeking (Lee & Ma, 2012). However, considering the virality of products, Mills (2012) proposes that that consumers need to like the items first in order to increase the spreadability. Therewith, news values reflecting the reasons why experts constitute one news product more valuable than another also become salient. These concepts will be introduced more comprehensively in order to provide the basis for this research.

### **2.1. Distribution of news products**

Toffler (1980) defined the principle of prosumer capitalism already 35 years ago. Nowadays, prosumer capitalism is likely to revolutionize the distribution link, as consumers may share articles *via* social media channels, transforming the end product with the option to add their own ideas in a written form, which also transforms the packaging. Del Águila-Obraa, Padilla-Meléndez and Serarols-Tarrés (2006) defined the value chain of news industry in the following way: content creation, packaging, distribution and consumption. However, value chains in media industry are transforming nowadays. Berry (2006) claimed that the process of involvement transforms the process of content creation and packaging, which should be largely developed with the cooperation of consumers. These parallels have also brought up in the context of news industry by Estefani and Jeon (2013), who suggested that packaging becomes a venture task with aggregators. Del Águila-Obraa et al. (2006) reflected, that the traditional value chain should be more integrated between each other due to the online character of the industry. Gordon & Johnson (2012) reveal, that the traffic generated by social media channels is increasingly important for news sites, while Facebook is the most salient assistant regarding the distribution. For Chicago's online news outlets, 18.9 percent of the traffic was generated *via* Facebook (Gordon & Johnson, 2012). However, as several studies state that the role of social media channels regarding the distribution of news products has been constantly increasing in the past, the importance of Facebook might have grown even further compared to 2012 (Gordon & Johnson, 2012; Matsa & Mitchell, 2014). Therewith, news organizations should involve Facebook into their strategy regarding the distribution of products and exploit the possibilities of Facebook in the best possible way. Regarding the amplification of distribution, news sharing is an important actor, which is primarily driven by opinion leadership (Ma et al., 2013).

### **2.2. Opinion Leadership**

The concept of opinion leadership diverges from the two-step flow communication model, which has been introduced by Katz and Lazarsfeld in 1955. The theory grounds on the diffusion of innovation theory, by which the diffusion of mass media messages depends on opinion leaders and individuals connected to these opinion leaders. Rogers (2010) defined opinion leadership as a degree, to which an individual can informally influence other individuals. By the definition of Rogers and Cartano (1962), opinion leaders are “[...] individuals who exert an unequal amount of influence on the decisions of others” (p. 435). However,

Burt (1999) enhanced this definition by claiming that “[...] opinion leaders are more precisely opinion brokers who carry information across the social boundaries between groups. They are not people at the top of things so much as people at the edge of things, not leaders within groups so much as brokers between groups” (p. 1). These individuals benefit from linking social networks with relevant information, while gatekeeping some of it (Burt, 1999). The statements of Burt (1999) are supported by recent findings, which claim that sharing news products enables to gain social gratifications. Therewith, this paper agrees more with the latter definition. To put it simply into the context of this study – opinion leaders are hereby defined as influential individuals, who increase the readability of news products by redistributing the news products *via* social media.

In order to identify opinion leaders, it is important to keep in mind that opinion leaders differ dependent of particular topic. For example, married individuals with large families may constitute as opinion leaders on food buying matters (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1970). Simultaneously, married persons with large families are not perceived as opinion leaders regarding the choice of films (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1970). However, the status of an opinion leader also depends on the dissemination of information by these individuals. For instance, if these opinion leaders are not forwarding the information about the products to others, they cannot be constituted as opinion leaders (Midgley & Dowling, 1978; Chan & Misra 1990).

Though, individuals who can be constituted as opinion leaders tend to share information more actively in contrast to average social media users (Lyons & Henderson, 2005). Lyons and Henderson (2005) also indicated, that opinion leaders have extensive possibilities for accessing information channels. Regarding the impact of opinion leaders, Romero, Galuba, Asur and Huberman (2011) conducted research to find out the correlation between influence and popularity. Popularity was measured by the amount of followers and influence according to total number of clicks and retweets, generated URL traffic and number of other variables. The findings indicate, that the connection between popularity and influence is rather vague. As Rob Miller, former congressional candidate of the United States, was ranked 147 803th by the amount of followers, he occupied 145th place by the rank of influence. Simultaneously, the Twitter account of CBSNews was ranked 114th by popularity, but by the influence it ranked 2278th. Therefore, an influential individual may constitute as more important link towards the audience, than an organization.

### **2.3. Social Gratification**

Opinion leaders are interested to sustain their position in order to benefit from the situation of brokerage, as opinion leaders are also defined as opinion brokers (Burt, 1999). Lee & Ma (2012) claimed that the gratification of entertainment was not a notable predictor for news sharing in social media in comparison with information seeking gratification, status seeking gratification or socializing gratification. In fact, the most salient factors influencing the intention to share news in social media are prior social media sharing experience and socializing (Lee & Ma, 2012). Lee and Ma (2012) underpinned, that people familiar with writing blog posts, may develop habitual utilization of social media to contribute and share content as they have already obtained the ability to execute such procedures. It is essential to hereby note, that the study of Lee and Ma (2012) did not research the connection between prior experience as a public spokesperson and the motivation to share news. However, as prior experience of writing blog posts influences people to share more, previous experience as a spokesperson may have a resemblant impact.

Considering the effect of driving forces, which increase the probability of sharing actions, the following factor was the intention of gaining status. Moreover, the findings demonstrated that sharing news on social media may enhance one's status within the online community, because if the shared content turned out credible, then the sharing initiators were perceived as more credible members of the community (Lee & Ma, 2012). Therefore, sharing actions are likely to rather provide social benefits than emotional gratifications. The importance of this study evidently manifests, because it demonstrates the interest of opinion leaders in sharing news products.

#### **2.4. Importance of liking the content**

Leckovec et al. (2008) highlighted the importance of recommendations, which affect the consumption of products. Mills (2012) went even further by developing the SPIN framework, which should assist practitioners to conduct viral marketing strategies. Viral marketing has been defined in various ways. Some consider it as an advanced form of word-of-mouth marketing (Dasari & Anandakrishnan, 2010; Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry & Raman, 2004; Shirky, 2000), but some argue that viral marketing differs from word-of-mouth, because the value of the virus depends on the number of other users attracted *via* initial consumer (Modzelewski, 2000). Although, it remained unclear why some scholars distinctively separate these two concepts, because in case of word-of-mouth actions it is also possible that the message goes viral, Mills (2012: 163) also reflects these definitions reaching the statement that viral marketing is a strategic release of branded content into the socially networked ecosystem, followed by potential spread of this content through the ecosystem as consumers receive the content while being motivated to share it with others. The definition of Mills (2012) is important as he proposed the model for viral marketing, which grounds on spreadability. According to this model, spreadability is dependent of likeability and sharability of the content – an individual has to like the content first to reach the next phases. If this individual likes the content, then the probability of sharing action increases. According to Mills (2012), likeability reflects the degree to which the message is stimulating or engaging the individual in emotional or intellectual way. However, the sharing action itself depends on the assessment of this individual, as sharability refers the degree to which the consumer feels that this content may have similar effect among other consumers. Hence, if the consumer considers the content likeable and thinks that other individuals in his social media network may have similar perceptions about it, the probability of sharing action increases. Keeping this in mind, the sharability should be completely dependent on the likeability of news products. On the other hand, it is important to mention, that Mills' (2012) model was designed for the purpose of spreading branded messages. However, in the context of this paper, shared items are products by themselves not branded messages designed to increase sales. Therefore, it should apply in case of marketing communication actions, but it could also be relevant regarding the spreadability of news products. Before researching the propositions of Mills' (2012) model in context of digital news products, it is impossible to claim whether it applies or not. However, in case Mills' (2012) model applies, liking the content itself would be a triggering factor for reaching the phases of sharing.

In order to explain the motivations for liking a news article, Sundar (1999) conducted a factor analysis, which indicated that the content needs to be enjoyable, interesting, lively and pleasing. In case the readers constitute an article to be boring, then the probability of liking an article significantly decreases.

## 2.5. News preference

The study of Ma et al. (2013) indicated, that opinion leadership was the most salient factor predicting news sharing actions, followed by news preference and tie strength. The research also confirmed the findings of Lyons and Henderson (2005), by which individuals constituted as opinion leaders tend to share more articles on social media. Although, the study of Ma et al. (2013) was conducted on the basis of Twitter data, it should not be constituted as irrelevant, as these integrate with their next study as well (Ma, Sian Lee & Hoe-Lian Goh, 2014),

Ma et al. (2014), who conducted a research using Facebook data confirming that opinion leadership, tie strength and news preference are indeed the factors influencing the diffusion of news articles in form of sharing. However, none of these findings reflect the indicators, how opinion leaders assess news products. On the other hand, in case Mills' (2012) SPIN framework model applies for news sharing, the opinion leaders firstly need to like the content.

As noted above, the most salient factor impacting news sharing in addition to opinion leadership is news preference (Ma et al., 2014). As opinion leaders tend to be experts in their particular field (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1970; Midgley & Dowling 1978), it is logical to presume that they assess products more critically before suggesting these items for others. Simultaneously, these experts should like the product first, otherwise the next stage of sharing news products will not be reached (Mills, 2012). Sallot, Steinfatt & Salven (1998) tested the perceptions of journalists and communication managers in order to derive knowledge about the importance of different news values. By the results, the most salient features of articles were: 1) perceived interest to readers; 2) factual accuracy; 3) timeliness; 4) usefulness; 5) favorable light towards topic; 6) fairness to different views; 7) completeness; 8) grammatical accuracy. It is worth mentioning, that journalists and communication managers had different perceptions towards the importance of news values. For example, for the journalists, the least important feature was showing the topic in favorable light, but for the communication managers it was the most salient feature (Sallot et al., 1998). Hence, there is no common method to propose, by which individuals evaluate news products. Different experts assess news products in distinct ways and there is clearly a deviation of evaluations between different experts.

In order to provide a broader dissertation to news classification, it is essential to rationalize the overview of news values, by which consumers tend to assess news products. Therefore, it is important to get more insight into the perceptions of opinion leaders to understand, which features drive the assessment of articles. One of the most cited dissertations, is Golding and Elliott's (1979) list (Table 1), which partly integrates with Bell's (1991) list of news values (Table 1).

**Table 1** Comparison of Bell's (1991) list of news values & Golding and Elliott's (1979) list of news values

Bell (1991)	Golding and Elliott (1979)
Negativity (e.g. negative news are good news)	Negativity (e.g. negative news are good news)
Recency (e.g. best stories have just happened)	Recency (e.g. best stories have just happened)
Unambiguity (e.g. clearcut stories are preferred)	Brevity (e.g. conciseness is important)
Personalization (e.g. level of personalization)	Personalities (e.g. level of personalization)
Superlativeness (e.g. the biggest building built)	Size (e.g. the biggest building built)
Relevance (e.g. impact to particular audience)	Importance (e.g. relevance towards audience)
Eliteness (e.g. reports about prominent persons)	Elites (e.g. reports about prominent persons)
Attribution (e.g. prominent sources)	
Proximity (e.g. geographical proximity)	Proximity (e.g. geographical & cultural proximity)
Unexpectedness (e.g. unpredictable is perception of sensationalism)	Entertainment (e.g. level of perception of sensationalism)
Consonance (e.g. compatibility of a story towards certain interest groups or nations)	Visual attractiveness (e.g. images or videos)
Facticity (e.g. amount of facts, numbers, locations)	Drama (e.g. opposing views or a conflict)

*\* News values with blue background completely integrate; news values with green background partly integrate; news values with orange background do not integrate.*

By enumerating news values influencing the assessment of news products, why should one just apply these directly to sharing actions? Several studies indicate, that all the news values cannot be applied regarding the amplification of news sharing actions. The research of Berger and Milkman (2012) demonstrates, that positive articles have higher probability to be shared, opposing the news value of negativity enlisted by Bell (1991) or Golding and Elliott (1979). Simultaneously, some of the features may apply regarding the amplification of sharing and in sense of assessment news products, because the unexpectedness factor should be essential on both occasions (Golding & Elliott, 1979; Bell, 1991; Berger & Milkman, 2012).

**2.6. Necessity of dramatization**

As Golding and Elliott (1979) deliberately pointed out, that incorporation of dramatization is necessary in order to present news stories in an engaging way, there are number of studies providing the same implication. For instance, Schaudt and Carpenter (2008) conducted a quantitative study, demonstrating that conflict is the second most important news value. The same study indicated, that tragedy is the third

most important news values, whereas tragedies were framed as events with significant loss of property, deaths or significant injuries (Schaudt & Carpenter, 2008).

Despite the aspect of dramatization has not been comprehensively studied within online news coverage, research has been made in the field of entertainment-education, which has been defined as the process of designing and implementing media messages purposefully in order to entertain and educate by increasing knowledge about an issue (Singhal & Rogers, 2002). Singhal and Rogers (2002) also pointed out, that successful entertainment-education is not attractive because of its educational content, but because of drama compelled into the story, as educational content needs to be dramatized (Brooke, 1995). Therewith, narrative quality is an important factor, which makes the content attractive (Singhal & Rogers, 2002), although wonderful and easily digestible stories are often just total radio flops (Brooke, 1995). Therefore, although dramatized stories are often simply broadcasting failures, dramatization still makes it easier to transmit the story in an easily digestible way.

Previous studies concentrating on news industry relevant in context of dramatization, have rather focused on researching the phenomena of perception of sensationalism, as newspaper outlets have preferred to utilize such stories on their front page to attract the attention of potential customers (Davis & McLeod, 2003). Nevertheless, Uribe and Gunter (2007) found that perception of sensationalism news stories are not more likely to trigger viewers' emotions compared to non-perception of sensationalism news stories. On the other hand, Uribe and Gunter (2007) noted, that emotion-eliciting features could be the factors triggering attention, as such ploys enable to engage audience and make the story more memorable. The latter should be especially relevant regarding the perspective of sharing or recommending news products. Simultaneously, the narrative *per se* and other production elements need to be mutually supportive in terms of the information they convey (Gunter, 1987). Despite the notifications, that the incorporation of emotion-eliciting features are likely to fortify the success of story, Uribe and Gunter (2007) clearly limited their inferences to the field of television broadcasting, claiming that further studies should be made in order to make similar assumptions for newspaper or online news coverage.

## **2.7. Abstracting proximity**

Schaudt and Carpenter (2008) found that proximity is by far the most important news value, which attracts clicks for online news outlets. Although the correlation between news sharing decisions and proximity has not yet been researched, number of studies including Bell (1991) along with Golding and Elliott (1979) reflect, that the necessity of incorporating proximity factors is crucial, as the readers should then theoretically feel closer to reported matters. Bell (1991) even pointed out two categories amplifying the power of news story, which both could be constituted as proximity factors, because Bell (1991) also noted that consonance is important to engage certain interest groups or nations.

Branton and Dunaway (2009) studied the coverage of news outlets, which operate close to the border between Mexico and the US. They found, that news organizations closer to the border cover more topics related to Latino immigrants. This research also indicated, that news organizations belonging into the selection had the tendency to exploit their proximity of being close to the border to generate provide negative and perception of sensationalism stories about immigration (Branton & Dunaway, 2009). The same assumption, that audience is mainly interested at information, which stands geographically close to their

location, has also been made by various other studies (Bendix & Liebler, 1999; Buyukokkten, Cho, Garcia-Molina, Gravano & Shivakumar, 1999; Sundar, 1999; Ruigrok & Van Atteveldt, 2007).

Nevertheless, Johnson (1997) noted that cultural proximity should be even more important factor compared to geographical proximity. The notion that cultural proximity holds salient implications was tested by Zaharopoulos (1990), resulting that cultural proximity was a key news value for Greek newspapers covering the US presidential elections in 1988. The study was based on the competition for presidential chair between George Bush senior and Michael Dukakis. As Dukakis is the son of Greek emigrants, Greek newspapers considered his views and statements much more important compared to the viewpoints and statements of his opponent (Zaharopoulos, 1990). However, it needs to be mentioned, that although Zaharopoulos (1990) constituted the important variable to be cultural proximity, then this variable could be a very wide concept. Perhaps the viewpoints of Dukakis also constituted more close towards the preferences of Greeks or perhaps the linguistic proximity held important implications, as it must have been easier for the Greek press to report news about Dukakis, because they could also access the previous information about this person in Greek language.

Although previous remarks are only speculations, Zaharopoulos (1990) did not concentrate the study on such details, but linguistic proximity and viewpoint proximity could have also contributed in favor of wider coverage of Dukakis compared to Bush.

The assumption that linguistic proximity affects newsrooms was proven right by Doorslaer (2009), who indicated that the coverage of Belgian newspapers highly differs due to the linguistic proximity. Doorslaer (2009) found, that the newsrooms located in French part of Belgium provided extremely unbalanced amount of stories about France compared to the newsrooms located in Flanders. This notification clearly links with the assumption, that Greek press could have simply accessed the information about Dukakis much more easily compared to the information about Bush, as Dukakis must have also been a widely reported person before the elections, as presidential candidates do not usually appear in public sphere right before the presidential elections. Doorslaer (2009) also concluded that linguistic proximity leads to increasing agenda setting about the country, where the news are derived from. The conclusion that linguistic proximity and agenda setting differs between newsrooms because of the first language spoken by the staff was also resulted by Soderlund, Wagenberg, Briggs & Nelson (1980).

## **2.8. Potential triggering effect of data visualization**

As proximity nor dramatization has yet to be studied in context of news sharing actions, the role of data visualization has not been researched in this context either. Although, there are several implications referring to this association, because info graphics is likely to provide additional value as pointed out by Golding and Elliott (1979).

Segel and Heer (2010) claimed, that online journalists have nowadays increasingly adopting visualizations in order to enhance their narrative with visual storytelling. Simultaneously, they pointed out that the platform could then provide reader-driven experiences, where audience can thereby design the reading path themselves by not being limited on the information fragments provided by the journalist (Segel & Heer, 2010). De Simone, Protti & Presta (2014) referred, that data visualization is a better tool compared



to text-only articles to educate audience within short period of time via communication mediated by news outlets.

Therefore, info graphics could carry the additional value of educating the audience by visual storytelling. Schroeder (2004) also assumed, that info graphics could be constituted as added value, which could help news outlets towards building sustainable business models. However, Schroeder (2004) also noted that only Spanish news outlets had widely adopted the option to provide visual storytelling besides text-only articles by 2004. Therewith, the indication that interactive info graphics was not a noteworthy trend in Europe was made (Schroeder, 2004).

