

***DISCIPLINED AND EMPLOYABLE
FOR NEWS PRODUCTION***

**Swiss Journalists, Off-the-Job Training and Journalism
Practice**

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by

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Abstract

Disciplined and Employable for News Production: Swiss Journalists, Off-the-Job Training and Journalism Practice

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This thesis explores the impact of journalism training on journalists' experiences of their occupation and its implications for the news industry in the present volatile economic environment. It examines to what extent training empowers current journalists to adapt to the fast changing news world in order to guarantee the improvement of journalistic quality and to further serve a vital democratic function in our society.

Using the example of Switzerland, this study focuses on the industry-oriented model of off-the-job training operated by MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism. In total, 30 one-on-one in-depth interviews with trainee journalists attending the two-year Certificate Course in Journalism were conducted and thematically analysed by means of a specific matrix-based method for ordering and synthesising the data.

The findings show that journalists who have experienced off-the-job training act more self-consciously in journalism practice as a result of regular information exchange and networking with co-trainees and lecturers, provided that the practical value of classroom expertise matches the editorial principles in force in their newsrooms. Off-the-job training increases journalists' employability regarding their personal, analytical, narrative and technical competencies and provides the bedrock for developing self-interested behaviour. Journalists trained within an industry-driven system seem more likely to predominantly think and act in an industry-minded manner, which eventually supports their employability and enables the news industry to reproduce itself.

On a larger scale, the findings exemplify that the latest generation of news manufacturers no longer seeks control over occupational jurisdiction in the first instance, but strives for the improvement of employability instead. This study argues that 24/7 news production supported by a closely tied model of training is hardly able to recalibrate journalism's traditional, but dwindling, mission to above all serve a democratic function in our society. Claiming that the supervision of journalism is too important to be left to the journalism industry, it calls for measures to be taken from a broader social and political scope.

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PART ONE
SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THESIS

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Chapter organisation

The introductory chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section I will give a sense of the thesis' overall argument by expounding the significance of investigating journalism training for the field of contemporary journalism education research, with a particular focus on the Swiss case. I will further address the need to gain insight into the hitherto under-researched and under-theorised mechanics of journalism training and its implications for journalists' experiences of their occupation, the news industry in a volatile economic environment, and journalism as a force traditionally playing a vital role in the democratic process and in the formation of public opinion.

In the second section I will outline how this thesis is organised and structured and give a brief overview of what is going to be established, reviewed, theorised, investigated, analysed, discussed and concluded in the six key parts and the fourteen chapters.

1.2. Significance of the research topic

1.2.1. Journalism and the news

This thesis addresses journalism training and the way it impacts on journalists producing news. To begin with, it is important to be clear about the subtle distinction between journalism and news. Not everything that journalists produce is considered to be news (Meikle, 2009). Film reviews, celebrity profiles and obituaries could be exemplified in this respect. For the purpose of this thesis, news will be defined as organised daily production, "as the product of the journalistic activity of publicizing" (Schudson, 2003, p. 12). Thus, the journalists

studied for this project all worked in the news industry at the time of research; most of them were producing news on a daily basis.

Regarding the theoretical framework of the present thesis, on one hand it refers to news as an institutional product, shaped by the imperatives of news organisations. In this respect, the used concept of news is rooted in early arguments; for example, those of Walter Lippmann¹ (1922) who claimed that news was an institutional product whose characteristics were shaped by the requirements of media organisations.

On the other hand, this thesis also theorises news and the news industry in the role of serving a vital democratic function in our society, a public knowledge concept, as Schudson (1995, p. 33) puts it, that “makes the news a resource when people are ready to take political action, whether those people are ordinary citizens or lobbyists, leaders of social movements or federal judges.” News in this context constructs a symbolic world that, in its easy and ubiquitous availability, “in its cheap, quotidian, throw-away material form, becomes the property of all of us” (ibid).

News in Schudson’s concept of ‘public knowledge’ can also be understood to be a cultural product, bound up “in our cultural norms of inclusion and exclusion, of forming and sustaining community” (Meikle, 2009, p. 18). From this notion follows the view that we, as a society, are greatly dependent on news embedded in an overall concept called journalism. Journalism in its most powerful form as news reports on the social world around us, about the social causes and consequences of human behaviour. At best, journalism with news as its daily product helps people to better understand their community and our world. But how do journalists attain the knowledge and skills to help people to better understand their world?

¹ Walter Lippmann (1889 – 1974) was an American intellectual, writer, reporter and political commentator. In *Public Opinion* (1922), Lippmann argued that the basic problem of democracy was the accuracy of the news and the protection of sources.

Journalism education and training is thus brought into play. However, as journalism has been widely understood to be a craft and a trade since its early days (Hartley, 1996), in many Western European countries like Switzerland formal journalism education and training is still not compulsory to become a journalist. Today there are multiple pathways that lead into the Swiss media arena and journalism is widely regarded as an ‘open profession.’

Therefore, the basic question is: Does formal journalism education and training matter for journalists at all? From a normative point of view, the answer to this fundamental question can only be yes, because the key purpose of journalism education is to enrich the quality of journalism by improving the quality of journalists (Josephi, 2009). Nevertheless, the ways in which and to what extent journalism education and training enrich the quality of journalists have largely remained open.

1.2.2. Why study formal journalism education and training?

As far as a contemporary evaluation of the quality of the journalistic media in Switzerland is concerned, there have been efforts made recently to generate new knowledge for this increasingly debated issue. In 2010, the Swiss Federal Council commissioned a number of studies in order to conduct research on the development of the media, media concentration and pluralism and the implications of the Internet on journalism practice (BAKOM, 2011).²

The initial spark that brought about research conducted on the quality of the media was eventually politically driven. In 2009, a leading member of the Swiss National Council forwarded a respective postulate.³ Although the Federal Council, based on the results of these studies, acknowledged that a rising number of Swiss media were facing difficult changes, it decided that it was up to the industry to keep pace with the constant structural changes challenging journalism practice.

² The Federal Council is a seven-member executive council constituting the Federal Government of Switzerland and serves as the Swiss collective Head of State.

³ The National Council of Switzerland constitutes the lower house of the Federal Assembly of Switzerland. The postulate in question was submitted by National Council Hans-Jürg Fehr in June 2009.

As a matter of fact, the issue of journalism education and its possible implications for the quality of journalism and the media was neither explicitly addressed nor thoroughly researched in the commissioned studies. If we proceed on the assumption that, according to Josephi (2009), the key purpose of journalism education is to enrich the quality of journalism by improving the quality of journalists, it can be argued that an assessment of the quality of the media with regard to its journalistic function must inevitably examine the way journalists are primed to fulfil their role.

Therefore, by presenting this thesis, I am making a case for the necessity to study journalism education and training in order to be able to reliably answer the question about the significance and implications for journalists' experiences of their occupation, the news industry and, broadening the scope, journalism as a force playing a vital role in the democratic process and the forming of public opinion.

I further claim that it is high time valid and reliable data on the effectiveness of journalism training on journalists' occupational practices was generated, since those practices are undergoing dramatic change, and the future of the news industry seems more unsettled than ever. In Switzerland, as in other European and North American countries, a rising uncertainty amongst journalists is spreading (Wyss & Keel, 2010). This is because news as an institutional product and as a complex of practices such as production, distribution and reception has been undergoing massive changes, mainly as a result of the dominance of the Internet. It is frequently argued that the fast-increasing prevalence of the Internet as the ultimate multi-media platform has called the journalists' traditional authority on news production into question.

As a result of the worldwide penetration of the Internet, with its technical facilities that make it very easy for everyone who has access to the World Wide Web to act as a global publisher, news has become more participatory, social and diverse, but is also increasingly reduced to a simple, often free-of-charge commodity. Along with the cumulative technical and structural changes challenging the authority of the traditional news manufacturer, journalistic news production seems ever more

at the mercy of economic volatility, the latter having recently been accelerated by the economic downturn also leaving its footprint in the media business.

As a consequence, the condition of contemporary journalism is frequently lamented and sometimes even compared to a state of siege (Zelizer, 2009, p. 31). Zelizer argues that today's journalists live in an economic environment "in which falling revenues, fragmentation, branding and bottom-line pressures keep forcing the news to act as a shaky for-profit enterprise across an increased number of outlets." A current book on the state of the media in the US edited by Robert McChesney and Victor Pickard even alleges that journalism has collapsed, and the book's title, *Will the Last Reporter Please Turn Out the Lights*, is correspondingly uncompromising (McChesney and Pickard, 2011).

With regard to this study's Swiss context, different scholars have recently intensified their public critique of the state of the media and journalism with reference to the question of journalistic quality. A rather gloomy picture of the state of Swiss media and journalism was presented by a much-debated yearbook (*Yearbook 2010*) on the Swiss media environment in 2010, an academic approach planned to continue monitoring the emerging trends in Swiss media and journalism and be edited on a yearly basis⁴.

In their copious analysis the authors of the yearbook, amongst other points, criticise the Swiss media's growing focus on internal affairs at the expense of foreign news. They particularly lament the increase in soft news and episodic journalism as a result of the rising market dominance of what they denote to be 'poor-quality media,' meaning free papers, news websites and commercial TV channels. The scholars assume that in future those media types and forms "which are currently contributing little to quality journalism will continue to gain importance" (Eisenegger et al., 2010).

⁴ The *Yearbook* is produced and published by the fög – the Center for Research on the Public Sphere and Society at the University of Zurich (www.foeg.uzh.ch). It receives support from the not-for-profit Stiftung Öffentlichkeit und Gesellschaft (Foundation for the Public Sphere and Society, www.oeffentlichkeit.ch). The *Yearbook* is published by Schwabe Verlag (ISBN 978-3-7965-2688-6). The results can also be accessed on the Internet (www.qualitaet-der-medien.ch). The fög publishes further research on this platform.

The findings of the first edition of the Yearbook have met harsh criticism from the media industry. The country's key publishers and Swiss Media, the Swiss association of publishers, rejected all points of the scholars' analysis, arguing that the industry was qualitatively developing in the right direction according to their readership response and audience rating and that the standard of education of their journalists was much better than in earlier times⁵.

Referring to Josephi's (2009) previously mentioned key purpose of journalism education, which is normatively supposed to enrich the quality of journalism by improving the quality of journalists, it can be argued that the ongoing quarrel between scholars and media executives in the Swiss context gives rise to the following questions:

- How does journalism training impact on journalists' experiences of their occupation, their self-conception as professionals, and their achievement of control over occupational jurisdiction?
- How is journalism education and training empowering current journalists to adapt to the fast changing news world in order to guarantee the improvement of journalistic quality and to further serve a vital democratic function in our society?⁶

Interestingly enough, significant findings and adequate answers to these questions are hard to establish, despite the fact that journalism education and training has become a debated topic at international conferences and on panels discussing the quality of the state of journalism. Hence, it seems odd, but it is nevertheless a fact that, despite the emergence of an increasing body of theoretical and empirical literature on journalism, the field of journalism

⁵ Hanspeter Lebrument, Swiss Media's current president, explicitly countered the criticism of the authors of the *Yearbook 2010* on Swiss national TV, claiming that their findings were wrong and that the publishers would guarantee private media of premium quality (13th August, 2010, SF 1, *Tagesschau*).

⁶ Journalistic quality is not an easy task to define. There have been multiple approaches to specifying the issue of quality in journalism and the media. As a kind of indicator for gauging journalistic quality for the purpose of the present investigation, this thesis will draw on the "Tartu Declaration," an agreement initiated by the members of the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA) whose mission statement and competency goals set up general principles for journalism training. The declaration is detailed in Chapter Four and Thirteen.

education and especially that of journalism training must still be regarded as widely under-researched (Deuze, 2006).

1.2.3. Lack of empirical data on journalism training

As evidenced by the review of the existing literature addressed in Chapter Six, I claim that research providing solid and reliable information on the implications of journalism training for a journalist's occupational news practice has been largely overlooked. We have practically no empirically based knowledge about how formal journalism training is helping journalists to better adapt to the newsroom practices that are basically shaped by the imperatives of the news organisations. Nor do we have comprehensive knowledge about the effectiveness of journalism training with regard to improving the news industry's role of serving a vital democratic function in our society.

Therefore, I argue that in order to know better whether journalism training empowers contemporary journalists to adapt to the fast changing news world in order to guarantee the improvement of quality (and the upholding of its democratic function), it is inevitable that journalists' experience of their occupation as a result of journalism training must first be analysed. Since there have only been assumptions made regarding the implications of training for journalists' occupational practices, the present study intends to thoroughly investigate and analyse the effectiveness of journalism training with the objective of generating valid concepts and theories about the various factors that determine it.

Only after the parameters that determine the implications of journalism training for journalism practice have been established to some extent will we be able to assess whether journalism training improves the news industry and the news in their role of serving a vital democratic function in our society, or, alternatively, may help the news industry to reproduce itself through a form of journalism training that first and foremost is conceived to meet the requirements of the news organisations.

Although a considerable number of journalism scholars have increasingly been calling for studies on schools of journalism, on the determinants of journalism education and training, and on the relationships between education, profession, and society (e.g. Cottle, 2000; Reese and Cohen, 2000; Altmeyden and Hömberg, 2002; Deuze, 2006; Zelizer, 2009), by and large, most approaches have essentially focused on the increasing academization of journalism education. Systematic research into the field of vocational training has not really gained in importance, neither on an international scope nor in the local Swiss context.

In particular, empirically based accounts of how journalists experience journalism education and training with reference to their occupation are absent. The present investigation seeks to fill this evident gap and attempts to contribute relevant insight to this overlooked field within the research sphere of journalism education and training. It especially focuses its efforts on professionalism in journalism by investigating Swiss journalists and their occupational experiences as a result of journalism training.

1.2.4. Mistrust between the academe and the media world

Up to the present day, journalism education has generally been widely understood to be preparation for and a corrective to journalism practice, comprising a dual role that has both strengths and weaknesses. Josephi claims that, on the one hand, journalism education puts journalism schools as preparation institutions “at arm’s length to the industry,” but on the other “it also entrenches the mistrust between academe and the media’s working world” (2009, p. 52). Earlier, Skinner et al. (2001) in addition to other scholars, pointed out that journalism schools are dependent on the media industry, whereas the industry has always been sceptical of the validity and, notably, the usefulness of journalism degrees.

Again, it is recognised that how journalists themselves experience and judge the dependence of journalism training on the media industry has not been established by previous research, particularly in the case of the Swiss context in which

journalism training has been predominantly shaped by the journalism industry up to the present day.

There are various notions regarding the ideal content and method for teaching journalism. Proposals as to what comprises an ideal curriculum differ greatly in their weighting of skills and knowledge. What should be taught in the opinion of university-based journalism educators is quite often dissimilar to the intentions and objectives of the journalism industry. As Skinner et al. argue, there are “those who advocate a singular focus on vocational training and those who would have journalism students follow a much broader program of study” (2001, p. 341).

In the Swiss case, as this study’s contextualising chapters on Swiss media, journalism and education outline (Chapter Two, Three and Four), until today there has been a clear affinity to advocating vocational training from the news industry, along with widespread mistrust and even outright denial of academic approaches to journalism education (e.g. Hanitzsch and Müller, 2009). The present thesis intends to outline the historical reasons and processes that led to the status quo.

1.2.5. Education in a social system managed by corporate media

It must be noted, however, that the above-mentioned academy versus industry quarrel is not only typical of the situation in Switzerland. Journalism scholars from all over the world have underlined that a critical approach to the nature and rituals of journalism, which usually informs a university-based journalism curriculum, has always been questioned if not dismissed by media employers. For example, Skinner et al., in their analysis of the challenges that occur when putting journalism theory into practice, point out that “media owners and managers do not generally welcome critical perspectives on media practices, especially if they are contrary to commercial considerations” (p. 356).

Deuze (2006, p. 27), in his critique of university-based journalism programmes, argues that they tend to hold up the notion of journalism “as an act of individual

freedom and responsibility rather than a social system located in and managed by the corporate media.” In this respect, Josephi (2009, p. 53) calls for research on journalism education entailing investigations that concentrate more on training received in a media industry centred context. She assumes that findings from such research approaches would give relevant answers to questions about the journalists’ compliance with the intentions and goals of their news organisations and provide insight into a possible industry bias that may influence journalism training.

Decades earlier in the late 1970s, McBarnet became a pioneer in this context by examining the implications of a corporate media managed journalism system for journalism training. He concluded that industry-driven training provides “an entrée into both the disciplining of journalists and the discipline of journalism” (1979, p. 181). He claimed that a “code of reporting practice embodied in training” implied that the way new journalists were trained would reflect existing practices in the newsrooms (p. 193).

The present thesis regards McBarnet’s study and his findings, which are discussed in Chapter Six, as a viable starting position from which to carry this political-economy-driven approach further into the context of Swiss journalism training and its implications for Swiss journalism and its role in Swiss society. In this respect, I argue that a political economy oriented approach to the topic in question can provide a useful theoretical background with regard to exploring this study’s research issues such as to what extent training is shaped to discipline journalists into a particular industry mindset, or whether Swiss media endorse and support off-the-job training first and foremost to create a more skilled professional workforce customised to their needs in order to help create ‘better’ output to enhance profit maximisation.

1.2.6. Exploring the Swiss case and the system of off-the-job training

As outlined in Chapter Three of the present thesis, the Swiss media industry has always preferred its journalists to be trained in a system of established techniques

on-the-job and at the hands of outside educational institutions with courses invariably staffed by (former) journalists-turned-lecturers and approved by industry-close credentialing authorities. This study now sets out to provide a pivotal insight into the field of vocational journalism education in Switzerland using the example of a well-established off-the-job model in the German-speaking part of the country as the respective research environment.

The investigation exclusively focuses on German-speaking Switzerland, firstly because it represents the most populated region and is home to by far the biggest and most influential journalism industry in the country, and secondly because the results of a nation-wide investigation would be complex to generalise due to the four linguistically and culturally different entities of Switzerland.⁷ The media frameworks in the four traditional cultures vary considerably, since the language regions are quite different in geographical and demographic dimension.

This research project specifically investigates the so far unexplored system of off-the-job journalism training⁸ exemplified by the well-known Certificate Course in Journalism run by MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism⁹, located in the city of Lucerne. In a nutshell, the present research aims to scrutinise and analyse the courses' implications for the trainee journalists' experiences of their occupation. MAZ, as a stand-alone and well-established journalism school, primarily provides courses with a distinct approach to vocational training which comprise the teaching of specific professional skills such as interviewing, reporting, researching, sourcing, writing and editing as well as various production techniques.

Thus, the course's curriculum constitutes the backbone of the main focus of the research, namely exploring Swiss trainee journalists and the experiences of their professional world as a result of off-the-job training.

⁷ For detailed information about the socio-cultural diversity and the linguistic segmentation of quadrilingual Switzerland see section 2.2.

⁸ Off-the-job training is generally understood to be a training model that provides employee training at a site away from the normal work environment. Off-the-job training modules often contain lectures, case studies, role playing and simulation. Further information on the off-the-job training model offered at MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism, can be found in Chapter Four (see 4.3.4.).

⁹ www.maz.ch

The avenue of enquiry will include the following research questions:

- How does off-the-job journalism training impact on journalists' hands-on experiences of their occupation? (Research Question 1)
- How does off-the-job training affect a journalist's self-conception? (Research Question 2)
- What impact does off-the-job training have on a journalist's sense of his or her accountability to the public? (Research Question 3)
- What effect does off-the-job journalism training have on the journalist's employability? (Research Question 4)
- How do trainee journalists perceive the involvement of the journalism industry in off-the-job training? (Research Question 5)

These questions are detailed in the methodological part of the thesis (see section 8.3.).

1.2.7. Occupational considerations

It is argued that, in order to understand contemporary and future journalistic work and occupational requirements such as education and training, it is indispensable to also learn about how and by whose agency journalists became members of an occupation with a unique role and social position in the first place. Hence, as a rationale for discussing journalism and its evolution into an occupation, in Chapter Five this thesis draws on research from the sociological theories of work, occupations and professions (e.g. Hughes, 1958; Abbott, 1988; Dooley, 1997).

By discussing those theories and explaining how they have been developed in the US and applied in order to investigate and understand US journalists during the transformation of journalism into an occupation, I attempt to exemplify the reasons for Swiss journalism's long-lasting struggle to achieve control over occupational jurisdiction and the efforts of members of an occupation to secure this.

I will outline to what extent the rather weak achievements regarding boundary-building (as an activity that may be a determinant for ultimately legitimising an occupational group as one whose work is regarded as indispensable) and gaining control over occupational jurisdiction of Swiss journalism have additionally empowered the journalism industry to have a dominant impact on the shaping of the educational environment.

This is made apparent, for instance, by the fact that substantial initiatives put forward by the journalists' associations to further standardise Swiss journalism training and equip it with more autonomy to develop its role in the country's news ecology have been rejected by the industry. The battle between journalists' associations and publishers for collective labour agreements can serve as an example of the ongoing quarrels between management and labour.¹⁰

On the other hand, this study also sets out to examine the current journalists' mindset regarding their occupation by asking the trainee journalists studied during this investigation what they consider to be important in becoming a professional journalist today. In other words, whether it is achieving control over occupational jurisdiction, as has been theorised by the above-mentioned sociologists of work, or rather other objectives such as improving one's employability.

It is therefore claimed that the findings of this study will address a point that has so far been largely overlooked within the field of journalism education research, namely the journalists themselves and the empirically generated insight into the effectiveness of journalism training on journalism practice, experienced and seen through their eyes. This new perspective will provide a valuable window into the nature of the contemporary journalistic occupation and enable us to draw inferences from what the journalists studied consider to be most significant to their work from their own point of view.

¹⁰ Since 2004 journalists in the German-speaking part of Switzerland have been without a collective labour agreement. It is expected that negotiations between the publishers (and their national association Swiss Media) and the journalists' associations (impressum and Syndicom) will be resumed by the end of 2011.

1.2.8. Validity of the investigation

In a specifically Swiss context, the findings of the present study will provide useful information and explanations about the way young Swiss journalists experience the practical value of off-the-job training, achieved by asking them to reveal how it is for them. They will illustrate, for example, whether the MAZ-trained journalists feel capable of transferring their lessons-learnt from the classroom to the everyday journalism practices that challenge them in their newsrooms and to what extent trainee journalists can benefit from off-the-job training in terms of developing their self-conception as professional journalists-to-be, increasing their employability and finally perpetuating their occupational careers.

Furthermore, and with relevance to the question of journalistic quality, the study's outcome will also show to what degree the effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training experienced by the trainee journalists matches the principles and competency goals addressed in the so-called 'Tartu-Declaration,' an agreement between all the members of The European Journalism Training Association (EJTA)¹¹, including MAZ.

The 'Tartu-Declaration' of 2006 is based on a Europe-wide survey conducted by the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA), as a consequence of discussions about how to confront the (academically perceived) crisis in journalism and journalism quality. Initiated by journalism educators and trainers in order to provide a generally applicable basis for journalism training in Europe, it refers to 50 competencies and goals journalists should possess after education or training.¹²

The competencies and goals stated in the 'Tartu-Declaration' are rather normative in nature; with reference to them, Koch and Wyss (2010) surveyed a number of European editors in chief and asked them to weight the most journalistic

¹¹ The European Journalism Training Association (EJTA), established in Brussels in 1990, currently groups 60 journalism centres, schools and universities from 24 countries across Europe. Its members work together with the aim of improving journalism education in Europe, "enabling members to collaborate on exchanges and teaching and research projects, and meet regularly to exchange ideas and information" (EJTA, website).

¹² The declaration and its competencies and goals will be detailed in Chapters Four and Thirteen as well as in the Appendices of this thesis.

competencies from their perspective.¹³ The question of how journalists themselves weight journalistic competencies, namely regarding the experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training, has been overlooked in this context so far. Thus, the respective findings of this investigation will also shed light on this issue.

Since this study is a project based on qualitative research, the analysis will also show in which way and to what extent its findings have implications for theoretical concepts and propositions relating to the research field in question. The intended purpose of generating theoretical propositions is to establish a pathbreaking concept that could be tested in the form of hypotheses as a basis for further investigations into the effectiveness of journalism training, on contemporary journalists' experiences of their occupation on the one hand and on the current state of journalism and the respective news industry on the other.

On an international and European scale, it can be assumed that the results of the present study will be insightful for researchers conducting other investigations into European journalism training systems and the respective journalism schools, notably those similar to MAZ members of the EJTA European Journalism Training Association. Thus, it is argued that the findings of the present investigation can be expected to eventually fill a further gap within the broader field of journalism research on a pan-European scope.

¹³ Koch and Wyss (2010) The weighting of different journalistic competencies. A survey with European editors in chief. Winterthur: Research Report.

1.3. Structure of the thesis

This thesis is thematically organised in six parts, opening with *Part One* as the introduction, followed by *Parts Two* to *Five* as the main body of the thesis and ending with *Part Six* detailing the study's synopsis, conclusions and qualifications.

Part Two, as the beginning of the main body of the thesis, is titled Swiss Media, Journalism, Education and Training. It comprises Chapters Two, Three and Four. Chapter Two gives an account of the structure and institutionalization of the Swiss media landscape as it exists today. It firstly illuminates socio-cultural and socio-political diversity as a basic phenomenon of the Swiss media landscape and then outlines the most important characteristics of the printed press, broadcasting, online and digital media, the role of news agencies and trade unions, the importance of media politics and the appropriate accountability system.

Chapter Three presents an account of the history of Swiss journalism, journalism education, and journalism training. It scrutinises the groups and initiatives that have shaped the system of journalism and journalism education and outlines the roles that politicians, unions, employers and journalists themselves have played in creating the system in place.

After the examination of the history of Swiss journalism, journalism education and training, Chapter Four outlines the contemporary status of journalism education, training, and journalism practice in the country. It opens by highlighting the increasing academisation and growing diversity in Swiss journalism education and training today. The various characteristics of education and training opportunities for Swiss-German journalists, with a special focus on job-relevant education and training, particularly that offered by MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism are sketched.

As a second key focus, Chapter Four defines the different characteristics of present Swiss (and predominantly Swiss-German) journalism practice and highlights equalities and similarities, as well as distinctions, with professionals in other European countries. Finally, this chapter sketches socio-demographic

idiosyncrasies, the perception of journalists' roles and norms, and the question of job satisfaction regarded as typical for contemporary Swiss journalists.

Part Three of the thesis embodies the theory chapters. Chapter Five focuses on a sociological perspective on journalism as an occupation I have previously introduced in this chapter (see section 1.2.7.). To begin with, Chapter Five establishes the rationale for journalism's route to becoming an occupation by drawing on research on the sociological theory of work, occupations and professions completed by American scholars such as Hughes (1958), Abbott (1988) and Dooley (1997) and discusses their contributions to understanding journalism's process of becoming an occupation using the example of the United States.

Informed by these sociological theories of work, occupations and professions, the second key element of Chapter Five discusses Swiss journalism's hesitance and struggle to become an occupation and its implications for the development of journalism education and training in Switzerland, first and foremost in the German-speaking part of the country. It discusses the impact of political parallelism on the creation of journalistic occupations and argues Swiss journalism's labour to achieve journalistic jurisdiction.

Chapter Six examines the existing literature on the laying of foundations of journalism education and training and discusses the few relevant texts in this rather under-researched field. The long-lasting lack of theoretically informed and conceived studies is addressed and the relatively late rise of systematic and comparative cross-national research initiatives discussed.

Among the key texts outlined by this study's literature research, Chapter Six especially references McBarnet's (1979) investigation into journalism training, his argument about industry-oriented training and its disposition to disciplining the journalists. As has already been hinted in the first section of this chapter (see section 1.2.5.), the importance of McBarnet's study for the present thesis is emphasised because his examination of journalism training methods has been one of the very rare initiatives in the field to date. It can be deemed a foundation for

carrying research further in order to scrutinise journalist's experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training, which stands as the fundamental objective of this study.

By examining the very few substantial approaches to scrutinising Swiss journalism education and training, Chapter Six underlines the need to generate relevant data, especially with regard to the scant existing knowledge about the implications of off-the-job training for journalists' experiences of their occupation. At the same time, it emphasises the usefulness of newly generated empirical data as a major point of discussion in the ongoing debate about the necessity for further formalisation, standardisation and countrywide harmonisation of journalism education and training.

Chapter Seven, as the concluding chapter of *Part Three*, gives an overview of theoretical considerations that inform the empirical approach to the present research project. It addresses the theoretical rationale of the study, which is essentially theory building and not theory testing, since the overall research approach as an inference from the defined research questions (see section 1.2.4.) is of a qualitative nature.

At the same time, Chapter Seven underscores that this research is not devoid of theoretical considerations and attempts to define an adequate theoretical framework as a useful background theory to the study of journalism training. The chapter then discusses relevant perspectives drawn on operational and normative theory, as well as approaches grounded in the political economy that inform the overall shape of this research project.

Part Four provides the methodology and analysis components of the thesis. Chapter Eight explains the core arguments for the decision to select qualitative research as a strategy to investigate the implications of off-the-job journalism training for the socialisation of young journalists to their occupational life. The chapter expounds the epistemological as well as ontological positions of the chosen research strategy and defends the approach of seeing the research problem through the eyes of the interviewed trainee journalists.