Regarding the financial aims, Smiciklas (2012) has claimed, that info graphics should help businesses to explain important information to internal and external stakeholders. Therewith, Smiciklas (2012) also pointed out that info graphics assist to provide thought leadership for the target group. The context in which Smiciklas (2012) utilized info graphics is different from the context of news organizations using visualizations. Nevertheless, newspaper readers also carry the role of stakeholders for news organizations in a way, as subscribers of news outlets contribute for the financial aims of news organizations. However, it remains unclear whether the readers value the additional value provided by info graphics as an educational tool or not.

## **2.9. Practice of news outlets refers to the influence of paywalls**

News outlets have acknowledged the problem, that readers may have second thoughts on sharing news articles in case the stories are behind paywall. Therefore, *the New York Times* implemented the model, whereas paywall does not apply for the news articles shared in social media (Newman, Dutton & Blank, 2012). Many other news outlets have also been actively looking for alternative option to not miss the traffic generated by the assistance of social media platforms (Newman et al 2012).

Another research conducted by Newman (2011) noted, that *the Economist* also implemented a more flexible paywall, so that the readers accessing articles from social media platforms could still read the stories without paying. Therewith, Newman (2011) also pointed out that *the Times* was also considering to develop a more flexible model in order to not exclude the traffic from social media networks. Nevertheless, *the New York Times* tightened the grasp regarding the readers manipulating URL address in order to sneak around paywall in 2013 (Coscarelli, 2013; Roberts, 2013), However, *the New York Times* and *the Times* still enable the users to avoid paywall via social media (Smith IV, 2015).

## **2.10. Features of source influence credibility, which is likely to affect sharing decisions**

As sharing of news products is dependent on the actions of opinion leaders, it is essential to provide the theoretical framework of other potentially influential factors. Bandari, Asur & Huberman (2012) researched the impact of source to predict the popularity of news articles on Twitter. The findings indicated, that source is one of the most important predictors of popularity, considering the amount of retweets (Bandari et al., 2012). Hence, the source may also impact the sharing decisions of opinion leaders. Hung, Li & Tse (2011) also suggested, that features related to source matter by claiming that interpersonal trust and platform credibility are the most important factors, which separate effective platforms from ineffective ones.

In this context, platform credibility may be constituted as the credibility of particular news sites. However, interpersonal trust relies on the credibility of platform and on the credibility of particular author.

The propositions of Berger and Milkman (2012) also integrate with source, as they reflect that popularity of author and length of article are likely to affect sharing actions, as longer stories are more likely to be shared. Therefore, in order to construct the understanding, which particular features amplify the sharing actions of opinion leaders, it is herewith essential to include the following features: platform credibility, author credibility and length of article.

There are no studies concentrating on the correlation between brand awareness, brand equity and sharing actions, but Oyedeji (2007) studied the correlation between customer based brand equity (CBBE), brand awareness and credibility. Within this research, customer based brand equity based on Aaker's (1991) dimensions of CBBE (i.e. brand association, brand awareness, brand loyalty and perceived quality) and Meyer's (1988) dimensions of media credibility (accuracy, bias, comprehensiveness, fairness and trustworthiness). The research of Oyedeji (2007) revealed, that the relation between brand awareness and channel's credibility was not statistically significant. Nevertheless, the research indicated strong relation between customer based brand equity and credibility (Oyedeji, 2007). However, the question about the sharing actions of consumers still remains. It is yet unclear, whether brand awareness affects the sharing decisions of readers, although credibility is expected to influence sharing decisions of consumers, which enables to speculate that brand equity might be an important factor.

The correlation between channel reputation and sharing actions has not been studied either. However, as consumers' willingness to pay for unbiased information is higher than paying for biased information, media channels desire to build a reputation for accuracy and eliminating bias assists media companies to develop in economically favorable direction (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2005). This presumption applies especially for longterm strategies, in case consumers' assessment change towards quality clearly manifests, because consumers' beliefs about quality largely base on past reports (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2005). Simultaneously, media channels need to shape their reports in order to conform the content with consumers' prior beliefs (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2005). Therefore, an evident paradox could be identified – although media channels should conform the content with consumers' prior beliefs, shaping the content increases the risk of transmitting false information, which damages the reputation (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2005). At the same time, in case the consumer does not have a certainty regarding the quality of content, then the source will be judged to have higher quality if the report conforms with consumers' prior expectations (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2005). The paradox stands behind the fact, that in case all the media channels operating in a certain market favor conforming information over reporting unbiased information, then all the media companies operating in that market are economically worse off. The latter study provides the implication, that channel reputation is a factor, which could potentially influence the sharing decisions of readers as well.

### **2.11. Credibility is the most likely factor to influence news quality**

As credibility of news stories should be likely to affect sharing decisions, it should be brought up that studies concentrating on the correlation between credibility, news quality and attribution have been made. Sundar (1998) conducted an experiment, whereas forty-eight subjects read six news stories from online platforms. Three of the stories were with attribution and three without quotes. Results indicated, that the

articles with attribution were rated significantly higher regarding credibility and quality, compared to the stories without references. Another study conducted by Sundar (1999) demonstrated, that quality is affected by five factors. Sundar (1999) conducted a factor analysis indicating, that an article is constituted as a quality story, in case it is well-written, comprehensive, concise, coherent and clear.

Hofstetter and Dozier (1986) concentrated their study to find out, how do perception of sensationalism and non-perception of sensationalism television news stories differ. They indicated, that non-perception of sensationalism news stories devote significantly more time on explaining the process, political process, consequences, pros and cons. In addition non-perception of sensationalism stories tend to include more sources. Although it is unclear, whether these quality indications also apply as triggering factors for news sharing actions, the opposite could not be claimed without investigating it.

Regarding online news articles, Gladney, Shapiro and Castaldo (2007) studied news quality criterions by conducting a survey among online news editors. Along with Sundar (1999), they also constituted credibility as the most important factor regarding quality. Rest of the most important criterions associated with content were the following (listed according to the level of their significance): utility, immediacy, relevance, fact-opinion separation, simplicity, exclusivity, hyper locality, good writing, content paramount and appropriate design (Gladney et al, 2007).

## **2.12. Representative news stories are rated higher by the perception of audience**

Representativeness has not been studied either in context of news sharing actions, but it is logical to assume that the stories rated higher by the audience, should be shared more likely. Leshner, Reeves and Nass (1998) conducted a study in order to find out, which television channel news programmes are rated higher by the perception of viewers. Representativeness was measured by the following five categories: important, disturbing, serious, interesting and informative. Despite Leshner et al (1998) utilized the categories in context of television news, Sundar (1999) incorporated some of the measures within researching text-only based news stories. As Leshner et al (1998), Sundar (1999) also separated relevance, importance and timeliness from quality attributes, classifying the latter factors under the concept of representativeness. He explained this deliberate differentiation by claiming, that these three attributes enable to constitute a story to be a news story. Despite the differentiation made by Sundar (1998) – relevance, importance and timeliness were all considered important attributes by the readers, as they rated such stories higher in terms of representativeness.

As previous studies have separated relevance, importance and timeliness from the factors affecting quality, it would be logical to continue with same premises. Hereby, it should be revised, that Bell (1991) along with Golding and Elliott (1979) pointed out timeliness and importance as salient news values, which enable to construct news stories purposefully. In addition, as Leshner et al (1998) and Sundar (1999) underlined the importance of relevance, Bell (1991) along with Golding and Elliott (1979) brought out the importance of proximity, which might overlap with relevance as different individuals are likely to differ regarding the perception of relevance. Despite, Gladney et al (2007) categorized relevance, hyper locality and immediacy under quality criterions, it could be assumed that these factors have some kind of influence also considering news sharing actions. Simultaneously, hyper locality could be constituted the same as geographical proximity and immediacy seems to be a close concept to timeliness.

### **3. Research design**

Considering the aims of this research, in-depth interviews were analyzed according to the steps of grounded theory data analysis. It was followed by document analysis of actual sharing actions of interviewees, to see how the ideas presented in the interviews are reflected in their actual sharing behavior. Therefore, the theoretical outcomes of grounded theory were compared to sharing behaviors. The assessment of news products matters, as individuals are expected to firstly like the content to reach the phases of sharing. Knowing the importance of these criteria, may enable news organizations to rationalize the first step to reach the sharing phases, as liking the content itself may theoretically apply to the viral marketing of news products.

#### **3.1. Sample**

Twelve opinion leaders were interviewed in-depth. In order to identify opinion leaders, snowball sampling was utilized to find suitable interviewees. As Rogers and Cartano (1962) defined the opinion leaders to be influential individuals, Moyser and Wagstaffe (1987) have highlighted that snowball sampling is an useful method for accessing the population of social elites. Snowball sampling is implemented if the sample is difficult to form or if the goal is to investigate hidden populations (Watters & Biernacki, 1989). Noy (2008) suggested that snowball sampling is an effective measure for identifying social networks with substantial social capital. As the goal was to investigate a hidden population, who expectedly possesses relatively higher influence on the decision of others (Rogers and Cartano, 1962), then snowball sampling suites as it enables to derive social knowledge and information about power relations between the society and informants themselves (Noy, 2008).

Sampling began by choosing the locator, as the selection of locator for the chain should be done carefully, because it should be an individual, who expectedly has contacts with other potential interviewees (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981), which is essential to engage informants for the research. Thus, locator had to be a definite opinion leader with extensive social network in desired field. Valente & Pumpuang (2007) underpinned the methods to identify opinion leaders. One of the noted techniques was positional approach, which was utilized for current study, as the disadvantages of this technique are minimized.

Therefore, the role of locator was appointed to a communication manager at a public sector institution, whose Facebook posts regularly engage other prominent public figures including present and former ministers of Estonian government, members of the Estonian parliament, mayors of Estonian cities, members of the European parliament, established journalists, business men and other prominent persons. The fact, that his Facebook wall is presently operating as a forum for prominent Estonians reveals that he should constitute as a suitable locator for this study. His wall engages other contributing prosumers and distributors regarding the sharing of news products, whereas the reach of these prominent persons should be extensive due to the fact, that they should be constituted as opinion leaders according to their position.

The suitability of interviewees into the selection was verified by the assistance of investigating their news consuming preferences in the beginning of interviews. Thus, if it would have been evident, that an interviewee is not eligible according to the theoretical profile of opinion leader, then another interviewee would have been chosen. Therewith, it was necessary to question their information consumption behavior, as opinion leaders are expected to have extensive possibilities for accessing information (Lyons & Henderson,

2005). Another factor to check their suitability was to implement the presumption of Rogers and Cartano (1962), by which opinion leaders exert an unequal amount of influence on the decision of others. Hence, I looked how popular their sharing actions were among others and compared this number with the results of De Vries, Gensler & Leeftang (2012), who studied Facebook engagement of branded users. Although private users and branded users are not directly comparable, the ratio of likes per share considering the reach can still be estimated. According to De Vries, Gensler & Leeftang (2012), average branded post generates 187 likes, whereas the average branded Facebook page reaches 337 500 users. According to this ratio, average post of private user should generate 3 likes considering that private users may have up to 5000 Facebook friends (Wilson, Boe, Sala, Puttaswamy & Zhao, 2009). Therefore, before interviewing the opinion leaders, I had to befriend them in order to be ascertain about the popularity of their posts. Lastly, I looked at their number of Facebook friends, as Burt (1999) claimed that opinion leaders are expected to have large social networks. Therefore, the average social network size of interviewees should be expectedly larger compared to average Facebook user, who has 338 friends (Pew Research Center, 2014). Although, none of the interviewees were eliminated based on these criteria, observing these criterions enabled me to gain certainty that the selection of interviewees is unusual regarding their amount of Facebook friends and considering the influence that their sharing actions triggered. Breakdown of the interviewees is provided in Table 2, whereas the exact information about their identity is not revealed in order to guarantee their anonymity.

**Table 2** Breakdown of the interviewees

Position	Age range	Gender	Range of Facebook friends
Academician at the University of Tartu	46-50	M	500-600
CEO at public relations company	36-40	M	1800-1900
Communication manager	41-45	M	1700-1800
Correspondent at BBC	41-45	M	900-1000
Editor-in-chief at nationwide journal	41-45	M	1100-1200
Editor-in-chief at online news outlet	41-45	M	1300-1400
Executive at public sector institution	41-45	M	300-400
Former advisor to the President of Estonia	46-51	F	600-700
Former investment banker	41-45	M	1200-1300
Member of the Estonian Parliament	51-55	M	2100-2200
Member of the European Parliament	36-40	F	4900-5000
Writer and film director	56-60	F	3900-4000

In order to determine whether sharing actions of interviewees reflect their claims, I planned to monitor fifteen sharing actions of each interviewee, which were shared before May 23. Therefore, the total sample size for document analysis was planned to be 180 articles. However, this sample size dropped from 180 to 161 due to the fact, that two interviewees had shared less than fifteen articles as of May 23 2015. A list of analyzed documents and titles with English translations are available in Appendix D. The appendix makes this research more transparent, as it reveals all the categories given for each document (i.e. shared article).

### **3.2. Data collection methods**

First, this paper utilized in-depth interviews in order to provide the motivators of opinion leaders regarding the sharing actions in social media. Sufficient sample size for in-depth interviews is reached if the same stories, themes, issues and topics start to reoccur (Boyce & Neale, 2006). In-depth interviews enable to derive potential characteristics, which may not be reported in previous academic research (Boyce & Neale, 2006). It fits with the aims of this study, as previous studies do not reflect the features, by which opinion leaders are expected to evaluate stories. In-depth interviews are suggested to use in case of further detailed descriptions (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The choice of in-depth interviews is made due to the fact, that although there is previous research circumscribing the field, then regarding the triggering features of sharing actions, detailed information is insufficient or opposing. For example, it is known that length of the article is expected to influence sharing actions, but is yet unclear whether positive news are more likely to be shared or not. However, it is vague whether it applies for opinion leaders. In addition, by Bell's (1991) list of news values, negative news should gain more readership. Therefore, in-depth interviews should provide the answers, how should these particular aspects be applied for news stories.

In-depth interviews enable to elicit information in order to reach a holistic understanding of interviewees viewpoint (Berry, 1999). The interview guide could be seen from Appendix B. However, as in-depth interviews include probing, if it enables to gather more useful data (Berry, 1999), then the particular questions asked in each interview differed, as many additional questions were asked from most of the interviewees. However, the exact process of interviews could be seen from interview transcripts.

In order to conduct document analysis, the data was collected from the Facebook walls of interviewees. In total, 161 sharing actions were monitored, which means that 161 electronic documents were collected. Although Facebook shares might constitute as unusual documents, Atkinson and Coffey (1997) defined documents as social facts, which have been produced, shared or used in socially organized ways. Yin (2009) has pointed out, that conducting a case study based on documents might have some weaknesses. One is retrievability, second is biased selectivity, third is reporting bias and another concern is access. However, none of the weaknesses apply on this occasion, as data was easy to find, selectivity was directly set by collecting the data about past fifteen sharing actions of each interviewee, the interviewees provided the access and grounded theory method enabled to leverage the bias of researcher by using multiple methods for research.

### **3.3. Data analysis methods**

Interviews were analyzed by inductive qualitative text analysis, which suites for a study if the categories are planned to form according to the research (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Inductive qualitative content

analysis is suggested, if there is not enough former knowledge about phenomenon or if the knowledge is fragmented (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Inductive qualitative content analysis is useful, if later categories will be formed on the basis of research, with the option to also support on the fragmented findings of previous studies (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Qualitative content analysis enables to begin with open-coding process, which provides the option to form categories in particular context (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Therefore, the analysis process began with open-coding, which is requisite as an initial part of qualitative data analysis for labeling concepts in case the aim is to provide grounded theory (Khandkar, 2009). Strauss and Corbin's (1990) grounded theory data analysis is implemented in order to provide comparative results, which is relevant for exploratory research grounding on previous theoretical and empirical findings. Grounded theory elaborated within this paper relies on the analysis of interviews and document analysis diverging from the monitoring of the actual sharing actions of interviewees. In order to form categories, axial and selective coding was utilized to reach grounded theory phase. Codes generated by open-coding provide core phenomenons, which enable to continue with axial coding by building the model around the core phenomenons (Creswell, Hanson, Plano & Morales, 2007). Throughout the grounding theory analysis process, constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1965) was implemented in order to form codes, categories and patterns.

In order to provide the certainty with grounded theory propositions, case study document analysis was conducted to investigate actual sharing behavior of interviewees. Document analysis is generally utilized in combination with other qualitative research methods for data triangulation (Denzin, 1970). As Bowen (2009) referred, information contained in documents may involve situations that need to be observed as part of research. Considering the aims of current paper, without obtaining the overview of actual sharing actions, grounding theory propositions could not be tested. Throughout the document analysis, the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1965) was implemented, grounding on inductive approach derived from grounding theory analysis. As Bowen (2009) utilized document analysis and constant comparative method as a complementary tool to add credibility, current paper uses the same option. Therefore, as constant comparative method allows to code the shared articles and form categories, it enables to make the derivations according to these categories and generate theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1965).

### **3.4. Operationalization**

Within the data collection phase, twelve opinion leaders were interviewed. They were contacted by e-mail and identified by the assistance of snowball sampling. As it was enormously difficult to schedule all the interviews into a small time frame, so that it would suit for every interviewee to conduct the conversations in Estonia, all the interviews were conducted via Skype. Additional practical reason was that some of the interviewees do not regularly live in Estonia, as two of them live and work in Finland and one works in Belgium. Therewith, video conference function was applied, which is suggested to simulate synchronous face-to-face interaction while overcoming interpersonal aspects of the interaction (Evans, Elford & Wiggins, 2008; Hanna, 2012). Open-ended questions were chosen, because such questions are preferred in case the data is collected primarily by interviews (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The average length of the interviews was 38 minutes. Time spent for an interview was dependent of answers and interviewees, as some of the

interviewees talked rather quickly but concretely, while some of the interviewees were talking in a hedging way. All the conversations were stored with digital voice recorder.