Furthermore, Chapter Eight addresses and argues the basic research questions underlying the present investigation and outlines the sampling considerations and sampling procedure employed for the research approach. It further reasons the decision to conduct semi-structured interviews as the research method and outlines the application of the selected interview guide. Finally, Chapter Eight illustrates the realisation of the interviews with regard to their settings, recordings and transcriptions.

Chapter Nine, as the second and concluding chapter of Part Four, focuses on the collection of data and the mode of analysis. Firstly, it emphasises the nature of qualitative data analysis as a result of methodological considerations and sketches the mode of thematic analysis as the selected approach. It illuminates the coding principles and, by means of a matrix-based method, outlines the chosen framework accountable for ordering and synthesising the data from the 30 in-depth interviews with trainee journalists attending the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism. The emerging key themes and subthemes are introduced and ranked according to their frequency.

Part Five contains the findings and discussion elements of this thesis and is grouped into four chapters. Chapters Ten, Eleven and Twelve provide the main findings of the present research resulting from the thematic analysis of the interview data, according to its coding into nine key themes and the identification of 28 subthemes.

Chapter Thirteen sets out to reflect on the implications of these findings for the research questions stated in Chapter Eight and in the thesis introduction (see section 1.2.6.), as well as for the literature review (Chapters Five and Six) and the above-mentioned ‘Tartu-Declaration,’ as a pan-European guiding principle for journalism education and training. This chapter thoroughly discusses the implications of the findings for journalists’ hands-on experiences of their occupation, the implications for the journalists’ self-conception and their accountability to citizens. It further debates the implications of the results for journalists’ employability and their perception of the media industry and its involvement in journalism education and training.

Part Six presents Chapter Fourteen, comprising this thesis' synopsis, conclusions and qualifications. It first evaluates the significance of the investigation results. Drawing on the discussion chapter, it then relates the key findings to the five research questions again and concludes with the implications of the findings for Swiss journalists, Swiss journalism education and training, the country's news industry, and on a broader scale, journalism and its vital role in the democratic process and the forming of public opinion.

Chapter Fourteen ends by addressing possible limitations of this study and stating theoretical propositions relating to the key findings and suggestions to be tried out and tested as hypotheses in the context of further research on journalism education, in particular, off-the-job journalism training.

PART TWO
SWISS MEDIA, JOURNALISM, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Chapter Two: The Swiss Media System

2.1. Introduction

The modality of journalism education and training in a given country is determined by a range of factors such as the role and function a society attributes to its journalists, the structures and institutional aspects in the field of journalism, and the special characteristics of the media system. In order to understand and analyse a system of journalism education and training, it is crucial to first look into the concordant media system. Political economists argue that media systems are not natural or inevitable; in other words, they don't just fall from the sky. Within this study, it is argued that this view also applies to the system of journalism education and training.

The political economy of a nation strongly influences the type of media system a given society develops. According to an American political economist, Robert W. McChesney (2008), the starting point for the analysis of a media system is first to understand that the institutional and structural context is the main determinant. The present investigation claims that in order to examine a system of media and journalism education it is equally essential to understand the institutional and structural context as crucial antecedents.

This second chapter of the present thesis that introduces Part II gives an account of the structure and institutionalization of the Swiss media landscape as it exists today. It firstly illuminates socio-cultural and socio-political diversity as a basic phenomenon of the Swiss media landscape and then expounds the most important characteristics of the printed press, broadcasting, online and digital media, the role of news agencies and trade unions, the importance of media politics and the appropriate accountability system.

The following two chapters will focus on and discuss the characteristics of Swiss journalism, journalism education and training and discuss its development from the early days to the present status quo.

2.2. Socio-cultural diversity in a small-sized country

Switzerland is defined by its cultural and linguistic diversity. For centuries different cultural entities have lived in this small, landlocked country that counts as many as four different official languages: German, which is spoken as Swiss-German by 64 percent of the population, French (19 percent), Italian (8 percent) and Romansh (less than 1 percent). The four national languages also roughly define four different mentalities. The remaining 8 percent consist of other languages spoken by foreign inhabitants. Foreigners account for about 22 percent of the total population of about 7.8 million (Bundesamt für Statistik¹⁴, 2011).

As a consequence, the language barriers have also built up media barriers leading to the phenomenon that the media of one specific cultural entity hardly ever enter the field of activity of another. Hence, the four traditional cultures of Switzerland have all developed their own media to the extent that in all four cultures there are different newswires, newspapers, magazines, radio and television programmes, as well as a growing range of online media. However, the media frameworks vary considerably, since the language regions are quite different in geographical and demographic dimension. The media in the German-speaking part of the country supply a market of about 5.5 million people, whereas communications in the Romansh part only reach a population of about 30,000.

This clearly shows that the resources for Swiss journalism can greatly differ depending on the cultural region. Only the Swiss-German, and to a lesser extent also the Swiss-French, media market can be seen as a marketplace under 'normal' conditions. Only in these parts of the country can one speak of a market that in the long run is able to economically feed professional media that, for example, run a

¹⁴ The most important Swiss statistics are published by the Federal Statistical Office in the Statistical Yearbook of Switzerland. The book has been the standard reference work on Swiss statistics since 1891.

network of foreign correspondents at home and abroad, attach importance to competent and competitive economic, science and culture journalism and provide investigative reporting that critically observes the political system and its representatives (Marr et al., 2001).

2.3. Socio-political diversity as a basic phenomenon

The split of the Swiss media market into four language-oriented public spheres and marketplaces results from the country's traditionally diverse political structure; it can be said that Switzerland's geographical fragmentation is reflected in its political differentiation. Few other European countries comprise such a large number of 'mini republics' as the federal state of Switzerland that consists of 26 Cantons or states.

The Swiss political system functions as a direct democracy on three different levels: the confederation, the regional provinces (26 Cantons) and the local communities. The system is the consequence of the country's socio-cultural diversity and creates various opportunities for political articulation "but also a variety of tensions among interest groups on these three levels" (Meier, 2004).

Even today in a globalised world, the traditional entities of consciousness (for example, the almost 3000 municipalities whose duties include local services, electricity, water, fire brigade, police, local roads, schools, and taxes) are endorsed and considered to be most important by the Swiss people (Marr et al., 2001). Since the 19th Century these miniature republics have established their own hyper-local media systems leading to the phenomenon that Switzerland has become a 'reserve' for small provincial newspapers, a particularity that only began to lose ground during the 1990s due to the effects of a growing press concentration

driven by the big regional publishers such as Tamedia¹⁵ and Neue Zürcher Zeitung¹⁶.

2.4. Printed press

Switzerland's press landscape is characterised by a large number of regional titles, but no real national newspapers. Multi-media companies today own all daily newspapers in Switzerland featuring a circulation over 100,000¹⁷ copies.

Ringier¹⁸, the largest publishing company with business expansions in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia, owns the tabloid newspaper *Blick* (circulation in 2009: 214,555) and *Sonntagsblick*, the leading Sunday newspaper (247,449), as well as the free evening paper *Blick am Abend* (225,226) and also publishes the weekly magazine *Schweizer Illustrierte* (204,856).

As a result of increasing consolidation processes, more and more small and medium-size newspapers have been forced out of the market or have been taken over by large publishing companies. In 2008, about 200 daily and weekly newspapers were on the market, which is about half of the number published in 1940. Furthermore, hardly any new dailies have been launched for decades (1959 the tabloid *Blick*, 1989 *Le Nouveau Quotidien* – relaunched in 2000 as *Le Temps*). The most dramatic change in the newspaper market happened in 1999 when the

¹⁵ Tamedia is a Swiss media company based in Zurich. Its daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, online platforms, regional radio and TV stations, together with its newspaper printing facility, make it one of Switzerland's leading media enterprises (www.tamedia.ch).

¹⁶ The Neue Zürcher Zeitung media group belongs to the biggest media corporation in Switzerland. Its flagship is the daily newspaper *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, one of the oldest newspapers still published today. It was first published as the *Zürcher Zeitung* in 1780.

¹⁷ All the statistical details regarding the current Swiss media landscape were taken from the Media Landscape section of the European Journalism Centre's website authored by Werner A. Meier, senior researcher and lecturer at the Institute for Mass Communication and Media Research (IPMZ) at the University of Zurich (http://www.ejc.net/media_landscape/article/switzerland/).

¹⁸ Ringier is the largest Swiss publishing house and is a multinational, integrated media company. Founded in 1833, it carries print, broadcast, radio, online and mobile media brands, and has become a successful player in the printing, entertainment and Internet business. Ringier is a Swiss family company with headquarters in Zurich. Since the beginning of the 1990s, Ringier has been invested in the deregulated markets of Central and Eastern Europe and now publishes and prints over 70 newspapers and magazines in Germany, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. At the same time, Ringier launched its activities in Asia. Since 1997, it has also been active in the People's Republic of China. In 2010 the Ringier AG and the Axel Springer AG jointly ventured business in Eastern Europe.

free daily *20 Minuten* entered the Swiss-German market and started heating up competition.

Since 2004, *20 Minuten* (owned by Tamedia since 2005) has been the most widely read daily newspaper in Switzerland with a readership of more than 1.4 million (circulation 2009: 536,473) in the Swiss-German market, clearly surpassing the former market leader *Blick*. Along with *20 minutes*, Tamedia also publishes a free daily in the French-speaking part (another is planned to launch in the Swiss-Italian part in late 2011) and clearly dominates the free-of-charge press market all over Switzerland.

Tamedia has sharply expanded its print media portfolio over the last five years and today publishes Zurich based *Tages-Anzeiger* (circulation 2009: 209,297) and *SonntagsZeitung* (194,764), along with the *Berner Zeitung* (208,694) and the Swiss-French dailies *24heures* (81,566), *Le Matin* (58,849), *Tribune de Genève* (56,333), *Le Temps* (45,506) and the Sunday paper *Le Matin Dimanche* (193,601), all belonging to the publishing house Edipresse¹⁹, of which Tamedia has held the majority since 2011.

As a matter of fact, with its latest large takeover (Edipresse), Tamedia has become the first Swiss-German media company to control the majority of the leading newspapers in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. It can be argued that in this case the traditional language and consequential media barrier between the Swiss-German and the Swiss-French parts of the country has fallen for the first time in the history of Swiss media. However, it is important to point out that the takeover has only been put into effect on the corporate level and that journalistic entities have stayed independent of one another.

The third key publisher in the Swiss German media market is the AG für die Neue Zürcher Zeitung, also situated in the Swiss media capital Zurich. It publishes the internationally recognised *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (circulation in 2009: 139,732),

¹⁹ Edipresse is an international media group headquartered in the French-speaking part of Switzerland in the city of Lausanne. Its main activities are newspaper and magazine publishing and digital media.

the *Neue Luzerner Zeitung* (127,244) and the *St. Galler Tagblatt* (95,469), as well as the Sunday newspaper *NZZ am Sonntag* (128,516).

The newspaper market is still greatly dependent on advertising income, providing around 75 percent of revenues. However, advertising income in the Swiss print media sector, as in other Western European and North American countries, has decreased; for example, from 2008 to 2009 it reduced by 19 percent (Meier, 2010). Publishers have thus been forced to develop new business models since circulation has been decreasing over the last couple of years.

As I have already outlined above, all common forms of press concentration, namely publisher concentration (a declining number of publishing houses), journalistic concentration (a declining number of fully staffed papers) and concentration of circulation can be observed in Switzerland. Last but not least, the newspaper readership, which had not varied substantially until 2008, has begun to slowly decrease lately mainly because of the growing importance of news websites and social media.

2.5. Broadcasting

In the field of audiovisual media, the national public broadcaster SRG SSR idée suisse²⁰ holds a strong position and has a special role. The publicly funded organisation has the legal right to issue licenses to broadcasting operators and to provide them with funding from licence fee resources for the production of radio (fully funded) and television (partially funded) programmes. Public service and the licence fee are thus inseparable. In return, SRG SSR idée suisse is entrusted

²⁰ SRG SSR is an association under Article 60 ff. of the Swiss Civil Code. The overall parent organisation for SRG SSR business activities, it is a non-profit-making public service undertaking. The SRG SSR association comprises four regional companies:

- The SRG.D association: Radio- und Fernsehgesellschaft der deutschen und rätoromanischen Schweiz (radio and television for German and Romansch-speaking Switzerland)
- The RTSR association: Société de radiodiffusion et de télévision de la Suisse romande (radio and television for French-speaking Switzerland)
- The Corsi cooperative: Società cooperativa per la Radiotelevisione svizzera di lingua italiana (radio and television for Italian-speaking Switzerland)
- The SRG.R association: SRG SSR Svizra Rumantscha (radio and television for Romansch-speaking Switzerland).

with a special mandate to provide all linguistic regions with programmes of equal quality on a public service basis.

Apart from the licence fee revenue, Swiss broadcasting is co-financed by advertising. In 2010, SRG SSR idée suisse received about 1.23 million Swiss Francs (950,000 Sterling) through license fees, while advertising (only TV, advertising on national radio is prohibited) generated revenues in 2010 of 376 million Swiss Francs (total of commercial income). Annually, a private user pays a license fee of 169.15 Swiss Francs for radio reception and another 293.25 Swiss Francs for TV reception. Since the Federal Council has the final say as far as the actual amount of the license fee is concerned, there is an element of dependence in the relationship between SRG SSR and the state.

The structure of SRG SSR idée suisse reflects the fact that Switzerland is multilingual as well as multicultural. Six radio studios (Zurich, Berne, Basle, Geneva, Lausanne and Lugano) and four regional studios (Aarau, Chur, Lucerne, St. Gall) providing regional news produce 16 channels, totalling 159,610 hours of radio broadcasting annually (figures from 2008). Three television studios in Geneva, Lugano and Zurich produce six independent programmes (two for each linguistic region), as well as special programmes in the Romansch language. In addition, the *SF info* channel repeats the German-language news and information programmes. In total, SRG SSR idée suisse employs around 5,800 people.

There is a system of financial compensation in place in order to distribute funds, which transfers money from the largest linguistic region to the two smallest. In order to enable the French and the Italian language regions to produce and receive programmes that are of an equally high quality to those in German-speaking Switzerland, they receive a high proportion of the funding. Without this system of cross-subsidies, as a sort of contribution to national solidarity, it would be nearly impossible to set up and maintain a full television programme in all linguistic parts of Switzerland.

Besides the SRG SSR channels, some commercial providers also operate TV and radio stations on a small scale, most of them at a local and regional level. Some of

the country's leading media companies such as AZ Medien²¹ (*TeleZüri*, *TeleBärn*, *Tele M1*) or Ringier (*NRJ Zürich*) hold significant shares in individual stations. As a result of the new media law (RTVG), a range of local providers receive a contribution from the SRG SSR's licence fee ('top-slicing')²² on the condition that they provide public service programmes.

Regarding the consumption of broadcast media in Switzerland, 80 percent of all households have access to cable TV and receive over 50 channels. About 10 percent of all Swiss households own a satellite dish. As far as advertising income is concerned, a 29 percent share of the whole media advertising market goes to TV, and print media absorbs 52 percent. Radio claims four percent, as does the Internet, and 11 percent is spent on billboard marketing.

At the time of writing, SRG SSR idée suisse is extending digital terrestrial reception for radio and TV. Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) is regarded as the medium-term digital extension to the FM system. The shortage of frequencies in the existing FM system is currently solved by terrestrial digital radio, which significantly improves the quality of mobile radio reception. Thereby, a convergent system is becoming established that permits the transmission of radio, text, pictures and data-only files of all types. Digital Video Broadcasting-Terrestrial (DVB-T) provides the transmission of digital added-value services via the conventional television aerial (terrestrial broadcasting). This is the current standard for broadcasting digital television to households that do not have cable, and to mobile receivers.

2.6. Online and digital media

The number of people using the Internet on a daily or almost daily basis has grown from seven percent in 1997 to 73 percent in 2009. The typical Swiss user of the Internet seems to be well educated, moneyed, young and male. Like in other

²¹ AZ Medien is another Swiss Top Ten media company publishing the Sunday newspaper *Sonntag* and a range of regional dailies in the Swiss Midlands and has recently bought the private television channels *TeleBärn* and *TeleZüri*, the latter being the number one private television station (focussing on news and talk) in German-speaking Switzerland.

²² For detailed information on licence fees and top-slicing go to <http://www.bakom.admin.ch/>

highly digitised countries, digital divides are obvious and resistant. Income accounts for the biggest gap: 91 percent of the people with a monthly income over 10,000 Swiss Francs use the Internet daily, while only 35 percent of those earning less than 4,000 Swiss Francs a month do so (Meier, 2004).

Although the differences between the sexes have remained constant over the past few years, some gaps have widened, especially with regard to age, income and education. The Internet is used differently by diverse socio-demographic groups: highly educated people use it in a rather instrumental way, while less educated people seem to go online almost exclusively for entertainment purposes.

When searching for news and information online, Swiss users still consult the services of the country's traditional mass media companies that have successfully kept their sovereignty as important information sources on the Internet. Some of the most frequently visited sites are *20minuten.ch* (2.44 million unique clients in November 2009), *Blick online* (2.09 million), *Sf.tv* (1.98 million), *NZZ Online* (1.49 million), *Tagesanzeiger.ch* (1.41 million), *Ttsr.ch* (845,000), *Swissinfo.ch* (775,000), *Drs.ch* (694,000). The most page visits (369.5 million in November 2009) and unique clients (3.93 million) by far, however, belong to the formerly state-owned telecommunication provider Swisscom²³. Their daughter company *Bluewin.ch* even has its own online newsroom. However, its leading position can be ascribed to its e-mail service for its customers.

Other websites with high numbers of unique users are search engines (*google.ch*), social network sites (*facebook.com*), timetables for the public train system (*sbb.ch*), search sites (*search.ch*), online market and auctions (*scout24.ch*, *ricardo.ch*), e-mail services (*gmx.ch*), and the real estate and job market (*homegate.ch*, *job.ch*).

²³ Swisscom is Switzerland's leading telecoms provider. It has a presence throughout Switzerland and offers a full range of products and services for mobile, landline and IP-based voice and data communication. Through Swisscom TV it provides its customers with over 160 TV channels, 130 national and international radio stations, and a large variety of Internet radio stations.

2.7. News agencies and trade unions

Until the beginning of 2010 there were two main news agencies serving Swiss mass media: the Swiss News Agency (SDA)²⁴ and an AP affiliate (Associated Press). After the takeover of AP by SDA, the national news agency now has the monopoly on information supply. SDA, situated in Berne, generates information in German, French and Italian. It is a publicly listed corporation owned by Swiss publishers. In principle a non-profit organisation, it is a classic news service that provides information about politics, economics, culture, social issues and miscellaneous issues from Switzerland and abroad.

There are several organisations, syndicates, and associations for employers, journalists and media professionals. The main employers' organisation is Swiss Media²⁵, the Swiss association of newspapers and magazine publishers. The commercial TV Channels cooperate through Telesuisse, while commercial radio stations are associated in the Association of Swiss Private Radios. The main trade unions are the Swiss Journalists' Association (impressum)²⁶, the Swiss Syndicate of Media and Communication (Syndicom)²⁷ and the Swiss Syndicate of Media Professionals (SSM)²⁸.

2.8. Media policies

Freedom of the press, radio and television is guaranteed in the Swiss Federal Constitution (Art. 16)²⁹. Furthermore, article 93/4 of the Constitution, which

²⁴ The Swiss News Agency (SDA) is located in Berne and covers national and local news, sports, business, jobs, and community events.

²⁵ The association Swiss Media is the industry organisation of Swiss publishers and media entrepreneurs with a focus on the printed press. It incorporates more than 150 media companies and industry-associated members who altogether are responsible for around 300 newspapers and magazines, as well as multiple electronic media. The association takes a stand for the protection of the private media in Switzerland and was founded in 1899; its headquarters are in Zurich.

²⁶ Impressum is the biggest association of media professionals in Switzerland and Lichtenstein. More than 5,500 are currently members of the association.

²⁷ Syndicom represents the interests of around 45,000 employees in the Swiss media and communication industry from people working in call-centres to bookbinders

²⁸ SSM as a trade union represents the interests of employees mainly working in electronic media.

²⁹ Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation of April 18, 1999.

regulates radio and television, explicitly calls for the protection of the written press. There is, however, no legal obligation for the Swiss press to fulfil a public service mandate. Newspapers, as private enterprises, are only subject to free entrepreneurial decisions and, obviously, the market.

The Swiss national television and radio stations have the mandate to provide a programme reflecting and maintaining the linguistic and cultural diversity of the country. Among others, The Federal Act on Radio and Television (RTVA)³⁰ (revised in 2006) requires that electronic media as a whole must contribute to the unrestricted formation of opinion, take into account the diversity of the country and its inhabitants, and adequately supply all regions. The new law entered into force in 2007 and states electronic media, especially public service media, must:

Contribute to the unrestricted formation of opinion, to the provision of general, wide-ranging and accurate information for listeners and viewers for their education and entertainment, and communicate knowledge on citizens' rights and obligations in the democratic decision-making processes.

- Take into account the diversity of the country and its inhabitants, reflect this diversity, and promote mutual understanding.
- Promote Swiss cultural creativity and stimulate listeners and viewers to participate in cultural life.
- Facilitate contact with Swiss nationals living abroad and promote the presence of Switzerland and understanding of its interests abroad.
- Focus attention on Swiss audiovisual productions, especially films, and broadcast as many European productions as possible.
- The programmes dealing in a specific area must not favour specific political parties, interests or ideologies.
- The different parts of the country must be adequately provided with radio and television programmes.

(Meier, 2010, website)

³⁰ For details go to www.bakom.ch

2.9. Accountability systems

Within this system, at least four interest groups influence, define, and enforce the standards, norms and values of the Swiss media landscape.

Firstly, there are trans-national actors, among which the council of Europe is of particular importance for Swiss broadcasting policy, since Switzerland is not a member of the EU. The second group is that of national authorities, mainly the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication (UVEK)³¹, the Parliament, the Federal Office for Communication in Bienne (BAKOM)³² and the Independent Authority for Programme Complaints (UBI). Thirdly, the political parties react in the media sector according to their traditional platforms.

Finally, as powerful multipliers on which politicians depend to a certain degree, media organisations can challenge or even obstruct government strategies, regulations and values they judge unfavourable to their interests. Especially, privately owned media companies are usually only willing to comply with special social, cultural or political obligations as long as the market rewards such activities.

2.10. Regulatory authority

UVEK (The Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications) and BAKOM (OFCOM, The Federal Office of Communications) are in charge of supervising the performance of Swiss radio and television broadcasting. The Independent Authority for Programme Complaints (UBI) and the Ombudsman are institutionalised programme-controlling and quality-

³¹ In English: DETEC

³² OFCOM (BAKOM in German) the Federal Office of Communications handles questions that are related to telecommunications and broadcasting (radio and television). In this field of activity, the Office prepares the decisions of the Swiss government (the Federal Council), the Swiss Federal Department for the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) and the Swiss Communications Commission (ComCom.). For further information see <http://www.bakom.admin.ch/index.html?lang=en>.

ensuring authorities. Since 1984, the UBI has been evaluating complaints about programming. The eleven-member committee judges individual programmes according to professional norms and social values. In practice, the procedure works as follows: within 20 days of initial transmission, anyone can lodge a complaint about a scheduled programme with the conciliation body of the broadcaster that has aired the programme (Ombudsman's office). The Ombudsman will then investigate the matter and try to mediate between the parties.

Assuming that the person lodging the complaint is still not satisfied with the Ombudsman's findings, he or she can complain to the UBI. The complaint must be counter-signed by at least 20 people. The UBI's final decision can be challenged in the Federal Court. The Ombudsman's office and the UBI have to balance freedom of speech of producers and viewers, and the responsibility of electronic media to inform citizens in a reliable way.

2.11. Conclusion

The future trend of the Swiss press, as Meier (2004, p.251) claims, "seems to be heading towards a two-tier newspaper landscape" leaving only a few high-circulation papers that serve the economic centres and metropolitan areas and a large number of small provincial newspapers filling the gaps, taking advantage of narrow local advertising and readership markets. All forms of press concentration can be observed in Switzerland, as big publishing houses have entered other media markets. Just to name one example, Tamedia has constantly expanded its radio and television business, as well as its online initiatives in recent years. In 2007, the Zurich media company merged with the Espace Media Groupe in Berne and only recently in 2011 took over the majority of the biggest Swiss-French publishing house Edipresse.

The most dramatic change in the Swiss media market occurred with the launch of the free daily *20 Minuten* in 1999. Meanwhile, the two Tamedia free-of-charge

papers *20 Minuten* and *20minutes* have reached a readership of almost 2 million (1.94 million in the second quarter of 2009), which equals about one third of total readership in Switzerland. The market dominance of *20 Minuten* and *20minutes* is undisputed, since *20 Minuten* only has to share the Swiss-German market with the free evening daily *Blick am Abend* (published by Ringier).

Compared to the development of the electronic media landscape in other western European countries, the role of public service broadcasting in Switzerland has not (yet) weakened considerably. There are no relevant private television stations on a national level. However, private TV-programmes have been able to assert themselves on a regional level with a small audience and consequently little commercial success. SRG SSR's strong mission to integrate state and cultural policy is increasingly conflicting with the demands of business and the practical competitive situation of radio and television.

The publicly funded programmes have been facing growing competition from television channels from France, Germany and Italy which are widely available, partly thanks to the very high take-up of multi-channel cable and satellite TV. Some German commercial broadcasters (e.g. RTL, SAT1, Pro7) provide especially tailored programmes and/or advertising versions of their channels for the Swiss market and quite successfully grab their shares of the 'cake'. According to Meier "this is why the SRG SSR is endeavouring to interpret and translate its legal contract from a more business-based perspective and tries to 'reconcile' the market and its public service mission" (2004, p.258).

In January 2011, the SRG SSR idée suisse merged public TV and public radio on the journalistic-editorial level in order to improve diversity, quality and productivity of the multimedia content. According to the national organisation, this merger should provide the answer to the critical financial situation of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, as well as to the change in journalism and media consumption. The homogenisation of two different corporate cultures has provoked a lot of criticism, since numerous renowned media experts consider it to be neither functional nor practicable. The critics basically consider small autonomous entities to be more promising for the future of national public service

broadcasting in Switzerland. Meier (2010) argues that a “fundamental discussion on the role of the public core media seems to be inevitable and pressing.”

Having delineated the Swiss media system in its present shape in this chapter, Chapter Three outlines and discusses the history of Swiss journalism, journalism education and training.

Chapter Three:

History of Swiss Journalism, Education and Training

3.1. Introduction

Similar to any educational system, journalism education is caught up in and impacted by the history, culture and politics of an individual country. Once given, any form of education will influence future educational development and change (Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha, 2003); or as Archer (cited in Becker, 2003, p.xvi) notes, “knowing the past helps explain the present and predict the future.”

This chapter aims to give an account of the history of Swiss journalism, journalism education, as well as journalism training. It examines the groups and initiatives that have shaped the system of journalism and journalism education and outlines the roles that politicians, unions, employers and journalists themselves have played in creating the system in place.

3.2. Merchant capitalism, Protestantism, early Swiss press

The early roots of the print press in Switzerland must be linked to merchant capitalism. The widespread commercial interest of Swiss merchants in the 17th and the first half of the 18th century caused them to become the prime consumers of newspapers. The first *corantos*, the forerunners of the modern newspaper, came out in urban centres like Amsterdam, Antwerp, Cologne or Frankfurt. In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, an early daily, *Ordinari Wochenzeitung*³³, began to be published in 1610 in Basel. These cities were situated along Europe’s main commercial routes and there was already a rising demand for economic and commercial news, as well as political events and developments that might affect

³³ From: *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz* (Historical encyclopaedia of Switzerland). Bollinger, E. (2002).

commerce (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). This development is also stressed by Habermas in his account of the public sphere:

With the expansion of trade, merchants' market-oriented calculations required more frequent and more exact information about distant events.... The great trade cities became at the same time centres for the traffic in news; the organization of this traffic on a continuous basis became imperative to the degree to which the exchange of commodities and securities became continuous (1989, p.16).

The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, sometimes considered to be the first prototype of the modern quality paper (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), appeared in 1780, eight years before *The Times* of London. The political opinion press in Switzerland emerged in the first half of the 19th century and was fuelled by the struggle between the absolutist state and the bourgeoisie. When the Helvetic Republic³⁴ proclaimed the (pro forma) freedom of press and the Swiss Cantons were granted the right to vote (men only), newspapers started burgeoning for the first time.

The press boom increased even more when the Liberals seized power in 1830 and manufacturers and professionals were granted more political and economic freedom. Between 1827 and 1858, the total number of Swiss newspapers rose from 33 to 180 (Blum, 1993). However, the country was struck by a period of unrest with repeated violent clashes that led to a civil war between some of the Catholic and most of the other cantons in 1847, which is called the *Sonderbundskrieg* (Sonderbund War)³⁵. The press, as the new modern media of the time, extensively covered the clashes between the Protestant, progressive, liberal and radical movements of the urban cantons and the Catholic, conservative forces of the rural cantons.

³⁴During the French Revolutionary Wars, the revolutionary armies boiled eastward, enveloping Switzerland on the grounds of "liberating" the Swiss people whose own system of government was deemed to be feudal. Some Swiss nationals had called for them to intervene on these grounds. On 5 March 1798, Switzerland was completely overrun by the French and the Swiss Confederation collapsed. On 12 April 1798 the Helvetic Republic, 'One and Indivisible,' was proclaimed; cantonal sovereignty and feudal rights were abolished. The occupying forces established a centralised state based on the ideas of the French Revolution. In 1815, the Congress of Vienna fully re-established Swiss independence and the European powers agreed to permanently recognise Swiss neutrality. The Vienna treaty marked the last time that Switzerland fought in an international conflict.

³⁵ The Sonderbund War of 1847 was a civil war in Switzerland. The Sonderbund was formed by seven catholic cantons in order to protect their interests against a centralisation of power. The end of the very short war was the beacon for the rise of Switzerland as a federal state.

On the one hand, the war coverage of the partisan press met the rising need for information of the literate public and contributed to the development of a critical public sphere (bourgeois as well as socialist), but on the other hand the reports were evidence of uninhibited propaganda (Schmidt, 1998). This early stage of the coexistence of media partisanship and mass circulation in Switzerland seems to acknowledge Eisenstein's claim that:

Protestantism was the first movement of any kind, religious or secular, to use the new presses for overt propaganda and agitation against an established institution. By pamphleteering directed at arousing popular support and aimed at readers who were unversed in Latin, the reformers unwittingly pioneered as revolutionaries and rabble rousers (1979, p.304).

Hallin and Mancini argue that the profundity of religious, ethnic, and ideological groups, the intensity of the conflicts among them, as well as the strength of the institutions they established, supported the development of a press "that would reach an almost capillary diffusion among group members, for whom reading the paper was essential to being part of their religious, political, and/or ethnic community" (2004, p.153). They emphasise that in their Democratic Corporatist³⁶ model of media and politics (in which they rank Switzerland too) all organised social groups have played a central role in the establishing of political, cultural and social life.

Important parts of the media system have always been closely linked to these groups and "the press has developed as an instrument of identification and organization within social groups, and of discussion, comparison, and conflict among them" (ibid). Referring to Switzerland as a culturally diverse society, Hallin and Mancini underline that obviously the press has always been linked to the different linguistic groups "though the level of intergroup conflict has not been as

³⁶ Building on a survey of media institutions in eighteen West European and North American democracies, Hallin and Mancini, in their book 'Comparing media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics' (2004) identify the principal dimensions of variation in media systems and the political variables that have shaped their evolution. They go on to identify three major models of media system development (the Polarized Pluralist, Democratic Corporatist and Liberal models) to explain why the media have played a different role in politics in each of these systems, and to explore the forces of change that are currently transforming them. It provides a key theoretical statement about the relationship between media and political systems, a key statement about the methodology of comparative analysis in political communication and a clear overview of the variety of media institutions that have developed in the West, understood within their political and historical context.

sharp as in other countries with linguistic division” (ibid). Generally, they claim that religious conflicts, together with ethnic-linguistic and political clashes simultaneously “encouraged the use of the press as an instrument for diffusing ideas and organizing civil society” (p. 196).

The *Sonderbundskrieg* lasted for less than a month, causing few casualties. The war is considered to have had a major impact on both the psychology and the society of the Swiss and of Switzerland. Swiss citizens from all strata of society, whether Catholic, Protestant, or from the liberal or conservative movements, realised that the cantons would profit further if their economic and religious interests were merged. In 1848³⁷ Switzerland adopted a federal constitution and the use of referenda (mandatory for any amendment of this constitution).

The new constitution provided for a central authority while leaving the cantons the right to self-government on local issues. The freedom of the press was finally and formally established and written down in Article 45 of the constitution. In 1874, the constitution was amended extensively in order to take into account the rise in population and the Industrial Revolution. It introduced the facultative referendum for laws at the federal level and also established federal responsibility for defence, trade, and legal matters.

3.3. Direct democracy as a premise for the rise of party press

Although the freedom of the press was by then formally guaranteed, the Swiss press in the second half of the 19th century was anything but ‘free’. Like in other European and North-American Countries “the point of journalism was to persuade as well as inform, and the press tended to be highly partisan” (McChesney, 2008,

³⁷ Swiss citizens are subject to three legal jurisdictions: the commune, canton and federal levels. The 1848 federal constitution defines a system of direct democracy (sometimes called half-direct democracy since it is added by the more commonplace institutions of a parliamentary democracy). The instruments of Swiss direct democracy at the federal level, known as civil rights (*Volksrechte, droits civiques*), include the right to submit a constitutional initiative and a referendum, both of which may overturn parliamentary decisions. By calling a federal referendum, a group of citizens may challenge a law that has been passed by parliament, if they can gather 50,000 signatures against the law within 100 days. If so, a national vote is scheduled where voters decide by a simple majority whether to accept or reject the law. Eight cantons together can also call a referendum on a federal law.

p. 26). Switzerland's political consensus system, based on the country's small size and cultural diversity, can be considered to be conducive to the practice of instrumentalizing the press in order to disseminate political perspectives and goals and to influence publishers and journalists accordingly. Hallin and Mancini, in their analysis of media systems, define instrumentalization as the "control of the media by outside actors – parties, politicians, social groups or movements, or economic actors seeking political influence – who use them to intervene in the world of politics" (2004, p.37).

It can be argued that in comparison to other European countries with government-media relations where party men were often editors (e.g. in Britain), the process of press instrumentalization and the building of a party press in Switzerland was even more extensive. As a particular phenomenon, Swiss political parties, as well as a major part of the political administration, were (and still are traditionally) run on a militia system, which implies that most Swiss politicians and also members of parliament handle even their most important tasks on a part-time basis and in an extra-official way.

Thus, in the second half of the 19th century (and as vestiges of the party press until the 1960s) it used to be quite common practice that, for example, political party executives and union secretaries would simultaneously work as politicians, as well as newspaper editors. Since journalistic work was considered to be a political task (and political work was done extra-officially) there did not seem to be a need for specific journalistic training and education (Blum, 2002). Consequently, becoming a journalist at the time was all about learning on the job and cultivating insider relationships that would mostly be established in the political work life of the part-time editors.

Journalism scholars like Blum emphasise the fact that the Swiss opinion on the press as it emerged in the second half of the 19th century was strongly instrumentalized by political objectives and often operated as '*Dienerinnen der Parteien*' or handmaid of the political parties (1993, p.134). Blum, who was a journalist and a part-time politician himself before becoming a leading scholar at the media and communication department at the University of Berne, reasons that

the traditional entanglement of the political militia system with journalism practice prevented Swiss journalism from developing a standardised education and training system.

Marr et al. (2001), in their research on Swiss journalists, also lament that a systematic journalistic education that would foster professionalism and adequately endow journalists to resist and differentiate from political or economic instrumentalization was never a serious issue until the 1980s. Lüönd (2007) claims that especially in a direct democracy, politicians may be more likely to seize control of the mass media than in other forms of democracy. Switzerland's system of direct democracy, which mainly originates from the federal constitution of 1848, is highly differentiated and therefore complex. The concept functions on three levels: the confederation, the regional provinces (26 cantons) and the local communities.

The system is basically the result of the country's socio-cultural and socio-political diversity and creates various opportunities for political articulation (Meier, 2004). Since Swiss citizens in the traditional direct democracy model are regularly asked to vote on all three levels (confederation, cantons and communities) they are dependent on a permanent supply of information and on regularly taking part in public discourse.

Consequently, providing information to the citizens in the direct democracy model belongs to the politician's core competencies. Without providing constant information on political issues, no politician in a direct democracy context would be able to find a majority to realise his or her projects.

In this context, Hallin and Mancini claim that the strong form of political parallelism particularly developed in democratic corporatist countries like Switzerland because these were countries:

in which the mass media served as instruments of public discussion, representing the different social, political, and economic interest that through them debate important issues, struggle for consent, and build the symbolic ground that makes agreement possible (2004, p.196).

3.4. Rise of mass circulation press and lack of professionalism

Political parallelism, with its tendency to instrumentalise, must be regarded as a crucial force in Switzerland's press from its early years in mid 19th century into the second half of the 20th century. The majority of the Swiss papers were affiliated to political parties and since all these party papers were politically opinionated they provided the basis for the political discourse in the country until the end of the 1960s. Nevertheless, towards the end of the 19th century a new type of daily newspaper emerged and was named *Generalanzeiger* (general newspaper or gazette). Their implementation on the press market indicated that the logic of newspaper publishing was increasingly shifting from being political to being primarily commercial.

Mostly established by foreigners and only loosely tied to parties, the new papers positioned themselves on the market as politically independent and as profit-making newspapers (examples: *Tribune de Genève*, *Tribune de Lausanne*, *Tages-Anzeiger*). The concept of politically independent newspapers had already become evident in Europe with the establishment of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in 1856, *Le Temps* in 1861 and Milan's *Corriere della Sera* in 1870.

When Zurich's first general newspaper the *Tages-Anzeiger* was launched in 1893, Switzerland, like its neighbours, was in the midst of social changes. It already had a literacy rate in excess of 90 percent and led the world in this respect (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). As was the case in other central and north European countries, industrialisation, urbanisation and proletarianisation was growing fast and fuelled the working class' need for relaxation and distraction.

This rising need was perfectly met by the new *Generalanzeigers*, which were the country's first popular papers focussing on reports on everyday life problems, human interest, sports and entertainment and, above all, local news (Blum, 1993). When the *Tages-Anzeiger* was first published in 1893, the circulation of the new daily had already reached 40,000 and it was distributed as a free paper during the first few weeks with the result that the number of subscriptions amounted to

25,000 within the first two months. Three years after its launch, the *Tages-Anzeiger* became Zurich's largest newspaper by far (Lüönd, 2007).

With the successful launch of the *Tages-Anzeiger*, the mass circulation press finally broke into the Swiss market, thus competing with the traditional political press and the small regional and local papers. The total number of the country's newspapers and magazines rose from 256 in 1856 to well over 1,000 in 1896 (Wettstein, 1902). The increase of the range of newspapers constantly stimulated competition and fuelled the pressure of economisation, which according to scholars like Meier (2005) is regarded to have had a negative impact on journalism quality as the market demanded more journalists than ever and recruited them from within every imaginable professional field.

However, the newcomers and career changers were not adequately educated or trained as journalists, nor were they experienced in journalism and therefore had to practice work by learning on the job. Hence, Meier asserts that professional journalism in Switzerland at the end of the 19th century was practically non-existent and professional consciousness was under-developed and the feeling of solidarity amongst journalists absent (ibid).

The problems of inadequate journalism training and education that the boom of newspapers and the functional change of the press brought to light by the end of the 19th century was obviously not a solely Swiss phenomenon. The newly established journalism associations sought appropriate resolutions and in 1895 the question of vocational journalism training was on top of the agenda of the International Journalism Congress (Meier, 2005). The Swiss Press Association (VSP, today impressum) founded in 1883 also began to debate the emerging professional inadequacy.

Nevertheless, and in contrast to their colleagues in other countries like the United States, the Swiss association came to the conclusion that there was no need to establish independent journalism schools. Interestingly enough, Swiss journalists at the time also disclaimed the question of establishing journalism schools that would provide a diploma that would become necessary to start a career (ibid).

It can be argued that this early stance against institutionalising and professionalising the journalistic craft may be regarded as the origin of the persistently dismissive attitude of many Swiss journalists and publishers towards systematic and off-the-job journalism training, which has not completely ceased to exist until today. According to Hugo Bütler, former and long-time editor of *Die Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, the crucial factors in becoming a professional journalist would be proficiency in one or two academic disciplines as well as the capability of good writing and impeccable characteristic traits (cited in Bänninger, 1999).

Contributing to the debate on the dichotomy of journalism theory and journalism practice dilemma, Peter Schellenberg (2008), the former director of *Schweizer Fernsehen* (the Swiss-German television station run by the publicly funded SRG SSR idée Suisse), claimed that in spite of the boom of communication and journalism training courses, journalism must still be viewed as a craft that can be learnt by 10 percent in the classroom and by 90 percent in the newsroom.

3.5. Complex relationship between academia and journalism

As a result of the dismissal of journalism institutionalization by publishers and journalists, organisations of professional journalists like the Swiss Press Association at the beginning of the 20th century attempted to make contact with academia hoping to receive adequate assistance in the process of professionalising journalism. The debates focused on the question of how universities would be able to contribute to practically equipping media practitioners for their job.

However, the common notion that journalism was a matter of natural talent stood in the way of a mutually beneficial relationship between academia and journalistic practice – a phenomenon that partly still exists today (Schade, 2005). The struggle of Swiss journalism to become an occupation that would have endorsed the Swiss Press Association's notion of building up social structural elements such as compulsory systems for training and paying workers or legal protection will be further addressed and discussed in Chapter Five within the literature review part of this thesis.

Nevertheless, the first courses in journalism at Swiss universities were established in 1903, one in Zurich and the other one in Berne. Oskar Wettstein in Zurich and Michael Bühler in Berne were the founders and first directors of the courses that were named *Zeitungswissenschaft* (newspaper studies)³⁸. Besides trying to establish an academic approach to journalism and mass communication, they both carried on working as newspaper editors and politicians simultaneously.

In the case of Bühler, his multiple responsibilities finally turned out to be too heavy a burden and when he had to resign due to health reasons a shortage of qualified academic staff became obvious and made evident the fact that journalism as an academic discipline by then had not yet been adequately anchored at the university level (Meier, 2005). Since the university of Berne was not able to recruit a suitable successor for Bühler, the journalism department was temporarily closed down.

Hence, during the following decades, the University of Zurich remained the only academic institution in Switzerland where *Zeitungswissenschaft* was taught and also primary research undertaken. Wettstein and his Zurich School conceived journalism as the “philosophy of daily history,” crucial for the ongoing analysis of developments within society (1903, p.33). The core role of the press in Wettstein’s view was to promote social education and information. For this reason, he believed that the purpose of academic study was to encourage a more profound understanding, which in his view was exactly what the press needed to improve its quality (Schade, 2005). In other words and in Wettstein’s view, a professional journalist also needed to learn to think scientifically.

It was Karl Weber, Wettstein’s successor at the Zurich department and also responsible for the revival of academic journalism courses at the University of Berne, who finally succeeded in theoretically anchoring and legitimising journalism studies as an academic discipline with an appropriate position in the Swiss alma mater. During the Second World War especially, the

³⁸*Zeitungswissenschaft*, which in German-speaking journalism research today is called *Publizistikwissenschaft*, is often associated with the early German media researcher Emil Dovifat who was the founding father of the *Institut für Zeitungswissenschaft* in Berlin.

Zeitungswissenschaft at the Zurich department headed by Weber distinguished itself as an imperturbable advocate of the idea of a liberal state and distanced itself from the political authorities.

Weber was a resolute opponent of state censorship and the instrumentalization of the Swiss press and argued vehemently “for the maintenance of press freedom, more decisive action against abuse, and disciplined, responsible behaviour on the part of the Swiss press” (1939, p.11). Schade claims that, in doing so, Weber imposed upon journalism the duties of an established profession, which resulted in a broad public acceptance of the press amongst the democratically minded Swiss population. Or, as Schade puts it:

It was clear to a large part of the Swiss population that in the majority of cases, the press had been a far more unambiguous advocate of democracy than many federal councillors and parliamentarians. In short, the press had proven its worth and was often called “protection forest of democracy” (cf. Frei 1987: 7). The academic world had made a vital contribution to this positive image (2005, webpage).

Weber, like his predecessors, still worked as a journalism practitioner while pursuing an academic career, which by all means can be regarded as a phenomenon symptomatic to the leading figures of Swiss journalism studies at the time and also later in the 20th century. Nevertheless, he was not able to integrate journalism studies or mass communications as it was later called with journalism practice.

As a matter of fact, Weber and Wettstein’s policies are more or less still in effect today. Practice oriented journalism education in Switzerland was not professionally and systematically institutionalised until the 1960s, contrary to development in other nations like France, Germany or the US where journalism schools (often in cooperation with universities like the Columbia School of Journalism in New York) had already been established in the first decades of the 20th century.

In their early academic studies in journalism, and later in mass communications, Swiss universities like those in Zurich, Berne, Basel or Geneva did not integrate vocational training courses in their curricula, but pursued and further developed

their courses of *Zeitungswissenschaft* into social science oriented disciplines. Blum (2002) argues that this strategy increasingly detached the universities' approach to journalism from actual journalism practice, but Schade (2005) acknowledges that ever since the foundation of the Zurich department in 1903, the fundamental focus of academic teaching at Swiss universities has been on the acquisition of a capacity for theoretical and methodical reflection, with the result that practice-oriented training of journalists has been left largely to the media organisations.

3.6. From the 'press model' of education to journalism schools

As a consequence of the lack of systematised journalism training and as a result of their own interest in having cadres of editors and reporters trained in a fashion conducive to their own corporate interests, in the 1950s and 1960s key publishing houses such as Tages-Anzeiger (now Tamedia), Jean Frey³⁹ and Ringier began to establish internal vocational training courses that became known as the 'press model' of journalism education. The vocational in-house education introduced by the publisher Tages-Anzeiger was widely regarded as the paradigm of the press model (Schulz, 2004).

The in-house educators, who used to be senior reporters and editors at Tages-Anzeiger, selectively recruited applicants (only two to three people per annum) and systematically introduced them to newspaper journalism during a period of 18 months. The applicants (*Volontäre*) completed internships in different departments of the daily newspaper, were deployed as interns in the editorial offices of the company's magazines and even worked for a certain period of time at a news agency. Each trainee was individually coached and finally qualified to be employed full-time as a reporter or an editor.

The Tages-Anzeiger apprentice model was later adopted by other Swiss media companies and demonstrated the importance of systematically training young people entering journalism, thus playing a seminal role in convincing publishers

³⁹ Jean Frey, a former traditional Swiss publishing house, merged in 2007 with Verlag Handelszeitung and belongs today to the German-owned media conglomerate Axel Springer.

and journalism organisations to establish journalism schools. In 1974 Switzerland's biggest publishing company Ringier founded its own journalism school offering an 18-month vocational course, also accessible to non-Ringier journalists. Journalism training in electronic media started at the publicly funded Swiss Broadcast Company (SRG SSR), providing regular and partly compulsory vocational training courses for its radio and television journalists.

The first systematic and off-the-job journalism training was initiated by the Centre Romand de Formation des Journalistes (CRFJ) in the French-speaking city of Lausanne in 1965. Right from the beginning of its existence, the Swiss-French institution started cooperating with the biggest publishers and the Swiss Broadcast Corporation (SRG SSR), who made structured training of their journalists at the CRFJ a compulsory matter. The first journalism training courses in the Italian-speaking part of the country started ten years later and were mainly supported by the Ministry of Education of the Canton of Ticino.

Contrary to the situation in the French- and Italian-speaking parts of the country, in German-speaking Switzerland off-the-job journalism training and education was first launched through private initiatives. The oldest and still active school offering journalism as a part of its curriculum is the School for Applied Linguistics (*Schule für angewandte Linguistik, SAL*) in Zurich founded in 1969. The first 'proper' journalism school in the German-speaking part of the country was initiated by the formation of MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism in 1984.

As I have already stated in the introduction to this study, MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism, is a Lucerne based foundation supported by the country's major publishers (the association Swiss Media), the Swiss national television and radio association (SRG SSR idée Suisse), the journalist associations, the Canton and the City of Lucerne as well as by BAKOM (OFCOM Federal Office of Communications).

MAZ is a member of the University Campus Federation of Lucerne and the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA). It cooperates with Swiss universities and universities of applied sciences and arts, with other institutions within the field and with foreign journalism schools like the Hamburg Media

School. It is one of the initiators of the Swiss Association for Quality in Journalism⁴⁰ and agitates for professional standards through membership of several journalism-prize juries.

A more detailed outline of MAZ's journalism training activities and initiatives is presented and discussed in the next chapter, which focuses on the contemporary situation of journalism education, training and practice in the German-speaking part of Switzerland.

3.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the relevant issues that influenced the development of journalism and journalism education in Switzerland. I have also sketched out how the country's historical socio-cultural and socio-political diversity and its political system of direct democracy have impacted on the emergence of journalism by developing a remarkably strong form of political parallelism in which the mass media have intensively served as elements and instruments of public discussion.

As a result of this high level of political parallelism, this chapter has pointed out that journalism practice from the second half of the 19th century until the 1970s was understood to be a sub-function of politics, eventually leading to a strong politicisation of journalists. It has been argued that this intensive politicisation prevented Swiss journalists from becoming members of a profession, lacking strong institutional coherence and a consensus on its own rules for a very long time, even until today to an extent.

Furthermore, the chapter has discussed the long-time complex relationship between academia and Swiss journalists, editors and media entrepreneurs with the result that practice-oriented training of journalists has been left largely to the media organisations. The historical account has also addressed the common

⁴⁰ The association (in German: *Verein Qualität im Journalismus*) was founded in 1999 by Swiss media representatives. It aims to improve and secure journalistic quality in Swiss media.

practice of the former press model of education (coined by the media organisations) and outlined the emerging of the first journalism schools offering systematic off-the-job journalism training courses with a special focus on MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism.

The next chapter addresses the contemporary situation of journalism education, training and practice in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, particularly focusing on MAZ and its Certificate Course in Journalism and discussing the latest national data on structures and attitudes of journalists in Switzerland.

Chapter Four:

Present Education, Training, and Journalism Practice

4.1. Introduction

In exploring the Swiss history of journalism, journalism education and training, I have made it clear that practice-oriented journalism training in the German-speaking part of Switzerland was left largely to the news organisations. By sketching the contemporary situation of journalism education, training, and journalism practice, Chapter Four shows that in the past ten years the field of journalism education has been enlarged mainly due to the rising involvement of higher education institutions in journalism training.

This chapter therefore begins by addressing the general tendency towards a growing diversity in the journalism education scene and outlines the various characteristics of education and training opportunities for contemporary Swiss-German journalists with a special focus on job-relevant education and training. I will then look into the basic types of journalism education and training such as university-based journalism courses, college-based journalism programmes, and professional training courses provided by journalism institutes and media organisations.

The chapter will have a special focus on the earlier mentioned off-the-job training model offered by MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism in Lucerne and will examine its Certificate Course in Journalism studied by the trainee journalists who are central to the present investigation's empirical approach. The scrutiny of the course's curriculum will provide a useful framework to better assess the accounts of the journalists studied later in the thesis.

As a second core point in this chapter, I attempt to mark out the various characteristics of contemporary Swiss (and mainly Swiss-German) journalism practice and underpin equalities and similarities, as well as distinctions, with

professional journalists in other European countries⁴¹. In this respect, the chapter will address the socio-demographic idiosyncrasies of the profile of Swiss-German journalists, the perception of their roles and norms, and the question of job satisfaction that have been widely regarded as typical for contemporary Swiss journalists. Again, this will be relevant to understanding and interpreting the trainee journalists' comments about the training they receive later in this thesis.

4.2. Increasing diversity as a general tendency

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the field of Swiss journalism education and training has been divided into three layers of education and training programmes: the first layer is understood to be a theoretical preparation for professional practice offered by a range of universities, the second comprises off-the-job and on-the-job training, and the third layer entails postgraduate studies (see Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of education and training institutions in Switzerland

Outside the media: <i>Preparing for professional practice</i>	<i>off-the-job training</i>	<i>postgraduate</i>
Universities like Zurich, Bern, Freiburg, Lugano etc.	MAZ Centre romand de formation des journalistes	MAZ
Universities of Applied Sciences, e.g. ZHAW Winterthur, ZHS Luzern	Corso di giornalismo della Svizzera italiana	
Inside the media:	<i>on-the-job training</i>	
	Swiss Broadcast Corporation SRG Publishers, e.g. Ringier	

Blum (2002, p. 53)

Over the last 20 years, Swiss journalism has become increasingly academic in nature, as has likewise been observed in other European countries⁴². At the end of the 20th century, around 40 percent of Swiss-German journalists had an academic

⁴¹ A useful basis for a comparison in evaluating different contemporary European journalism systems is provided by the book *European Journalism Education* (2009) edited by Georgios Terzis which will be addressed in Chapter Six of this thesis.

⁴² *ibid*

educational background; in the French- and Italian-speaking parts of the country, around 60 percent of journalists had graduated from university before entering the journalistic field.

However, and this seems more striking than the above-mentioned increasing academisation of Swiss journalists' educational background, the contingent of journalists who studied mass communications or journalism must still be regarded as comparatively low. By 2000 only 19 percent of the Swiss-German journalists had graduated in mass communications. The share of diploma holders from journalism schools (e.g. MAZ) also increased. By 2000, around 13 percent of Swiss-German journalists had studied at a journalism school, whereas in the French speaking part the percentage was much higher (close to 70 percent) mainly due to the fact that publishers and media organisation make journalism training compulsory for their practitioners (Marr et al., 2001).

As illustrated in Table 2, findings from a recent survey held in 2008 by Wyss and Keel (2010) indicate a further rise in the number of Swiss German journalists having graduated in mass communications (24 percent by 2008) whereas the share of diploma holders from journalism schools has substantially remained the same (14 percent). The rise in the number of journalists having graduated in mass communications can be seen as a result of the stronger involvement of higher education institutions in journalism education and training. By the end of the 1990s, several universities of applied sciences entered the Swiss journalism education market offering practice-oriented Bachelor's and Master's courses in journalism and corporate communications (e.g. Winterthur) as well as Bachelor's courses in business communication (Zurich, Lucerne).

Table 2: Job-relevant education per language region (in percent)

	Year	German	French
No journalistic education	1998	15.4	5.5
	2008	17.7	9.9
Journalism school	1998	12.6	67.0
	2008	13.9	68.5
Mass communications	1998	18.8	12.0
	2008	23.7	13.7
Internship	1998	41.1	10.7
	2008	38.1	24.5
Volontariat	1998	41.7	76.1
	2008	30.5	46.0

Wyss and Keel (2010, p. 253)

As Table 2 further shows, the most common manner of journalism recruitment in the German-speaking part of Switzerland today is the internship (38 percent), followed by the so called *Volontariat* that has decreased over a period of ten years from around 42 percent down to 30 percent. The *Volontariat* is a kind of semi-formalised professional traineeship usually involving a period of between 12 and 24 months. The internships are less structured and vary in length and training format subject to the needs and ideas of the employers.

The internships and *Volontariats* are mostly arranged in co-operation with adequate journalism training courses (often at MAZ). Wyss and Keel (2010), in the presentation of their findings, do not specify whether a certain number of journalists allocated to the category of 'Internship' and *Volontariat* have also simultaneously attended an off-the-job training course at MAZ. I am assuming that this is partly the case, which would then considerably increase the number of journalists allotted to the category 'Journalism School'.

It has become common for graduates of mass communication and media science studies to enter the profession by accomplishing an internship and continue by learning on the job and/or attending journalism practice oriented seminars.

Some also decide to enrol for the Certificate Course in Journalism at MAZ. Again, Wyss and Keel (ibid) do not spell out the number of university graduates enrolling for the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism, which would once more further increase the percentage of journalists allocated to the category 'Journalism School.'

As the findings of Wyss and Keel's survey reveal, there is still a remarkable number of journalists at work who have no background of formal and systematic journalistic education. The number of journalists who had no formal journalism education at all, but have learned everything on the job instead, remained stable between 1998 and 2008 on a national basis. Interestingly enough, the number of Swiss-German journalists without any job-related education, however, has risen from 15 to 18 percent between 1998 and 2008.

Nonetheless, Wyss and Keel's analysis does not offer arguments for this development. It can be assumed that the massive growth of the free paper press and the advancement of news websites within the Swiss media industry have created an increasing demand for a young tech-savvy workforce that is initially trained on-the-job.

Regarding the adequacy of journalism education, about 90 percent of all print media journalists (surveyed in 2008) declared their journalistic education to be "very adequate" and two thirds of all surveyed journalists were happy with the opportunities offered to gain further journalistic education and training in their work (Bonfadelli et al., forthcoming). From these findings it can be inferred that Swiss journalists, once they have achieved regular employment, seem to be quite supportive of the educational system in place. Hence, it is argued that this outcome will be of relevance when evaluating the journalists' accounts on the issue of employability later in this thesis.

In order to provide a more detailed overview of the most common paths of education and training leading to journalistic practice in German-speaking Switzerland, the following sections will introduce the three most widespread

types: university-based, college-based, and professional with a special focus on the curriculum of the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism.

4.3. Basic types of journalism education and training

4.3.1. University-based journalism courses

Most universities in Switzerland provide programmes in mass communications and media studies at both the Bachelor's and Master's levels. Studies in the field of mass communications and media science are offered at the universities of Zurich (Mass communications and media research, BA and MA), Basel (media studies, BA and MA), Lugano (Communication science, BA and MA), Lucerne (Social and communication sciences, BA; comparative media research, MA), Neuchâtel (Linguistics and communication studies, BA and MA), and St. Gall (Corporate communication, BA and MA). Communication and media studies can also be studied at the universities of Berne (BA, only as minor), Fribourg (BA and MA) and Geneva (MA). In 2008, Geneva also introduced an MA in journalism attempting to bridge theory and practice in academic journalism education.