In order to guarantee, that all the interviewees are representative regarding the research of opinion leaders, the execution of interviews was planned so timely as possible in order to check their background. Therewith, it was necessary to befriend the interviewees to see their social network. Hence, the first part of interview always started with the questions, which were targeted to investigate their behavior of information consumption. Next, the association between the interviewees and opinion leadership needs to be revealed. As Lyons & Henderson (2005) claimed, then opinion leaders tend to have extensive possibilities for accessing information channels. This assumption applies for the selection of interviewees, as almost all of them noted, that then may access various information channels without paying the subscription fees themselves due to their working duties, as their employer enables the access. At the same time, Rogers and Cartano (1962) stated, that opinion leaders exert an unequal amount of influence on the decisions of others. Although it is difficult to indicate the influence of interviewees over other Facebook users, the shares of some interviewees collected over a hundred likes (Appendix C1, Facebook: Writer and film director), whereas the average was over ten likes. The latter is rather uncommon considering, that the reach of private Facebook users is limited due to the fact, that a private user could maximally have 5000 Facebook friends. The average branded Facebook post received 189 likes, whereas the average brand had 337 500 Facebook fans (de Vries et al, 2012). Therefore, the probability that a news sharing action of private user exceeds a hundred likes should be rather unlikely, as the maximum direct reach of private users is over 75 smaller compared to branded Facebook users. Even the fact, that the average number of likes was over ten is rather unlikely considering the ratio revealed by the research of De Vries et al (2012). In addition, the average number of friends among Facebook users is 338 (Pew Research, 2014), but the average amount of Facebook friends of interviewees is over a thousand. Such indications are in line with Burt (1999), who claimed that opinion leaders are rather opinion brokers benefitting from large social networks. Simultaneously, interviewees also have connections within diverse social groups, as several interviewees claimed that the news about some very controversial topics cannot be shared due to the fact, that their social network in Facebook includes people with various background and they may need to become moderators of their own shares.

Interviews with opinion leaders were transcribed right after and analyzed by inductive qualitative text analysis, which suites for a study if the categories are planned to form according to the research (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Qualitative content analysis enables to begin with open-coding process (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Therefore, the initial analyze process began with open-coding, which is necessary if the requisite part of qualitative data analysis is to provide grounded theory (Khandkar, 2009). Initially, 33 codes were created according to the interviews as seen from Appendix A, where relevant example is beside each code. Complete coding process with categories can be seen from Table 3.



**Table 3** Coding process

	Open code	Category	Patterns	Grounded theory
1	Assessment of structure			
2	Attribution			
3	Balanced information			
4	Brand awareness			
5	Cultural proximity			
6	Educative function			
7	Eliteness of actors			
8	Eliteness of author			
9	Existence of paywall			
10	Existence of visualizations			
11	Geographical proximity			
12	Informative function			
13	Level of abstraction	Perception of importance		
14	Level of analysis	Perception of novelty	Perception of novelty	
15	Level of novelty	Perception of proximity	Perception of proximity	Likeability and sharability
16	Level of writing	Perception of irritation	Perception of irritation	
17	Linguistic proximity	Perception of quality	Perception of quality	
18	Ownership of channel	Trustworthiness		
19	Perception of conflict			
20	Perception of importance			
21	Perception of influence			
22	Perception of irritation			
23	Professional proximity			
24	Recency			
25	Reputation of author			
26	Reputation of channel			
27	Sensationalism			
28	Social proximity			
29	Topic proximity			
30	Trustworthiness			
31	Viewpoint proximity			
32	Values of author			
33	Values of channel			

Axial and selective coding were utilized in order to form categories and reach grounded theory phase. Axial coding enabled to build a connection between initial codes, categories and patterns. Example process of forming a category can be seen from Table 4. Later in selective coding, propositions for grounded theory were developed, which interrelate with the categories, providing the assemblage of derivations describing the interrelationships of categories on this model (Creswell et al, 2007).

**Table 4** Example of category (i.e. core phenomenon)

Open-code	Core phenomenon: Perception of reputation
Brand awareness	"So my receipt is the following: normally it is better to stick with the channels you are aware of."
Eliteness of author	"And sometimes, if some outstanding persons have written something, like in case Henry Kissinger writes something, who rarely does these days... Then I might share."
Ownership of channel	"Yes, I think it does eliminate the sharing possibility. Kender is a person, who generates suspicious processes... In case he would only be a fun rebel, then it would be alright."
Reputation of author	"There are people, whom I do respect and with whom I share similar viewpoints. And then there are persons, whose opinions do not have any weight at all."
Reputation of channel	"Well, that's the way it is, that one channel is Mercedes-Benz and the other one is Lada. Channels have some kind of reputation and it has a certain influence, which affects sharing decisions as well."

In order to control, that the sharing actions of interviewees reflect their claims, fifteen article shares of each interviewee was planned to monitor, which were shared before May 23. In order to provide the certainty with grounded theory propositions, document analysis was conducted to investigate the actual sharing behavior of interviewees. Considering the aims of current paper, without obtaining the overview of actual sharing actions, grounding theory propositions could have not been tested. The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1965) was implemented, which based on categories and patterns. As Yin (2009) suggested to create a database for analyzed documents, the list of analyzed documents may be seen from Appendix D, which includes the headlines of articles, identification of sharing action initiator and given categories for these sharing actions. Therewith, I had to ask the permission to befriend these interviewees in order to see all the shares they have conducted. These interpellations enabled to check, if the factors stated to be salient by them, reflect in their actual sharing actions or not. Their anonymity is still assured, as APA suggests to provide confidentiality (Lee & Hume-Pratuch, 2013). Thus, the examples implemented to demonstrate their actual sharing actions will hide names and profile photos in order to guarantee the confidentiality. However, the interviewees will be identified according to their job title. It needs to be mentioned, that analyzing actual sharing actions of opinion leaders revealed, that a member of the Estonian Parliament had only shared one article in total, which was not about his party. Thus, I decided to exclude his sharing actions from document analysis. In addition, a member of the European Parliament had only shared eleven articles in total, which were not written by her or about her. Hence, the amount of the shared articles by her was smaller and the total sample size of document analysis dropped from 180 to 161. As document analysis enabled to give codes for a substantial amount of sharing actions, then a conclusive visualization of the factors triggering sharing actions is also provided within the results section. It needs to be mentioned, that the visualization does not

apply for any quantitative research standards, as this study is thoroughly qualitative. However, it enables to provide an overview about the proportion of codes and their importance for the sharing action decisions.

## 4. Results and discussion

The theoretical framework of this paper refers, that internet is the most important gate from which consumers access media (Dimmick, Chen & Li, 2004). Simultaneously, Facebook is the most popular social media channel regarding news sharing actions (Gordon & Johnson, 2012; Matsa & Mitchell, 2014; NewsWhip, 2014; Rayson, 2014). Therefore, news organizations should exploit the possibilities of Facebook in the best possible way by incorporating social media channels into their online distribution networks. Simultaneously, opinion leaders could have a significant role in the innovation of online distribution network, which is enabled by social media channels. Mills (2012) has studied viral marketing strategies with an aim to provide complementary knowledge for the execution of marketing campaigns. According to Mills' (2012) SPIN framework model – spreadability is dependent of likeability and sharability of the content, as an individual has to like the content first to reach the next phases. Sharability *per se* refers the degree to which the consumer feels that the content may have similar effect among other consumers.

Results chapter is divided into nine sub-sections. As the patterns and categories reflect Mills' (2012) SPIN framework model, then the associations with this model will be introduced. However, I introduce every category separately, which was formed in order to demonstrate the way how such interpretations were reached. Detailed example, how the categories were formed may be seen from Appendix A, whereas an example of quotation is provided for each category.

### 4.1. Mills' (2012) SPIN model

Although Mills' (2012) SPIN model was designed to spread branded messages, then current research indicates that it applies for news stories as well. Before the execution of in-depth questions and follow-up questions, an opened question was asked. The interviewees had the tendency to point out, that they either need to like the content or they need to acknowledge the quality of content. Simultaneously, many of them pointed out that before sharing, they think whether it would offer same kind of experience for someone else. These implications could clearly be associated with the findings of Mills' (2012), as he claimed that an individual has to first like the content, which makes the individuals think about sharability. Hereby, I would like to present some examples. The member of the European Parliament said:

Well, I mainly look if the article carries some news values or if it constitutes as a comprehensive analysis for me. Then as I personally like it, I might feel that perhaps someone else would like to read the same thing, to enrich themselves as it has enriched myself.

A former advisor to the President of Estonia said:

The main factor is, that the content needs to be important because of something and I also consider, what could it offer for someone else. But what affects this decision quite a lot, is that the text needs to constitute as a quality text according to my perception.

The most important implication of this research is, that Mills' (2012) SPIN framework is not limited to branded messages, but it also applies for news industry. Specific factors, which are expected to increase the

probability of sharing actions will be presented in the following. Based on twelve interviews, thirty three codes were formed, which led to six categories and four patterns. The coding process can be specifically seen from Appendix A. In addition, the document analysis enabled to confirm these categories, as actual sharing actions of interviewees were monitored. List of analyzed documents can be seen from Appendix D. Nevertheless, I now present all the categories along with relevant examples, which led to the formation of pattern interpretations. Some of the interpretations will be demonstrated by multiple examples. Theoretical implications will be presented along the results, because this study aims to provide general categories based on participant perspectives in this field of research and previous studies have strong implications for providing an abstract approach.

#### **4.2. Perception of novelty**

As previous studies have indicated, that news stories are representative in case they are interesting and informative (Leshner et al, 1998), this paper strongly confirms the same conclusion. At the same time, representative stories are rated higher by the perception of audience according to previous studies. Interviewees also brought it up by claiming that news stories need to provide something novel. Perception of novelty initiates from two codes. Therewith, the pattern of the perception of novelty incorporates the code, which is labelled as sensationalism. The latter term was still categorized as the perception of novelty, because as all sensational stories should constitute as novel, all novel stories do not necessarily constitute as sensational. By the perception of novelty it needs to be mentioned, that all consumers perceive information differently. Therewith, a particular story may constitute very novel for one person, but for another it might not constitute as novel at all. Hence, the sharing action *per se* depends on the level of perceived novelty by the reader. It should be mentioned, that all the interviewees deliberately pointed out the necessity of novel viewpoint, without even asking this question directly from them. I suppose, that the following example should be the best in order to illustrate the perception of novelty: "there has to be a novel and interesting viewpoint, which could be written about a well-known topic, but it has to be different. It needs to be enriching, enlightening and it has to trigger my mind" (Appendix N: Member of the Estonian Parliament, interview transcript, May 5). At the same time, interviewees brought up different examples regarding the perception of novelty. One of the categories under the perception of novelty is the perception of novel viewpoints. However, novel viewpoints were associated with educative function and informative function of the content. It should be mentioned, that along with the member of the Estonian Parliament, another interviewee also associated novelty with enlightening and educative function. A writer and film director said:

I rather share the content, which is is educative and enlightening. Because educating myself and enlightening myself are both important for me, so I also consider important sharing that kind of content. Then, in case some breaking stories from global perspective have been launched, then I am interested at the psychological side... I am interested at the psychological discussion – why did somebody do, what he did? And I am also keen at political psychology. I share the stories, which analyze government actions – why do they act as they act? Why do the political leaders act as they act? That kind of psychological theme is important.

Looking at the Facebook posts made by these interviewees, the perception of novelty can be easily acknowledged on the wall of the writer and film director. For instance, she has shared a story about a young Somalian woman, who moved to Finland as a refugee, graduated university in Finland and presently runs for Somalian president (Appendix C1, Facebook: Writer and film director). This story is clearly novel, as the article mentioned that the same woman is the first Somalian to graduate a master's programme in Finland (Koistinen, 2015). In total, 135 of the monitored sharing actions were categorized as the ones, which carry a level of novelty, which makes novelty a very salient factor.

### 4.3. Perception of proximity

Perception of proximity is the broadest pattern of the results section. However, it is also one of the most influential factors predicting likeability and sharability, as there were no monitored sharing actions out of 161 without any proximity factors. Perception of proximity should constitute as a suitable term for around one third of the underlying codes, while the perception of influence is also under the pattern of proximity, as different individuals are expected to perceive influence differently. For instance, the writer and film director shared a story about the premiere of Arvo Pärt's *Adam's Passion* (Appendix C1, Facebook: Writer and film director). As Arvo Pärt is an Estonian composer, who belongs into Pope's Culture Council (Sivonen, 2011), then the premiere may constitute as a very influential event among the people working in culture industry. Meanwhile, an editor-in-chief at online news outlet claimed that he does not generally even read reviews about classical music (Appendix J: Editor-in-chief at online news outlet, interview transcript, March 26). The necessity for researching the topology and interests of particular social networks has also been underlined by another study (Leckovec et al., 2008). The question is – how close does a person stand in relation with the writing. The subchapter about the perception of proximity reveals the details about recency, geographic proximity, professional proximity, perception of influence, social proximity, cultural proximity, linguistic proximity, topic proximity and existence of paywalls as follows.

Most of the interviewees pointed out that recency is a factor, which conduces their sharing decisions, as the articles published long time ago have a small chance to be shared. The latter got confirmed by monitoring the actual sharing actions, as 160 articles out of 161 were shared shortly after the article got published. This links with previous studies, because Bell (1991) along with Golding and Elliott (1979) pointed out, that best stories tell about recent events. An editor-in-chief at nationwide journal said "Recency matters as well. For example, as the news story about the assassination of Boriss Nemtsov (i.e. the former prime minister of Russia) was published, then I shared it right away about an hour after the shooting" (Appendix I: Editor-in-chief at nationwide journal, interview transcript, March 26). A communication manager said "When I read that Boris Nemtsov was assassinated, then it's pointless to share it, because thousands of people have already shared it. Such stories only have a positive sharing effect, in case it is very recent news story" (Communication manager, interview transcript, March 26). Looking at the Facebook wall of him, one may see that the editor-in-chief at nationwide journal has indeed shared a story about the assassination of Boris Nemtsov (Appendix D), but the communication manager did not share it. Therefore, it could be stated that recency *per se* matters in context of breaking news stories. At the same time, the content does not necessarily need to tell about recent events in case the article is not perceived as a breaking news story, but the publishing date *per se* matters. The editor-in-chief at online news outlet said:

Recency matters quite a lot. For instance, I often read some foreign news outlets. But I don't read every foreign news outlet on daily basis, but on some sites I end up once a week or even once a month. Then, I might read something interesting from there, but if I see the publishing date... And if I notice, that it's two weeks or a month old... Then, I normally don't share such content.

Branton and Dunaway (2009) underlined that geographic proximity is one of the driving forces in news industry. Geographical proximity is constituted to be the most common proximity factor (Bell, 1991; Golding & Elliott, 1979), as individuals try to estimate the suitability of content for their audience (Mills, 2012). Conventional geographical proximity factor is still very salient, as multiple interviewees deliberately claimed, that they tend to share stories about Estonia, which are published in foreign press. Furthermore, when asked about the influence of geographical proximity, then ten interviewees out of twelve claimed, that it is likely to raise their positive perception of a story. This implication links with the findings of multiple previous studies (Bendix & Liebler, 1999; Buyukokkten, Cho, Garcia-Molina, Gravano & Shivakumar, 1999; Sundar, 1999; Ruigrok & Van Atteveldt, 2007). The latter was also strongly confirmed by this study, as 96 of the monitored sharing actions out of 161 (Appendix D) were about the country where the person lives at. The rationale behind this factor could be illustrated by the citation of the communication manager:

I tend to think it through, whether it could have any meaningful influence or create some kind of reflection among the people, who potentially reads my Facebook posts. There's no meaning to share any stories about China on my Facebook wall, right? I just try to figure out, what people care about before sharing something.

The following example should additionally demonstrate, that individuals think about sharability matters, because in case they feel that the content will not be reached otherwise, they feel responsible for providing the coverage because of their professional proximity towards a topic. 42 out of 161 monitored sharing actions were partly triggered by professional proximity, which makes it a very salient factor. In order to demonstrate the rationale behind these sharing actions, the following citation needs to be provided. The editor-in-chief at nationwide journal said:

Sometimes I also share content because of my area of expertise, if there is an interesting analysis about foreign policy. In case I know that otherwise some kind of content is likely to not be reached by my Facebook friends, then I constitute my task to trigger interest in another person or to create a discussion.

Perception of influence was also a rather salient factor, as 30 out of the 161 monitored sharing actions were labelled accordingly. Nevertheless, the interviewees were not pointing it out particularly. For instance, an academician at the University of Tartu replied "Let us presume, that the major of Voronezh or Pskov has done something, which is indicative, then I might share it" (Appendix E: Academician at the University of Tartu, interview transcript, April 6). Therefore, perception of influence seems to be another factor, which

comes along with elite actors. Perhaps the most accurate citation regarding the triggering aspect of the perception of influence is the following "I tend to think it through, whether it could have any meaningful influence or create some kind of reflection among the people, who potentially reads my Facebook posts" (Communication manager, interview transcript, March 26).

Next, this paper describes social proximity. As Ma et al (2014) claimed that tie strength is a conducting factor for sharing actions, this study makes the same notification, because some individuals share stories simply because they know the author. However, this research makes the proposition to label the term as social proximity not as tie strength. One interviewee pointed out, that offline connections with authors provide wider understanding, which conduce sharing probability. The member of the European Parliament deliberately pointed out, that writings of his brother are likely to be shared, as she considers her brother a very wise person. The member of the European Parliament said:

Well. First, the writings that this author has previously published – this matters. Second, perhaps it also matters, whether I have a personal connection with someone. Because reading the writings of a person... The character count is limited. Hence, you might actually understand a person way better, when meeting the person. Perhaps this person has interesting viewpoints because of his education or background... So, if I have met the person and know the background, then this might determine my decision to read it at all. [...] Yes, the person could also be my friend or someone, whom I have grown up together with. Hence, I might read everything suggested by that sort of people... For instance, my brother is one of these persons.

The actual sharing actions of her indicate (Appendix C5, Facebook: Member of the European Parliament), that she has shared an article where his brother revealed Estonian financial issues. In addition, as the member of the European Parliament is from an influential political family, it is worth mentioning that she has repeatedly shared stories about the actions of her close relatives. Therefore, social proximity is clearly an important factor regarding the prediction of her sharing behavior. The same presumption also applies for several other interviewees, as they have shared the stories written by an author, who belongs into their personal friend list. The latter applies for the academician at the University of Tartu, the communication manager, a correspondent at BBC, the former advisor to the president of Estonia, a former investment banker and the editor-in-chief at online news outlet. Although the latter examples cannot not be demonstrated in detail, as it might enable their personal identification, it could be stated that twelve shared articles out of 161 were conducted by the person, who has the author of the article in his Facebook friend list, which means that seven percent or more of the sharing actions were also conducted by social proximity. The reason, why social proximity might be even more influential than this paper indicates, is that it is not totally guaranteed that all the authors, whose texts have been shared by the interviewees of this research, have a Facebook account. Thus, the connection might have been unnoticed.