4.3.2. College-based journalism programmes

As previously mentioned, at the end of the 1990s, as a result of the Bologna Declaration⁴³, an increasing number of universities of applied sciences (colleges) entered the Swiss journalism education market offering practice-oriented Bachelor's and Master's courses in journalism and corporate communications. One of the most significant institutions in this field is the Institute of Applied Media Studies (IAM) in Winterthur, close to the city of Zurich. The institute

⁴³The so-called Bologna Declaration, which was signed by 29 European Ministers of Education in June 1999 in Bologna, aims to create a European area of higher education and to strengthen the competitiveness of Europe as a place for education. The declaration put the following key points into action: establish a system with transparent and comparable degree programmes, create a two-tiered system of degrees (undergraduate, graduate), introduce a credit point system (ECTS model), encourage mobility by removing the hindrances to mobility, foster European collaboration through quality assurance, and support the European dimension in higher education (EHEA, website).

belongs to the governing body of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences. The IAM attempts to balance theoretical approaches and professional practice in its curricula, offering a Bachelor's degree in Journalism and Organizational Communication, as well as a Master's degree in Publishing.

Another college-based institution in the German-speaking part of Switzerland is the School of Applied Linguistics (SAL) in Zurich. The school's general curriculum is first and foremost targeted at individuals wanting to pursue a career in language-oriented professions. It also provides a skills-based programme in journalism that can be studied either full-time or on a part-time basis.

In the eastern part of the country, the College of Technology and Economy (Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft, HTW) in Chur has offered a Bachelor's programme in Multimedia Production for a few years. After completion of the programme, the students can directly proceed to the consecutive Master's in Information and Communication Science that is offered in collaboration with the German University of Applied Sciences Mittweida.

The Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (Hochschule Luzern) offers a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, specially focussing on communication and marketing, whereas the Zurich University of Applied Business Sciences (HWZ Hochschule für Wirtschaft Zürich) runs a Bachelor of Science in Business Communication including multiple aspects of media-related knowledge and journalistic work.

4.3.3. Professional journalism training at MAZ

As the leading institution of journalism training in German-speaking Switzerland, MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism provides a curriculum with various part-time vocational courses in print, radio, television and online journalism, as well as courses in editorial and media management. The institution has committed itself to a clear mission that focuses on the education of young journalists and the further education of experienced practitioners in all media types in the German

speaking part of Switzerland (MAZ, website). MAZ offers part-time study and training courses for those already working in journalism and courses for those preparing to enter the professional world of journalism from the Master's level to short introductory modules.

The courses of study are, for the greater part, vocational, compact, modular and stand international comparison to the ECTS credit system⁴⁴. The further education seminars are short and regularly host international students. Amongst the school's key courses are the Certificate Course in Journalism (four semesters, part time) which is part of the present investigation, the Master of Arts in Journalism (four semesters, full time, and in cooperation with Hamburg Media School/University of Hamburg), the Executive Master of New Media Journalism (four semesters, part-time, and in cooperation with the University of Leipzig, the Akademie für Publizistik, Hamburg, and the Kuratorium für Journalistenausbildung, Salzburg) and Press Photography (three semesters full-time).

Most of the 300 instructors⁴⁵ and trainers are professionals from the editorial staff at newspapers, magazines, radio stations, TV stations, photo agencies and online media. Others are professionals from publishing and media business organisations, as well as from the arts. Amongst the teaching staff there is also a number of guest lecturers from media and mass communication departments at Swiss and international universities.

The school hosts over 1,000 students each year, approximately half of the MAZ students are aged between 20 and 30 years old, while a third are between 30 and 40. It offers over 950 course days a year and operates with an annual budget of around five million Swiss francs⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ The ECTS credit system represents a standard for comparing the study attainment and performance of higher education students across the European Union and other collaborating European countries like Switzerland. ECTS credits awards for successfully completing studies which are equivalent to a certain number of hours of studies in all participating countries and is basically used to facilitate transfer and progression through out the European education infrastructure. See also the information about the Bologna Declaration in this same chapter (section 4.3.2.).

⁴⁵ Seven directors of studies are responsible for the different courses of study.

⁴⁶ Five million Swiss Francs are equal to around 3.6 million Pounds Sterling (exchange rate mid September 2011). Of this, 70 percent of the annual budget is financed by the students or their employers, 20 percent is supported by the public sector (mainly OFCOM and the Canton of Lucerne); 10 percent comes from donors.

Since its beginning, MAZ has attempted to differentiate journalism education from courses in corporate communication and public relations, although the school has been successfully running a department for professional media relations for a couple of years. Today, the school's department for media relations offers rhetoric, writing and media training for those responsible for communications and public relations, as well as leaders in business, politics, administration and the non-profit sector. Sylvia Egli von Matt (2004), the school's current director, emphasises that from a socio-political as well as from a journalism professionalism perspective, it is crucial that communication beginners first concentrate on one field and only later eventually change roles.

Egli von Matt underlines that, although certain communication techniques seem to be equal to those used in journalism, and although the market does not consequently differentiate between the roles of journalists and other communicators, public relations agents and corporate communication people, their perspectives, their self-perception and basically the philosophical approach differ a great deal from the work philosophy of journalists.

MAZ's policy of running courses in media relations and corporate communications under the patronage of a journalism school has also occasionally met with scepticism and criticism (e.g. Hitz, 2005). Despite incidental criticism from some journalistic circles, the school has been claiming to master the balancing act between the commitment to journalism and the handling of media relations as an additional curriculum and source of revenue in a just, and for both sides, enriching way.

4.3.4. The MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism

The Certificate Course in Journalism is based on off-the-job training. The main conditions are that candidates need to be involved in a *Volontariat* or be employed by a media organisation and work in a newsroom in print media, television, radio or online media. The journalists-to-be must look for an occupation by themselves, which can turn out to be quite a difficult task since the job market in journalism in

Switzerland is rather small (also see Chapter 2). It is assumed that in the German-speaking part there are no more than 50 posts with a *Volontariat* available (Wespe, 2008).

An entry exam and a practical assignment, together with a general knowledge test, decide admission. The programme comprises 90 mandatory course days, which must be attended during the course of four semesters. The curriculum of the course is designed according to the principles of the Bologna Accord⁴⁷ and is structured in seven module parts:

Module one: Basics

Module two: Dialogue and self-competence

Module three: Language and speaking skills

Module four: Professional competence and expertise

Module five: Journalistic expression

Module six: Multimedia

Module seven: Diploma project

Two thirds of the training programme is based on mandatory units, the rest is freely selectable. The programme includes on-campus training in classes at the school's location in Lucerne, web-based training and written assignments, literature review and qualifications for the different modules. Successful accomplishment of the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism yields 90 points for the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

The learning objectives are tested in three ways:

- by written examinations: qualification of the basics module, qualification of professional competence.
- by the qualification of written assignments (portraits, reportages, interviews).

⁴⁷ See the Bologna Declaration in this chapter (section 4.3.2.).

- by the diploma project. Trainee journalists are asked to demonstrate their mastery of the profession by completing a portrait, a background report, or a radio and television feature. The diploma project has to be accomplished in a bi- or multimedia fashion. The graduates need to demonstrate with their diploma project that they are able to think and act in a multimedia way. In addition to the diploma piece in their regular field of journalism practice, they are asked to produce a complementary multimedia piece.

MAZ, of its own accord, claims that the school's unique selling proposition is the close alliance between journalism theory and journalism practice (Wespe, 2008). With regard to the Certificate Course in Journalism, the school arranges a mentor for every trainee journalist studying the course (usually a senior co-worker or editor of the trainees' newsroom). The mentors are asked to discuss strengths and weaknesses with the respective trainee journalists on a regular basis. During the process of accomplishing the diploma project, additional coaching is organised to further support the trainees. Experienced journalists volunteer in terms of supporting the trainees in their approaches to the selection of a topic, narrowing it down and storytelling.

The principles and goals of the Certificate Course in Journalism have also been harmonised with the "Tartu-Declaration"⁴⁸, a pan-European agreement on the principles and competency goals of journalism education and training established and signed by the members of the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA) (for details about the declaration, see Chapter Thirteen and the Appendices).

Regarding the future of journalism education, MAZ assumes that journalism training in Switzerland will continue to be based on a concept of trisection. One group comprising career starters with or without an academic education background will have access to the profession via the *Volontariat* model, the kind of structured in-house training provided by news organisations; another group will consist of graduates from departments of journalism and communication

⁴⁸ The name of this declaration originates from the city of Tartu, Estonia, the place where the declaration was signed by its founders on June 10th, 2006.

research at universities who will go through a training-on-the job concept or accomplish an abbreviated internship at the start of their career; and finally there will also be a group of career starters and career changers without any journalistic background who, individually, will be granted access to the field of journalism from a learning-by-doing starting point (Egli von Matt, 2004).

4.3.5. Professional journalism training at other institutions

As mentioned in Chapter Three (see section 3.5.), the first journalism school in Switzerland was founded in 1965, located in the French-speaking city of Lausanne. The Centre romand de formation des journalistes (CRFJ) runs a skills-oriented course, mainly for journalists working in the Swiss-French media. In order to be able to attend the 40 to 50 course days, students need to be employed by a recognised media organisation. The students finish the off-the-job training course with a certificate.

Apart from MAZ and the CRFJ, there are a few institutions, mainly in the Swiss-German part of the country, that also provide professional vocational education, although they are not nearly as significant as the two above-mentioned traditional and well-established institutions. Worth mentioning is The Media School (Medienschule) in the city of St. Gall in the eastern part of Switzerland. The institution belongs to the Migros Klubschule⁴⁹, Switzerland's largest further education institution, and offers part-time courses of 30 days over a period of eight months. The courses are tailored for both beginners and experienced journalists.

A further provider of skills-based journalism education is the Media School Northwest Switzerland (Medienschule Nordwestschweiz, MSN) offering seminars in journalism and communications. The institutions also co-operate with the School of Applied Linguistics in Zurich (SAL) and the Media School Klara in Berlin.

⁴⁹ The Migros Klubschule basically provides learning opportunities for the general public, companies and public services as a cultural and social goal for the Migros group, Switzerland's biggest retailer. The Migros Klubschule is subsidised through the *Kulturprozent* (a sort of cultural levy) that allows further education to be offered at an affordable price.

A further institution that can be mentioned here is EB Zurich. The organisation belongs to the vocational school of the Canton of Zurich and provides skills-based courses are mainly designed for print journalists.

Compared to the period when the 'press model' (see Chapter Three, section 3.5.) used to be the predominant way of training novices for professional journalism practice, structured in-house journalism education is no longer that prevalent. Systematic further education and training is provided by the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation SRG SSR idée Suisse, especially in the fields of radio and television journalism and by the country's biggest publishing house, Ringier.

As mentioned in Chapter 3 (see section 3.5.), Ringier founded its own journalism school in 1974, establishing courses and internships first and foremost for the organisation's own trainees. After suspending the courses for some years (mainly due to the deteriorating job situation in the media industry), Ringier is back on the training track again. On the occasion of its 175th anniversary, Ringier has founded two new establishments to meet future needs in the fields of further education and digital media: the Ringier Academy and the media LAB.

The Ringier Academy is understood to be a group-wide network platform supporting the hands-on training and further education of Ringier journalists, editors and employees of the publishing house. The journalism school was re-launched in 2007 and offers a 12 month basic training course integrated in one of Ringier's principal newsrooms. The main focus of the programme lies in learning and improving journalistic skills.

4.4. Characteristics of the present journalism workforce

4.4.1. Similarities with professionals in other European countries

According to the historical and political determinants that impacted upon journalism education (see Chapters Two and Three), one might have good reason

to assume that the sociology of Swiss journalists would be as distinctive and as unique as the country's particular political position within Europe. However, this assumption was partly corrected by the seminal nation-wide examinations of Swiss journalists conducted by Marr et al. (2001) and Wyss and Keel (2010).

According to their findings, Swiss journalists quite often display a great deal of equalities and similarities with their fellow professionals in other western European or North American countries. They work under equivalent structural conditions, originate from similar socio-cultural segments and the number of academics entering the profession is growing. They also equally judge their occupational standards, share the same professional understanding and self-perception and feel the same pressure caused by globalisation and its different facets of commercialisation, information overload and technological challenges. The only substantial discrepancy the study of Marr et al. reveals is the fact that when compared to other European countries, the pressure for Swiss journalism to change due to new technological and economic challenges shows a certain delay.

4.4.2. Socio-demographic characteristics

However, what must be considered to be an outstanding characteristic of Swiss journalism is the country's comparatively high number of journalists. Wyss and Keel (2010), as well as Marr et al. (2001), assume that the total number of professional journalists in the whole of Switzerland is around 10,000, of which most are registered with the three national trade unions, the Swiss Journalists' Association (impressum), the Swiss Syndicate of Media and Communication (Syndicom) and the Swiss Syndicate of Media Professional (SSM). This equals about 130 journalists per 100,000 inhabitants and is significantly above the European average (Marr et al., 2001). The corresponding density of journalists in Germany, for example, amounts to 58 per 100,000 inhabitants (Weischenberg et al., 2006).

The average age of Swiss journalists is around 43 years. A constant increase in the number of women journalists (35 percent in 2008) can also be observed following

the international trend (Wyss & Keel, 2010). It must be pointed out that journalists working for the national public service broadcaster SRG SSR Idée suisse still dominate (in numbers) the national journalism labour market, with a share of 18 percent of the total number of Swiss journalists (ibid).

4.4.3. Perception of roles and norms

The findings of Wyss and Keel (2010), based on questions about journalists' self-evaluation, more or less endorse the earlier conclusions of Marr et al. (2001). Generally speaking, Swiss journalists see their roles in a pluralistic context. The role of the 'impartial reporter' still seems to be the most important to exert and to achieve. Strong agreement is also found with the role of the 'analyser' of complex issues. Compared to the findings of Marr et al. (ibid), the roles of the 'critic', the 'commentator' or the 'advocate' seem to lose importance.

In this respect, Bonfadelli et al. (forthcoming) argue that younger journalists tend to be less closely associated with roles supporting the public good such as the 'commentator' or the 'analyst' than with more audience-oriented roles such as the 'adviser', the 'service provider' and 'the entertainer,' whereas the role of the 'marketer' is still seen as unimportant. Wyss and Keel (2010) claim that the varying characteristics of the roles can be interpreted through the variety of media formats, organisational regulations and working conditions, rather than through variables such as language region, sex, age or education.

At the organisational level of the newsroom, questions about economic efficiency seem to gain increasing interest. Leadership and management know-how are becoming more important in everyday news work, whereas the outsourcing of editorial work does not (yet) match the strategies and goals of editors and media managers. However, the 2008 survey clearly reveals that in the system of Swiss journalism (similar to other highly media-developed countries), the Internet has become a core tool. In fact, it is used constantly and in practically all aspects of journalistic production such as research into facts and people, content publication,

exchanges with the audience from emails to user-generated-content, as well as co-orientation and co-operation with other media and their output.

The share of freelance journalists⁵⁰ increased from 11 to 19 percent in 2008. Bonfadelli et al. (forthcoming) interpret the change by concluding that an increasing number of journalists now have freelance contracts, but still work like regular staff. Regarding the present working situation, findings from the 2008 investigation show that 70 percent of the journalists surveyed (76 percent in 1998) indicate that they would still recommend journalism as a profession, especially those working for public broadcasting.

On the other hand, the latest national survey also reveals that Swiss journalists' job satisfaction⁵¹ is decreasing. Bonfadelli et al. (ibid) assume two factors are responsible for the decrease: the growing workload for little pay, and the widespread job insecurity. Both reflect the media crisis and are partly due to effects of the economic downturn, partly to the structural transformation taking place in contemporary journalism.

4. 5. Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the current Swiss-German journalism education and training scene offers more pathways for the preparation of young Swiss wanting to enter journalism practice. They range from professional and basically vocational trainings at MAZ and other (mostly) private institutions to college- and university-based journalism courses. Similar to other Western European and North American countries, journalism in Switzerland has become increasingly academic, mainly due to the journalists' educational background, which tends to be more academic than two decades ago. Nevertheless, recent national surveys

⁵⁰ In the Canton of Zurich, freelance journalists are organised in their own association under the patronage of the national association, impressum.

⁵¹ These findings seem to be in accordance with a 2008 survey on journalists' job satisfaction in Switzerland conducted by the Center for Research on the Public Sphere and Society – fög, and the research institute GfS-Zürich. The study specified that the older and the more established Swiss journalists are, the less satisfied with their work conditions they become. See Chapter Eleven, section 11.6.1.

have revealed that the number of journalists who have studied journalism or mass communications is still relatively low.

In this respect, it is important to recognise that an academic degree is anything but a *carte blanche* or an entrance ticket to journalism practice, although it may be one of the qualifications certain employers acknowledge when assessing a job candidate's general education. The most common way to enter journalism in the German-speaking part of the country is the internship, followed by a traineeship called *Volontariat* in German. In contrast, the number of journalists with no formal and systematic journalism education is still comparatively high (18 percent in the Swiss-German part), notwithstanding the rising discussions about systematisation and standardisation of journalism education, the latter being an issue that was already addressed in the introduction chapter (see section 1.2.4.).

Various universities of applied sciences (colleges or Fachhochschulen) entered the journalism education market at the beginning of the 21st century, offering practice-oriented Bachelor's and Master's courses in journalism and corporate communications. Some of them, and above all the Institute of Applied Media Studies (IAM) in Winterthur close to Zurich, attempt to balance theoretical approaches and professional practice in their curricula, which are mainly at the Bachelor's degree level.

The rising involvement of higher education institutions in journalism education and training can be interpreted as one of the drivers for the above-mentioned debates about systematisation and standardisation of journalism education in Swiss journalism. On the one hand, these new academically informed educational pathways seem to intensify competition within Switzerland's small domestic market of journalism education and are a challenge to the longstanding vocational and industry-oriented training models, of which the Certificate Course in Journalism at MAZ is the most established. On the other hand, in detailing the curriculum of the off-the-job model at MAZ, this chapter has outlined how strongly MAZ is embedded in the Swiss-German journalism and news industry.

In regard to this study's purpose, namely to explore journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training, it is argued that this fairly new and competitive constellation in the Swiss-German journalism education scene has become an issue that needs to be examined. This is particularly necessary in relation to the question of whether trainee journalists need to be more academically informed or first and foremost require industry-driven training for an appropriate socialisation into their journalistic work life. Therefore, the findings of the present investigation are expected to display relevant insight into this matter.

Concerning the characteristics of the present Swiss-German journalism workforce, this chapter has emphasised that Swiss journalists (and hence also the journalists studied for the present investigation) basically share a lot of characteristics with their colleagues in other Western European and Northern American journalism landscapes. The latest national survey on Swiss journalists in 2008 has unveiled that a new generation of journalists is entering the field and more types of commercial media such as private broadcasting programmes, online news portals and free daily newspapers are gaining in importance (Bonfadelli et al., forthcoming).

According to that survey's findings, the appeal of more types of commercially oriented media also seems to affect the journalists' perception of their roles. The younger journalists are less closely associated with the roles incorporating accountability to citizens such as the 'commentator' or the 'analyst' than with more audience-oriented roles such as the 'service provider' and 'the entertainer'. It is argued that these findings are of special relevance when making inferences from the journalists' accounts on the issue of self-perception later in this thesis. As the average age of the journalists studied for this thesis is close to 30, almost thirteen years below the average age of all Swiss journalists⁵², it can already be assumed that the present investigation's findings in this particular case will be similar.

⁵² See this Chapter (section 4.4.2.)

Finally, this chapter has emphasised that it is not so much minor changes in journalists' role considerations as the dominance of the Internet as the core tool for all aspects of journalistic work that has brought about the most fundamental changes in journalistic action in Swiss newsrooms. Despite the fact that the easy and fast applicability of the Internet has facilitated a range of journalistic tasks such as research of facts and people or exchange with the audience, for example via social media websites, Wyss and Keel in their 2008 journalists survey emphasise that job satisfaction has decreased, presumably because of the increased workload for little pay, and rising job insecurity.

Interestingly enough and as a further debatable issue for this investigation, the findings on job satisfaction contrast with those on satisfaction with educational matters. It could be argued that either Swiss journalists are content with the educational system in place or that education and training is not so important once regular employment has been achieved. The analysis of this study attempts to reach some clarification on this point.

The next chapter, as the first chapter of Part III of the present thesis (literature review and theoretical considerations), sets out to examine how and by whose agency journalists have become members of an occupation with specified roles and social positions and debates the difficulties Swiss journalists have faced in achieving control over occupational jurisdiction.

PART THREE
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL
CONSIDERATIONS

Chapter Five:

Reviewing Research on Journalism as an Occupation

5.1. Introduction

It is argued that, in order to understand contemporary and future journalistic work and occupational requirements such as education and training, it is indispensable to learn about how and by whose agency journalists became members of an occupation with a unique role and social position in the first place. By providing further background to help evaluate this study's findings on journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training, Chapter Five introduces and debates a sociological perspective on journalism as an occupation.

As a rationale for discussing journalism and its change into an occupation, this chapter will first draw on research on the sociological theory of work, occupations and professions completed by American scholars such as Hughes (1958), Abbott (1988) and Dooley (1997) and will discuss their contribution to understanding journalism's process of becoming an occupation, especially in the US.⁵³

I will then go on to exemplify in the second part of this chapter the reasons for Swiss journalism's struggle and hesitance to become an occupation and the implications for the development of journalism education and training in Switzerland. I will discuss the impact of political parallelism on the creation of the journalistic occupation and explore the difficulties encountered by Swiss

⁵³ I have decided to draw on American theories of work, occupations and professions and how they have been applied to investigating and understanding US journalism on its route to becoming a profession because journalism first began to develop into a profession in the US during the second half of the 19th Century. I endorse Chalaby's claim that journalism is an Anglo-American invention (1996, 1998). The conception of news and journalistic practices like reporting, and especially interviewing, are broadly considered to have been invented and developed by American journalists and adopted by journalists in many other countries, as well as Switzerland.

Regarding the German-speaking literature on journalism as an occupation, Requate (1995) outlined the history of the process to journalistic professionalism in Germany, also comparing it with development in the US, England and France.

journalism in achieving control over occupational jurisdiction and the efforts of the members of the Swiss journalistic group to secure this.

5.2. Journalism as an occupation

5.2.1. Sociological theory of work, occupations and professions

Historical sociologists differ in their analysis of when, why, and how occupational groups emerge and intertwine. It is often argued that occupational groups develop in response to broader environmental movements, events, changes or processes. According to Hughes (1958), occupational groups are affected by technological development as well as social movement and new social institutions; through observing occupational groups at work, the key characteristics of the professional experience can be identified.

Abbott (1988) identifies two categories of work coexisting in occupational structures: technical and abstract. Technical work that is often referred to as crafts embraces merely physical or routine tasks that do not require the acquisition and/or the control of abstract knowledge. One of the primary aspects of professionalism, however, is that professionals serve humanity by fulfilling human needs that can only be satisfied through the management of that abstract knowledge. Hence professional work can be distinguished from other work by the fact that its tasks depend on the manipulation of abstract knowledge (Dooley, 1997).

Systems of abstract knowledge are usually developed over long periods of time. For example, the medical profession is legitimated in part by its development of medical science and technology, law has legal theory and politicians draw on political science and philosophy. In contrast to, for example, sociologists who have a clearly marked theoretical ambition, journalists have always been associated with performing tasks that are the product of experience and practice rather than theoretical knowledge (Abbott, 1988; Bovee, 1999; Strong, 1983; Trice, 1993).

Dooley (1997) argues that since journalism involves gathering and disseminating information about the world, it has always depended strongly on the knowledge and knowledge systems developed by others. The absence of a theoretical and scientific framework makes the case for journalism problematic. Dooley emphasises that due to journalism's highly subjective nature, the journalist's work becomes susceptible to attacks from encroachers as well as to major shifts in institutions outside journalism's realm and boundaries⁵⁴ with the consequence that,

for example, because journalists have been so dependent on political sources for knowledge about politics, they have been especially vulnerable to politicians and governmental officials who refuse to provide information (1997, p.13).

Dooley, referring to Abbott, argues that journalistic work can be conceived in terms of three culturally defined overlapping stages: the diagnosis, inference, and treatment of human needs open only to expert service:

Diagnosis is that part of professional work where workers take information into their knowledge systems. Treatment, which comes at the concluding stages of professional work, brings the information gathered in the diagnostic process back out from the work system in some form to solve the basic human problem addressed by the professional. Inference, a purely professional act that occurs somewhere between diagnosis and treatment, takes the information of diagnosis and indicates a range of treatments with their predicted outcomes (Dooley, 1997, p.14; Abbot, 1988, p.40).

5.2.2. Formation of occupational associations and systems of training

Another approach within the sociological theory of work, occupations and professions focuses on the phenomenon that work groups form independently and are strengthened due to the efforts of the groups themselves. Dooley, drawing on American history of sociology, asserts that among the strategies groups use to establish themselves are:

⁵⁴ Dooley is also endorsing earlier arguments put forward by Walter Lippmann, which have been addressed in Chapter One of this thesis (see section 1.2.1.).

social actions, including the formation of occupational associations, the issuance of occupation-related communication, and group negotiation of a system of interdependencies with other groups. Boundary and maintenance are important, claim these sociologists, since the various forms that boundaries take help delineate and empower the group's members as they seek occupational power (1997, pp. 5-6).

In his analysis of systems of professions, Abbott (1988) asserts that jurisdiction also embraces social structural elements such as systems for training and paying workers, legal protection for workers and certain non-legal entitlements such as the right to define the group and its work. Furthermore, jurisdiction also includes public financial support, unconstrained employment and the control of recruitment, schools, codes of ethics and associations. Dooley underpins Abbott's approach, claiming that:

through these education functions, occupational associations and college training programs served as mechanisms of group social control, and by their very existence, they reinforced the legitimacy of the journalistic occupational group and its various specialities (1997, p.17).

The creation of professional associations and the formation of boundaries, allowing the empowerment of professional groups and permitting negotiation with other associated groups, are regarded to have led to the five stages in the history of professionalism in the United States (Tumber & Prentoulis, 2005):

the emergence of a full-time occupation; the establishment of a training school; the founding of a professional association; political agitation directed towards the protection of the association by law; and the adoption of a formal code (Dooley, 1997; Freidson, 1983; Johnson, 1972).

Hughes (1958) makes a case that journalistic work tasks came together into occupations partly due to broad environmental movements, or structural changes like technological, economic and political development, social and cultural shifts, and movements and new social institutions. Sociologists and historians claim that development within many occupations has been fuelled and driven by common processes that took place over the 19th century including industrialisation, urbanisation and a fundamental shift from an economic system based on patronage to one dominated by capitalistic markets (Polanyi, 1957).

In addition to social, technological and other broad environmental structures, Abbott (1988) claims that emerging occupational groups also coalesce in response to the efforts of their own members. Once a work group amasses enough power to acquire a certain level of control of both the abstract knowledge and the skills needed to practice work, it holds professional work jurisdiction. Abbott further states that it is jurisdiction that forms the ties binding occupational groups to work tasks (ibid). Dooley, drawing on, Abbott points out that:

a determining factor in the occupational development of the journalistic group has been its members' efforts to acquire jurisdiction over such work. Part of this struggle for power has involved efforts to amass market power through the development of products that attract patrons and advertisers. A second integral part of the process has involved attempts to form and maintain occupational boundaries, defined as social or cultural divisions that help define an occupational group's work, societal roles, and legitimacy (1997, p.21).

5.2.3. Boundary-building and jurisdiction

Abbott (1988) emphasises that jurisdiction needs to be won, which basically means struggles with other groups for control of work. Dooley underlines that (American) journalists were involved locally and nationally in jurisdictional disputes throughout the 19th century with the result that:

such disputes had significant impact on the development of the journalistic group, its work, and historical and contemporary relationships to other groups and institutions, including patrons, advertisers, politicians, political parties, and government officials and agencies (1997, p.24).

Dooley assumes that boundary-building activity may be a determining factor to ultimately legitimise an occupational group as one whose work is regarded as indispensable:

To form and maintain boundaries, aspiring professionals must adopt various strategies, including the dissemination of professionalizing rhetoric in a variety of forms and venues, and become involved in social actions designed to influence public opinion and legislatures (1997, p. 7).

Referring to the importance of creating occupational boundaries, Abbott (1988) argues that American journalists in the 19th century discursively established boundaries through the issuance of occupational communication. Dooley points out that journalists' statements about their independence became more common in the 19th century:

An example of such a jurisdictional claim is a pervasive argument across the century that journalists were occupationally independent. Such statements were made in newspaper prospectuses, newspaper mastheads, courtroom testimony, and editorial exposés of the wrongdoing of elected and other public officials (1997, p.25).

5.2.4. Critique of journalism professionalization

According to Dooley's arguments, it can be inferred that it was primarily the implementation of professional associations and the formation of boundaries that allow the empowerment of professional groups and permitted negotiation with other associated groups. That led to clearly marked stages of professionalism such as the emergence of a full-time occupation, the establishment of training schools, the founding of professional associations and also the adoption of a formal code.

On the other hand, the theory of professional journalism has also met with strong criticism by scholars in the political economy field. McChesney, for example, claims that:

to the extent journalists believe that by following professional codes they are neutral and fair – or, at least, they need not entertain the question of bias – they are incapable of recognizing and addressing this inherent limitation of the craft (2008, p.31).

McChesney, referring to Bagdikian (2000), identifies three deep-seated biases built into the professional code that journalists follow and that have political and ideological implications: firstly, professional journalism's core problem of relying heavily upon official sources as the basis of legitimate news; secondly, its tendency to avoid contextualisation; and thirdly, its predisposition to smuggle in "values

conducive to the commercial aims of the owners and advertisers as well as the political aims of the owning class” (2008, p.34).

Dooley, in conclusion of her research on journalism as an occupation in American history, is not completely opposed to McChesney and Bagdikian’s reasoning when she argues that journalists may not achieve full jurisdiction over political communication because of the important links to politicians and the historical realities of democratic and legal systems:

Because journalism is based on gathering and publishing facts, journalists must acquire political knowledge, either through direct observation or from others within the political system. While journalists can acquire some political knowledge through direct observation, they are unable to acquire all such knowledge that way. Thus, politicians have a tool they can use to deprive journalists of political knowledge, and this makes full jurisdiction impossible for journalists (1997, p.134).

5.3. Swiss journalism and its struggle to become an occupation

5.3.1. Impact of political parallelism

Judged from a socio-occupational approach, it can be argued that the Swiss media industry’s failure to endorse social structural elements such as compulsory systems for training and paying workers or establishing legal protection for them deprived the rapidly rising group of journalists in late 19th century Switzerland from achieving control over their occupational jurisdiction. Abbott’s (1988) claim that jurisdiction needs to be won through battles with other groups for control of work cannot be recognised as a relevant approach to Swiss journalism practice in its early days, mainly due to the tight affiliations with the political system as stated above in Chapter Three.

As already outlined, political parallelism as it occurred in Switzerland (see Chapter Three) did not enhance the involvement of Swiss journalists locally and nationally in jurisdictional disputes. Similar to the USA, these disputes could have

had a significant impact on the development of the journalistic group, its work, and relationships with other groups and institutions including patrons, advertisers or political parties and government officials (Dooley, 1997).

In this regard and drawing on their research into models of media and politics, Hallin and Mancini reinforce that a system in which media are tied to political groups, and in which journalists are more or less just elements of a political party's publicist conception, is by definition a system in which journalism professionalization is not developed or only weakly present:

Where political parallelism is very high, with media organizations strongly tied to political organizations, and journalists deeply involved in party politics, professionalization is indeed likely to be low: journalists are likely to lack autonomy, except to the extent that they enjoy it due to high political positions, and journalism is likely to lack a distinct common culture and distinct sense of social purpose, apart from the purposes of the political actors with which media are affiliated (2004, p.38).

As discussed in the preceding chapter, the lack of adequate journalism training and education towards the end of the 19th century, the point at which a growing number of commercial newspapers emerged, was indeed recognised by the Swiss Press Association (VSP).⁵⁵ The association, which was founded in 1883, even launched a debate on how to deal with educational and occupational inadequacy within Swiss journalism (Meier, 2005). However, and quite in contrast to their union colleagues in other countries like the United States, the Swiss Press Association came to the conclusion that there was no need for the establishment of independent journalism schools, nor did they identify a need to establish codes of practice.

Editors and publishers also rejected the question of establishing codes of conduct and journalism schools to provide a diploma, which would be required to start a career (ibid). One can argue that due to the neglect of authoritative educational norms and codes of conduct, the press association could not achieve adequate

⁵⁵ Today the association is called impressum.

control over journalistic jurisdiction and hence has remained in a non-binding state until today.⁵⁶

The tight alliance of Swiss politics with journalism, the traditional partisanship, lasted way into the 20th century. This was partly due to the political system of direct democracy based on a militia model, but also partly due to journalism's difficulty in winning jurisdiction over its craft. In the first half of the 20th century, and especially during the Second World War, the practice of political parallelism, the press/politics partisanship, was broadly upheld and even reinforced by the fact that quite a few editors-in-chief of key Swiss dailies were members of the Swiss parliament during war time; for example, the liberal Willy Bretscher of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Karl Wick of the catholic-conservative *Vaterland* or Paul Meierhans of the social-democratic *Volksrecht* (Marr et al., 2001).

The interweaving of roles between politicians and journalists also continued in the post war era until the 1990s. As this point, firstly the process of press concentration forced newspapers with a traditional monopolistic position to open up in new directions and provide new discussion forums; secondly, economic recession enhanced the pressure on media organisations to build synergies and alliances with competitors.

In 1996, the Swiss Press Council claimed that strict segregation between holding a political office and pursuing a journalistic occupation should be sought. However, even today Swiss media companies are rather reluctant to regulate the political activities of their journalists, with the exception of the few traditional non-party dailies such as the *Tages-Anzeiger* or the *Neue Luzerner Zeitung* (ibid).

⁵⁶ Since 2004, journalists in the Swiss-German speaking part of the country have been working without a collective labour agreement (CLA), which is frequently regarded as another sign of the weak position of the journalists' associations vis-à-vis the publishers.

5.3.2. Difficulty in achieving control over journalistic jurisdiction

The long-established dismissive attitude of many Swiss publishers and editors towards institutionalising and standardising journalism education has not completely ceased to exist up to the present day (see Chapter Three). The country's leading contemporary journalism association, *impressum*, has recently brought up the controversial issue again and clearly argues for a standardised Swiss education and training system, with structures and activities that would be mandatory for all the stakeholders involved, to be finally established. The association has presented a strategy paper entitled *Journalismus Schweiz, Strategiekonzept zur Vereinheitlichung der Berufsbildung* (Szer, 2007)⁵⁷ to further discuss and implement the systemisation of journalism education and training.

One of the association's goals is the introduction of an institutional certification of journalism training courses in order to guarantee quality standards. However, other journalists' associations and journalism unions, as well as journalism schools like MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism and the country's leading publishers, clearly object to it. It is generally suspected that such a rigorous form of systemisation as that suggested by *impressum* would undermine the traditional pluralism that is considered to be intrinsic to the (free) craft of journalism and the shaping of its newsroom culture (Egli von Matt, 2004).

As a consequence of the widespread rejection from most stakeholders, the strategy paper of 2007 has hitherto not been further developed, nor have its key points been implemented into practice. The deep disagreement about how Swiss journalism education and training should be systematised and standardised underpins the still common old-school conception that a formal, systematic and nationally standardised journalism education is not required to become a journalist.

⁵⁷ The proposed reform basically suggests a journalism education that is tailored to the needs of the market, suited to professional practice, transparent, standardised in terms of quality controls, compatible with the European job market, timely in terms of professional know-how and open to lateral entrants. In addition, it should also recognise equivalent expertise, appreciate the professional register, allow mobility across similar programmes and institutions, and finally, guarantee every journalist a professional degree that is officially recognised (see also Hanitzsch & Müller, 2009).

It can be argued whether the publishers' unambiguous stance on journalism professionalism hampers Swiss journalists in gaining journalistic jurisdiction as members of a profession. By all means, the rejection of binding systematisation and standardisation as a further route to professionalization can be interpreted as the media industry's principal interest lying in journalists being trained to become compliant with the employers' (first and foremost, commercial) objectives.

5.4. Conclusion

To understand contemporary and future journalistic work and occupational requirements such as education and training, in this chapter I have outlined and discussed various insights from research on journalism as an occupation. In doing so, I have drawn on the sociological theory of work, occupations and professions completed by scholars such as Hughes (1958), Abbott (1988) and Dooley (1997). Thereby, it has been stressed that, according to the sociological theory of work, two categories of work coexist in occupational structures, namely the technical and the abstract. This implies that professional work can be distinguished from other work, since its tasks depend on the manipulation of abstract knowledge.

In this regard, I have referred to the work of Dooley (1997) who argues that the situation of journalism is problematic because core journalistic tasks such as the gathering and disseminating of information about the world have always depended strongly on knowledge and knowledge systems developed by others. Thus, this makes it rather difficult for a journalistic group to achieve control over occupational jurisdiction.

Using the example of US journalists and their efforts to gain acceptance for journalism as an occupation, I have emphasised that, on the one hand, journalistic jurisdiction can be achieved by full-time occupation, the establishment of a training school, the founding of a professional association, political agitation directed towards the protection of the association by law, and the adoption of a formal code (Dooley, 1997; Freidson, 1983; Johnson, 1972).

On the other hand, journalistic jurisdiction can also be defined by boundary building. The chapter has pointed out that American journalists were involved in juristic disputes throughout the 19th Century, which had a significant impact on the development of the journalistic group, its work, and historical and contemporary relationships with other groups and institutions.

Although Dooley (1997) claims that American journalists finally took their professional and political stance as a result of the intense battle for journalistic jurisdiction, she argues that journalists cannot achieve full jurisdiction over political communication because of the important links to politicians and the historical realities of democratic and legal systems. This point has also been strongly criticised by political economists such as McChesney (2008) and Bagdikian (2000).

Concerning the case of Swiss journalism and its struggle to become an occupation, in the second core part of this chapter I have accentuated the implications of the traditional political parallelism inherent to the development of Swiss journalism regarding the establishment of a journalistic occupation in the Swiss way. Referring to Hallin and Mancini (2004) and their seminal approaches to comparing different media systems, I have pointed out that a system in which media are tied to political groups, and one in which journalists are more or less just elements of a political party's PR conception, is by definition a system in which journalism professionalization is not present or only weakly developed.

Informed by a socio-occupational perspective, I finally argued that due to the long-lasting tight alliance of Swiss journalism with Swiss politics, the traditional partisanship between the two groups, leaving little room for independent journalism associations and trade unions to thrive, Swiss journalists missed out on achieving control over occupational jurisdiction.

This argument is all the more relevant because recent initiatives towards systematisation and standardisation regarding journalism education and training (as already addressed in section 5.3.2.) have been broadly rejected by core

stakeholders within the educational system such as employers and the association of Swiss publishers, as well as journalism schools (above all, MAZ).

One can argue from a socio-occupational perspective, as claimed in the works of Abbott (1988) and Dooley (1997), that Swiss journalists, with their reluctance to acquire abstract knowledge and improve their skills, may be regarded as possessing shortcomings regarding their journalistic jurisdiction. This is because a work group only holds professional work jurisdiction if it “amasses enough power to acquire a certain level of control of both the abstract knowledge and the skills” (Abbott, 1988).

On the other hand, Hallin and Mancini, in their oft-quoted book *Comparing Media Systems* (2004), emphasise that within media systems assigned to the Democratic Corporatist⁵⁸ model (including Switzerland) a coexistence of political parallelism and journalistic professionalism quite often occurs, as well as “the coexistence of liberal traditions of press freedom and a tradition of strong state intervention in the media, which are seen as a social institution and not as purely private enterprises” (2004, p. 196). Although Hallin and Mancini, referring to Katzenstein, (1985) did not explicitly mention the Swiss media system in this respect, in dividing the countries of the Democratic Corporatist model into those with greater social corporatism and others with a focus on liberal corporatism, the authors assigned Switzerland to the latter.

Another fact that cannot be ignored in this context: practically all the stakeholders in the Swiss media arena except for the unions clearly favour industry-related journalism training. This phenomenon has been endorsed by the findings of a national survey in 2008 (see Chapter Four) indicating that not only employers, but also journalists themselves are generally in favour of trade-related education (Bonfadelli et al., forthcoming). It suggests that Swiss journalists tend to understand news predominantly as a market-driven commodity that, as Hamilton (2004, p. 6) puts it, “emerges not from individuals seeking to improve the

⁵⁸ See Chapter One, section 3.2.

functioning of democracy but from readers seeking diversion, reporters forging careers, and owners searching for profits.”

Regarding the issue of journalists being increasingly driven by an economic viewpoint, Fengler and Russ-Mohl have called for an economic theory perspective on future journalism studies, claiming that “under the conditions of an ever-increasing competition between media outlets, journalists increasingly employ a ‘market approach’ to their decisions” (2008, p. 673). They argue that today’s journalists need to be described more and more as “rational actors seeking to promote their own interests, reacting to material and non-material incentives and rewards” (p. 667).

In this context, the arguments by Fengler and Russ-Mohl are suggested to be of further relevance to the present study in relation to the question as to whether an economic self-interest in journalists’ understanding of their profession is already being fostered and implemented through off-the-job journalism training as delivered by MAZ.

The next chapter, the second within the literature review and theory part of the present thesis, examines the existing literature about journalism education and training in order to discover what has been debated and theorised about the topic of this study that could inform the present investigation.

Chapter Six:

Research on Journalism Education and Training

6.1. Introduction

Before studying one of this research project's core objectives, namely the effectiveness of journalism training on journalists' occupational practices, it is crucial to scrutinise the existing literature on this topic in order to draw on primary insight that may be helpful to inform the present investigation. Thus, in progressing Chapter Six, I will examine and evaluate the existing literature on the laying of foundations of journalism education and training and discuss the respective key texts.

At the beginning of the chapter, the review will focus on the Swiss case by first referring to the literature on the very few approaches that have so far been undertaken to investigate journalism education and training in Switzerland. I will make a case for the need to generate relevant data and insights in order to contribute to the scant existing knowledge about the implications of off-the-job training for journalists' experiences of their occupation and hence for the Swiss news industry. I also expect the findings to be a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate about the necessity for formalisation, standardisation and countrywide harmonisation of journalism education and training.

The review on an international scale, complementing the Swiss perspective, will first outline the rise of comparative cross-national research and then examine the first steps to systematic journalism education and the influence of national journalism culture on journalism education. As a key text underlying the objective of exploring the effectiveness of journalism training, I will particularly highlight the findings of McBarnet's (1979) examination of journalism training and the disciplining of journalists, one of the rare approaches to examining journalism training as a specific part of journalism education. I will emphasise the importance

of McBarnet's investigation of training methods to carrying the research further in order to scrutinise journalist's experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training.

6.2. Lack of theoretically informed and conceived studies

6.2.1. The Swiss Case

Compared to the international scale in which the field of literature on journalism education (less on journalism training) is slightly growing, in the Swiss case a body of literature on journalism education and on journalism training (in particular regarding their implications for journalists' experiences of their occupation) is practically non-existent. This stands in marked contrast to the fairly copious literature on journalists at work, especially seen from a worldwide perspective.

Therefore, in order to gain any insight into journalism education in Switzerland, one needs to draw on the groundbreaking studies on Swiss journalism by the scholars and researchers mentioned in Chapters Three and Four such as the national survey research on Swiss journalists by Marr et al. (2001) and Wyss and Keel (2010), as well as the studies by Meier (2005) and Schade (2005). The latter two primarily discuss the development of mass communication studies in Switzerland and their contribution to the professionalization of Swiss journalism.

Only over the last ten years have Swiss scholars developed an interest in researching journalism education. Blum (2002) attempted to critically evaluate and define Swiss journalism education at the beginning of the 21st century (see Chapter Three) and Schulz⁵⁹ (2004) provided the first historical and descriptive account of the development of the on-the-job Swiss system, as well as off-the-job journalism training. The latter extensively refers to the history and present status of MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism.

⁵⁹ Peter Schulz was the founding director of MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism in Lucerne.

Wyss and Keel (2010), with their national survey conducted in 2008, have partly updated the findings of the first national survey research on Swiss journalists by Marr et al. (2001). They indicate that over the last couple of years there has been rising demand for journalism education in Switzerland, although the percentage of journalists without any education in journalism has also increased (in the German-speaking part of the country it has risen to 17.7 percent, see section 4.2.).⁶⁰

Another recent study, a cross-national survey with European editors in chief from 16 countries conducted by the IAM Institute of Applied Media Studies of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (Koch & Wyss, 2010), has generated some insight into the weighting of different journalistic competencies. In one aspect of the survey, the editors' answers were also compared with those from the heads of journalism schools. The competency described as 'have insight in the influence of journalism in society' was judged to be very unimportant by the editors in chief, but was rated as very important by the schools' heads. This outcome seems to further confirm that journalism as it is practiced in today's newsrooms is much less society oriented as is generally understood and taught by journalism schools.

The competency that journalists regard as most important remains unknown since no journalists were surveyed in the above-mentioned study. Therefore, I am making a case for the necessity of the present study to scrutinise Swiss trainee journalists and the experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training in order to generate adequate data on this under-theorised issue. Later in this thesis in Chapter Thirteen (see section 13.5.2.) the weighting of the journalistic competencies by the surveyed European editors in chief will be compared to the findings of the present investigation regarding the studied journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training.

⁶⁰ For more detail, go to Chapter Four (see section 4.2.).

6.2.2. International perspective

On an international scale, although a respectable body of literature on journalism education has been established over the last 20 years (e.g. Berkowitz, 1997; Löffelholz, 2004; Merrill, 2000; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996; Tumber, 1999; Zelizer, 2004), theoretically informed and empirically conceived studies on journalism education and, above all, on journalism training still seem to be rare. Becker (2003) and Deuze (2006) lament this shortcoming by claiming that the existing literature on journalism education tends to be either too normative or rather descriptive.

Scholars from all over the world have called for studies on schools of journalism, on the determinant aspects of journalism education, on the similarities and dissimilarities between journalism training run by the industry and institutionalised education, and on the relationships between education, profession and society. They urge the development of a body of knowledge about journalism education research that would ideally complement the literature on journalism research (e.g. Cottle, 2000; Reese and Cohen, 2000; Altmppen and Hömberg, 2002; Morgan, 2003; Deuze, 2008).⁶¹

Reviewing the existing avenues of inquiry in the field of journalism education research, it can be noted that only since the 1990s have scholars begun to examine the history and structures of systems of national journalism education in order to define the factors influencing journalists' work. In Europe, for example, Stephenson and Mory (1990) presented a first survey of journalism education institutions in EU member states that would later form the basis for the survey and interview data generated by Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha (1993).

Subsequently, a range of case studies has been conducted, most of which emphasise the heterogeneity of European journalism education systems. Donsbach, Becker & Kosicki, for example, concluded their study by claiming "no

⁶¹ In 2008, Deuze, as one of the scholars with a relatively clear perception of future models of journalism education, suggested an agenda of global journalism education research entailing ten categories ranging from philosophical motions of motivation and mission to more practice-oriented concepts such as curriculum and pedagogy (p. 271).

two countries seem to offer exactly the same type of training opportunities to their journalists” (1992, P.2). It can be argued that the multitude of educational systems for the training of journalists is one of the reasons or difficulties that have retarded the formation of an accordant body of literature.

6.3. Rise of comparative studies on journalism education

One of the first comparative surveys on journalism education was operated by Splichal and Sparks (1994), who investigated first year journalism students in university-level institutions in 22 countries of the major world regions and critically discussed the concepts of journalistic professionalism and the significance of journalistic education and training. Splichal and Sparks’ find that the students have a strong desire for professional status and that they believe that the form of media ownership dominant in society is a major threat to press freedom and that journalism education and professional socialisation are not necessarily a function of politics or dominant ideology.

Although Splichal and Sparks’ study, for the first time in journalism education research, clearly indicates the importance of the achievement of a professional status to journalism students, some of its findings must be qualified, especially from a methodological point of view. It is clearly erroneous to assume that first year students who have not yet had any newsroom practice are capable of giving conclusive answers as to how their journalistic values and norms have been influenced by a legal and political system.

Splichal and Sparks emphasise the relative influence of professional education in the early stages of the development of journalists. Weaver, on the other hand, in his global journalistic study (1998) surveying journalists in 21 countries and territories, emphasises societal influences and especially differences in political systems more than the influence of media ownership, professional norms and journalism education.

With his collection, *Making Journalists* (2005a), de Burgh carries the discussion further, underlining the fact that differences in journalism education stem not so much from variations in legal and political systems as from differences in culture. Or as de Burgh puts it “How journalism operates in a given society, no less than musical expression or eating habits, is the product of culture” (2005b, p. 17).

6.4. First steps to systematic journalism education research

As discussed in the above section, a range of pivotal case studies on journalism education was aggregated prior to the early years of this century. With journalism becoming a more relevant research topic, calls for more systematic investigation have been raised. Becker, for example, blames a lack of attention to the determinants of the topic partially on “insensitivity in the literature to significant variations in journalism education itself” (2003, p. xiii).

Altmeyden and Hömberg (2002) presented in their volume *Journalistenausbildung für eine veränderte Medienwelt* (journalism education in a changing world) a first evaluation of the variations in journalism education in German-speaking Europe reflected by a range of leading German-speaking journalism scholars.

Placing a larger emphasis on curricula questions, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha (2003) attempted to counterbalance the deficit on systematic journalism education research with a collective edition of country-specific systematic research into journalism education in Europe. It is claimed that their compilation can be regarded as having laid the ground for further analyses and comparisons of the way journalists are trained and educated and how journalism education and training is intertwined with the expectations placed on journalism and the role of journalists in society.

The book in question titled *Journalism Education in Europe and North America: An International Comparison*, not only set out to investigate how journalists are trained in different countries, but also how the different systems for educating journalists evolved. Thus, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha argue that only by examining

the influences that have affected journalism training in the past can we hope to anticipate what may happen in the future. Their collection of systematic comparison approaches basically amplifies Gaunt's (1992) groundwork that suggests that journalism training programmes vary considerably in terms of curriculum, control mechanisms, location and even in terms of the nature of the instructors and the students.

In order to systematise the various determinants shaping journalism education and training programmes, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha (1993) assigned journalism education systems to four categories according to their dominant system of journalism training. The first group comprises countries with a strong emphasis on journalism education at the university level such as the United States, Spain and Finland. The second group is formed by countries where journalism training is dominated by stand-alone-schools, which may be interlinked with universities in some ways, as is the case in the Netherlands and Italy, for example.

The third group comprises countries with a mixed system of university-level education and stand-alone schools such as Germany and France. The fourth and final group is characterised mainly by on-the-job training, meaning that journalism education is carried out at media companies and/or at other institutions providing courses that complement in-house-training. This group, according to Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha (2003), consists of countries such as the UK and Austria.

Switzerland, as a non-member of the EU, was not included in Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha's seminal compilation of cross-national studies on European journalism education systems. One can argue whether the Swiss practice of journalism education and training may be assigned to the fourth group, the British and Austrian model, or whether it belongs to the second or even first, as academization of the profession has been increasing (see Chapter Three).

Because of the existing heterogeneity of Swiss journalism education and training programmes based on specific and unique political determinants, as discussed in

Chapter Three, it must be doubted whether Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha's model of categorisation can classify the Swiss journalism education landscape at all.

On the other hand, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha's edited volume about the emergence of various national journalism education systems illustrates an impressive homogeneity of challenges faced by journalism education and training in various European countries. There are a number of conflicts and debates that can also be identified in the field of Swiss journalism education and training; for example, the notion that employers still believe that 'real' learning in journalism can only happen on the job or the common conflict (or, at least, the complex relationship) between academia and journalism practice (see Chapter Three).

6.5. Influence of national journalism culture

Although there are no indications that a common concept of a 'European Journalism Education Model' is emerging, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha's thinking on how to systematically analyse journalism education and training provides a valuable literature reference and an appropriate premise to draw upon when studying a national journalism training system. The authors clearly make a case that the model of journalism education selected by a certain country is dependent on a variety of determinants and that:

a country's journalism education system is first influenced by the other factors in the media structure. They include normative and economic factors but also the role journalist trade unions or other professional associations play. Among the others, the societal sphere has a major impact on how a system of journalism education develops, how the media are regarded, what function they are assigned by a society or its subsystems, and consequently, how the media's self-perception influences the concept of journalism training (2003, p.314-5).

Thus, Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha further argue that "the way journalists are educated influences their self-perception. Their self-perception and their role in society lead to differences in journalistic practice" (p. 319). A comparison of the professional attitudes and values of British and Spanish journalism students by Sanders et al. (2008) seems to confirm Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha's assumptions.

Sanders et al.'s findings suggest that distinct, national journalistic 'cultures' have already influenced students before they arrive at university:

This study's findings on Spanish and British students' views on news media roles and ethics and their career ambitions and motivations suggest that the mix of the influences at work on students' outlooks include the particular generational political and national culture, the structure of and perceived practices of each country's media industry, and the students' lack of professional experience and their youth – because the changed outlooks that come with age can be deemed to be a general, worldly influence distinct from professionalization (p.148).

However, Sanders et al. further claim that “caution is required in making claims about the influences and effects of journalism education, given the complexity and weight of other systemic factors including, for example, the employment opportunities open to students after graduation” (p.134).

Indeed, the present investigation, in aiming to contribute new insights to the so far scant knowledge in this field, sets out to examine the weight of a range of other systemic factors determining the effectiveness of journalism education. They include journalism training in particular; for example, the impact of co-trainees, co-workers in the newsroom, the schools' and lecturers' approach to the curriculum and the trainees' basic wish to increase their employability.

6.6. Critique of vocationalism, calls for new avenues and models

Ambiguity about the implications of journalism education and training for everyday journalism practice has repeatedly given rise to various calls to reinvent journalism education (e.g. Dennis, 1984; Medsger, 1996; Reese and Cohen, 2000; Carey, 2000; Adam, 2001; de Burgh, 2003; Macdonald, 2006; Deuze, 2006; Josephi, 2009; Zelizer, 2009). De Burgh, for example, argues that journalism should be taught and regarded first and foremost as a serious academic discipline and not simply vocational training. He claims that society and polity requires journalists to carry new responsibilities and therefore to be better educated.

Josephi calls for further research encompassing “the training received in places other than tertiary institutions, such as in newsrooms or in the media industry, to complete the picture of the forces that shape journalism” (2009, p. 53). As a matter of fact, the present study partly attempts to answer Josephi’s call in terms of its investigation into the effectiveness of a mode of journalism training that is fairly industry-oriented⁶² although MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism is officially regarded as a tertiary institution within the Swiss education system (Schulz, 2004).

Two recently published compilations on journalism education and training experiences in various countries carry the discussion further: Georgios Terzis’ *European Journalism Education* (2009) and Bob Franklin and Donica Mensing’s *Journalism Education, Training and Employment* (2011). Franklin and Mensing, in their recent collection of essays about current journalism education, training, and employment, position the discussion in the context of the way information today is produced, consumed and paid for in a rapidly growing network society.⁶³ Mensing suggests that journalism schools should move the focus of attention from industry-oriented to more community-focused approaches in order to “reconnect journalism with its democratic roots and take advantage of new forms of news creation, production, editing, and distribution” (p. 16).

Terzis’ collection of reviews of the national journalism education landscapes of 33 European countries attempts to analyse the way in which European journalism education fits into the pattern that comprises the interrelationships between the market, the state and civil society. At an individual level, Terzis, in his book which also provides a chapter on the Swiss journalism education landscape⁶⁴, claims that the institutions providing journalism education in most European countries today are “producing a plethora of graduates with diminished professional accountability and a ‘proactive obedience’ to their employers, due to their bureaucratic ‘reactive obedience’ to political and market forces” (2009, p. 21).

⁶² 70 percent of the school’s annual budget is financed by the journalist trainees, resp. by their news organisations (see Chapter Four, section 4.3.3.)

⁶³ Franklin and Mensing’s book (according to the authors’ introduction) was inspired and initiated by the ‘Future of Journalism’ conference held at Cardiff University in September 2009.

⁶⁴ Thomas Hanitzsch and Annette Müller, p. 208-216.

Stephenson, who, together with Mory (1990), can be regarded as one of the pioneers of researching journalism education, argues in his foreword to Terzis' compilation that most journalism training "seems to be strikingly similar to that being provided twenty years ago" (2009, p.15), whereas Bromley claims that the intention to replicate the workplace compels vocationalism to be emphasised (p. 28).

However, what seems to be largely missing from the literature of journalism education and training, with the exception of the one study addressed in the next section, are relevant findings on the effectiveness of vocational training; in other words, an analysis of journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of vocational, and in this study's context, off-the-job journalism training. Hence, it is argued that filling this knowledge gap can be considered to be a further *raison d'être* of the present research.

6.7. Key text: McBarnet and the disciplining of journalists

Despite several calls for studies on journalism education and training, relevant data on journalism training compared to (academic) journalism education is still very rare, as mentioned above. In this context, McBarnet (1979) must be regarded as one of the few pioneers in this under-researched field. He identified two key focuses of journalism training: on the one hand there is impact in terms of the trainee's socialisation into "the techniques which make someone recognizable as a journalist in the labour market, techniques which may also of course produce values and assumptions of a very particular kind" (p.182).

On the other hand, McBarnet addresses the news industry's prevalent intention to train journalists in the off-the-job mode, which leads to questions such as: What do employers intend the trained journalist to be? Or, what assumptions about and implications for news manufacture does that reveal?

McBarnet basically claims that journalists' compliance with the goals of news organisations "often answered in terms of 'self-censorship' and 'gatekeeper'

theory” (p. 181) must be understood with regard to the way journalists are trained in a system of well-established techniques and practices, both on-the-job and under the guidance of outside educational institutions.

In other words, it is not the socialisation to specific values such as journalistic objectivity or accountability to the public, but the socialisation into the existing techniques and practices that make trainees recognisable as journalists in the labour market. Although McBarnet’s investigation seems rather dated, the above-mentioned claims and his conclusion that the “code of reporting practice embodied in training implies that the way new journalists are trained reflects existing practice in newspapers and by extension (...) in broadcasting” (p. 193) provide a viable conception for carrying the investigation further.

Hence, the present investigation not only sets out to examine training methods like McBarnet, but first and foremost attempts to scrutinise and analyse the influence of industry-oriented training on journalists’ experiences of their everyday occupation and, from a broader perspective, its implications for the Swiss news industry.