In addition to previous proximity factors, viewpoint proximity is also a conducting factor regarding sharing actions, which links with the findings of Sallot et al (1998). Sallot et al (1998) indicated, that demonstrating a topic in favorable light is the least important feature for journalists, but it is the most salient feature for communication managers. The former investment banker said "I always share such stories and I



do not have any problems with ideologies. The same magazine *Jacobin* is very radical and it favors leftists. It is very ideologically loaded but I sometimes share very radical content" (Appendix M: Former investment banker, interview transcript, April 15). The editor-in-chief at online news outlet said:

In case I have read some complete nonsense from an author about the topics, that I am personally well-aware of... Then you understand, that there might be no competence or objectivity or there might be an intentional tease. Well... Of course there might be some exceptions. For instance, if I would like to make the same tease, then the teasing aspect might be positive regarding my sharing behavior ...

Looking at the sharing actions of the former investment banker, it can be noticed that he has indeed shared a story from *Jacobin Magazine* (Appendix C6, Facebook: Former investment banker), which provides novel viewpoint about the possible interpretations of alien imperialism (Spencer, 2015). Although, it might be constituted as a risky sharing action with a possibility to diminish the reputation of the former investment banker, as aliens are normatively not considered to exist, the person still made the share knowing that such dissertations are considered to be radical. At the same time, the editor-in-chief at online news outlet shared an interview with a former Minister of Health and Labour Rannar Vassiljev, where the reporter asked very critical questions about the actions of government (Rudi, 2015). Along with the sharing action, the editor-in-chief at online news outlet wrote a long foreword for that particular sharing action guiding the attention to these critical questions (Appendix C7, Facebook: Editor-in-chief at online news outlet). These implications demonstrate, that the findings of Sallot et al (1998) do not apply for communication managers only, as there might be wider spectrum of individuals with a desire to show a topic in favorable light. It is worth mentioning that the code of viewpoint proximity was given for 28 sharing actions, based on the fact whether the stories were ideologically loaded or the sharing actions included a foreword encouraging other Facebook users to read the content.

Regarding linguistic and cultural proximity, a clear line needs to be drawn. Cultural proximity factors rather conduce sharing actions, as linguistic proximity factors have the chance to eliminate the sharing possibility due to the linguistic barrier. Firstly, cultural proximity factor will be introduced by the citation of the writer and film director, who said "So the actions or the countries, which might affect Estonia or the topics which should be somewhat important to us – I might share that kind of articles" (Appendix P: Writer and film director, interview transcript, April 7). The sharing actions of the writer and film director reveal, that she has recently shared a story about a tiny elderly community living in a small Estonian island, which was published in foreign press (Appendix C1, Facebook: Writer and film director). All together, 16 sharing actions out of 161 indicated cultural proximity (Appendix D). Simultaneously, linguistic proximity is also an important factor, which in contrary has the power of eliminating the possibility of sharing actions. Next example is also a certification for Mills' (2012) SPIN framework, as individuals try to estimate the suitability of content for their social media audience. In case an opinion leader thinks that the content is not very sharable, because it does not have similar effect for others due to linguistic barriers, then the person does not share it. The former advisor to the President of Estonia said:

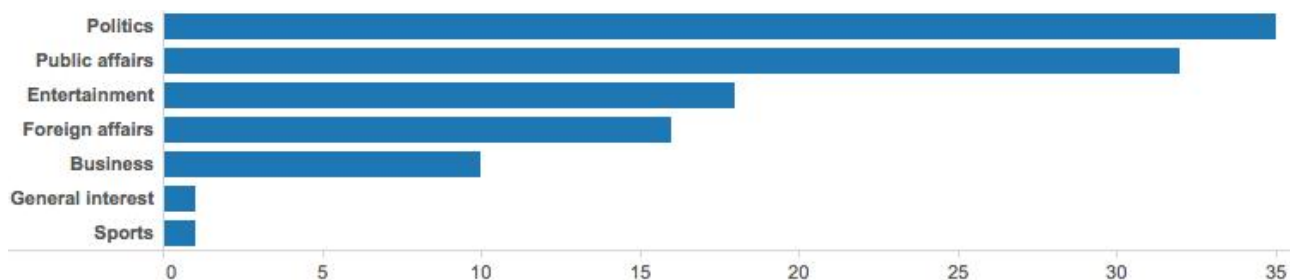
Indeed. And this doesn't only depend on my physical geographical location, but it depends whether I consider a region interesting. And language is of course a criteria as well, because I operate in Estonian, Finnish, Swedish and English. In addition, I also read in Danish, but this is so-so... Because in case I know, that my audience in social media cannot understand Danish, then I rather do not share. But for instance, if someone from Portugal has written an essay in English, which touches me as a person, then I still might share it and the geographical location does not matter.

Existence of paywalls has also been categorized under the perception of proximity, which is similar to linguistic proximity factor, as it also has the power of eliminating the possibility for a sharing actions. The reason for such stigmatization is, that the existence of paywalls could be addressed as the perception of technical proximity barrier. Practice of news outlets refers to the influence of paywalls, as several news outlets including *the New York Times* have implemented the model, whereas users may access stories *via* social media without subscribing (Newman, 2011). The fears of news organizations seem to be right, as some interviewees claimed that they have not shared stories only because of the perception, that the persons in their social media network cannot either access the story or are not willing to pay for reading a story. The communication manager said:

A young female English teacher wrote a long story about her viewpoint towards educational problems. It was very well and interestingly written. There was a very humorous aspect in this text about equalizing educational quality throughout the country. She said, that everyone has different intellectual abilities and skills, which should be trivially acknowledged. And then she says: "Every day I need to teach chickens to fly into beehive house." It was just a brilliant figure of speech in order to illustrate, that everybody cannot understand everything and that's just the way it is. She was a totally unknown person for me... But I just couldn't share it, because its behind the paywall. However, I would have shared it right away and recommended everyone to read it.

The adoption of online news platforms indicated, that the audience is more interested to sports and business and spends less time on public affairs, political stories and local news (Tewksbury & Althaus, 2000). Simultaneously, Schaudt & Carpenter (2008) have suggested that reporting crimes is very important for news outlets, as the audience is highly interested in stories about criminal actions. In addition, Golding and Elliott (1979) claimed that sensational or entertaining stories should be popular among the audience. These theoretical implications were taken into account, as several interviewees pointed out, that there are topics that they never read nor share. For instance, the member of the European Parliament and the editor-in-chief at online news outlet claimed, that they never read stories about sports (Appendix O: Member of the European Parliament, interview transcript, April 1; Appendix J: Editor-in-chief at online news outlet, interview transcript, March 26). Therewith, it needs to be mentioned that topic proximity is an important factor, as majority of the shared articles were either about politics or public affairs (Table 5). The table was formed according to the existing categories listed in Appendix D and although this table does not apply for any quantitative research standards, it enables to demonstrate the proportion of shared article types.

**Table 5** Overall categorization of shared articles



\* The bar chart indicates the percentage of shared article types

#### 4.4. Perception of trustworthiness

All but one of the interviewees particularly pointed out trustworthiness, as it is likely to affect their sharing decision (Appendix E: Academician at the University of Tartu, interview transcript, April 6); Appendix F: CEO at public relations company, interview transcript, March 26; Appendix G: Communication manager, interview transcript, March 26; Appendix H: Correspondent at BBC, interview transcript, April 9; Appendix I: Editor-in-chief at nationwide journal, interview transcript, March 26; Appendix J: Editor-in-chief at online news outlet, interview transcript, March 26; Appendix L: Former advisor to the president of Estonia, interview transcript, April 21; Appendix M: Former investment banker, interview transcript, April 15; Appendix N: Member of the Estonian Parliament, interview transcript, May 5; Appendix O: Member of the European Parliament, interview transcript, April 1; Appendix P: Write and film director, interview transcript, April 7). Meyers (1988) dimensions of media credibility also include the features of trustworthiness. The former advisor to the President of Estonia said "Yes. The question of trustworthiness of the channel raises and it matters. No doubt" (Appendix L: Former advisor to the President of Estonia, interview transcript, April 21). The sharing actions of her clearly demonstrate, that she tends to share the content published in broadsheet newspapers like *Dagens Nyheter*, *Helsingin Sanomat*, *the New York Times* or *Postimees* and broadsheets are normatively constituted as high-quality newspapers (Hippocrates, 1999; Rowe & Brass, 2008).

However, several interviewees directly pointed out, that the credibility of author and the credibility of channel affects their sharing decisions, which links with the findings of Hung, Li & Tse (2011). Hung, Li & Tse (2011) claimed, that interpersonal trust and platform credibility are the most important factors, which distinct effective news platforms from ineffective ones. Gentzkow & Shapiro (2005) noted, that as consumers' willingness to pay for unbiased information is higher than paying for biased information, media channels desire to build a reputation for accuracy and eliminating bias assists media companies to develop in economically favorable direction. As a CEO at public relations company pointed out, then news channels are highly stigmatized by his perception (Appendix F: CEO at public relations company, interview transcript, March 26). On the other hand, multiple interviewees claimed, that the articles published at *Nihilist FM* will not be shared just because of the association of Kaur Kender. [(i.e. *Nihilist FM* is an internet-only platform, which publishes content without editing and the channel was founded by Kaur Kender; Kaur Kender is a controversial Estonian writer, whose writings have been accused to represent child pornography (Sinikalda, 2015) and he has publicly claimed (Pauts, 2002), that he has consumed various drugs)]. The latter example

provides the implication, that the association of highly stigmatized authors may eliminate sharing possibilities by opinion leaders. The CEO at public relations company said "Well, that's the way it is, that one channel is a Mercedes-Benz and the other one is a Lada. Channels have some kind of reputation and it has a certain influence, which affects sharing decisions as well" (Appendix F: CEO at public relations company, interview transcript, March 26). The member of the Estonian Parliament said:

Yes. It will eliminate the possibility to share, because I am well aware about the background of Kaur Kender. I am ascertain, that he is the spin doctor of Estonian Reform Party. Or even if he isn't now... Then he used to be, because he got paid for distracting public attention. Hence, regarding this matter, I am careful. I really try to be aware of such background actors. It's easy to do it in Estonia, but not so easy in international context. However, in case I want to check the background a bit, then it all exposes.

The former investment banker said:

But to think about it again, I have had some doubts, whether I should share the content published at *Nihilist FM* or not. But in this case, the background is much more complexed and it does not really depend on the channel. I know Kaur Kender for long and he is a good acquaintance for me but I have my own prejudices regarding him. [...] And this also applies for the texts written by Kaur Kender. Despite his writings may be great, there are always a couple of other factors behind his agenda, which I might not agree with or even understand these background features. Hence, it is often wise to avoid sharing the texts of such authors.

According to the actual sharing actions, it could be stated that the CEO tends to share the articles of *the Telegraph* and *Postimees* (Appendix C4, Facebook: CEO at public relations company), which are both broadsheet newspapers. Although it is difficult to estimate the reputation of these papers, broadsheets are normatively constituted as high-quality newspapers (Hippocrates, 1999; Rowe & Brass, 2008). Simultaneously, the articles of *Nihilist FM* are indeed not shared by the member of the Estonian Parliament nor the former investment banker.

In addition to credibility and trustworthiness issues, number of interviewees claimed that in case they are not previously aware of the channel, then the sharing action is very unlikely. Although the research of Oyedeij (2007) found, that brand awareness is not likely to affect credibility, then this paper suggests that brand awareness is very likely to affect credibility in context of news sharing actions. The editor-in-chief at nationwide journal said:

But talking about the level of trustworthiness, it is important to carefully observe these "wonderful" Russian platforms, which have spawn... And Ukraine of course. They contain a lot of "sensational" information... So it is important to observe, what comes in from there. And in Estonia, there is *Nihilist FM*, where they sometimes also publish pretty good content, but some of these are like... The ones,

which I would never publish. So it is necessary to be careful with the issues regarding trustworthiness. [...] So my recipe is the following: normally it is better to stick with the channels you are aware of. The writer and film director said:

That too. I look at it very carefully, because presently there's the era of psychological warfare between Russia and Eastern Europe. Hence, all kinds of novel online news outlets spawn quickly. Of course, all the Russian-state owned channels... I sometimes look at these too, to understand the logic behind some decisions, but I am not deliberately looking for such stories.

The communication manager said:

Yes, I am personally very careful with sharing the content published on sites, which I am not aware of, especially it applies for internet-only based platforms. I will bring you an example, from the early phases of Russian-Ukrainian conflict, when there were shootings on Maidan square. I looked at the photo, which was taken of sniper shooter... It was published on the site of *Euromaidan* or *EuromaidanPR*... So, it was clearly the platform supporting Ukrainian propaganda. Anyway, then I thought: "My dear god! What kind of sniper? What kind of photo is this?" I tend to distrust that kind of information, which I cannot check by myself. I downloaded the photo, opened Google's Image Detection, uploaded it there and looked what happens. Of course, it then came out, that this image was taken in 2010 at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

The actual sharing actions of these persons demonstrate that they tend to share the content of established channels. According to their last fifteen shares, they haven't shared the content from any internet-only based news channels. In addition, the interviewees pointed out that attribution matters and they prefer to read articles, which provide balanced information and would not constitute as "articles directed towards one goal" (Appendix J: Editor-in-chief at online news outlet, interview transcript, March 26), which is especially salient regarding news stories.

It should be mentioned, that the necessity of correct attribution was also underlined by Bell's (1991) list of news values, whereas avoiding bias and providing attribution along with balanced information was pointed out by Meyers (1988). The latter implications received strong approval by the editor-in-chief at nationwide journal (Appendix I: Editor-in-chief at nationwide journal, interview transcript, March 26). Looking at the past 15 shares of him, it could indeed be detected that he does not share stories without attribution and the news stories which he has shared, represent several information sources. All in all, only one sharing action was considered to have shortcomings in attribution. The latter sharing action was conducted by the writer and film director (Appendix D).

#### **4.5. Perception of quality**

Perception of quality pattern will be introduced in this subchapter. The category consists of several codes, listed as follows: assessment to structure, attribution, balanced information, existence of visualizations, informative function, level of abstraction, level of analysis and level of writing. However, first

the connections between theoretical framework and results will be provided, which will continue with specific demonstration of results. The explanation of results will focus more on the level of abstraction and level of analysis, as these factors saliently emerged from the actual sharing actions of interviewees.

Previous research has indicated, that relevance and importance is likely to affect the perception of audience (Bell, 1991; Golding & Elliott, 1979). Sundar (1999) and Leshner et al (1998) separated relevance, importance and timeliness from quality attributes, while categorizing these terms under the concept of representativeness. However, this paper proposes the pattern labelled as “Perception of quality”, which implies both categories in order to provide more abstract approach. It seems to be appropriate, as different individuals are likely to assess representativeness and quality in different way. For instance, a quality article about medicine could be rated highly by nurses, but it could receive low ratings from lawyers. At the same time, a representative article about the jurisdiction of the EU could constitute as very relevant and important for lawyers, but it could be constituted not relevant nor important at all for nurses. As Gladney et al (2007) has used similar approach by categorizing the concepts reflected by Sundar (1999) and Leshner et al (1998) under the concept of quality, this paper implies the same approach in order to provide more abstract overview. Regarding the relevance of articles, multiple interviews revealed, that even the articles published long time ago may constitute as relevant in current context. However, such articles are relevant and trigger sharing initiatives only if they provide higher abstraction level. In case the reader finds articles, which are also relevant in current context, then these stories hold a potential to be shared. The correspondent at BBC said:

For instance, yesterday I read an article written by Simon Kordonsky, who is a famous sociologist. He used to work for the president and said that there is no class society in Russia, but there’s feudalism. Although the article was actually four years old, I read it with great interest... Though, I didn’t share it, but I think it actually should have been shared, because it is very relevant in current context. And I am not sure, that many people have read it, because it was published in a channel, which basically only targets Russian intellectuals.

The importance of abstraction level was particularly pointed out by the academician at the University of Tartu (Appendix E: Academician at the University of Tartu, interview transcript, April 6). Regarding the posts of the academician, it could be claimed that he has shared radical opinion stories about potential annexation of Baltic countries, which provides unique abstraction level in order to understand, how Russian radicals think (Appendix C2, Facebook: Academician at the University of Tartu). In addition, many other interviewees mentioned the same factor. For instance, the editor-in-chief at online news outlet told, that the abstraction level drawing out from a news report about small cities in Northern Finland was outstanding (Appendix J: Editor-in-chief at online news outlet, interview transcript, April 21). Regarding his sharing actions, it could be easily noticed that there have been several articles, which provide high abstraction level. In total, over a half of shared articles by seven interviewees (i.e. An executive at public sector institution, the academician at the University of Tartu, the CEO at public relations company, the communication manager, the correspondent at BBC and the former investment banker) could be characterized by the existence of high abstraction level provided by the article (Appendix D). However, high abstraction level might emerge in two

different ways. One is the abstraction level, which emerges because the article is problem-oriented and illustrates a wider issue in particular context. For example, the academician at the University of Tartu had shared an analytical article about the abstraction of Moscow's point of view towards truth, which was voted for the best foreign policy article in Estonian media in 2014 (Appendix C2, Facebook: Academician at the University of Tartu).

Another is the abstraction of stupidity, which may emerge if a news outlet publishes a story about failed public statements by elite individuals, unfortunate opinion stories written by elite individuals, failures and shortcomings of policies or elite individuals. Therewith, it could be stated that eliteness may often amplify the level of abstraction. For instance, the academician has shared an article (Appendix C2, Facebook: Academician at the University of Tartu) about the statement of Dmitry Peskov (i.e. press officer for Russia's president Vladimir Putin), where Peskov blatantly claims, that although Russia may influence separatists in Ukraine, Russia's influence over these separatists is not unlimited (Saltykov, 2014). This statement may be taken clearly as the abstraction, how shamelessly does Russia take Ukrainian sovereignty. Another example for the eliteness factor amplifying the level of abstraction could be brought from spring 2015, where there were several sharing actions conducted by interviewees about Jaak Madison's actions and statements (Appendix D). Jaak Madison became the member of the Estonian Parliament in March 2015 (Einmann, 2015), but news outlets provided the disclosure of his personal actions after the elections. For example, before getting elected, he had stolen an iPhone from a passenger, when working for Estonian shipping company Tallink and he tried to sell it online (Einmann, 2015). In addition, he had harassed female colleagues by making copies of their electronic keycards and sneaking into their bedrooms during bedtime (Berendson, 2015). However, he has not yet been convicted in none of these actions and he refused to resign from the parliament (Berendson, Einmann, 2015). Moreover, as Madison is also known for being against immigration and ethnic Russians living in Estonia, he made a twitter post during Estonian basketball championship finals: "I was watching Kalev play Rock and during the final break the girls danced to a song in Russian. I left. #absurd (Oll, 2015)." Next, #*absurd* got viral and thousands of Estonians replied on Twitter and on Facebook, making his post even more ridiculous. For instance, one user tweeted: "My colleagues applauded Russian Eurovision entry. I resigned. #absurd (Oll, 2015)." Therewith, #*absurd* became the symbol for the abstraction of stupidity in Estonian media and many interviewees of this study participated in this demonstration of stupidity as well (Appendix D). However, it remains questionable if this abstraction of stupidity would have scaled so rapidly without an elite individual making such statement.