6.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined and discussed the existing literature on journalism education and training on a Swiss, as well as an international, scale. In doing so, the chapter has notably revealed the significant lack of theoretically informed and conceived studies within the field of the present research. I have made it clear that in order to gain any insight into journalism education in Switzerland, one must inevitably draw on the general national surveys by the scholars and researchers mentioned in Chapter Three (e.g. Marr et al., 2001; Wyss & Keel, 2010).

On an international level, I have established that the first approaches to the study of journalism education only started at the beginning of the 1990s. This chapter has particularly focused on the early studies defining the factors in journalism

education and training that influence journalists' work (e.g. Stephenson and Mory, 1990; Donsbach, Becker and Kosicki, 1992) and identified the initial comparative cross-national research by scholars such as Gant (1991), Splichal and Sparks (1994), Weaver (1998) or De Burgh (2005a).

I have further discussed the first steps to systematic journalism education research and placed strong emphasis on the work of Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha (2003) and their basic argument that only by examining the influences that have affected journalism training in the past can one hope to anticipate what may happen in the future. The cross-national study of Sanders et al. (2008) has also been referenced.

I have also argued that journalism education and training is influenced by the national journalism culture and that caution is required when making statements about the influences and effects of journalism education, given the complexity and weight of other systemic factors like the impact of co-trainees, co-workers in the newsroom, the schools' and lecturers' approach to the curriculum and the basic trainees' wish to increase their employability to gain more lucrative jobs.

As a further crucial issue within Chapter Six, I have investigated the repeatedly occurring critique of vocationalism as a common core principle for journalism education and training and addressed the numerous calls for new avenues and models. In this regard, the chapter has particularly highlighted the study of McBarnet (1979) as one of the first and only approaches to critical scrutiny of the impact of journalism training.

McBarnet's claim that it is not the socialisation to specific values such as journalistic objectivity or accountability to the public, but the socialisation to the existing techniques and practices that make trainees recognisable as journalists in the labour market, has been identified as a useful concept for carrying the investigation into journalism training further, especially in the present study's Swiss context of off-the-job training.

In summary, I point out that the literature review on journalism education and particularly journalism training has revealed a growing debate on journalism education, especially on an international scale. However, I have also referred to the lack of theoretically informed and conceived studies on journalism education and training, in particular regarding the Swiss context. With reference to this study's Swiss case, I deplore the fact that a substantial body of literature on journalism training is lacking.

Therefore, in line with the present investigation, I claim that there is a definitive need to generate empirical findings through further research, not least because the ongoing debate within the Swiss media scene about the need for further formalisation, standardisation and country-wide harmonisation of contemporary and future journalism education and training has raised controversy about the means of quality control and official recognition of journalism as a profession (Hanitzsch and Müller, 2009).

In their latest book, Franklin and Mensing (2011) claim that the capacity for "recalibration and reinvention of journalism education for the next century is felt in classrooms, conferences, on Twitter feeds, and in scholarly journals." However, within this study I assert that a map for future journalism education and training should not only encompass what is felt in classrooms, conferences, on Twitter feeds and in scholarly journals, but even more how journalists experience their occupation as a result of journalism training, especially regarding the question of employability.

The literature review in this chapter has shown that most studies of journalism education and training have so far failed to scrutinise the issue of journalists' employability. Therefore, it is argued that empirically generated findings will provide useful insights into the practical value of the system of off-the-job training as it is practiced at MAZ, demonstrated in practice by the respective accounts of the journalists studied.

Hence, in conducting this research project by exploring the Swiss German journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job training, I

attempt to contribute firsthand empirical data to the scant existing knowledge about the effectiveness of journalism training on journalism practice experienced by the journalists studied. Hopefully, I will also discover relevant answers to questions about the hitherto only assumed implications of the model of off-the-job training for Swiss journalism and its news industry.⁶⁵

Before proceeding to address the outline of the methodological approach to the present investigation, the next chapter will conclude the literature review and theory part of this thesis by outlining the theoretical considerations guiding the empirical approach chosen for this project. It will discuss the relevant and appropriate perspectives drawn from different theoretical approaches that inform the overall shape of this investigation.

⁶⁵ MAZ questions the trainees attending the Certificate Course in Journalism on the occasion of a mid-term review. However, the data is meant for internal use only.

Chapter Seven: Theoretical Considerations

7.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out to provide an overview of the theoretical considerations that will inform the empirical approach to this research project. To begin with, I address the theoretical rationale of this study by essentially theory building and not theory testing, since the overall research approach as an implication of the broadly defined research questions (see Chapter One, section 1.2.6.) is of a qualitative nature. Nevertheless, it is argued that the present investigation is not devoid of theoretical considerations, which this chapter will address and assess.

Firstly, the core dimensions and types of media theory need to be introduced and evaluated in relation to their possible significance to the topic of journalism training. Attempting to define an adequate theoretical framework as a useful background theory to the study of journalism training, I will then discuss relevant perspectives drawn on operational and normative theory, as well as address approaches that are grounded in the political economy and are appropriate to theoretically inform the overall shape of this research project.

7.2. Theory building instead of theory testing

The essential empirical objective of this study is to explore journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job journalism training. As argued in the introduction chapter, investigation of journalism training is important because journalism is changing rapidly in the wake of technological, economic and structural challenges. However, as discussed in this study's literature review, there seems to be no clear understanding of the usefulness of journalism training; there have merely been a number of assumptions made in different contexts suggesting that it is of a certain importance.

As addressed in Chapter Six, there have been repeated calls to reconceptualise journalism education.⁶⁶ Yet, there seems to be a lack of thorough insight into the specific topic of off-the-job journalism training, which has emerged as an inherent part of the industry-driven conception of Swiss journalism and its stance on journalism education and training. In particular, there is a dearth of comprehension of its effectiveness on and lasting implications for journalism as an occupation, most notably in the way journalism practitioners understand it.

Hence, the present research sets out to explore this fallow field within the broader realm of journalism studies and aims to generate data that can be analysed with regard to eventually attempting to build concepts and theories in order to better understand the mechanics and effects of off-the-job journalism training. It is argued that such empirically generated theoretical propositions on the one hand could be a useful means for further investigating the effectiveness of journalism training on journalists' occupational practices.

On the other hand, they could also serve as a means to establish relevant answers to the question of whether journalism training improves the news industry and the news in their role of serving a vital democratic function in our society or whether, first and foremost, it helps the news industry to reproduce itself through a form of journalism training that is conceived to meet the corporate requirements of the news organisations, rather than to engage with accountability to the public.

7.3. Dimensions and types of media theory

7.3.1. Two dimensions of media theory

Although testing hypotheses is not an issue relative to this study's qualitative research approach, it would be superficial to assert that the present research is

⁶⁶ For example, Medsger (1996), Reese and Cohen (2000), Carey (2000), Blum (2002), Russ-Mohl (2002), Deuze (2006), Franklin and Mensing (2011).

devoid of any theoretical considerations. Therefore, the dimensions and types of media theory by which the present study, in terms of a theoretical background, is broadly informed need to be discussed first. Before referring to the theoretical considerations that can be identified to inform the present research, it is crucial to comprehend the basic dimensions and types of media theory.

Looking back through the history of mass communication research, one notices that broadly divergent perspectives and approaches have identified the field of media theory. For example, Lazarsfeld (1941), as one of the earliest media theory pioneers, differentiated a critical orientation from an administrative orientation or a critical theory from an applied theory. Critical theory, in Lazarsfeld's view, is basically understood to face up to the subjacent challenges and faults of media and journalism practice and relate them to relevant social issues, whereas applied theory attempts to generate an understanding of communication processes in order to face practical challenges and problems and eventually make mass communication more effective and (economically) worthwhile (also see Windhal et al., 2007; McQuail, 2010).

McQuail, in his perspective on media theory, distinguishes two dimensions and four types of approaches illustrated in Figure 1.

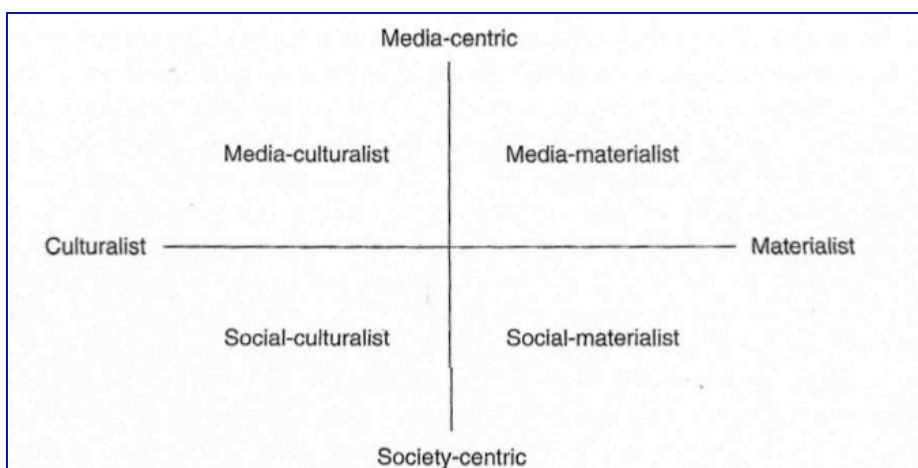


Figure 1: McQuail's dimensions and types of media theory (2010, p. 12)

According to McQuail, the vertical dimension separates media-centric from society-centric approaches. A media-centric approach above all concentrates on

the media's own field of activity and understands mass media "as a primary mover in social change, driven forward by irresistible developments in communication technology" (ibid), whereas a society-centric sees the media mainly as a reflection of political and economic forces.

The horizontal dimension of media theory, according to McQuail's conception, distinguishes culturalist⁶⁷ from materialist approaches. It basically symbolises the divide between theorists highlighting cultural interests and perspectives and theorists emphasising material forces and aspects. McQuail aligns this divide with certain other dimensions such as "humanistic versus scientific, qualitative versus quantitative, and subjective versus objective" (ibid).

7.3.2. Four types of perspectives on media theory

As Figure 1 illustrates, between the two dimensions (vertical and horizontal lines) one can identify four different perspectives on media and society. McQuail summarises them in the following way:

- a media-culturalist perspective is an approach that takes "the perspective of the audience members in relation to some specific genre or example of media culture ... and explores the subjective meaning of the experience in a given context" (p. 13);
- a media-materialist approach is a research tradition emphasising "the shaping of media content and therefore of potential effects, by the nature of the medium in respect of the technology and the social relations of reception and production that are implicated by this" (ibid);
- a social-culturalist perspective is a view subordinating "media and media experience to deeper and more powerful forces affecting society and individuals. Social and cultural issues also predominate over political and economic ones" (ibid);

⁶⁷ A term used by McQuail.

- and a social-materialist perspective is an approach that “has usually been linked to a critical view of media ownership and control, that ultimately are held to shape the dominant ideology transmitted or endorsed by media” (ibid).

It is important to note that although these four perspectives on media and society can be seen as inherent stand-alone approaches, a rising trend to convergence between them has been emerging. This phenomenon also manifests itself with regard to the research in hand. It is argued that media-materialist approaches, social-culturalist as well as social-materialist perspectives, essentially inform this study’s theoretical framework. The media-materialist approach relates to operational theory, the social-culturalist approaches can be understood as a kind of normative theory, whereas the social-materialist perspectives are underpinned by a political economy impetus.

The three perspectives that form the theoretical framework this study draws upon are reviewed in the next three sections.

7.4. Following operational theory

7.4.1. Operational approach to media theory

One of the theoretical perspectives guiding this research can be identified as operational theory, an approach within media theory referring to the practical issues and ideas adopted and applied by media practitioners regarding their own media work (McQuail, 2010). Operational theory has served as an integral component in several studies of communicators and their organisations; for example, Elliott (1972), Tuchman (1978) and Tunstall (1993). It is a theoretical approach with an inherently media-centric orientation that has proved to be helpful when investigating tasks like selecting and producing news, pleasing audiences and coping with sources and society.

7.4.2. Operational perspective on off-the-job journalism training

In the context of the present study, operational theory refers to the practical knowledge to be found in journalism training settings. The approach can be taken into consideration when exploring the fundamental tasks inherent in journalism training, including how the subject matter of classroom training is designed, how trainee journalists improve skills such as writing and interviewing, how they become socialised to occupational practices as a result of their training experiences and how they can better position themselves as journalists in a strongly competitive market.

Although knowledge in the field of journalism training has hardly been codified so far, it is often patterned and ongoing which puts it in a theoretical framework, all the more because it is deemed to exert a certain impact on journalists' behaviour with regard to their occupational practices.

Hence, operational theory as a kind of a background approach offers a useful basis to draw upon for a crucial part of this research in terms of investigating trainees' experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job journalism training, with a special focus on the practicality of the subject matter imparted by classroom training.

7.5. Referring to normative theory

7.5.1. Normative approach to media theory

Another perspective theoretically informing the overall research approach to the present investigation is a normative approach to media theory, which is usually concerned with investigating and stipulating how media and journalism ought to function if certain values need to be observed or achieved. McQuail claims this approach is important "because it plays a part in shaping and legitimating media

institutions and has considerable influence on the media's own audiences" (2010, p. 14).

If journalism education is understood as "improving the quality of journalism by improving the quality of journalists" (Joseph, 2009, p. 42), it is likely to also have an indirect influence on the media's audiences. In other words, my basic assumption here is that it matters how journalism education and training lay the foundations for the attitudes and knowledge of future journalists, a task that also includes observing and maintaining certain values. Therefore, with this study's objective in mind, a significant part of the research is also geared to exploring questions about the norms of social and cultural performance in the context of journalism training.

7.5.2 Normative perspectives on off-the-job journalism training

Hence, this research's normative approach is concerned with questions about journalism training's contribution to the core purpose and largely shared values of journalism, namely reporting and disseminating information to the public in order to hold political as well as economic power to account and supporting citizens in making more thoroughly informed choices.

As a matter of fact, this research sets out to explore a number of issues from a normative point of view; for example, questions about in what social context is journalism training in the Swiss context grounded, whether journalism training and in particular the Swiss model of off-the-job training is a socialising or individualising agent and whether a journalist attending off-the-job training is becoming more accountable to the citizen and society as a whole or whether he or she is first and foremost becoming more disciplined to meet the employer's requirements.

In summary, it can be stated that drawing on a normative theory approach as a kind of an additional background theory will guide the exploration of journalism training's accountability, be it to the community or to the media industry.

Therefore, this underlying normative perspective sets out to contribute a further important part to the overall theoretical framework guiding this research project and also informs another theoretical approach originating from the field of political economy, which is discussed in the following section.

7.6. Drawing on political economy approaches

7.6.1. Political economy approach to media theory

As a basic principle, a political economy approach to media understands content, style and form of media products as shaped by structural factors such as ownership, advertising and audience spending. It claims that media systems are neither naturally given nor are they inevitable (McChesney, 2008). They are the result of political strategies and policies, as well as the product of economic objectives and constraints. Hence, political economy suggests that the production of media products is structurally constrained by economic and political factors, above all the private ownership of media industries (Franklin, 1997).

On the whole, it is argued that this research project is informed by a political economy perspective insofar as the way it approaches journalism training within the context of MAZ and its cooperation with Swiss media organisations is based on an understanding of those organisations as being essentially profit making bodies which are first and foremost interested in maximising profit.

As a matter of fact, these are the underlying economic and organisational logics to which journalists and accordingly journalist trainees in the contemporary highly competitive field of news production have to adapt. They comply with the system Mensing (2011, p. 17) describes as the basic model of journalism training taught in journalism schools that is run as a business by news production oriented media organisations.

7.6.2 Political economy perspectives on off-the-job journalism training

With reference to Murdoch and Golding's claim that "the mass media are first and foremost industrial and commercial organisations which produce and distribute commodities" (1973, p.227), I argue that a political economy approach provides a useful background theory with regard to exploring research issues. These include the extent to which training is geared to disciplining journalists into behaving in a particular industry-oriented way, or, whether Swiss media endorse and fund off-the-job training first and foremost to produce a more skilled, professional workforce customised to their needs in order to help create 'better' output to enhance profit maximisation.

Being broadly informed by a political economy perspective about how the media industry works and what it is for, this research encounters a number of other specific issues concerning journalism training. These include, for example, journalism training providing a model of reproduction of the industry's work force, which is first of all an assumption that needs exploration since there is only minimal knowledge about the effectiveness of journalism training judged from the point of view of the individual journalistic practitioner.

Hence, I propose that using a political economy perspective as a further kind of background theory can contribute an additional and valuable part to the overall theoretical framework this research is drawing upon.

7.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided an overview of theoretical considerations that inform the present research project. It has been emphasised that the theoretical rationale of the study is first and foremost theory building and not theory testing, due to the fact that the overall research approach, as a result of the largely defined research questions, is of a qualitative nature.

Yet, I have clarified that the overall shape of the present project cannot be achieved without theoretical considerations. In this respect, the chapter has briefly introduced the core dimensions and types of media theory and assessed them from the perspective of journalism training. In order to find an adequate theoretical framework as a helpful background theory to investigating journalism training, I have discussed relevant perspectives on operational, normative as well as political economy approaches that inform the basic form of the present research.

Nevertheless, despite the importance of these theoretical considerations and their backdrop impact on the present scrutiny, I maintain that it is important to keep in mind that this study's underlying investigation process cannot be based on testing hypotheses. It concentrates on exploring specific research questions that are constituted by the attempt to generate knowledge and, eventually, theoretical insight about journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training, which in the Swiss context is notably the model of off-the-job training.

Finally, theory-building attempts like those underlying the present investigation call for methodological considerations that are grounded in qualitative research. The methodological initiatives driving this research project will be introduced and discussed in Chapter Eight.

PART FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

Chapter Eight: Methodological Considerations

8.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the main arguments for the decision to select qualitative research as a strategy to investigate the effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training on the socialisation of young journalists to their occupational life. The second section reveals the epistemological as well as ontological positions of the research strategy; subsequently, I will argue for the approach of seeing the research problem through the eyes of the studied trainee journalists and will also be responsive to the critique of qualitative research.

Section three reviews the basic research questions underlying the present project followed by a section on sampling considerations that outlines the sampling procedure applied to this research by introducing and discussing the selected purposive approach, as well as exploring the issues of saturation and sample size. The fifth section advocates the decision to conduct semi-structured interviews as the chosen research method. I will debate the application of the chosen interview guide and, finally, will describe how the interviews were conducted and present an account of their settings, recording and transcription, the latter being discussed in the last section of this chapter.

8.2. Qualitative research as an investigation strategy

8.2.1. Epistemological position

The main aim of this research is to generate an understanding of the social world of journalism trainees by exploring their experiences of their occupation as a result of an off-the-job training system, as provided by MAZ in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. In order to achieve understanding, it is postulated that in the collection and analysis of data, words need to be emphasised as

opposed to quantification, a phenomenon that is usually construed as qualitative research. In contrast to the application of quantitative research and a natural scientific model, qualitative research focuses on the understanding of the social world of the studied population through an examination of the interpretation of that world by the members themselves. In other words, if we want to understand the phenomenon of off-the-job journalism training, we have to examine the way the trainees themselves interpret the pros and cons of the system.

Consequently, the epistemological position of this research strategy is based on interpretivism, a position that requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action or the subject matter of the investigation (Bryman, 2008). As stated in the literature and theory chapters of this study, information on the subjective meaning of the social actions of journalism trainees in terms of how they interpret their social world, especially as a result of journalism training, is practically nonexistent.

Therefore, as this investigation sets out to explore trainee journalists and their views of and experiences within their social world, the selection of a qualitative research strategy sensitive to how trainees interpret their occupational practice will prove to be a valuable approach and a method to provide relevant insight to a field significantly under-researched until today.

8.2.2 Ontological position

Several seminal studies on journalism and news production have claimed that journalism and the manufacture of news must be considered to be a construction of a social reality (e.g. Tuchman, 1978; Fishman, 1980). From these claims, it can be inferred that journalism and news production are not considered to be social entities that have an external reality to the journalists as social actors, but are rather social constructions built from the actions (producing news) and perceptions (meaning) of the journalists (e.g. Tuchman, 1978; Schudson, 2002, 2005). Such an ontological position is generally understood to be constructionist.

By viewing journalism training as a social entity, I contend that, analogous to journalism practice, journalism training based on an off-the-job module cannot be seen as an external reality, but rather as an emergent process of continuous production and reproduction. The social order of journalism as an occupation, in this case, primarily as an occupation in the context of off-the-job training, must be viewed as the result of agreed-upon patterns of action that are in a continuously negotiated state. Referring to Bryman, the ontological stance in this investigation clearly endorses the notion that constructionism proves to be a feasible approach if the studied social entity is “an ongoing accomplishment of social actors rather than something external to them and that totally constrains them” (2008, p. 20).

8.2.3. Seeing through the eyes of the examined trainees

Once again, this study’s point of orientation is the perspective of those being examined, thus addressing young Swiss journalists completing a well-established off-the-job training certificate course at MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism. By clearly focussing on the position of the participants being studied, I assume that they perceive things differently from what may be expected by a researcher as an outsider with minimal direct contact with the social world in question; in this case, the social world of young journalists being trained in an off-the-job system.

Therefore, through this study’s empirical approach, I attempt to examine the effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training on the occupational socialisation of young journalists by, above all, letting them tell it like it is for them. Hence, this strategy aims to understand the phenomenon in the participants’ own words.

Nonetheless, I am aware of the risk that seeking to see through the eyes of a study’s research participants may bring about practical problems. In this respect, Bryman points to the “risk of ‘going native’ and losing sight of what you are studying” (2008, p. 386). Generally speaking, it can be assumed that practical difficulties may be caused by the possibility that a researcher will concentrate on seeing through the eyes of only a small group of the social actors or he or she may pretend to investigate participants of only one gender.

I am aware that close involvement with the participants being studied, a phenomenon that clearly differentiates a qualitative from a quantitative researcher, is occasionally claimed to compromise a social scientist's independence. I therefore tend to basically agree with Cottle, who opines that outsiders may have more "autonomy in their movements" (1998, p.51).

Indeed, my partial in-situ position (that of a visiting lecturer at MAZ) can be questioned. However, I still judge the strength of my insider approach to be valid and unique enough to surpass the supposed weakness of being a researcher in an in-situ position. Moreover, its capacity to generate rich data in a so far under-researched field spared me complicated and long lasting access problems while conducting this study's empirical work.

In order to handle this issue properly and to face the problem of possible reactivity, I have drawn on the arguments put forward by Mason (2002) who, with regard to challenges to qualitative research, suggests that researchers should constantly take stock of their role and activities in the research process:

This is based on the belief that a researcher cannot be neutral, or objective, or detached, from the knowledge and evidence they are generating. Instead, they should seek to understand their role in that process. Indeed, the very act of asking oneself difficult questions in the research process is part of the activity of reflexivity (p.7).

Besides the attempt to be reflective on the research process, I have additionally sought to provide maximum transparency with regard to revealing relevant details about the sampling process (see section 8.3.) as well as to presenting a clear outline of the process of data analysis (see Chapter Nine).

8.2.4. Considerations of the critique of qualitative research

Regardless of the fact that, on the grounds of its premises, the present research can be conducted most appropriately by employing a qualitative approach, it is important to establish the criticisms that have been levelled at qualitative research in general and explore the measures this study has taken to cope with them in particular. One of the most frequently criticised issues is the lack of replicability of qualitative research (Bryman, 1994). The critique especially targets unstructured approaches with hardly any standard procedures to be followed that often rely too strongly on the researchers' subjective judgement.

Bryman (2008, p. 391), on the common critique put forward by quantitative researchers, states that "by these criticisms they usually mean that qualitative findings rely too much on the researcher's often unsystematic views about what is significant and important, and also upon the close personal relationships that the researcher frequently strikes up with the people studied." The present study, however, attempts to qualify the common critique by partly standardising the qualitative approach; for example, by means of applying a purposive sampling process and conducting semi-structured interviews in order to attach a degree of structure to the investigation concept. This could facilitate replication in similar research areas to some extent.

Another common point of criticism concerns problems of generalisation. It is often asserted that the scope of the results of qualitative research is restricted. Again, the reproach is especially aimed at unstructured interviews with a small number of participants. Although this study employs a semi-structured interview technique as its core research method and relies on a sample of 30 participants with whom to conduct in-depth interviews, I am aware of possible criticism and questioning as to whether it will be possible to generalise the findings to other settings for further investigation of off-the-job journalism training.

By all means, I am claiming that qualitative research looks for an understanding of behaviour, values and beliefs in terms of the context in which the investigation is undertaken. Hence, what matters more is the fact that the findings of qualitative

research, like those stemming from this investigation, are meant to generalise to theory rather than to populations. Or, as Bryman puts it, “it is the quality of the theoretical inferences that are made out of qualitative data that is crucial to the assessment of generalization” (2008, p. 392).

8.3. Research questions

8.3.1. Nature of research questions

Although qualitative research is more open-ended than quantitative investigations, I contend that it is important to base the examination process on clearly formulated research questions in order to maintain focus and ensure that relevant data is being collected. The formulation of suitable research questions is crucial because they will guide the literature search, impact on the decision about what data should be collected, inform the analysis and writing up of the data and will prevent the research from tangentially moving in irrelevant directions.

The selection of the research questions driving this study follows the principle that they should be related to one another. With reference to Bryman (p. 74), research questions should be:

- clear, in terms of being intelligible
- researchable, meaning it should be possible to conduct research in relation to them
- linked to each other
- able to make an original contribution to the topic
- neither too broad nor too narrow

8.3.2. Research questions underlying this study

Based on the above exhibited characteristics and in an attempt to address the essence of this enquiry, I have selected the following five basic research questions

as the backbone for this research, which has already been briefly outlined in the introduction part to this study:

Research Question 1

- How does off-the-job journalism training impact on journalists' hands-on experiences of their occupation?

The scope of exploration initialised by research question 1 embraces first and foremost a thorough investigation into the practicality of the subject matter of off-the-job journalism training, seen through the eyes of the examined trainees. It also focuses on guiding the examination of trainees' employment conditions and the consequent implications for the experience of their occupation related to the effectiveness of off-the-job training. Furthermore, it prompts questions about the impact of MAZ (including its lecturers) on trainees' socialisation to their occupational work life.

Research Question 2

- How does off-the-job training affect a journalist's self-conception?

Since research question 2 is related to research question 1, above all it explores how off-the-job training and its practice-oriented subject matter inform a trainee journalist's self-conception. Investigation of a trainee's self-confidence and self-awareness and his or her perception of a contemporary journalist's role and purpose leads on to research question 3.

Research Question 3

- What impact does off-the-job training have on a journalist's sense of his or her accountability to the public?

Research question 3 basically guides the exploration with regard to how journalism trainees see their role and purpose in a workspace that Carey (2000) describes as a "particular type of democratic practice" (p. 22). It scrutinises the trainee journalists' perception of their responsibility to the citizens as a result of off-the-job training, given the critical proposition (e.g. Mensing, 2011) that

industry oriented journalism training is approximate to compromising the journalist's traditional role in the democratic process.

Research Question 4

- What effect does off-the-job journalism training have on the journalist's employability?

In comparison with the scope of exploration prompted by research question 3, this focus of enquiry examines how the system of off-the-job training impacts on trainee journalists' employability in terms of endowing them with abilities that will match the journalism industry's needs and eventually gain them better jobs, which finally relates to research question 5.

Research Question 5

- How do trainee journalists perceive the involvement of the journalism industry in off-the-job training?

Since the model of off-the-job training has always provided a professionally oriented programme focused on training journalists for jobs in media industries, research question 5 scrutinises the industry related characteristics of the off-the-job training system by examining how trainee journalists perceive them. Thus, this question prompts enquiry about trainee journalists' awareness of industry influences on the course curriculum and examines their stance on the proposition that the media industry endorses and funds off-the-job training first and foremost to create a more skilled workforce with regard to their intention to maximise profit.

The next section shows the relevance of these basic research questions with reference to sampling and deciding what data needs to be collected.

8.4. Sampling considerations

8.4.1. Purposive sampling

Qualitative research often entails a purposive sampling strategy because such sampling is basically strategic and an attempt to establish a viable correspondence between research questions and the sampling itself. Purposive sampling is conducted with reference to the research goals of the investigation, “so that units of analysis are selected in terms of criteria that will allow the research questions to be answered” (Bryman, 2008, p. 376). Thus, the sampling for this research has been accomplished with the aim of interviewing journalism trainees who are relevant to the research questions stated above (see section 8.3.2.).

Since the present research approach exclusively focuses on journalism trainees and their experiences of their occupation as an outcome of off-the-job training, purposive sampling with a theoretical approach has been employed. The main feature of theoretical sampling is the additional focus on theoretical reflection on the emerging data while pursuing the collection of the data. Since this theoretical approach is a sort of principle for assessing the adequacy of a sample, it then functions as a guide as to whether data saturation is achieved or whether more data are needed.

8.4.2. Saturation and sample size

In practice, however, it turned out to be quite difficult to know in advance how many interviews would be necessary to achieve theoretical saturation. Bryman, in his critique of sampling techniques, argues that a theoretical sampling approach is basically iterative, implying that there is generally a movement backwards and forwards between sampling and theoretical reflection, and points out that “the key idea is that you carry on sampling theoretically until a category has been saturated with data” (p. 416).

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), data saturation has been achieved when “(a) no new or relevant data seem to be emerging regarding a category, (b) the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variation, and (c) the relationships among categories are well established and validated” (cited in Bryman, 2008, p. 416).