Level of analysis also saliently emerged by several interviews and it got confirmed by actual sharing actions of interviewees (Appendix D). Although it could be debated, if the level of abstraction and the level of analysis could be under the same category, this paper divided these categories into two. The rationale behind this decision is, that although most of the articles with high level of analysis are also with high level of abstraction, it does not necessary apply *vice versa*. For example, the CEO at public relations company shared a story about Japanese prime minister, who obtained the e-residence of Estonia (Appendix C4, Facebook: CEO at public relations company). Simultaneously, the article does not provide an in-depth analysis about the topic (Tambur, 2015), but as an abstraction it could be claimed, that e-residency is attractive even for the most prominent individuals. In addition, it needs to be mentioned that among the past fifteen sharing actions of interviewees conducted before May 23, every interviewee except the member of

Estonian Parliament had shared at least two articles, which could be characterized by high level of analysis (Appendix D). In total, 38 shared articles out of 161 demonstrated high level of analysis (Appendix D).

Golding and Elliott (1979) pointed out, that visual attractiveness should contribute for the quality of news stories. Simultaneously, De Simone et al (2014), Schroeder (2004) and Smiciklas (2012) claimed that visualizations add educational value. However, this indication cannot be surely confirmed. Some of the interviewees clearly claimed, that visual attractiveness matters, but most of the interviewees opposed that argument. The academician at the University of Tartu said:

Graphics – this is a factor, what I also always suggest for my students. Even if the paper is really philosophical: at least include some graphical elements! It sells. It triggers attention and makes people to think further. Visual side is very important.

The editor-in-chief at nationwide journal said:

I am one of these old-school persons. I can understand, that the focus has to be built up well in newspapers. However, in opposite – how can we read books without any illustrations at all? I think, that it does not matter so much in social media. It might matter, in case interesting caricatures are involved, but then I won't share it because of a caricature, but because of its relation with the main story.

Therefore, by the perception of some interviewees, visualizations may provide additional output for the elaboration of news stories. For instance, the academician is regularly sharing articles with enhanced maps about the situation in Eastern-Europe (Appendix C2, Facebook: Academician at the University of Tartu). Nevertheless, the majority of interviewees were opposing. For instance, any visually complemented stories were not registered considering the 15 most recent shares of the editor-in-chief at nationwide journal, which links with his statements. In order to provide more abstract results, then only seven articles shared by the interviewees had some kind of special visual elements (Appendix D). Meanwhile, four of these sharing actions were conducted by the writer and film director (Appendix D).

In addition to previously mentioned factors contributing for the quality, all the interviewees pointed out that the level of writing increases the probability of sharing actions. Same implication has also been underlined by Sundar (1998), by listing the level of writing among top ten most significant factors, which affect the rating of news stories by the perception of online news editors. Sundar (1999) also pointed out, that appropriate design has to be provided for each article. Interviewees stated, that good structure affects their assessment of articles. However, it is difficult to prove the role of appropriate structure, as interviewees have not shared any news stories with a foreword claiming, that they have shared a story because good structure. An interviewee said "In case, I share something because of its content, then of course the structure matters" (Appendix F: CEO at public relations company, interview transcript, March 26). The former advisor to the President of Estonia said:



The main factor is, that the content needs to be important because of something and I also think, what could it offer for someone else. But what affects this decision quite a lot, is that the text needs to constitute as a well-written quality text according to my perception. Because I wouldn't share some low quality content. In case I do, then I argue or criticize it by the foreword, which comes along with the sharing action. However, I rather tend to share something, which makes me feel positive.

The past 15 sharing actions of the former advisor to the President of Estonia reveal, that she shared a story by particularly pointing out, that it is a well-written article with high abstraction level about the dissertation of xenophobia (Appendix C3, Facebook: Former advisor to the President of Estonia). All the articles were also categorized by the level of writing, concluding that 33 of the shared articles out of 161 were constituted as well-written.

#### **4.6. Perception of importance**

This research confirms that the perception of importance affects the sharing decisions of opinion leaders by increasing the probability that one likes or shares an article. Many scholarly articles have also underlined that importance is one of the requisite factors, which is expected to affect the perception of audience (Bell, 1991; Golding & Elliott 1979, Leshner et al 1998, Sundar, 1998). In the context of importance, it should be pointed out that importance can often be a conducting actor for sharing actions, but importance is often linked with eliteness of actors or authors. Therewith, it has to be mentioned that eliteness *per se*, does not necessarily matter in case it does not provide valuable discussion for ongoing debates. However, eliteness may amplify the importance. The member of the European Parliament said:

In case I would share, then perhaps some foreign... For instance something associated with Yanis Varoufakis (i.e. newly elected finance minister of Greece) or such persons... Eliteness of actors matters, if it adds something to the debate. For instance the story regarding the kitchen of Ed Miliband (i.e. leader of the British Labour Party). In case someone stands against austerity and has a lifestyle of a millionaire, then it provides important complementary information for the debate or regarding the stances that these persons are defending. However, I wouldn't share a story about Madonna's kitchen.

Looking at the actual sharing actions of the member of the European Parliament, news sharing actions regarding the stories about Yanis Varoufakis nor Ed Miliband could not be detected. However, she did share her own blog post concentrating on the role of Yanis Varoufakis at Greek government, but it cannot be presented as an example, as it would harm the confidentiality (Lee & Hume-Pratuch, 2013). Regarding the level of importance not particularly linked with eliteness factor, several interviewees reflected that importance is a conducting factor for their sharing actions (Appendix H: Correspondent at BBC, interview transcript, April 9; Appendix I: Editor-in-chief at nationwide journal, interview transcript, March 26; Appendix O: Member of the European Parliament, interview transcript, April 1). In order to illustrate the necessity of transmitting truly important news stories for the audience, it has to be mentioned that 51 articles shared by interviewees were categorized as important for the Estonian audience (Appendix D), as 161 of the shared articles were monitored.

#### 4.7. Perception of irritation

The pattern called perception of irritation, consists of two codes: conflict and the perception of irritation. However, the pattern was labelled as the perception of irritation not as conflict, because the perception of irritation code was more dominant. 30 out of 161 codes was labelled as conflict, whereas 42 out of 161 was labelled as the perception of irritation. Although it was not initially planned to separate these two codes, then these two did not totally overlap, as these two codes were given for the same news articles for 20 times. Therefore, two separate codes were created. The reason of the separation of these two codes could be illustrated by the sharing action of the CEO at public relations company, as he shared an article about the suspension of Sir Malcolm Rifkind (Appendix C4, Facebook: CEO at public relations company). Although, it definitely constitutes as a conflictual story, then it is not really irritating. The latter may be caused by the fact, that as it might be irritating for the audience, who is aware about the context, it is not irritating for the audience, which is not aware about the context. Simultaneously, the communication manager and the editor-in-chief at nationwide journal have both shared a story about a person, who cut trees shorter in order to get a one million dollar view at Kakumäe. The latter is conflictual, as there is an ethical conflict, because one person has done something, which is not tolerated nor in the Estonian society or by the legislation. At the same time, it constitutes irritating just because the region of Kakumäe has been known for long as the living area, which is full of obnoxious millionaires, who make unauthorized actions just because they have the resources to pay all the fines. Therefore, it is possible that the level of irritation is perceived more strongly by the audience, who is aware about the context, whereas conflict may emerge without knowing the background. In order to illustrate the irritation factor more clearly, then it is relevant to come back to the sharing action of the writer and film director, who shared a story about the young Somalian women, who obtained her master's degree in Finland and runs for Somalian president (Appendix C1, Facebook: Writer and film director). Although there is no conflict regarding the story, the topic is presently irritating throughout the European Union, as there has been a long debate about accepting 60 000 refugees from other countries. Thus, the writer and film director claimed that she tends to share news stories on irritating topics, as she reflects her resistance (Appendix P: Writer and film director, interview transcript, April 7) to narrow-minded people, while encouraging discussion.

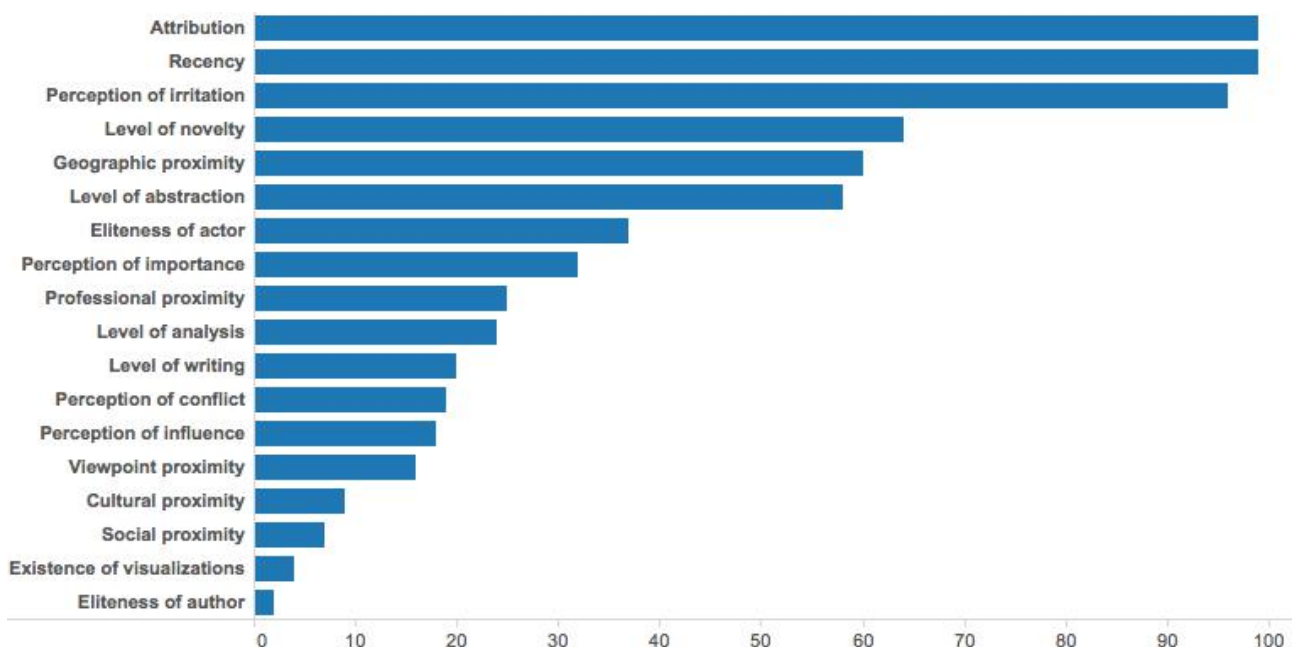
In sum, the level of irritation links with previous theoretical implications. Golding and Elliott (1979) claimed, that the incorporation of dramatization is necessary in order to present news stories in an engaging way. Although this field has not been comprehensively studied in context of online news industry, studies have been made regarding television news. Uribe and Gunter (2007) have found that emotion-eliciting features could be the factors triggering attention, as such ploys enable to attract audience by making the story more memorable. However, Gunter (2007) has also underlined, that narrative itself needs to be supportive in terms of informations it conveys, as it should not only emphasize sensationalist details. From this point of view, the cinderella story about the young Somalian woman is a representative example. In addition to aforementioned implications, Singhal and Rogers (2002) have researched entertainment-education and found that even educational content needs to be dramatized, because it makes the content more attractive. This paper supports these findings, as the interviewees acknowledge the importance of sensationalism but claim that in case a content is shared because of its quality, then dramatization or irritation level is the conducting factor for sharing actions (Appendix F: CEO at public relations company, interview transcript, March 26;

Appendix I: Editor-in-chief at nationwide journal, interview transcript, March 26). From the actual sharing patterns of CEO, it can be noticed that he has recently shared a story about the rape of Sansa Stark, who is a fictional character in *the Game of Thrones* series (Appendix C4, Facebook: CEO at public relations company). Although, the story *per se* might be perception of sensationalism and irritating, the article reflects the personal explanation of George R.R. Martin, who is the author of *the Game of Thrones* novels. Therefore, the level of irritation is linked with the explanation of background, which associates with the suggestions of Gunter (2007), that narrative needs to be supportive in terms of informations it conveys. Therewith, the sharing actions on irritating topics are likely to encourage discussion.

#### 4.8. Summary of results

As remarked in the first section of this chapter, the findings integrate with Mills' (2012) SPIN model, whereas sharing actions depend on likeability and sharability. One of the main findings was, that Estonian opinion leaders are interested in sharing articles about politics or public affairs (Table 5). However, even the articles on given topics need to have specific characteristics. The triggering patterns are the following: perception of proximity, perception of novelty, perception of irritation and the perception of quality. In order to provide the results more in depth, this paper tried to determine the scope of influence of triggering factors according to the given codes by document analysis. Although this research does not apply for any reliability regarding quantitative inquiry, the scope of triggering factors is still given in order to provide the overview about the importance of factors. Therefore, the results will now be presented as a table, indicating the role of each category (Table 6), which was possible to determine by document analysis.

**Table 6** Factors triggering opinion leaders to like and share news articles according to their sharing actions



\* The bar chart indicates the percentage of shared articles with given codes

It was not possible to determine, if the article provides balanced information; how aware is the interviewee about brand; how educative is an article; what is the influence of paywalls; what is the influence

of linguistic proximity; how does ownership of a channel exactly influence sharing actions; how informative is an article; what is the reputation of author or channel by the perception of interviewees, how trustworthy does the initiator of sharing actions constitute a text or whether the article is shared because of values of author or channel. Therefore, such interpretations were made according to the interviews. However, it can still be indicated that the perception of proximity, perception of novelty, perception of irritation and the perception of quality cause the likeability and sharability of news articles. The latter implies that the propositions made by grounded theory inquiry apply for predicting the sharing actions of opinion leaders. Despite the fact that all the triggering factors could have not been determined in detail, it has to be pointed out, that even the factors not represented in Table 6, affect the sharing behavior of opinion leaders but the proportion of their influence is yet unclear.

In addition, as can be seen from Appendix D, the actual sharing actions reflect that the news products, which get shared, include multiple triggering factors. Therefore, the chance that a news product gets shared grows if there are many conducting factors. All the underlying categories have been expected to influence the perception of readers according to the previous studies. However, the association between sharing actions and readers' perceptions has never been made. In addition, Mills' (2012) SPIN model was previously only expected to affect the virality of branded messages. The finding, that SPIN model is applicable for news articles is completely novel. Last but not least, the importance of these findings is especially salient as it was researched among opinion leaders, who are constituted as very influential individuals, whose sharing actions have strong impact on the behavior of other individuals. Therefore, in case an online news outlet has the capability to please the audience of opinion leaders, it is also very likely to penetrate the messages for wider audiences. However, the latter depends on the sharability of news articles, because before the actual sharing action, opinion leaders tend to estimate the potential impact of news articles among their audience. In case the opinion leaders do not constitute a text as novel, representative, irritating, trustworthy, high-quality, proximate, representative or the source has low reputation – then the probability of sharing action decreases.

## 5.0. Conclusion

In sum, the study indicates that Mills' (2012) SPIN model does not only apply to the sharing actions of branded messages, but it could also be utilized for predicting sharing decisions among opinion leaders, as the level of likeability and sharability are the conducting factors for sharing actions. However, these two factors themselves are dependent on number of other factors, which largely overlap with the news values described by Bell (1991) and Golding and Elliott (1979). In addition, it seems that opinion leaders are assessing news articles in similar way like online editors, because most of the influential factors were also listed by Gladney et al (2007), who studied the quality assessments to news products by the perception of online editors. The focus of this research was to find out, which factors trigger opinion leaders to share news articles. In sum, the sharing actions of opinion leaders depend on their perception to proximity, quality, novelty, importance and irritation.

First, although the adoption of online news platforms indicated, that the audience is more interested to sports and business and spends less time on public affairs, political stories and local news (Tewksbury & Althaus, 2000), this cannot be confirmed by the interests of Estonian opinion leaders, considering that the sharing actions of opinion leaders are expected to reflect the content, that they assess as likeable. This conclusion can be made, as majority of the topics in the sharing actions of opinion leaders was about politics or public affairs. In addition, despite it is difficult to determine whether the opinion leaders like to share local news, then geographical proximity was still a very salient factor as about two thirds of the shared articles were about the country, where the person lives at. It needs to be mentioned, that although sensational stories (Golding and Elliott, 1979) and news reports about crime (Schaudt & Carpenter, 2009) are expected to be popular among the audience, then these topics are not popular to share by opinion leaders in comparison with politics or public affairs. Therefore, proximity was definitely a triggering factor for opinion leaders, whereas the power or geographic proximity nor the power of topic proximity cannot be underestimated. Topics written about local issues and stories about politics or public affairs are put in highest regard by the perception of opinion leaders.

However, these are not the only salient factors, as even the articles written in suitable topic need to follow certain standards. First it is important to keep in mind, that trustworthiness of a channel and author conduce sharing actions, whereas unawareness of the news outlet could eliminate the sharing possibility. The chance of a sharing action by an opinion leader also decreases in case the article is behind the paywall or is in a language, which is not understood by the perception of opinion leader. Second, the article needs to provide novel information. Even if the article is an analytical piece about a well-known topic, then it has to add novel information or a novel viewpoint. Third, non-quality articles are unlikely to be shared. Therefore, the author has to put effort into correct attribution and present an enjoyable reading, as opinion leaders appreciate well-written texts. Simultaneously, the article should have a certain level of abstraction, so that it would build the ground for wider generalizations. At the same time, the article needs to be written on an important topic, which includes elite individuals and it is suggested to present it in analytical manner. Supplementary value is given, if the article is capable of providing irritation, which does not mean that the reader needs to be angered, but it means that the story should to be about a social controversy, which encourages discussion. These are the main conclusions of this study.