Regarding the present research, after I had conducted and transcribed 10 out of a total of 30 in-depth interviews, a thematic exhaustion and a viable iterative variability within the data began to emerge. Interestingly enough, by the time the first 10 interviews had been examined, the main codes and the corresponding key themes could already be detected and identified and did not have to be significantly revised for the analysis of the other following 20 interviews.

By the time all of the 30 in-depth interviews had been analysed, I considered it to be obvious that there would be no need to continue the data collection and that the outcome of the 30 interviews had formed a viable basis for the establishment of relevant key themes that could be critically assessed with reference to the underlying research questions.

Summing up the issue of saturation and sample size, it is argued that the sampling technique applied in the present investigation strengthens the notion that research based on qualitative interviews can work on comparatively small samples when theoretical saturation is applied as a principle for deciding on the adequacy of the sample.

8.4.3. Sampling journalism trainees

The purposive sampling of potential interviewees focused on the trainees completing the MAZ certificate course in spring 2010 and 2011.⁶⁸ The total population of the two classes added up to 86 trainees (42 graduating in 2010, 44

⁶⁸ The two-year Certificate Course in Journalism at MAZ usually starts and ends in March. Within this period, the trainees have to attend 90 mandatory course days. For more details about the Certificate Course, see Chapter Four (section 4.3.4.).

graduating in 2011). At the time of sampling, which took place in January 2010, all of the scheduled interviewees were still attending the certificate course, including a few who were close to ending the course. The interviewees were randomly sampled from two lists of names (class lists of 2010 and 2011) and in two steps.

Firstly, every third name on the alphabetically arranged lists was sampled (counting from A to Z). Secondly, minor displacements to the random selection were applied in order to attempt to ensure that the sample, by and large, matched the proportion of print media, radio, TV and online journalists attending the certificate course at MAZ at the time. The final selection encompassed 35 trainees who were all contacted by phone. Of these, 30 out of the 35 contacted trainees could successfully be sampled for this study. At the time of sampling, 65 percent of the selected trainees were working in print media, 20 percent in radio, 10 percent in television and five percent exclusively online.

As a matter of fact, this sample stratification corresponds quite accurately with the outcome of a survey of more than 200 alumni of the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism I conducted in 2008, indicating almost identical proportions (Bigi, 2009).⁶⁹

Regarding the comparatively high number of students working in print media in this study's sample, it is worth mentioning that a few of the trainees also indicated that they occasionally worked for the online edition of their newspaper. With five of the contacted trainees, the sampling approach was not successful; the trainees were either not interested in taking part in the present investigation project or would not respond to the sampling request at all.

8.4.4. Ethical considerations

As far as ethical issues are concerned, I followed the principles of the Research Ethic Framework (REF) established by the Economic and Social Research Council

⁶⁹ The survey was conducted within the context of the school's 25th anniversary.

(ESRC) as the principal funding agency for UK social science research.⁷⁰ Ethical approval was not required since:

- This research involved exclusively adult persons. There were no participants belonging to vulnerable groups like children or young people with a learning disability.
- This research did not involve sensitive topics such as participants' sexual behaviour or their illegal or political conduct, but examined accounts of professional experiences, views on social roles at work and an assessment of political, economic and cultural determinants of journalism education.
- This research did not involve groups whereby the permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial access to members; for example, native groups or indigenous communities. All participants were accessible without permission from a gatekeeper or an authority.
- This research did not cause psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation or physical pain.

All the sampled trainees were guaranteed full data protection and complete anonymity regarding their part in this study, especially in view of potential enquiries on behalf of their employers or MAZ. Therefore, I have anonymised the participants for the analysis of this study and characterised the interviewees with the letter I for interviewee and with associated numbers from 1 to 30. A quotation by interviewee 23, for example, would be denoted with (I23) at the end of the respective text passage.

8.5. Qualitative interviewing

8.5.1. Why qualitative interviewing?

Since this research is aimed at exploring the effectiveness of journalism training, in particular the system of off-the-job training, and is not attempting to test

⁷⁰ The Research Ethic Framework (REF) was introduced in 2006. It was revised in 2010(www.esrc.ac.uk).

hypotheses, preference has been given to the qualitative interviewing technique. In qualitative interviewing, there is paramount interest in the interviewee's own perspective, in other words what she or he considers to be relevant and important, which ideally corresponds with the basic approach of this study. The two core approaches to qualitative interviewing are the almost unstructured interview and the semi-structured interview; the latter is introduced in the next subsection.

8.5.2. Semi-structured interview as investigation method

The term semi-structured interview generally refers to a context in which the researcher has a list of questions that are an elementary form of interview guide, "but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply" (Bryman, 2008, p. 438). It seems obvious that this research advocated a semi-structured approach to the subject matter, since a semi-structured interview by its very nature is capable of providing insights into how journalism trainees view their world.

Since the research in hand has a fairly obvious focus, namely the question of how training impacts on the socialisation of a young journalist to his or her everyday professional life, the flexibility in semi-structured interviewing seems conducive to addressing specific and relevant issues and topics.

8.5.3. Guiding principles

A semi-structured interview usually employs a list of questions to prompt conversation in the areas to be covered in order to explore the given research questions. Bryman, referring to Lofland and Lofland (1995), points out that "what is crucial is that the questioning allows interviewers to glean the ways in which research participants view their social world and that there is flexibility in the conduct of the interviews" (p. 442).

Although qualitative research is predominantly almost unstructured, it is usually structured enough for at least the basic research focus to be specified. It can be said, therefore, that the questions in an interview guide are the backbone of a semi-structured interview and thus need to cover the targeted research areas, but from the perspective of the interviewees.

An explicit formula on how to design an interview guide as a sort of a backbone to conduct a qualitative interview does not seem to exist. As a guiding principle for the present research project, I have adopted the question pattern of Kvale (cited in Bryman, 2008, pp. 445-7) as a loose format for designing the appropriate interview guide⁷¹:

- Introduction questions
- Follow-up questions: asking the interviewee to elaborate on his or her answers
- Probing questions: following up what has been said through direct questions
- Specifying questions
- Direct questions
- Indirect questions
- Structuring questions
- Silence: to give the interviewee the opportunity to reflect and perhaps amplify his or her answer
- Interpreting questions

Apart from following a certain running order regarding the sequence of questions, an interview guide may also entail prompts that are conducive to conversations relating to the areas approached by the research questions. It is important to state, however, that such an initiative needs to be exercised with due care in terms of not leading the interviewees. Bryman (p. 448), in his deliberations on the design of an interview guide, claims that in interviews the following areas are usually probed:

⁷¹ Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing* Thousand Oaks, Cal: Sage.

- values – of interviewee, of group, of organisation;
- beliefs – of interviewee, of others, of group;
- behaviour – of interviewee, of others;
- formal and informal roles – of interviewee, of others;
- relationships – of interviewee, of others;
- places and locales;
- emotions – particularly of the interviewee, but also possibly of others;
- encounters;
- stories.

8.5.4. Design of interview guide

For the present project, I have arranged the interview guide regarding the running order for the questions into three major sections: initial questions, intermediate questions, and ending questions:

Initial questions

What was your journalist life like prior to the MAZ certificate course?

How did you become aware of journalism training?

Why do you think journalism training is needed?

Intermediate questions

What was your feeling at the beginning of the training?

How do you experience your journalistic practice with reference to your journalism training?

What do you connote in a positive sense? How do you think about this?

What do you connote in a negative sense? How do you think about this?

How do you experience your daily journalistic work since you began attending the training course?

What does this mean to you personally?

Ending questions

How have your views about working as a journalist changed?

In which ways has the relationship with other employees and your employer changed?

In which ways do you think and act differently as a result of journalism training?

What advice would you give somebody wanting to take journalism training?

What is your opinion about the contemporary media industry?

What do you think about the future of journalism?

Having designed an appropriate type of semi-structured interview and selected the above-mentioned questions as an interview guideline, I was aware that it was important to note that the determined questions did not turn out to be leading questions with regard to identifying the themes that would later emerge as the basis for the findings.

On the other hand, since the present research aims to thoroughly explore the effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training and thereby possibly qualify existing assumptions and assertions on this debated issue, it is contended that scrutiny is bound to be reliant on specific questions covering the research area in question. This is in order to prompt an independent and thorough discussion about the multi-layered issue of journalism training, which then is supposed to enable an assessment of potential implications for the essential research questions.

Taking a closer look at the interview guide applied for this research, there are several questions prompting responses to emotions such as: what was your feeling at the beginning of your training? Further questions prompt responses to reasoning about values such as: how have your views about working as a journalist changed? Others are likely to induce responses to beliefs and behaviour, for example: in which ways do you think and act differently as a result of journalism training? And still others are apt to generate responses to relationships, for instance: in which ways has the relationship with other employees and your employer changed?

In summary, it is postulated that by adopting the above-mentioned interview guide this study's research approach endorses Bryman's conception of prompting,

which mainly causes the interviewee to think more about the researched topic and provides the opportunity to generate a more detailed response. Or, as Bryman (p. 450) puts it: “There is no doubt that it is the prompts that elicit the more interesting replies, but that is precisely their role.”

8.5.5. Realisation of the interviews: setting and recording

I conducted the interviews with the 30 trainee journalists in two rounds. The first round took place between January and March 2010. It especially focused on trainees finishing the two-year course in March 2010. The second round, aiming to interview trainees graduating in 2011, took place between May and July 2010. All participants had been informed verbally in advance that taking part in this research project was completely voluntary, that they had the option to withdraw from the project at any time, and that their identity would be protected at all times and complete anonymity of their data would always be guaranteed (also see section 8.4.3.).⁷²

All interviews were conducted face-to-face and lasted between 45 to 60 minutes each. The conversations were recorded on an mp3 player and stored as mp3 files. No hardware malfunctions occurred. All participants agreed to be recorded; the locales where the recording sessions took place differed depending on the preferences and availability of the trainees. Some of the participants preferred to be interviewed at a site close to their job location; others favoured MAZ as the location for the recording session; still others wished the recordings to take place in a ‘neutral’ environment such as in a café in Zurich or Lucerne.

The procedure of the conversations by and large followed the above-mentioned interview guide. The first questions referred to personal information such as name, age, years of work experience, present employer, and present position in the company. Then the interview proceeded with a range of initial questions, followed by intermediate and ending questions using a similar wording in every

⁷² I briefed each participant about the general conditions of my study personally over the phone.

interview in the style of the specifically designed interview guide (see section 8.5.4.). Usually, the mp3 recorder remained switched on after completion of the formal interview in order to catch additional comments by the interviewees that sometimes turned out to be complementary moments of revealing information and views.

Since a semi-structured interview concept leaves the interviewee a degree of leeway to develop answers, the guiding questions do not always follow accurately in the way outlined in the interview guide. Care had to be taken that emphasis was always put on how the interviewee framed and understood the topic. Thus, the interviewees were given enough room to pursue the views they felt were important and raise issues of particular interest to them that had not been requested in the interview.

Once again, it should be pointed out that a semi-structured interview is flexible by nature and not a kind of mutated quantitative research without numbers. As the interview programmes of this study progressed, trainees themselves generated additional topics and supplementary issues, which contributed to the detection of key themes and subthemes later in the analysis, providing relevant findings (see Chapter 7).

8.6. Transcribing interviews

8.6.1. Translation from Swiss German to German

All interviews were conducted in Swiss German as Switzerland's most widespread spoken language⁷³. Consequently, the transcription of the interviewees was not only a translation of the spoken into the written context, but also the translation of Swiss German into German since the official written language in the Swiss-German part of Switzerland is German.

⁷³ Although a small range of dictionaries in Swiss German exist, it is not considered to be an official written language.

The decision to conduct the interviews in Swiss German instead of German (which would have cut out the translation step) rested on the common experience that Swiss Germans are generally capable of explaining their views and feelings more adequately and authentically when using their mother tongue and spoken language. To avoid a further translation procedure, I decided against translating the transcripts into English, except those text passages that could be used as quotations for the analysis and findings chapter (see Chapters Ten, Eleven and Twelve).

8.6.2. Cutting out the less illuminating

Since the transcription of the 30 interviews was amounting to a very large body of text, I identified interview sections that were unlikely to be fruitful for the analysis, perhaps because the interviewee was being repetitive on issues, reticent or discussion was not relevant to the research topic. Needless to say, it doesn't seem to be necessary to transcribe interview material that recognisably will not contribute relevant information to the analysis.

On the other hand, I was aware of the slight risk of missing important data when leaving out sections during the process of transcription. Therefore, in order to ensure that nothing important was missed, I listened closely to each recording (from the beginning to the end) two to three times before starting to transcribe. Moreover, the fact that I personally performed the transcription of the interviews as the interviewer and the researcher of this project also contributed to the certainty that nothing relevant was missed.

8.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented a detailed outline of the main arguments for the decision to select a qualitative research strategy in order to examine the effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training on the socialisation of young journalists to their occupation and listed relevant points about the study's

research questions, sampling procedure and the arrangement of the 30 in-depth interviews with the selected trainee journalists attending the Certificate Course in Journalism at MAZ.

Discussing this study's epistemological position, I have made a case for the chosen research strategy based on interpretivism and argued that the latter has proven to be a valuable approach to exploring journalism trainees and their views of and experiences in their social world. I have also pointed out that the chosen qualitative research approach promised to be a viable method to provide relevant insights into a so far significantly under-researched field.

From an ontological point of view, I have stressed the relevance of a constructionist approach to this investigation, since the social order of journalism as an occupation (as well as in the context of off-the-job training) must be viewed as a result of agreed-upon patterns of action that are constantly negotiated.

I have further emphasised that the point of orientation of this investigation is the perspective of those being investigated. That is why this research attempts to examine the impact of off-the-job journalism training on the occupational socialisation of young journalists by letting the trainees tell it like it is for them.

In this context, I have also critically addressed the close involvement of a qualitative researcher with the participants and illustrated how I dealt with this issue with regard to the present research. I have put further emphasis on the fact that, as a qualitative researcher, I aimed to be constantly reflective with regard to the research process and provide maximum transparency as to revealing relevant details about the sampling process.

In this chapter, I have further presented a detailed outline of the five research questions underlying this study and expounded the core sampling considerations by introducing and discussing the selected purposive sampling approach, as well as debating the issues of saturation and sample size. In addition, I have reviewed the semi-structured interview as an investigation method, addressed its guiding principles and presented the design of the chosen interview guide for the present

investigation. Finally, the arrangement of the 30 in-depth interviews has been sketched by giving a detailed account of their settings, recording and transcription.

In Chapter Nine, the thesis proceeds to reveal the key facts about the systematic and thematic collection and analysis of the data originating from the 30 in-depth interviews based on the above-described sample of trainee journalists.

Chapter Nine: Collection of Data and Thematic Analysis

9.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the collection of data and the mode of analysis. Initially, I will emphasise the nature of qualitative data analysis as a result of methodological considerations and discuss the mode of thematic analysis as the chosen approach. The chapter will then examine the coding principles and, by means of a matrix-based method, outline the chosen framework accountable for categorising and synthesising the data from the 30 in-depth interviews.

Following this, the emerging key themes and subthemes will be introduced and ranked according to their frequency. The presentation of the findings originating from the applied thematic analysis and initial conclusions are the subject matter of the next chapter.

9.2. Thematic analysis as selected approach

As stated in the previous methodological chapter, analysing in-depth interviews calls for a qualitative analysis strategy. Bryman argues that there are no “clear-cut rules about how qualitative data analysis should be carried out” (2008, p. 538). It is clear that qualitative research is subject to quickly generating a large amount of detailed data; obviously, this study is no exception.

In qualitative research, with its intent to generate theories rather than testing hypotheses, the search for themes to be developed into concepts that may generate theoretical knowledge is regarded as a common activity when approaching data. Bryman points out that searching for themes is a part of most approaches to qualitative data analysis such as “grounded theory, critical discourse analysis, qualitative content analysis, and narrative analysis” (p. 554).

Thus, thematic analysis is generally considered to be a process for encoding qualitative information. The encoding asks for an explicit 'code,' which, for example, could be a list of themes. According to Boyatzis, a theme can be a pattern found in the information that "at the minimum describes and organizes possible observations or at the maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" (1998, p. vi).

Regarding the research approach to this investigation, the themes are solely generated inductively from the raw information gathered from the 30 interviews, since prior investigation into this particular field of journalism training research is scarce or non-existent and, consequently, no patterns and themes could be deducted from an appropriate theory.

Boyatzis (1998, p.11) identifies four stages in developing the ability to use thematic analysis:

- 1) *Sensing themes* – that is, recognising the codable moment
- 2) *Doing it reliably* – that is, recognising the codable moment and encoding it consistently
- 3) *Developing codes*
- 4) *Interpreting the information and themes in the context of a theory or a conceptual framework* – that is, contributing to the development of knowledge (italicised by the author).

As indicated by Boyatzis, coding must be regarded as the starting point for the application of thematic analysis, as it is for most forms of qualitative analysis. The next subsection of this chapter explains how the coding for the thematic analysis within this research has been informed.

9.3. Coding principles

With regard to the thematic analysis approach, as Boyatzis claims, sensing themes is about recognising patterns of text as a "codable moment" (ibid). In order to

develop a viable process of coding or indexing the interviews' data, I have consulted and implemented into this study's coding considerations relevant principles traditionally applied in grounded theory and other approaches. The reflections follow propositions by Bryman (2008, p.550) who, referring to Lofland and Lofland (1995)⁷⁴, states them as follows:

Of what general category is this item of data an instance?

What does this item of data represent?

What is this item of data about?

Of what topic is this item of data an instance?

What question about a topic does this item of data suggest?

What sort of answer to a question about a topic does this item of data imply?

What is happening here?

What are people doing?

What do people say they are doing?

What kind of event is going on?

Each transcript of the 30 recorded in-depth interviews has been tested regarding these coding principles by multiple reviewing and the application of labels (capital letters and numbers, for example E1, that is 'practicality of subject matter') to component text parts that seem to represent a theme of potential significance to the worlds of the trainee journalists. Overall, the coding approach to the transcripts of the 30 interviews with MAZ trainees has generated nine codes or lists of themes.

It is important to note at this point of the analysis that, for some writers, as Bryman in his introduction to thematic analysis acknowledges, "a theme is more or less the same as a code" (2008, p. 554). In this respect, I have decided that the write-up of this study's thematic analysis process does not explicitly distinguish between 'coding' and 'identifying a theme' and the nine codes (or lists of themes) will be known as denoted key themes from now on, including 28 subthemes. In order to be able to distinguish a theme from a non-theme, the thematic analysis

⁷⁴ Lofland, J and Lofland, L. (1995) *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 3rd ed. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth.

process has identified emerging key themes and subthemes that comprise topics recurring again and again or that are discussed in different ways by the interviewees. The following subsection introduces the selected framework that has been used to index and organise key themes and their related subthemes.

9.4. Ordering and synthesising data: key themes, subthemes

As a strategy for thematically analysing the qualitative data emerging from the interviews, I have applied an approach called Framework, which was developed at the National Centre for Social Research in the UK. The approach is based on a framework described as a “matrix based method for ordering and synthesising data” (Ritchie et al., 2003, p.219). The essential idea is to create an index of central themes and subthemes that are represented in a matrix. The themes and subthemes are basically recurring motifs identified in the in-depth interviews and the trainees’ deliberations on their individual perception of off-the-job training.

The following key themes and related subthemes have emerged from the data:

Key theme:

A) Perspectives on the route into journalism

Subthemes:

A1) Traineeship (Volontariat connected with MAZ)

A2) Traineeship or internship not connected with MAZ

A3) University degree

Key theme:

B) Impact of employment and working conditions

Subthemes:

B1) Rapport with co-workers

B2) Impact of editorial and newsroom concept and guidelines

B3) Support of editors, co-workers and mentors

B4) Salary critique

Key theme:

C) Impact on journalists' self-perception

Subthemes:

C1) Self-confidence and self-awareness

C2) Fostering courage, taking chances and risks

C3) Self-assertion against superiors and sources

C4) Impact on self-image

Key theme:

D) Impact of co-trainees

Subthemes:

D1) Mutual feedback on course work

D2) Exchange of information, discourse on journalism work

D3) Building of professional network

Key theme:

E) Impact of the curriculum

Subthemes:

E1) Practicality of subject matter

E2) Fostering journalistic innovation

E3) Fostering critical thinking

E4) Value of the certificate

Key theme:

F) Impact of lecturers and instructors

Subthemes:

F1) Lecturer qualification

F2) Lecturer bias

Key theme:

G) Impact of MAZ as an institution

Subthemes:

G1) Administrative issues

G2) Fees for certificate course

G3) Media industry influence on the curriculum

Key theme:

H) Impact of the media and journalism industry

Subthemes:

H1) Industry's opinion of journalism education

H2) Commercial pressure on journalists' work

H3) Industry's ability of self-criticism

Key theme:

I) Impact on perspectives regarding the future of journalism

Subthemes:

I1) Own career perspectives

I2) Perception of journalism and media development

Organised initially into key themes and subthemes, the data was subsequently analysed by applying the above-mentioned framework and was displayed within a matrix developed on an Excel sheet (see Appendices for details). Table 3 displays a brief excerpt from the framework approach to key theme B (impact of employment and working conditions) and reveals how it is thematically organised within the matrix:

Table 3: The Framework approach to thematic analysis

(excerpt from Excel sheet on analysis of key theme B with subthemes containing coded text from all 30 interviewees)

B) IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

	Rapport with co-workers	Impact editorial/nr concept & guidelines	Support mentors/editors/co-workers	Salary critique
Interviewee 1	Man ist schon sehr geprägt v	n		
	Die Redakteure, die nicht an	n		
	Es war schon gut, das MAZ	n		
Interviewee 2			Dass ich wegen dem MAZ v	n
Interviewee 3	Die Arbeitskollegen, die gar	p		
			Ich habe den Eindruck, dass	n
Interviewee 4	Bei älteren Journalisten stell	n	Die Reaktionen auf mein M	n

The excerpt of the matrix in Table 3 illustrates how the coded text relating to key theme B, the impact of employment and working conditions on journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training, is thematically organised and presented via the four associated subthemes. As shown in the appropriate cell of the matrix, interviewee 1 is associated with three statements from the interview that have been coded and identified with subtheme B1, but with none regarding the other subthemes. Interviewee 2, on the other hand, has not provided text that could be identified with subtheme B1, nor B2 or B4, but has displayed B3, whereas interviewee 3 has provided text that could be coded with B1 and B3. The column at the end of each subtheme cell indicates whether the statement is connoted in a positive (marked by p) or a negative (marked by n) way.

For technical reasons, the above-shown excerpt of the matrix only displays very brief snippets of the coded text drawn from the statements of the 30 interviewees. A further excerpt from the applied Excel-matrix, providing a broader insight into

the coded text of key theme E (impact of the curriculum), is listed separately in the Appendices part of this thesis.⁷⁵

9.5. Systematic approach to thematic analysis

Application of the framework and the chosen matrix system allows for grounding the interpretation of the identified themes and subthemes on two modes of analysis: a qualitative and verbally descriptive approach to the phenomenon under scrutiny, as well as a quantitative approach to systematically analysing the information. The latter focuses on a quantitative description of the frequency of key themes and subthemes and explores whether they are connoted in an affirmative or negative manner. It can be assumed that the more a theme within the data analysis process recurs, the more significant it will be to the interpretation of the data.

In taking account of this proposition, the key themes, as well as the subthemes, have been ranked according to the frequency of appropriate statements, as displayed in Tables 4 and 5:

Table 4: Frequency in numbers and ranking of coded statements per key theme

Key theme	Number	Rating
1) Impact of the curriculum (E)	195	30 %
2) Impact of MAZ as an institution (G)	86	13 %
3) Impact on self-perception (C)	81	12 %
4) Impact of co-trainees (D)	76	11 %
5) Impact of employment conditions (B)	58	9 %
6) Lecturer critique (F)	54	8 %

⁷⁵ The coded data has not been translated from German into English, with the exception of those parts that have been used as interviewee quotes in the next chapter (Chapter Ten: Presentation of Findings).

7) Impact on perspectives on journalism's future (I)	54	8%
8) Perspectives on the route into journalism (A)	38	6 %
9) Impact of the media and journalism industry (H)	17	3 %

Total number of coded statements: 659 100 %

Table 5:
Frequency in numbers and ranking of the coded statements per subtheme

Subtheme	Number	Rating
1) Practicality of subject matter (E1)	135	20%
2) Administrative issues (G1)	45	7%
3) Self-confidence and self-awareness (C1)	39	6%
4) Perception of journalism and media development (I2)	39	6%
5) Lecturer qualification (F1)	33	5%
6) Exchange of information, discourse on journalist work (D2)	30	5%
7) Support of editors, co-workers and mentors (B3)	27	4%
8) Building of professional network (D3)	26	4%
9) Value of certificate (E4)	24	3%
10) Fostering journalistic innovation (E2)	23	3%
11) Traineeship (Volontariat) connected with MAZ (A1)	23	3%
12) Media industry influence on the curriculum (G3)	22	3%
13) Lecturer bias (F2)	21	3%
14) Mutual feedback on course work (D1)	20	3%
15) Fees of certificate course (G2)	19	3%
16) Fostering of courage, taking chances and risks (C2)	17	2%
17) Rapport with co-workers (B1)	16	2%
18) Self-assertion against superiors and sources (C3)	15	2%
19) Own career perspectives (I1)	15	2%
20) Fostering critical thinking (E3)	13	2%
21) Impact of editorial and newsroom concept and guidelines (B2)	12	2%
22) Traineeship or internship not connected with MAZ (A2)	11	2%
23) Impact on self-image (C4)	10	2%

24) Commercial pressure on journalist's work (H2)	9	2%
25) Industry's opinion of journalism education. (H1)	5	1%
26) University degree (A3)	4	1%
27) Industry's ability of self-criticism (H3)	3	1%
28) Salary critique (B4)	3	1%

Total number of coded statements	659	100 %
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9.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explained how I handled this study's rich data and the chosen mode of analysis. Given the selection of a qualitative research approach, with its intent to generate theories rather than testing hypotheses, I have indicated that the search for themes to be developed into concepts that may generate theoretical knowledge is a common activity when qualitatively approaching data. In this respect, I have underlined that within the present research project the themes had to be generated inductively from the raw information stemming from the 30 in-depth interviews, since prior investigation into this particular field of journalism training (off-the-job training) is practically non-existent.

Furthermore, in this chapter I have reviewed general coding principles and stressed those implemented in this analysis' coding consideration. The ordering and synthesising process of the interview data into key themes and subthemes based on a matrix method called Framework (developed at the national Centre for Social Research in the UK) has been illustrated and the emerging nine key themes (from A to I) and the 28 related subthemes (from A1 to I2) introduced.

I have emphasised that the application of the chosen framework and matrix system allowed for the interpretation of the identified key themes and subthemes to be grounded on two modes of analysis, i.e. firstly a qualitative and verbally descriptive approach to the subject matter and secondly a quantitative approach

to systematically analysing the data. It has further been underlined that the latter focused on a quantitative description of the frequency of key and subthemes and examined whether they were connoted in an affirmative or negative way.

Conclusively, it is argued that, as a result of this study's systematic approach to identifying themes, it can be assumed that the more a theme within the data analysis process recurs, the more significant it will be to the interpretation of the data. Therefore, I have ranked the key themes as well as the subthemes according to the frequency of appropriate statements emerging in the interview data.

Having exemplified the procedure of this study's thematic analysis, the next three chapters will detail each coded key theme and respectively identified subtheme and present the core findings of this study's thematic analysis approach.

PART FIVE

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter Ten: Presentation of Findings (Part One)

10.1. Introduction

The presentation of the main findings resulting from the thematic analysis of the interview data according to its coding into nine key themes (A to I) and the identification of 28 subthemes (A1 to I2), as described in Chapter Nine, is grouped into three parts.

Part one provides the findings relating to the key themes and respective subthemes of:

The perspectives on the route into journalism (A1 to A3)

The impact of employment and working conditions (B1 to B4)

The impact on journalists' self-conception (C1 to C4)

The impact of co-trainees (D1 to D3)

Every section of this chapter focuses on a key theme and its respective subthemes. The sections start with an introduction to the key theme and its subthemes followed by a detailed outline of the respective findings and then conclude with a first weighting of the findings with reference to the discussion chapter.

The sequence of the relevant key themes and subthemes, as well as the presentation of the corresponding findings, follow the chronological order of the emergence of the interview data, as stated in the previous chapter. A thorough weighting of the findings and a reflection on their implications for the research questions will be presented in the discussion chapter (see Chapter Thirteen).

10.2. Perspectives on the route into journalism (theme A)

10.2.1. Introduction

Key theme A of the thematic analysis deals with the basic question of whether a specific way of entering journalism practice is believed to have a lasting effect on everyday journalism. As illuminated in Chapter Three on the Swiss history of journalism and journalism education and training, there are still different pathways into the world of journalism in German-speaking Switzerland. The most common methods of recruitment are the so-called *Volontariat*, a professionally paid traineeship that usually lasts for a period of one to two years and the internship, a system of on-the-job training either paid partially or unpaid.⁷⁶

As previously outlined in more detail in Chapter Four, according to the first broad national survey of the Swiss journalism workforce, conducted in 2000 and presenting the opinions of 2,020 journalists (Marr et al., 2001), around half of all Swiss journalists completed a *Volontariat* and about one third went through internships at the time. The remainder entered journalism without any specific journalism-oriented education.