### **5.1. Limitations and further research**

Allan (2003) has criticized grounded theory as a research method pointing out, that it is recommended to collect the data by interviews not by surveys, as the researcher can then confirm, if the interviewee is capable of providing the answers on the topic. This research followed this suggestion, while providing additional confirmation by asking number of questions to confirm the suitability of interviewees as information sources, which is described in operationalization paragraph. Allan (2003) also underlines, that bias needs to be avoided, as it is a threat of grounded theory method. Simultaneously, he underlines that Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggested to avoid any preconceived ideas before coding. However, Allan (2003) still remarks that it might be impossible to start the analysis without any preconceived ideas, as the focus of research is already set before the start of analysis process. At the same time, Allan (2003) suggests to make efforts to leverage bias and this research leveraged bias by concentrating on open-ended questions, when collecting the data by interviews. Regarding this paper, Allan's (2003) suggestions are even more relevant, as he points out that case studies could be implemented to minimize the shortcomings of both methods, as according to Yin (2009) – case studies benefit from prior development of theoretical postures in order to conduct data collection and execute analysis. The same suggestion to analyze data by multiple methods has also been made by Flyvbjerg (2006), as it enables to leverage the weaknesses of case study. Meanwhile, Yin (2009) has advised to implement a case study, if the boundaries between the phenomena and the context in the real world remain vague. The same interpretation of Yin's (1994) suggestions was also pointed out by Allan (2003). Regarding the critique of case study, Flyvbjerg (2006) has concluded that case studies should not focus on the investigation of one case, such studies should not be used for theory building, it is often difficult to summarize case studies and that case studies contain bias towards verification. This research has made efforts to minimize these shortcomings, as the list of analyzed documents was extensive, grounded theory was utilized for theoretical propositions instead of a case study and bias was avoided by the triangulation of data obtained from the interviews and documents. In addition, grounded theory method assisted the researcher to reach tangible results, which can be summarized. In other words, this study tried to leverage the weaknesses of both methods in order to hold the reliability.

This paper proposed that the likeability and sharability of news products triggers opinion leaders to share news products and that likeability and sharability depend on the perception of proximity, perception of novelty, perception of irritation and on the perception of quality. It has to be mentioned that many triggering factors have been not remarked in previous literature on news values, which raises the question that the research of news values in modern journalism discourse should be investigated more in-depth. Presently, the interpretations of this study can only be made in context of Estonian society, as the selection of interviewees was formed out of Estonian citizens, who primarily consume Estonian media. In addition, out of twelve interviewees, only three interviewees were women. Although such imbalanced gender selection was not planned to occur, the selection of interviewees was formed according to the suggestions of other opinion leaders. However, the results could be different if the selection of interviewees would be represented by equal number of males and females. The results could also be different, if the study would have concentrated only on the research of female opinion leaders.

All in all, further research should also be conducted to find out, how readable are the stories via social media, which are shared by the opinion leaders. The latter would provide the implication, how important are

the opinion leaders in news distribution models. Further research should be conducted to study this topic quantitatively and check, if the findings of this study reflect wider context or is it only limited to Estonian society. In addition, as news industry is now deriving more revenues from sales in comparison with advertisement revenues, it would be interesting to know, how do sharing actions influence subscription sales revenues.

## **5.2. Practical implications**

By the introduction of this paper, the issue of polarizing public spheres was presented in context of Estonia. According to the two-step flow communication model, opinion leaders should be capable of transmitting the information for wider audiences. It needs to be mentioned, that quality articles on politics or public affairs are likely to be shared, which is the most important implication reached by this study regarding the societal point of view. The latter implication provides the knowledge, that in case news outlets are capable of providing novel, irritating and influential high-quality stories with high level of proximity, then such stories should get shared by the opinion leaders on social media channels, which should enable to leverage the polarization of public spheres, as social media channels enable opinion leaders to link society with important information. Therewith, even if privately owned online news outlets cannot execute the role of connecting the society by producing news products, which constitute as likeable and sharable, then publicly funded news organizations should keep these triggering factors in mind in order to leverage the polarization of public sphere. Therefore, this research also contributes for the discussion of public media policies, in case the aim is to decrease the polarization of society. Hence, it should be taken into account in wider context of modern journalism discourse that novel, societally meaningful, well-built and catchy texts are still in highest regard by the perception of opinion leaders and without implementing quality standards, the polarization issue grows at least in the context of online journalism.

In addition, despite social media channels enables to enlarge the traffic by providing the possibility to reach articles via social media channels or to boost the circulation of online news products by sharing actions, news industry is still facing the challenge to hold its revenue sources, as advertisement revenues are falling globally. Simultaneously, the revenues from sales exceeded the revenues from advertisement first time in 2014, which indicates that this research may provide additional knowledge for news outlets in order to gain revenues in new economic environment. As the two-step flow communication model implies, that opinion leaders are effective tools for accomplishing marketing communication goals (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1970; Mills, 2012) and that the virality of positive messages about products is achieved in case the opinion leaders like and share the word about these products (Mills, 2012), which is also confirmed by this study in context of news products – news industry may get additional knowledge in context of new economic environment, as the news industry needs more sales revenues than ever before and opinion leaders may be the tools to enlarge their subscription revenues.

This research complements the discussion of novel business strategies in news industry, as knowing the triggering factors of opinion leaders, may facilitate novel marketing communication activities for online news outlets. However, the findings of this study need to be interpreted in the context of Estonia and practical implications should be studied in particular context before any implications in other environment.

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## Appendix A, Open-coding

Open code	Example
1 Assessment to structure	"It matters, how is the story structured and how is the argumentation built up."
2 Attribution	"Attribution matters as well. It is the same as trustworthiness. As a journalist I understand, that on some occasions anonymity is inevitable, but it should be avoided."
3 Balanced information	"And then there are the usual criterions for a news story, that at least two sides need to be listened and as we speak about a news story, then the story need to be balanced."
4 Brand awareness	"So my receipt is the following: normally it is better to stick with the channels you are aware of."
5 Cultural proximity	"Two days ago I shared something from London Review of Books, were the author claimed, that the Quaran mentioned Bless Virgin Mary more compared to the Bible. Estonia is reputedly Terra Mariana. I found it ironical and shared it simply because of this catch."
6 Educative function	"I am only looking, weather it is an intelligent story or an educative story."
7 Eliteness of actors	"For instance the story regarding the kitchen of Ed Miliband. In case someone stands against austerity and has a lifestyle of a millionaire, then it provides important complementary information for the debate or regarding the stances that these persons are defending. However, I wouldn't share a story about Madonna's kitchen."
8 Eliteness of author	"And sometimes, if some outstanding persons have written something, like in case Henry Kissinger writes something, who rarely does these days... Then I might share."
9 Existence of paywall	"I don't. I don't neither pay for the articles behind the pay-wall. I have usually opened chats with my acquaintances, who have ordered the papers, so in case I need something... I ask from a friend, who has the subscription. And then this person makes the copy-paste for me..."
10 Existence of visualizations	"Even if the paper is really philosophical: at least include some graphical elements! It sells."
11 External communication about Estonia	"Occasionally, I rather deliberately irritate and share some news about international rankings, where Estonia does not really impress."
12 Geographical proximity	"There's no meaning to share any stories about China on my Facebook wall, right?"
13 Informative function	"Everything grounds on the informative aspect for me. In case something enlightens me..."
14 Level of abstraction	"This particular story needs to be publicise something, which has the power of abstraction."
15 Level of writing	"I often share the content, which is journalistically very well written and formatted. The story itself has to be alright, regarding the content. But I sometimes find the texts, which are journalistically just so well written, from Helsingin Sanomat for instance..."
16 Linguistic proximity	"And language is of course a criteria as well, because I operate in Estonian, Finnish, Swedish and English."
17 Novel viewpoint	"There has to be a novel and interesting viewpoint, which could be written about a well-known topic, but it has to be different."
18 Ownership of channel	"Yes, I think it does eliminate the sharing possibility. Kender is a person, who generates suspicious processes... In case he would only be a fun rebel, then it would be alright."
19 Perception of conflict	"Well, the conflict might mobilize. Because it might provoke some thoughts in my mind as well."
20 Perception of importance	"So, the Estonian society is normally informed about the events on the coast of river Jordan, which do not even slightly affect Estonia. But the society is often not informed about the event in Finland or Sweden. It is a retrospective problem, which is yet to be solved."

21	Perception of influence	"I also might share some articles, which talk about foreign affairs but which also affect Estonia."
22	Perception of irritation	"Then you understand, that there might be no competence or objectivity or there might be an intentional tease. Well... Of course there might be some exceptions. For instance, if I would like to make the same tease, then the teasing aspect might be positive..."
23	Professional proximity	"So, I read and share primarily the articles, which are associating with my area of expertise. Politics of Ukraine and Russia and so on."
24	Recency	"Recency matters quite a lot. For instance, I often read some foreign news outlets. But I don't read every foreign news outlet on daily basis, but on some sites I end up once a week or even once a month. Then, I might read something interesting from there, but if I see the publishing date..."
25	Reputation of author	"There are people, whom I do respect and with whom I share similar viewpoints. And then there are persons, whose opinions do not have any weight at all."
26	Reputation of channel	"And then there are some platforms, published content in favor of some groups of interest or lobbyists, which are not reasonable to share."
27	Sensationalism	"Occasionally, I also share some kind of perception of sensationalism news."
28	Social proximity	"For instance, my brother is one of these persons. In case he suggests something, then it's a rule – it has to be great."
29	Topic proximity	"Well, I usually do the monitoring of economic affairs, news, opinion stories... And by the way – I now started to follow the web site called poliitika.guru as well. But when I scroll the sites of Delfi and Postimees, then it ends with sports and news about Rihanna's bikinis or such stuff, which I don't read."
30	Trustworthiness	"Trustworthiness – yes. And the overall reputation, right? It is obvious, that some channels have higher level of trustworthiness and some have lower."
31	Viewpoint proximity	"I also share stories on environmental issues, because I am a really nature loving person."
32	Values of author	"In case it is interesting and in case it is well written and I am really aware of the topic... Then it could be a channel from the US or the UK... I still share it for sure. Because we share the same values with western countries, don't we? I care about the values."
33	Values of channel	"Such articles cannot be published in any news outlets, where you even provide the cellphone number of the person, who is chargeable! Basically, the article built up a prosecution in homicide and they even didn't speak with this particular person. Such articles couldn't be published."

## Appendix B, Interview guide

1.0) Hello! First, I would like to thank you, that you found the time to talk with me. To begin with, I would like to ask, which non-paid online news outlets do you follow?

1.1) Do you order any physical papers?

1.2) But do you follow any online newspapers, which are subscription based?

1.3) Regarding newspapers or digital subscription based papers – are there any particular sections, which you read with higher level of interest?

1.4) Do you also use any radio or television channels?

1.5) Are there any particular shows, which you watch or listen on regular basis?

2.0) This leads us to content sharing. To begin with, I would like to find out the preferences by an opened question. What do you think, which factors conduce your decision to share content on Facebook?

2.1) But are there any reputational issues about some channels for instance? For instance, let's say that an article from *Sirp* (i.e. a weekly newspaper about culture, society and arts) could be shared, but not an article from *Delfi* (i.e. an online news outlet)?

2.2) But which particular factors influence the reputation of channel by your point of view?

2.3.) Now we reach the ownership of channels. Does the ownership of channels matter for you?

2.4) Does the trustworthiness of channel also affects your perception of channel?

2.5) Does the awareness of channel also affects your perception of channel?

2.6) But could we also say, that the positioning of channel matters? Let us say, that the Guardian is leftist paper and Independent has leaned to the right – does the positioning of channel matters for you, in case you share content?

3.0) This leads us to next section. I would like to ask some questions about the author. Presumably, you have Facebook friends whom you know from childhood and Facebook friends, who you may have only spoken with for once or twice. Let's imagine a hypothetical situation, when person X writes an opinion story, which gets circulated by *Postimees* (i.e. an Estonian daily broadsheet newspaper). Does it matter, to what extent you know this person, regarding your decision to share it?

3.1) What about the role of author in wider sense? Could we then say, that an article written by Vahur Koorits (i.e. a contradictory journalist working for Delfi, who has been cautioned for number of times by Estonian Press Council) claimed to be is less likely to be shared by you in comparison with articles written by Argo Ideon (i.e. a journalist working for *Postimees*, who has been nominated for Estonian story of the year award)?

3.2) But which factors would you specifically bring up regarding the author, which increase the level of likeability by your perception?

3.3) But does the genre matter in your opinion? For instance, let's say that some might share opinion more likely than news stories.

3.4) The following question is about your assessment regarding a particular media product. As I understand, then the quality of particular content product matters. But could you name any particular factors, which may affect the quality from your point of view?

4.0) This leads to last section of questions. I now stop on each separate factor, which should theoretically affect your assessments about a particular content product. To what extent does geographical proximity matter for you? Let's say, that there are elections of the Assembly of the Republic in Portugal. Let's say, that there is an interesting story about the elections in Portugal, but simultaneously there are also elections of Eduskunta in Finland – would you then rather share a story about the elections in Finland?

4.1) Could we say that novel viewpoint could be the triggering factor regarding your sharing action?

4.2) Could we say, that the conflict built up by the article... Could we say, that this mobilises you to share?

4.3) To what extent does the recency matter?

4.4) But how does the incorporation of elite persons affect you sharing decision? For instance, let's say that there's a story about Siim Kallas (i.e. former prime minister of Estonia), which might get shared. But then there is a story about the major of Kärđla city... Does the eliteness matter?

4.5) Could we also say, that correct attribution to sources increases the probability that you could share content?

4.6) To what extent to the hard facts matter: number, facts and names... Even if their existence does not trigger to share an article – do such factors conduce you to share content?

4.7) Is perception of sensationalism also a conducting factor for you?

4.8) Would you claim, that bad news are good news? Or are you rather the person, who shares positive content?

4.9) To what extent the structure of content matters?

4.10) Does the visual attractiveness matter for you? Let's say, that the content has great pictures or info graphics. Does this make it more likely, that you share it?

4.11) Do you also read feature stories?

4.12) If you read feature stories, to what extent you share such stories?

5.0) This was the last question. Have you personally recalled any other factors, which could potentially affect your decision to share media content?

## Appendix C, Actual sharing actions

### Appendix C1, Facebook: Writer and film director

shared a link.



#### Arvo Pärtin Aatamin passio kertoo unenomaista tarinaa ihmisyydestä

Ei ole oikeastaan ihme, että kolme Arvo Pärtin teosta eri ajoilta sopivat näinkin hyvin yhteen. Tallinnassa tiistaina kantaesityksessä Aatamin passio...

HS.FI

Like Comment Share

24 people like this.

Edited

Soome sõjapõgenikuna tulnud naine, on esimene, soomaal, kes lõpetas Soomes ülikooli, sai magisterks ja kandideeribjust nüüd Somalia presidentiks....



#### "Olen ensimmäinen Suomessa valmistunut somali" - maailmalla uutisoidaan tämän naisen...

Suomessa tohtorintutkintoa suorittava Fadumo Dayib pyrkii nyt Somalian presidentiksi.

VERKKOUUTISET.FI

Unlike Comment Share



and 101 others like this.

shared a link.



## Kihnu Island – where the past is always present

The quickest way to reach Kihnu Island is by car – across the ice. When the shallow water off the Baltic coast freezes you can drive there from the nearest mainland in 20 minutes.

SILVERTRAVELADVISOR.COM

Like · Comment · Share

 35 people like this.

## Appendix C2, Facebook: Academician at the University of Tartu

Balti anchluss?

"молниеносное занятие Прибалтики ставит ЕС в ситуацию, когда добиваться восстановления status quo можно только путём переговоров. Не воевать же с Россией из-за уже оккупированной Прибалтики. Ну а переговоры всегда требуют поиска компромисса, взаимных уступок и т.д., то есть позиция ЕС должна будет потерять первоначальную жёсткость и стать более конструктивной, что собственно и надо России, давно пытающейся принудить Евросоюз к конструктивным переговорам."

Kohati ilmutab autor küll ilmselget faktidega mitte kursis olemist, aga mõttelaadi märgina tähelepanuväärne tekst.



Искупительный выкуп | Аналитика

hea tekst. paraku need, keda oleks vaja selle abil veenda, seda ilmselt ei loe ja/või ei usu. aga need kes usuvad, neid pole vaja veenda



**ПРО КРЫМ**

Этим стоит поделиться!

TOP.THEPO.ST

Like · Comment · Share

11 people like this.



· Edited ·

RSR akadeemilise juhendajana on mul hea meel levitada seda teadet. Kadri Liik - palju õnne!

Muuseas, see on Kadri juba teist korda RSR auhind võita.

Rahvusvaheliste Suhete Ringil on rõõm teatada, et 2014. aasta parimaks välispoliitiliseks kirjutiseks valiti Kadri Liigi kirjutatud "Moskva tõde ja Euroopa õigus" ajakirja Vikerkaar oktoobri-novembri numbris (<http://www.vikerkaar.ee/moskva-tode-ja-euroopa-oigus/>). Artikkel kogus 41% häältest, kusjuures hääli laekus nii Eestist kui ka välismaalt.

Lisaks antud artiklile pälvisid tunnustuse veel:

Lauri Mälgsoo "Lääne mittetunnustamispoliitika: Balti riikide õppetund Ukrainale?" (<http://arvamus.postimees.ee/.../laane-mittetunnustamispoliti...>)

Tõnis Oja "Naftahoolik Venemaa – ühe sõltuvuse lugu"

(<http://arvamus.postimees.ee/.../naftahoolik-venemaa-uhe-soltu...>)

Mariliis Metsa "Prantsusmaa ja Aafrika: kuidas teha minevikutaagast tulevikueelis?" (<http://www.diplomaatia.ee/.../prantsusmaa-ja-aafrika-kuidas-.../>)

Silver Meikari "Vähirakkude arv on kriitiline, kuid mitte surmav" (<http://www.sirp.ee/.../vahirakkude-arv-on-kriitiline-aga-vee.../>).

Nagu lubatud, võtame kindlasti Kadri Liigiga ühendust, anname üle auhinna ning kutsume järgmine semester RSRI loengut andma! Palju õnne talle!



**Vikerkaar**  
3/2015

### Moskva tõde ja Euroopa õigus

Kui ma veel Eestis töötades Lennart Meri Konverentsi korraldasin, siis me panime alati konverentsikavasse ka ühe arutelu Idapartnerlusest – 2009. aastal Rootsi-Poola eestvedamisel käivitunud Euroopa Liidu poliitikast, mille eesmärgiks oli aidata postsovetlikel

VIKERKAAR.EE

Like Comment Share

25 people like this.

Kreml'i rahuinlid lepivad kõigega, nii Ukraina valimistega kui Novorossia valimistega. No tõepoolest, mis nad siis ikka saavad ära teha, kas pole, mh-ah?



### Песков: Влияние России на ополченцев "не безгранично"

Пресс-секретарь российского президента Дмитрий Песков заявил, что у России нет безграничных рычагов влияния на ополченцев ДНР и ЛНР и это...

VESTI.RU

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## Appendix C3, Facebook: Former advisor to the President of Estonia



"Meie ajakirjanduski tegutseb laiemas plaanis Stalini-aegse Nõukogude Liidu prokuröri Võšinski doktriini järgi, et inimene peab ise tõestama, et ta pole kits või kaamel." väga hea kokkuvõttev analüüs sellest, mida reaktsioonid Hesari lihavõtteämbriale paljastasid tänase Eesti vaimsest kliimast.



### Imbi Paju: rahvuse pilkamine pole huumor - Arvamus

Vaiksel laupäeval rikkus paljude soomlaste pühaderahu Helsingin Sanomate kuulisa, kus laiutas suur pealkiri «Kuidas nimetaksime eestlasi». Või märkasid nad Helsingin Sanomate veebilehel...

ARVAMUS.POSTIMEES.EE

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👍 16 people like this.

## Appendix C4, Facebook: CEO at public relations company

· 👤

Feminists protest against raping of Sansa Stark



### George RR Martin defends Game of Thrones rape

The Game of Thrones author and creator pleads with fans to stop emailing him in wake of further backlash from fans CONTAINS SPOILERS

TELEGRAPH.CO.UK

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likes this.

· Twitter · 👤

Ilusad sõnad. Ka rikkad nutavad. ÜHR mahasurumine on anger managementi raskeim osa. tegelen ka sellega igapäevaselt



### Indrek Saar «Foorumis»: Ossinovski rahulolematuse on loomulik osa ühiskonnas valitsevast...

Sotsiaaldemokraatliku Erakonna juhatuse liige, kultuuriminister Indrek Saar ütles, et erakonna esimeheks kandideeriva Jevgeni Ossinovski...

BIT.LY

Like

Comment

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komisjonide istungite avalikustamise määra üle võiks polemiseerida (täis avalikustamist ei poolda), aga hea lugu



### Maria Alajõe: Kolm soovi riigikogule - Arvamus - Postimees +

Kuidas tagada, et parlamentaarses Eestis oleks riigikogu jätkuvalt demokraatlik institutsioon, kus oleks tagatud vaba arutelu, mõtiskleb uue koosseisu kogunemise eel riigikogu kantsleli direktor Maria Alajõe.

PLUS.POSTIMEES.EE

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Comment

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Twitter · 👤

Presidendikampaania on saanud varajase stardi, kuidagi varakevadine või siis valekevadine



### Siim Kallas palkas appi PR-firma - Eesti uudised - Postimees.ee

Endine Euroopa Komisjoni president ja Eesti peaminister Siim Kallas on palganud enda meediasuhteid korraldama PR-firma, mille juhi hinnangul oleks Kallas Eestile väga hea president.

POSTIMEES.EE

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11 people like this.

shared s post.

Welcome to Estonia 😊



### Japanese Prime Minister becomes Estonian e-resident

Japanese Prime Minister becomes Estonian e-resident Today 17:57  
Category: Sci-Tech Shinzō Abe, the Prime Minister of Japan, has become...

NEWS.ERR.EE

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Twitter · 👤

90ndate staarminister, meie mõistes Briti "Kapo kom" juht visati tooridest välja. MP&lobisti ameti segiajamine, not good



### Conservatives suspend whip from Sir Malcolm Rifkind

The Conservative Party has suspended the whip from Sir Malcolm Rifkind and will convene a disciplinary committee to investigate his case, a party source has said.

ITV.COM

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## Appendix C5, Facebook: Member of the European Parliament

recommends an article.



Uhkustan oma targa vennaga 😊.



sõnul on vaja jõulisi meetmeid selleks, et vastu seista loomulikule suuremate kapitaliturgude tõmbele ja väikeste turgude rohtukasvamisele.

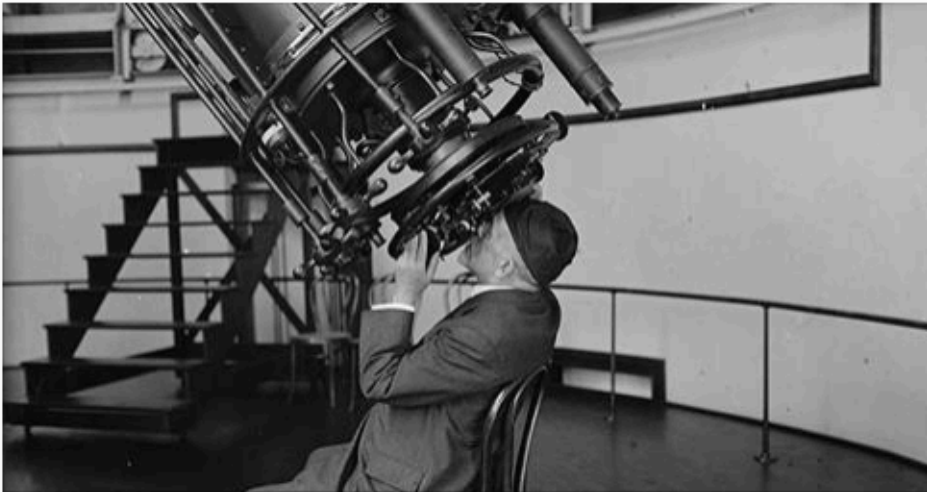
MAJANDUS.DELFI.EE

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👍 30 people like this.



why are we afraid of aliens?



### Fear of a Capitalist Planet | Jacobin

Fear of a Capitalist Planet Astronomers look to the stars, and only see themselves. by Keith A. Spencer Astronomer Asaph Hall Jr at the US Naval Observatory in 1924. Library of Congress Have you ever seen an alien? Scientists haven't, but that hasn't...

JACOBINMAG.COM

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👍 5 people like this.

## Appendix C7, Facebook: Editor-in-chief at online news outlet

Soovitan lugeda tänasest Postimehest intervjuud riigikogu rahanduskomisjoni esimehe Rannar Vassiljeviga.

Vallitud tsitaate:

"Praegu te maksustate neid, kes ostsid kütuse ära siis, kui seadust veel polnudki. Nad peavad riigile maksuma ammu ostetud kütuse eest. Kas see on seaduslik?"

Juridilist analüüsi ... rahandusministeerium tegeleb sellega, ka meie inimesed. Loomulikult me seadusele juridilist analüüsi ei telli. Selleks ei ole põhjust. Küsimus ei ole selles, et see pole juridiliselt korrektne. Küsimus on selles, kas see on põhimõtteliselt korrektne, sest kaup on juba lõpptarbija käes. Selge on see, et pärast seadusemuudatust seda kütust müüa enam ei tohi, aga kui see on juba ostetud, võib olukord olla teistsugune.

Kas sama loogikat hakkab rahanduskomisjon kasutama ka tubaka- ja alkohollaktsiisi muutmisel?

Ei hakka – kui inimene on alkoholi koju ostnud, siis seda deklareerima ei pea."

"Kuidas oli võimalik, et komisjon kaine mõistuse vastu käiva eelnõu toona üldse riigikogu suurde saali saatis? Kas te ei arutanud seda läbi?"

Ei, absoluutselt mitte. See ongi huvitav, et mitte keegi ühestki huvigrupist seda teemat ei tõstnud."

"Rahanduskomisjon menetleb eelnõusid nii, et ei mõtlegi, mis see inimestele kaasa toob?"

Me arutame palju eelnõusid ja üritame seda teha nii hästi kui võimalik. Mis siin salata, kevadel oli tempo üsna kõrge ja meil on ministeeriumiga võrreldes äärmiselt vähe ametnikke. Tavaliselt osutavad probleemsetele kohtadele huvigrupid."



### Uus seadus on vaja kiiresti ringi teha - Majandus - Postimees +

Riigikassa täitmiseks keelas riigikogu majaanikel soodsama aktsiisimääraga erimärgistatud diislikütusega kütmise ja käskis inimestel 1. maiks alles jäänud kütus mahutitest välja pumbata, mis eeldanuks...

PLUSS.POSTIMEES.EE

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👍 23 people like this.

## Appendix D, Document analysis: categories

Opinion leader	Article headline	Translation of headline	Categories	
1	Academician at the University of Tartu	Искупительный выкуп	Ransom for redemption	Attribution, level of abstraction, geographic proximity, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, professional proximity, recency, visualization
	Vaeste vastuhakk	Resistance of the poor		Attribution, geographic proximity, level of novelty, level of analysis, public affairs, recency
	Was Surkov Behind The LifeNews Raid?	-		Attribution, crime, elite actor, foreign affairs, level of writing, full disclosure, elite actor, perception of influence, recency
	Moskva tõde ja Euroopa õigus	Truth of Moscow and European justice		Attribution, foreign affairs, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, professional proximity, social proximity, viewpoint proximity
	VIDEO ieskats trešdienas «Viens pret vienu»: Ko Ilvess saka par Baltijas vienotību	VIDEO Insight from wednesday «One on One» What president Ilves says about the unity of the Baltic States		Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of novelty, professional proximity, public affairs, recency
	Вторая по оружию	Another arms deal		Attribution, foreign affairs, level of importance, level of novelty, level of writing, professional proximity, recency
	Extremist' Content in Activist's Nemtsov Banner Actually Putin Quote	-		Attribution, elite actor, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, perception of influence, level of novelty, professional proximity, recency
	Lavrov nimetas Nemtsovi mõrva rāpaseks kuriteoks	Lavrov labelled the assassination of Nemtsov as a filthy crime		Attribution, crime, elite actor, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, professional proximity, recency
	Про Срым	For Crimea		Attribution, foreign affairs, level of writing, professional proximity, recency
	Inga Raitar   Igaüks teenigu 3000 eurot kuus!	Inga Raitar   Everyone should earn at least 3000€ per month!		Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	Боги, Боги мои	God, my God		Attribution, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of analysis, professional proximity, recency, viewpoint proximity
	Журналистов гонят первыми	Journalists are the first to lose their job		Attribution, business, perception of Influence, level of novelty, recency,
	Putin's Eurasian Dream Is Over Before It Began	-		Attribution, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, perception of influence, politics, professional proximity, recency



	Полный сакрал	Completely sacral	Attribution, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of novelty, professional proximity, recency
	Песков: Влияние России на ополченцев "не безгранично"	Peskov: Russia does not have "unlimited" influence on separatists	Attribution, crime, elite actor, level of abstraction, level of novelty, professional proximity, politics, recency
2	CEO at public relations company	DELFI VIDEO: Kalev Kruus: enne, kui Madison teleka aknast välja viskab, tasub öelda, et Petšerov on ukrainlane	DELFI VIDEO: Kalev Kruus: It's worth mentioning that Petšerov is Ukrainian, before Madison throws the TV out of his window
	George RR Martin defends Game of Thrones rape		Attribution, elite actors, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency, sports, viewpoint proximity
	Pikku Kakkosen punainen lista: näitä lastenohjelmia ei enää saa esittää	Pikku Kakkosen's red list: such children programs cannot be presented again	Attribution, elite actor, entertainment, level of irritation, level of novelty, recency
	Indrek Saar «Foorumis»: rahulolematu on loomulik osa ühiskonnas valitsevast pettumusest	Indrek Saar «Foorumis»: Ossinovski's dissatisfaction is natural reflection of the disappointment of society	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, professional proximity, recency
	Vestager launches probe of national power companies		Attribution, business, elite actor, foreign affairs, level of importance, level of novelty, recency
	BMW ja MINI esindus Tallinnas on nüüd üks terviklikumaid MINI salonge Skandinaavias	BMW and MINI retail office is one of the most complete ones in whole Scandinavia	Attribution, business, elite actor, geographic proximity, entertainment, level of abstraction, level of novelty, recency
	Japanese Prime Minister becomes Estonian e-resident		Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, professional proximity, public affairs, recency
	Renewable energy investment heats up worldwide		Attribution, business, level of abstraction, perception of influence, level of novelty, recency
	Siim Kallas palkas appi PR-firma	Siim Kallas hired a PR-company	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	Maria Alajõe: Kolm soovi riigikogule	Maria Alajõe: Three wishes for the Riigikogu	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of analysis, public affairs, politics, recency, viewpoint proximity
	Cultural industries unite against copyright reform		Attribution, business, conflict, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, level of irritation, perception of influence, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency
	The 'Dying Russian Nation' Is Not Unique		Attribution, foreign affairs, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of novelty, recency, visualizations

	Aunaste läheb ikkagi riigikokku: kallid kaasmaalased - te peate mind veel kuulma ja nägema!	Aunaste goes to the Riigikogu: dear compatriots - you still need to hear and see me!	Attribution, elite actor, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, politics, recency,	
	Estonians can vote in a matter of seconds thanks to e-voting	-	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of novelty, politics, recency	
	Conservatives suspend whip from Sir Malcolm Rifkind	-	Attribution, crime, conflict, foreign affairs, elite actor, level of novelty, politics, recency	
3	Communication manager	Alar Karis: variautorite aeg	Alar Karis: Era of academic fraud	Attribution, elite author, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, level of writing, public affairs, recency
	Argo Ideon: pettumus peaministri parteis"	Argo Ideon: disappointment on prime minister's party	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, politics, viewpoint proximity, recency	
	Mupo valvab Edgar Savisaare haiglasviibimist, seda avaliku korra huvides	Municipal police secures Edgar Savisaar's recovery for public order	Attribution, elite actor, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	DELFI VIDEO ja FOTOD: Miljonivaate saamiseks raiuti Kakumäel puudel ladvad maha	DELFI VIDEO and PHOTOS: Trees were cut half in order to get a one million dollar view at Kakumäe	Attribution, conflict, geographic proximity, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	Jaak Jõerüüt: mis toimub Reformierakonnas või – erakonnaga?	Jaak Jõerüüt: what is going on in Estonian Reform Party?	Attribution, elite author, geographic proximity, level of analysis, level of novelty, politics, recency, viewpoint proximity	
	Andres Anvelt: võimalus otsustada innustab noori oma kodukanti jääma	Andres Anvelt: opportunity to decide makes youth to live, where they were born	Attribution, elite author, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, politics, recency	
	Ergma: Jaak Aaviksoo ärgu sõõgu oma sõnu	Ergma: Jaak Aaviksoo should not eat his words	Attribution, conflict, elite actors, geographic proximity, level of irritation, public affairs, recency, viewpoint proximity	
	RÜE ei taha immigrante: Võib-olla on nende seas kurjategijaid, võlgadest kõrvalehoidjaid või aferiste? Milliseid nakkushaigusi võivad nad kanda?	Party of People's Unity does not want immigrants: Perhaps there are criminals, debtors or con men among them? What kind of diseases may they carry?	Attribution, conflict, crime, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	EOK korraldab konkursi Eesti oma spordilaulu loomiseks	Estonian Olympic Committee organized a contest for a sport song creation	Attribution, geographic proximity, entertainment, level of abstraction, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	Krõpsutootja kirjeldab elu maal: aasta jooksul käis mind kontrollimas 22 VTA inspektorit	Chips manufacturer describes life at the country side: there were 22 veterinary inspectors checking my business in one year	Attribution, business, conflict, geographic proximity, perception of influence, level of irritation, level of novelty, level of writing, recency, viewpoint proximity	
	Sotsid pole nõus majutusasutuste käibemaksu säärase tõusuga	Socialists do not agree on VAT tax raise for housing companies	Attribution, conflict, geographic proximity, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, politics, recency, viewpoint proximity	

	Nastik tõmbas kassi haneks	A grass snake duped a cat	Attribution, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of writing, recency	
	Sester: Eesti peab olema valmis aktsiisidega seotud otsused üle vaatama	Sester: Estonia needs to be ready to double-check decisions on excises	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency	
	Tartu linnavalitsus teeb ettepaneku Madruse tänava nimi tühistada	Tartu municipality makes an offer to rename Sailor's street	Attribution, geographic proximity, entertainment, level of abstraction, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	Valge Maja arvutisüsteemi tunginud kurijategijad pääsesid ligi presidendi e-kirjadele	Criminals who hacked into the computers of the White House, accessed e-mails of the president	Attribution, crime, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, recency	
4	Correspondent at BBC	Казахстан вводит безвизовый режим для граждан 37 государств	Kazakhstan introduces visa-free regime for citizens of 37 countries	Attribution, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, recency
	Путин рассказал, что такое счастье	Putin told what's happiness about	Attribution, elite actor, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	Антон Алексеев: Добрый барин Март Хельме	Anton Alekseev: Good lord Mart Helme	Attribution, conflict, cultural proximity, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of analysis, level of irritation, level of writing, professional proximity, public affairs, social proximity, recency, viewpoint proximity	
	Иноземці йдуть з Кабміну: Яника Мірило залишила свій пост	Foreigners leaving from the government cabinet: Jaanika Merilo resigned	Attribution, cultural proximity, foreign affairs, elite actor, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, recency	
	Константин Эрнст предсказал два года кризиса на российском телевидении	Konstantin Ernst predicted financial crisis to last two years for Russian television	Attribution elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, perception of influence, level of novelty, professional proximity, public affairs, recency	
	Саша Боровик: Украинское государство неспособно что-то улучшить	Sasha Borovik: Ukrainian state is unable to improve anything	Attribution, elite actor, foreign affairs, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, perception of influence, level of novelty, recency	
	Госдума принимает закон о запрете "враждебных" фирм	State Duma adopts a law banning "hostile" firms	Attribution, business, conflict, foreign affairs, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, perception of influence, level of novelty, recency	
	Большинство жителей Крыма довольны положением дел в регионе	Most of the inhabitants of Crimea are happy with the situation in the region	Attribution, foreign affairs, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, recency	
	Дело компании King-Seeley Thermos Co. против компании Aladdin Industries, Inc	The case of King-Seeley Thermos Co. against the company Aladdin Industries, Inc	Attribution, business, level of abstraction, level of novelty, recency	
	Кремль отредактировал слова Меркель об аннексии Крыма	Merkel said that Kremlin has edited the term about the annexation of the Crimea	Attribution, elite actor, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, professional proximity, public affairs, recency	

	Экс-губернатор Одесской области Владимир НЕМИРОВСКИЙ: «Трагедия 2 мая была запрограммирована, хотя ее несложно было предотвратить»	Ex-governor of the Odessa region, Vladimir NEMIROVSKIY: "The Tragedy of May 2 was planned to happen, but it was not difficult to prevent it"	Attribution, conflict, crime, elite actor, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	Птица-перестройка	Bird-Perestroika	Attribution, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of writing, public affairs, recency	
	Одесса: Реконструкция трагедии. Часть 1	Odessa: reconstruction of the tragedy. Part 1	Attribution, crime, elite actor, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of writing, public affairs, recency, viewpoint proximity	
	Рік трагедії в Одесі: хто відповідатиме за загибель людей?	A year from the tragedy: who is responsible for the massacre?	Attribution, crime, elite actor, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of irritation, level of novelty, level of writing, recency	
	Высокий суд Лондона опубликовал досье на Виктора Иванова	Royal Court of Justice has published a dossier on Viktor Ivanov	Attribution, crime, elite actor, foreign affairs, level of importance, level of novelty, recency	
5	Editor-in-chief at nationwide journal	Lapse sünnipäev lõppes närvivapustusega	Children birthday ended by a mental breakdown	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	7 Soviet Sci-fi Films That Everyone Should See	-	-	Attribution, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of novelty, recency
	FOTOD JA VIDEO: Mis teeb Muhu vallast mõnusaima omavalitsuse, kus elada?	PHOTOS and VIDEO: What makes Muhu island the cosiest municipality to live at?	Attribution, cultural proximity, geographic proximity, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	Ratastoolis Toompeale rühkimine on võimatu missioon – ehk aitaks ühistransport?	Running a wheelchair to Toompea hill is a mission impossible – perhaps public transport would help?	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency, social proximity, viewpoint proximity	
	Antony Beevor: 'There are things that are too horrific to put in a book	-	-	Attribution, crime, elite actor, level of novelty, professional proximity, recency
	Inimesed vastavad Jaak Madisoni säutsule huumoriga! #absurd	People are replying Jaak Madison's tweet with humor! #absurd	Attribution, conflict, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	FOTO ja VIDEO: Hullumaja! Saaremaa praamisaba oli mitu kilomeetrit pikk	PHOTOS and VIDEO: Nuthouse! Waiting line for Saaremaa's ferry was a couple of kilometers long	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency	
	Bickering between Russia, West mars WWII commemorations	-	-	Attribution, conflict, geographic proximity, level of analysis, professional proximity, politics, recency
	Vabadussõjalaste rehabiliteerimise toetusrühm tahab panna riigikogu vabandama vapside järeltulijate ees	Support group for the veterans of Estonian War of Independence wants to make the parliament to apologize in front of their descendants	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency	
	When the Doves Disappeared by Sofi Oksanen tr by Lola Rogers, review: 'superb'	-	-	Attribution, cultural proximity, geographic proximity, level of analysis, level of importance, level of novelty, public affairs, recency

	Operation Dragoon Ride	-	Attribution, foreign affairs, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, perception of influence, level of irritation, level of novelty, level of writing, recency, professional proximity, social proximity
	Leht: SLK kavatseb uued praamid suve hakul Saksamaale viia	Paper: Saaremaa Shipping Company plans to deliver new ferries to Germany at the beginning of summer	Attribution, business, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, recency
	Keskerakondlane Nõukogude okupatsioonist: aitäh tuleks öelda!	A member of the Estonian Centre Party about Soviet occupation: we should show some gratitude!	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	DELFI VIDEO ja FOTOD: Miljonivaate saamiseks raiuti Kakumäel puudel ladvad maha	DELFI VIDEO and PHOTOS: Trees were cut half in order to get a one million dollar view at Kakumäe	Attribution, conflict, geographic proximity, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	Prince Harry Is Looking For Someone To Share Royal Life With And Wants Kids "Right Now"	-	Attribution, elite actor, entertainment, level of novelty, recency
6	Editor-in-chief at online news outlet	Ekspertid: Tasavägise peaministrikandidaatide väitluse võitis Juhan Parts	Experts: A close debate between prime minister candidates was won by Juhan Parts
	Осиновский не дал прямого ответа на вопрос, войдут ли соцдемы в коалицию с центристами	Ossinovski did not give a direct answer to the question whether Social Democrats would enter into the coalition with the centrists	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, politics, recency
	Helmi kahvel	Helm's fork	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, level of writing, public affairs, recency, viewpoint proximity
	Maksuamet peatas firmaautode kontrolli	Estonian Tax and Customs Board stopped checking the cars owned by private companies	Attribution, business, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	Väitlusblogi: eilne ETV debatt oli siiani valimiste kõige sisulisem	Debate blog: yesterday's debate on Estonian Television was the most content-rich during these elections	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of importance, level of novelty, professional proximity, politics, recency
	Reformierakondlane: pole professionaalne enne valimisi koalitsioonipartnereid välistada	A member of the Estonian Reform Party: it's not professional to exclude coalition partners before the elections	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, perception of influence, level of novelty, professional proximity, politics, recency
	Valimiste eel VKG põlevkivipõuale leevendust ei saa	VKG will not get relief for oil shale draught before the elections	Attribution, business, geographic proximity, level of irritation, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, professional proximity, recency, viewpoint proximity

	Ida-Viru pole juba ammu Tuhkatriinu anymore	Ida-Viru County is no Cinderella anymore	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, professional proximity, politics, recency
	Sotsid teevad meeleavalduse ka IRLi ja Keskerakonna kontori ees	Social Democrats will also protest in front of Pro Patria Union's and Centre Party's office	Attribution, conflict, geographic proximity, level of irritation, level of novelty, recency, politics, professional proximity
	Reformierakonnast välja astunu: kõik otsused tehakse erakonna tagatoas	An ex-member of the Estonian Reform Party: all the decisions are made in the back office	Attribution, conflict, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, professional proximity, recency, viewpoint proximity
	Postimehe valimisstudiod: kuidas kasvatada Eestit suuremaks?	Elections studio of Postimees: how could we enlarge Estonia?	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, politics, recency
	Uus seadus on vaja kiiresti ringi teha	New law needs to be changed quickly	Attribution, business, conflict, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, perception of influence, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, professional proximity, recency, viewpoint proximity
	IRL tegi riigikogu juhatusel salvestiste asjus viis ettepanekut	Pro Patria Union made five propositions for parliamentary board regarding commission records	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of novelty, professional proximity, politics, recency
	Saarts: valimised võidab see, kes defineerib põhikonflikt	Saarts: elections will be won by the one, who defines the main conflict	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, professional proximity, politics, recency
	Laastava lumepalli hoogu saab pidurdada	Ravaging pace of snowball could be hindered	Attribution, business, geographic proximity, level of analysis, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, level of writing, politics, professional proximity, recency, viewpoint proximity
7	Executive at public sector institution	EU offers stronger ties to eastern nations — but cautiously	- Attribution, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, professional proximity, recency, viewpoint proximity
	DVLA bans BL03 JOB but allows ORG45M	-	- Attribution, entertainment, level of novelty, recency
	Fitch Affirms Estonia at 'A+'; Outlook - Stable	-	- Attribution, business, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, recency
	Hello, dictator': Hungarian prime minister faces barbs at EU summit	-	- Attribution, elite actor, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, level of writing, politics, professional proximity, recency,
	Andy Murray: French Open qualifier - for Briton	-	- Attribution, elite actors, level of novelty, recency, sports

	Muuli palus õhtusöögiteki riigikogule esitamise pärast vabandust	Muuli apologized for handing in a dinner check to the parliament	Attribution, conflict, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency
	Alkoholipoliitika lillakad valed	Purple lies of alcohol policy	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency
	TTÜ uueks rektoriks valiti Jaak Aaviksoo, kes esitab erakonnale lahkumisavalduse	Jaak Aaviksoo was elected to be the new rector of Tallinn University of Technology, who now resigns from his party	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	Finland tells 900,000 reservists their roles 'in the event of war		Attribution, foreign affairs, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, recency
	Länts: peasekretäri valik võib ohustada Mikseri tagasivalimist	Länts: the choice of secretary general could endanger the reelection of Mikser	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, level of writing, politics, professional proximity, recency
	Kolmikliidu konarlik algus	Bumpy start for the government coalition	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, perception of influence, level of irritation, politics, professional proximity, recency, viewpoint proximity
	Propose to your beloved with this bitcoin engagement ring	-	Attribution, entertainment, level of abstraction, level of novelty, recency,
	Chinese man 'with 17 girlfriends' arrested for fraud	-	Attribution, crime, entertainment, level of abstraction, level of novelty, recency,
	Tahtejõuga kaitsetahte vastu	Will power against national defense will	Attribution, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of novelty, public affairs, recency, viewpoint proximity
	Liiklusekspert algavatest teetöödest: nii rasket suve pole Tallinna liikluses varem olnud	Traffic expert about starting road work: there has never been so hardworking summertime in Tallinn	Attribution, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, level of irritation, public affairs, recency
8	Former advisor to the President of Estonia Haglund sätti Sipilää sotesta ja yhteiskunta-sopimuksesta: "Tässä hän on epäonnistunut"	Haglund blasted Sipilää's statements and the social contract: "He has failed here"	Attribution, conflict, cultural proximity, elite actors, geographic proximity, level of importance, level of novelty, level of writing, politics, recency
	Why Robots Will Always Need Us	-	Attribution, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of writing, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	Charlie, turvallsuus ja sananvapaus	Charlie, security and freedom of speech	Attribution, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of writing, public affairs, recency, values of author, viewpoint proximity
	Muhammed-kuvat pois Maailma kylässä -festivaaleilta – näyttelyn järjestäjät pitävät ennakkosensuurina	Muhammed images from World Village Festival - exhibition organizers are proactive	Attribution, conflict, geographic proximity, perception of influence, level of irritation, public affairs, recency

	Perutun Sananvapauskylän näyttelyiden sisällöt	Freedom of Speech exhibition restricted content	Attribution, conflict, geographic proximity, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency, values of author, viewpoint proximity
	Classic Latvian Work About the Gulag Published in English	-	Attribution, cultural proximity, entertainment, level of novelty, recency
	Rise of the Robots' and 'Shadow Work	-	Attribution, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of novelty, public affairs, recency
	Ménage-à-trois with Hitler: the Goebbels' marriage was a bit crowded	-	Attribution, cultural proximity, elite actors, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, level of novelty, politics, recency
	Suurlähettilään mukaan Viron venäläisväestön on osoitettava lojaalisuutensa	Finnish ambassador in Estonia said that Russians in Estonia must demonstrate their loyalty	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of importance, level on novelty, politics, recency, viewpoint proximity
	Presidentinlinnan salaisuudet	Secrets of presidential palace	Attribution, elite actors, geographic proximity, level of novelty, level of writing, public affairs, recency
	Björn Wiman: Astrid Lindgren och Tolkien förstod sagan om kriget	Björn Wiman: Astrid Lindgren and Tolkien knew the saga of war	Attribution, cultural proximity, elite actors, level of abstraction, level of writing, public affairs, recency
	Pappa – vi förlorade det stora kriget	Dad – we lost the Great War	Attribution, cultural proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, level of writing, public affairs, recency
	How Russians Lost the War	-	Attribution, cultural proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, politics, recency
	Venäjä on muuttanut keskiajalle	Russia has stepped back into the middle ages	Attribution, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, level of writing, recency
	Toiveiden ulkopolitiikka ei enää toimi	Wishful thinking on foreign policy matters does not work any more	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, local politics, recency, viewpoint proximity
9	Former investment banker		
	Fear of a Capitalist Planet	-	Attribution, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of novelty, level of writing, public affairs, recency, viewpoint proximity
	Mikser: on aeg lõpetada solvumine valimistulemuse pärast	Mikser: it's time to stop being resentful at election results	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency
	Junckeri kvoodid ja Eesti solidaarsus	Juncker quotas and Estonian solidarity	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of novelty, level of writing, politics, recency
	Liitlaste ründelennukid teevad üle Tallinna madallende	Ally fighter jets fly low over Tallinn	Attribution, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency,



	Nonviolence as Compliance	-	Attribution, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of novelty, level of writing, public affairs, recency
	Valitsus arvutas, kui palju erinevad pered nende lubadustest võidavad	Government calculated, how much will the families win from their promises	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, politics, recency
	Jaak Madison: reaalsus tuli kätte	Jaak Madison: reality became actuality	Attribution, elite actor, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of novelty, perception of influence, level of irritation, politics, recency
	Mart Nutt: Konservatism mitmekesisustub	Mart Nutt: conservatism diversifies	Attribution, elite author, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, politics, recency
	Ruta Arumäe: nõu saada peaminister ei soovinud	Ruta Arumäe: prime minister did not want advice	Attribution, conflict, elite actor, geographic proximity, elite actors, level of abstraction, level of importance, perception of influence, level of irritation, level of novelty, level of writing, politics, public affairs, recency
	Sester: kui kütuse hind tõuseb, jääb inimestele ikkagi rohkem raha kätte	Sester: people will have more money, even if the fuel prices rise	Attribution, conflict, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, perception of influence, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency
	For a theory of destituent power	-	Attribution, level of analysis, level of novelty, level of writing, public affairs, recency
	Madisonile määrati mentor	Mentor was appointed for Madison	Attribution, conflict, elite actor, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency
	Jaak Madison: ma ei lahku riigikogust	Jaak Madison: I will not leave the parliament	Attribution, conflict, elite actor, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, recency
	Name Calling: An intricate map of who's insulted who	-	Attribution, entertainment, level of novelty, politics, recency, visualization
	Vana hea kolmikliit	Good old government coalition	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of novelty, level of writing, politics, recency
10	Member of the European Parliament	Top 10 most-followed Estonian politicians on Twitter	-
	DELFI FOTOD: President Toomas Hendrik Ilves andis Rakvere teatris üle riiklikud teenetemärgid	DELFI PHOTOS: President Toomas Hendrik Ilves handed out national merit medals at Rakvere theatre	Attribution, elite actor, geographic proximity, politics, professional proximity, recency, social proximity

	Pealtnägija: uued korruptsioonisüüdistused Viimsis	Eyewitness: new corruption accusations at Viimsi	Attribution, conflict, crime, level of irritation, geographic proximity, perception of influence, politics, recency
	Siim Kallas saavutas ainulaadse ülemaailmse kokkuleppe	Siim Kallas accomplished a unique global deal	Attribution, elite actor, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, politics, professional proximity, recency, social proximity
	FOTOD: Vabaduse väljakul marssis üle tuhande kaitseväelase ja kaitsepolitsei	PHOTOS: Over a thousand soldiers marched on the Freedom Square	Attribution, geographic proximity, public affairs, recency, social proximity
	Financeestonia: Eesti kapitaliturg võib kasvada rohtu	Financeestonia: Estonian capital market may become weedy	Attribution, business, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, social proximity, recency
	Klassi sarja 7. osa - telgitaguseid.	Class series part 7 - information from behind the curtains	Attribution, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of analysis, level of novelty, level of writing, recency
	Olari Taal: küüditaksin Kallase Eestisse ja paneksin peaministriks	Olari Taal: I would deport Kallas to Estonia and make him the prime minister	Attribution, elite actors, geographic proximity, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, professional proximity, recency, social proximity
	Populism elektrihinna ümber	Populism about electricity prices	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, politics, public affairs, recency, viewpoint proximity
	FOTOD: Ansip ja Rasmussen meenutasid vanu aegu	PHOTOS: Ansip and Rasmussen recalled old times	Attribution, elite actors, politics, professional proximity, recency, social proximity
	Raske talv	Tough winter	Attribution, conflict, level of abstraction, level of irritation, public affairs, recency, social proximity
11	Writer and film director	Oh, what happiness! - 10 best Moomins quotes ever	- Attribution, cultural proximity, entertainment, geographic proximity, level of novelty, recency
	Kihnu Island – where the past is always present	-	Attribution, cultural proximity, geographic proximity, general interest, level of abstraction, level of novelty, recency
	Ilon Wikland: "All along, I've been trying to paint the emotions"	-	Attribution, elite actor, cultural proximity, general interest, level of abstraction, level of novelty, recency
	Olen ensimmäinen Suomessa valmistunut somali" - maailmalla uutisoidaan tämän naisen pyrkimisestä presidentiksi	I am the first Finnish made Somali - story about her pursuit for being the next Somali president	Attribution, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of importance, level of irritation, level of novelty, public affairs, recency

Arvo Pärtin Aatamin passio kertoo unenomaista tarinaa ihmisyydestä	Arvo Pärt's Adam's passion tells a dream story about humanity	Attribution, cultural proximity, elite actor, geographic proximity, level of abstraction, level of analysis, perception of influence, level of novelty, level of writing, public affairs, recency
Astrid Lindgren's second world war diaries published in Sweden	-	Attribution, elite actor, cultural proximity, level of novelty, professional proximity, public affairs, recency
Venäjä on muuttanut keskiajalle	Russia has stepped back into the middle ages	Attribution, foreign affairs, level of abstraction, level of analysis, level of importance, perception of influence, level of novelty, level of writing, recency
Värityskirjat villitsevät aikuisia – "Värittäminen on kuin nukkuisi päiväunet"	Painting books suit for adults - "Painting works as a lullaby"	Attribution, entertainment, level of novelty, recency, visualizations
The Crossroads of Should and Must:- An Intelligent Illustrated Field Guide to Finding Your Bliss	-	Attribution, entertainment, level of analysis, level of writing, recency
Korean Artist Beautifully Illustrates What Real Love Looks Like	-	Attribution, level of novelty, recency, viewpoint proximity, visualizations
20 Things Only Highly Creative People Would Understand	-	Entertainment, level of abstraction, level of novelty, professional proximity, recency
A Sweet Illustrated Celebration of Our Wild Inner Child	-	Attribution, entertainment, level of novelty, recency, viewpoint proximity, visualizations
The rape of Berlin	-	Attribution, crime, cultural proximity, level of importance, level of writing, recency, viewpoint proximity
The One-Minute Writing Activity That Will Make You Happier Every Day	-	Attribution, entertainment, level of novelty, recency, viewpoint proximity
Tove Jansson's Rare Vintage Illustrations for Alice in Wonderland	-	Attribution, cultural proximity, elite actor, entertainment, level of novelty, recency, visualizations