A more recent survey (conducted in 2008) of a sample of 1,744 journalists in the Swiss German part of Switzerland showed a decrease of around 25 percent regarding the number of journalists who completed a *Volontariat* (30 in comparison to 41 percent), whereas the number of journalists who experienced an internship has only changed marginally and stayed at 40 percent. Furthermore, 12 percent of the Swiss German journalists in 2008 had graduated from a journalism school and 18 percent did not have a journalistic education at all (Wyss and Keel, 2010).⁷⁷

⁷⁶ The *Volontariat*, a special format of internship in Swiss journalism, is detailed in Chapter Four of this thesis (see section 4.2.).

⁷⁷ For more details, see Table 2 in Chapter Four.

Theme A of the thematic analysis reflects the scrutinised journalists' mindset on the impact of three different pathways into journalism practice and how they may affect the journalists' experiences of their occupation.

10.2.2. Traineeship (Volontariat) connected with MAZ (subtheme A1)

Overall, 23 of the 38 coded statements on the impact of the method of entering journalism practice highlight the traineeship (*Volontariat*) in connection with the MAZ certificate course in journalism. Most statements emphasise the practical value of doing journalism while studying it.

I would recommend this course to anybody wanting to enter journalism. One of the biggest advantages is the possibility to immediately transfer the lessons learnt into your work practice. Obviously, the adequate support of your editorial staff is a prerequisite. (Interviewee 21)

The interviewees, responding to questions on this issue, claim that the chance to be in touch with leading Swiss journalists executing their roles as instructors and lecturers provides them with a rare insight into the work practice of highly rated professionals, which is regarded as an outstanding asset.

Only two of the propositions on subtheme A1 show a negative connotation. One points out that journalism education is basically useless and that all a journalist needs is to be talented. The other suggests that instead of taking the whole certificate course, one would be better off attending separate course days.

10.2.3. Traineeship or internship not connected with MAZ (subtheme A2)

About one third of the coded statements on key theme A refer to the path of entering journalism practice through a traineeship or an internship not connected with the MAZ certificate course. As a first step, practically all statements advocate trying to gain an internship with a media company to find out whether a career in journalism seems like a viable occupational option. Most statements recommend entering the media world via an internship at a (local) newspaper. It is repeatedly

pointed out that an internship before starting a journalism course could be a good way of establishing a newcomer's capability to become a professional journalist.

10.2.4. University degree (subtheme A3)

Only about every fourth statement on the preferred path to journalism practice emphasises the importance of having a university degree in general, and one in journalism or mass communication studies in particular, when entering journalism practice. The few accounts favouring an academic background when entering the profession mostly refer to the potential advantage that may stem from the achievement of a general and also academic education:

If you really want to make a career in journalism you will need an academic background. Of course, if you write for a local newspaper on local sports, you're basically fine with journalistic skills. Apart from that, if specialised knowledge is required you may need to be able to draw on your academic background. (Interviewee 7)

10.2.5. Conclusion

The chosen path of entry into the world of journalism and its impact upon journalists' experiences of their occupation seen through the eyes of the examined trainees has to be considered to be minor and unimportant. From a quantitative perspective, the number of assertions coded with key theme A is the second lowest on the list of nine and equals only six percent of the total of the coded statements.

The result is hardly surprising if one takes into consideration that journalism education in Switzerland has been formalised rather late (Blum, 2002) and that Swiss universities have long marginalised journalism education and research (Gysin et al., 2004). The latter may also explain the trainees' aversion to an academically backed entry to the profession. The outcome most strongly condemned by trainees with regard to journalism education and training in terms of being partly academy-driven also matches trainees' expectations of the

practical value of the course curriculum, as findings in subtheme E1 (practicality of curriculum) reveal.

In summary, it can be stated that the findings regarding key theme A indicate that the interviewees assess a traineeship in connection with the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism to be an ideal way of entering Swiss journalism practice. In a way, it may be surprising that the interviewed MAZ trainees tend to respond in a rather negative way to an academic input to journalism, although the findings of the latest national survey of Swiss journalists (Wyss & Keel, 2010) indicate an increasing level of academisation in Swiss journalism, which may be reducible to a rising interest in academic education as a prerequisite for entering journalism.

On the other hand, this impression has to be put into perspective since it is a common phenomenon that learners who are asked to evaluate their education programme for the greater part tend to display. Nevertheless, the outcome gives an idea of the significance of the schools' curriculum and the practicality of the subject matter with regard to everyday journalism practice, a topic that is analysed in key theme E (Chapter Eleven, see section 11.2.2).

10.3. Impact of employment and working conditions (theme B)

10.3.1. Introduction

The findings presented in this section originate from an analysis of the impact of employment and working conditions upon the trainees' socialisation to their occupation. The influence of co-workers on each individual journalist working in a newsroom has already been studied in the 1950s. Breed (1955) and Merton (1957) pointed out in their newsroom studies that group membership as well as the learning of suitable role-behaviour on entry to groups, and the constant pressure of the expectations of co-workers and editorial staff, largely determine a journalist's individual behaviour in a newsroom.

The key question that can be asked here is whether trainee journalists experience off-the-job journalism training as a force that is capable of disrupting the common routinisation of institutionalised news production (routinisation in the sense of Tuchman, 1973; Schlesinger, 1978; Boyd-Barrett, 1980; Tunstall, 1993) or whether the effectiveness of off-the-job training merely helps to reproduce daily work performance according to a well-tried newsroom system.

10.3.2. Rapport with co-workers (subtheme B1)

About one third of the statements emerging from the interview data as key theme B are coded as subtheme B1. More than half of the trainees doubt or deny that their rapport with co-workers has a positive effect on the applicability of lessons learnt from off-the-job training. One of the trends emerging from the analysis of this subtheme is the impression that the more senior a journalist is in the context of a newsroom, the less willing he/she will be to acknowledge the benefit of journalism training and help integrate a trainee's input into the daily news work:

Most of my fellow workers have been in journalism for years. So they don't think a lot about journalism training. Actually, they never really cared about my input. (Interviewee 29)

Another subject that arose when analysing the subtheme in question is the trainees' perception of fellow journalists who never had formal journalism training and tend to ridicule the system of off-the-job training. It is suggested that such behaviour may stem from feelings of envy:

My colleagues at work kept blaming me for just having a good time whenever I left the newsroom for another set of course days at the journalism school. I think some of them were envious. (Interviewee 23)

On the other hand, the minority of statements on this subtheme also emphasise that fellow workers, especially those who are young, are quite interested in what trainees learn when attending an off-the-job training course:

The rookies in our newsroom, those who have not yet had formal journalism training, are usually quite interested in my lessons learnt and want to know more about useful hints and tricks. (Interviewee 3)

10.3.3. Impact of editorial/newsroom concepts and guidelines (subtheme B2)

In total, the interviews with the sample of trainee journalists generated 12 statements that are coded as subtheme B2. Compared to the 135 statements coded as subtheme E1 (practicality of subject matter), this quantity must be considered to be of minor importance. Nevertheless, all the coded statements indicate that journalism trainees experience editorial concepts and guidelines as predominant and not susceptible to their training-based input. Editorial deadlines and pressure to provide constant output in the circumstances of rising job cuts are often referred to, in addition to the lack of sufficient resources that would help realise the investigation skills learnt and simulated at journalism school in everyday journalism practice.

The problem is that editorial guidelines force us to constantly produce more while more and more jobs are being cut. This clearly affects the quality of our journalistic work. (Interviewee 13)

10.3.4. Support of editors, co-workers and mentors (subtheme B3)

In total, 27 of the 58 statements occurring in the context of key theme B comment on the support of editors, co-workers and mentors and are coded as subtheme B3. Three out of four accounts affirm that the trainees' experiences of support from editors, co-workers and mentors are insufficient or even nonexistent. It is repeatedly indicated that editors as well as senior journalists who are supposed to coach the trainees at their workplace (which is normally part of the agreement with MAZ) fail to do so, mostly because of a constant lack of time. One interviewee points out that in order to interest editors in his off-the-job training and its implications for everyday work, he often needs to insist on receiving feedback:

MAZ is a kind of parallel universe. People in our newsroom don't bother about MAZ at all. Neither my editor nor senior journalists are really interested in what I take from my off-the-job training. If I want to show them a piece of work from the course it's always up to me to call on them. (Interviewee 27)

Nonetheless, a few interviewees state that they are adequately supported by the editor and senior co-workers, meaning that the method and amount of support

are compliant with the terms of agreement concluded with MAZ.⁷⁸ However, it is repeatedly claimed that the hitherto existing mentorship system would be considerably improved if a trainee completing the certificate course could be granted an extra-occupational mentor accountable to MAZ and not to the trainee's employer.

10.3.5. Salary critique (subtheme B4)

As far as a trainee's salary conditions are concerned, the findings show that they have practically no impact on the experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job journalism training. Only three statements out of a total number of 659 are coded in this respect.

10.3.6. Conclusion

The findings from thematically analysing the data coded as key theme B testify that journalists completing off-the-job training courses find it difficult to implement their training knowledge in everyday journalism practice. The outcome shows that trainees still have to deal with senior journalists' belief that proper journalistic qualification stems from talent and the journalist's 'nose for news', and that everything relevant to becoming a professional journalist will be learnt on the job anyway (Hanitzsch and Müller, 2009). It can be argued that this phenomenon basically tends to be a generation issue, since the analysis also reveals that trainees feel more accepted by younger fellow workers, who seem to show more interest in the qualification obtained from off-the-job training.

The analysis of this key theme also demonstrates that most of the coded accounts regarding the support of editors, co-workers and mentors are connoted in a negative fashion. The trainees' assertions emphasise a common problem amongst editors and senior journalists, who deplore the constant lack of time to give

⁷⁸ For details about the agreement see Chapter Four (section 4.3.4.).

relevant feedback. Furthermore, the findings indicate that most trainees rarely succeed in challenging the predominant editorial concepts and guidelines while trying to implement their off-the-job training expertise into daily newsroom practice.

Finally, as an outcome of thematically analysing this issue, it must be argued that trainee journalists, while trying to implement their off-the-job training knowledge into newsroom practice, can hardly disrupt the so-called routinisation of institutionalised and mass-produced news, a concept that has been evidenced in existing research by various scholars.⁷⁹

In other words, the organisational concept of a newsroom and the constant pressure of the expectations of the editorial staff and co-workers not only largely determine a journalist's individual behaviour in a newsroom (Breed, 1955; Merton, 1957), but also inform the performance and behaviour of a journalist acquiring additional expertise through off-the-job training.

10.4. Impact on journalists' self-perception (theme C)

10.4.1. Introduction

Key theme C explores the impact of off-the-job journalism training upon a professional journalist's sense of self. The statements coded in this respect are grouped into four subthemes: C1 examines the training's influence on a journalist's self-confidence and self-awareness judged from his/her own point of view; C2 investigates the question of whether lessons learnt (the subject matter) at journalism school influence a journalist's occupational behaviour in terms of him/her being more courageous, taking chances and risks; C3 looks at the possible effect on a journalist's self-assertion against superiors (e.g. senior journalists, editors) and sources; and C4 inspects the training's impact upon a journalists' self-image.

⁷⁹ For example: Tuchman, 1973; Schlesinger, 1978; Boyd-Barrett, 1980; Tunstall, 1993.

10.4.2. Self-confidence and self-awareness (subtheme C1)

The third most frequently coded statements of the entire body of data are found in subtheme C 1, as 35 out of 39 coded statements indicate that training experiences have a positive impact upon journalists' belief in themselves and their abilities and increase their own individuality.

I've clearly become more self-confident while interviewing people. I also recognise it whenever I communicate with sources. Before pursuing off-the-job journalism training I would quite often be afraid of getting in touch with people. Naturally, my everyday journalism practice has also played an important role. It's not easy to say which part is connected to MAZ and which to my occupational routine. However, getting trained at MAZ probably was my jump-start. (Interviewee 2)

Some trainees point out that, due to the training sessions and the opportunity to work in a group with journalists from different media, they are better able to position themselves as self-confident journalists according to the improvement of their writing and editing skills. Others argue that off-the-job training has merely proved they are in the correct occupational field.

Since I have been trained at MAZ I often recognise that I have become more self-confident when writing an article. Now I know my strengths as well as my weakness. As a result you tend to commit less basic mistakes because you are especially aware of the things you shouldn't do in journalism. (Interviewee 5)

Quite a few of the coded accounts indicate that journalists being trained to become working professionals also recognise their individuality and identity more easily:

I have become more self-assured because I now know better who I am. (Interviewee 27)

Only a few of the interviewees claim that what they take away from the training course is of little or even no use to them with regard to the essential requirements emerging from their occupational practice.

I'm not able to apply the experiences from radio training at MAZ since at my local radio station we would never get enough time to do the research on features the way it is taught at the school. (Interviewee 17)

10.4.3. Fostering courage, taking chances and risks (subtheme C2)

Compared to the number of statements to be found in other subthemes (e.g. E1 or G1, see below), the accounts coded as C2 show that off-the-job training does not significantly increase a journalism trainee's courage in approaching his practical work, nor does it largely drive him/her to take chances and risks. Some interviewees claim that they have become more persistent in trying to collect the required information. Others point out that having the opportunity to learn new storytelling approaches and practicing them at school gives them the courage to bring up new ideas at newsroom meetings. Yet others mention that their writing style has become more direct, bolder in a way.

I have realised that one of the impacts of the training so far is the fact that I now phrase words in a bolder manner than before the course. I now know better where the limits are and how close I can get to them. (Interviewee 3)

10.4.4. Self-assertion against superiors and sources (subtheme C3)

The statements coded with this subtheme specify whether off-the-job journalism trainees are more capable of putting forth their own opinions and insights gained from training courses while expressing themselves to superiors and negotiating with sources.

In fact, only every fifth statement coded with key theme C (self-perception as journalist) matches subtheme C3 (self-assertion against superiors and sources). However, 13 out of 15 statements are connoted positively.

Before I started off-the-job training I would not dare bring in issues and ideas at a newsroom meeting. In the meanwhile I have learnt to hold sway. (Interviewee 23)

Another journalism trainee (interviewee 19) points out that he has become more persistent in defending his own special approaches to writing an article when challenged by the editor-in-chief. Several trainees claim that as a result of journalism training they have become more able to build up a sound

argumentation and stand up for it in discussions with senior journalists and sources.

Women journalism trainees indicate that they tend to be more prepared to cope with gender prejudices:

Senior journalists and people I interview take me more seriously now and don't look at me as the lovely young reporter girlie. I have learnt to come to the point quickly and am not susceptible to a man trying to flirt with me in order to avoid nasty questions. (Interviewee 23)

10.4.5. Impact on self-image (subtheme C4)

No more than 10 out of 81 coded statements regarding key theme C are coded with subtheme C4. The rather low number implies that subtheme C1 (self-perception and self-awareness) and subtheme C4 (increase of self-image) are close to each other in terms of their denotation and cannot be so easily differentiated. Therefore, it must be considered that some statements coded with C1 also partly comprise notions of subtheme C4.

10.4.6. Conclusion

About half of all propositions regarding key theme C (self-perception as journalist) refer to subtheme C1 (self-confidence and self-awareness). Moreover, 90 percent of the corresponding statements indicate a positive impact upon trainees' experiences of their occupation. Consequently, the findings in key theme C primarily state that off-the-job journalism training seems to have a considerable impact upon journalists' belief in themselves and their abilities and also fosters their journalistic individuality. The opportunity to get to know trainees from other media organisations during the training course and to become involved in a collaborative learning system enables them to better position themselves as journalists with respect to their level of skills which, as they emphasise, affects their self-confidence and self-awareness.

On the other hand, the findings also show that it must be taken into consideration that off-the-job journalism training is unlikely to boost journalists' courage in approaching their daily work, nor does it incite them to take chances and risks - except perhaps an occasionally bolder approach to writing. On the basis of the results, the examined trainee journalists tend not to become a great deal more self-assured when confronting senior journalists and sources.

In summary, it can be stated that off-the-job training seems to have a positive impact on trainees' belief in themselves in the sense of them becoming approved journalists achieving the required standards of the news industry. Then again, there is little perceived change in newsroom behaviour, although some interviewees mention that they have become more insistent while holding a discussion with superiors or negotiating with sources as a result of training experiences. From this information, I tend to infer that the impact of employment and working conditions (see key theme B and subtheme B1) also has a determining effect on the development of a trainee journalist's self-conception.

10.5. Impact of co-trainees (theme D)

10.5.1. Introduction

Key theme D focuses on the impact fellow classmates may have on the occupational experiences of an off-the-job journalism trainee. In subtheme D1 they way journalist trainees perceive the effectiveness of mutual feedback on course work regularly occurring in classroom sessions is explored. Furthermore, subtheme D2 concentrates on how trainees experience the classroom-driven regular information exchange and discussions on the broad subject of journalism as imaginative and innovative work and as an occupation.

Subtheme D3 then reveals trainees' experiences regarding the practical effect of building up a personal professional network given the basic advantage that activities could draw on the journalism school's longstanding reputation in Switzerland-wide networking in the field of journalism and media.

10.5.2. Mutual feedback on coursework (subtheme D1)

About one quarter of the statements coded with key theme D refer to subtheme D1 (mutual feedback on course work) with 70 percent of the assertions being positively connoted. This is deemed even more important since it is often claimed that feedback in the newsroom is much less satisfactory:

In our newsroom we hardly ever get any feedback on our work. That's why feedback from fellow trainees and lecturers is so important to me. While getting feedback I quite often come across new approaches and ideas I would never have developed myself. (Interviewee 3)

Several interviewees point out that regular feedback from fellow trainees and lecturers not only leads them to apply new approaches to their journalistic activities, but also incites them to give feedback themselves:

I appreciate regular feedback from trainees and lecturers very much. It's definitely one of the best aspects of the training course. I have also learnt how to give feedback myself. I would love to apply my feedback experiences in our newsroom as well. But it is not welcomed by the old hacks. (Interviewee 5)

However, it is also stated that sometimes feedback from co-trainees and lecturers tends to be too indiscriminate. Furthermore, a few interviewees claim that the school's initiatives on how to give proper feedback are sometimes disproportionate:

It's okay that we are taught how to give proper feedback. However, I think that the school's emphasis on an intensive feedback culture is clearly exaggerated. (Interviewee 25)

The feedback culture at MAZ has turned out to be a kind of a ritual – it's just too much. We are forced to provide feedback on almost everybody and everything. That's just not possible although it is good to get involved with your co-trainees' work. (Interviewee 27)

10.5.3. Exchange of information, discourse on work (subtheme D2)

A total of 40 percent of the statements coded with key theme D (impact of co-trainees) refer to subtheme D2 (exchange of information, discussions on journalism work). Interviewees discuss the chance to become aware of how journalism colleagues go about their daily work, what problems and challenges

they face in their occupational situations, but also how they cope with newsroom principles such as hierarchy and organisational structures:

When you get to know journalists from other news organisations and talk about daily work you learn a lot about how different newsrooms are organised, how other newcomers cope with behaviours of senior journalists and editors and how the newsroom is managed in terms of, for example, the way meetings are organised and held. You can then compare your co-trainees' accounts with your own working experiences, which sometimes reassures you that other news organisations deal with the same problems or, at other times, you begin to realise that your daily work field is not as dissimilar as you might have thought. (Interviewee 23)

Due to a constant information exchange with other trainees, I became aware that at my workplace structures are too flat which means that we work too much and earn too little. (Interviewee 15)

Other interviewees emphasise that the regular information exchange on journalism work with classmates can provide a useful assessment of the current state and quality of Swiss journalism:

The regular information exchange with fellow trainees has made me aware of the semi-miserable working conditions newcomers to journalism in Switzerland have to cope with. At MAZ we sometimes analyse articles from the local press that clearly show that the authors did not have the time and the means to do the essential research which often has a negative effect on the article's journalistic quality. These exercises clearly demonstrate how important a news organisation's commitment to quality is and also bluntly disclose that a lot of my fellow trainees have to work under heavy time pressure. The analyses of the pieces of work they bring to class often show how things should not have been done. (Interviewee 7)

Most of the coded statements regarding this subtheme show that to a newcomer off-the-job journalism training constitutes a valuable initial access to the world of journalism. This particularly applies to the Swiss media landscape, providing a multifaceted insight into its prerequisite structures as well as into the prevalent factors that make the system work.

Whenever I am at MAZ I feel like I am in the middle of the Swiss media scene and get to know more about the aspects that matter in the contemporary world of journalism, which gives me important knowledge on how to position myself and develop my career. (Interviewee 16)

10.5.4 Building of a professional network (subtheme D3)

About one third of the statements referring to the impact of co-trainees on a journalism trainee's experiences of his/her occupation focus on the importance of building up a professional network comprising fellow trainees as well as lecturers. Several interviewees claim that building up a professional network stemming from acquaintances with fellow trainees at MAZ enables them to help each other out; for example, by exchanging story ideas and access to sources.

You get in touch with journalists from all over Switzerland. This enables you to build up a great network system comprising people working in print media, radio, television and online. If I have no use for a certain story I can always pass it on to a journalist friend in Berne, for example. Or sometimes I get hints from a fellow trainee from another city that can help my research on a piece of investigation in my own local area. Needless to say, the chance of getting to know a variety of lecturers who have proven their excellence as journalism practitioners can be of added value later when looking for a new job. (Interviewee 30)

Most of the interviewees who express themselves on the matter of this subtheme expect their professional network to become a valuable reference tool when looking for a new job. One of the examined journalists has already positively experienced this during his traineeship:

The MAZ network can be of great help. I have already been offered a new job through one of my co-trainees. So it is really worth constantly working on it. (Interviewee 3)

Besides the notion that network building is likely to support the advancement of a journalist's career, some trainees also point out the contact system's capacity to build friendships with classmates:

I very much appreciate the fact that here at MAZ we are all more or less at the same level of career. It's quite easy to make friends in such an environment. And it's also a good place to occasionally slag off one's own media organisation. (Interviewee 18)

10.5.5 Conclusion

The findings regarding key theme D imply that information exchange and discussions on journalism work amongst journalism trainees can be considered an

added value of an off-the-job training system. According to the numerous positively connoted accounts on subtheme D2, the mutual information exchange on journalistic skills, a closer look into the structures and mechanisms of the media industry and the ability to compare and analyse different working conditions all help off-the-job trainees to better position themselves as journalists in their occupational environment.

It is contended that the stated impact of a regular and substantial information exchange may well have a positive influence on a trainee's self-perception. A comparison between subtheme D2 (exchange of information, discussions on journalism work) and subtheme C1 (self-confidence and self-awareness) demonstrates that all the trainees report that information exchange has had a helpful and constructive impact ($n = 13$). They also report a positive impact on self-confidence and self-awareness as a result of off-the-job training.

Regarding the accounts identified as subtheme D1 (mutual feedback on course work), it can be recognised that off-the-job training may partly compensate for the insufficiency or even lack of existence of a newsroom feedback system, a critical point made by virtually all the trainee journalists in the in-depth interviews. Several interviewees claim that regular and appropriate feedback on journalistic work is felt to be contributing to the strengthening of their self-confidence and self-awareness, although others opined that the school's emphasis on an intensive feedback culture did not have a lasting effect.

Most trainees consider the building up of a professional network to be more important and longer lasting than the advantage of a feedback system as an off-the-job training contribution to their occupational socialisation. Interpreting the corresponding statements, it can be inferred that trainees who actively build up such a network tend to be more familiar and up-to-date with the ongoing processes occurring in the Swiss media because they are interested in keeping up a discourse about relevant issues; for example, receiving helpful hints for dealing with specific sources and exchanging information on working conditions and job offers.

It can be assumed that these trainee journalists will be in a better position when looking for a new job since the school-initiated network includes journalists and lecturers from all over the country who could be personally contacted whenever support or advice is needed.

On the other hand, some of the coded trainee statements also specify that the process of building up a professional journalism network may also be advanced through on-the-job connections and relationships; the latter obviously depend on a trainee's occupational position and his/her employer's newsroom conception and journalistic approach (e.g. local, regional, national or international news).

In summary, the findings stemming from key theme D suggest that deliberate network building and continuous information exchange with peers and lecturers about journalism as imaginative and innovative work and as an occupation seem quite likely to further strengthen an off-the-job trainee's self-conception and his/her positioning in the occupational environment.

Chapter Eleven: Presentation of Findings (Part two)

11.1. Introduction

Part two of the presentation of the findings provides the results relating to the key themes and respective subthemes of:

The impact of the curriculum (E1 to A4)

The impact of lecturers and instructors (F1 to F2)

Analogous to part one of the presentation of the findings in Chapter Ten, every section of this chapter also focuses on a key theme and its respective subthemes. The sections start with an introduction to the key theme and its subthemes, followed by a detailed outline of the respective findings, and then conclude with a first weighting of the findings with reference to the discussion chapter.

A thorough weighting of the findings presented in this chapter and a reflection on its implications for the research questions will be addressed in the discussion chapter (see Chapter Thirteen).

11.2. Impact of the curriculum (theme E)

11.2.1. Introduction

Key theme E argues the basic research question of how the curriculum of the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism, widely regarded as a paragon of journalism training in German-speaking Switzerland, affects the trainee journalists' occupational experiences in a sustained manner.

Subtheme E 1 (practicality of subject matter) considers the trainees' perception of the effectiveness of taught skills such as research and investigation techniques, writing and interviewing skills and a basic knowledge of media ethics and the right to personal privacy. Subtheme E2 (innovation support) focuses on trainees' accounts of the certificate course's potential to foster journalistic innovation.

Subtheme E3 (critical thinking support) centres upon the statements addressing the issue of the curriculum's capability to further trainees' critical thinking, whereas subtheme E4 (value of certificate) assesses the value of the course certificate as perceived by the examined trainee journalists.

11.2.2. Practicality of subject matter (subtheme E1)⁸⁰

Subtheme E1 has turned out to be the themed pattern with the highest frequency rate of trainees' accounts by far. About 20 percent (n=135) of all statements emerging as analysable data from the 30 in-depth interviews are thematically coded with subtheme E1. The positively and negatively connoted statements roughly balance one another. Accounts referring to writing skills, research and investigation approaches, interview technique and a basic understanding of media and personality rights have emerged as core themes.

11.2.2.1. Writing skills

Several trainees underline in their accounts that the certificate course provides them with a basic understanding and/or a reminder of journalistic writing principles such as how to begin an article, how to conceive a report or an article or how to integrate sound into a radio feature:

We have elaborated the beginning of an article so extensively in class that I'm able now to apply these insights into my practical work. Senior journalists in our newsroom seem to have noticed my efforts since they keep telling me that I have become more structured in my writing. (Interviewee 21)

⁸⁰ The term 'practicality' stands here for the usefulness, the applicability, the practical value, and the benefit of the course with regard to the trainee journalist's socialisation to becoming a professional journalist.

The certificate course taught me guidelines and structures regarding the construction of a radio feature. I have also been sensitised to construct my reports in a more dramaturgic way; for example, in the sense that I now know better how to integrate musical sound into radio features. (Interviewee 28)

Some trainees maintain that the course's focus on improving writing skills and storytelling has also demonstrated to them how to approach assignments in a more structured way:

In the past I would just write away not really bothering about a concept or storyline. Today I know how to approach a story, how to build it and manage storytelling. I've been able to apply these new skills to newsroom practice and pass them to our junior journalists. (Interviewee 15)

I pay more attention to the way I structure a report. For example, I try to avoid passive sentences and foreign words. Senior journalists may refer you to these principles in your newsroom, too. But at MAZ you are shown how to consciously structure your writing and storytelling and you get feedback from the lecturer as well as your co-trainees. (Interviewee 30)

Further statements on this issue point out that, in order to apply newly acquired writing skills into journalistic practice, a trainee should beware 'old' newsroom habits and patterns and try to integrate off-the-job training insights into his/her daily work.

On the other hand, quite a few accounts argue that the writing principles taught at MAZ often tend to have a poor practical orientation, notably with regard to the fact that the production of copy in newsroom practice is always determined by a rigid deadline system:

There's no point in trying to rehearse stress situations. You can't simulate a real deadline. As a TV editor I know that my news report must be broadcast live at 6 pm. There is no escape. You just can't compare this live broadcast pressure with the simulated immediacy in the classroom. (Interviewee 10)

I find it quite ridiculous when lecturers advise me to spend a couple of hours reflecting on my article before producing copy. You can't afford that when being involved in daily news production. (Interviewee 14)

Some trainees also emphasise in their statements that the school's initiatives of applying a structured approach to writing may result in everything being over-structured, which may impair one's imaginative or innovative approach to one's writing. Interviewee 22 even raises the question of whether a journalism school is capable of teaching writing skills at all:

I doubt the effectiveness of teaching writing skills to trainees. It's not classroom assignments, but newsroom practice that tells you how to write a piece of journalism. Although I attended the course on magazine journalism and liked it very much, I must underline that after just a two-day introduction into the magazine genre you are far from being proficient in mastering that field. (Interviewee 22)

Nevertheless, others agree that being taught how to advance one's writing is regarded as valuable in terms of developing a more accurate, direct and compelling writing style. Another critique refers to the preferred style of writing determined by MAZ lecturers as the main subject matter in their writing classes. A few trainees argue in their statements that those responsible for writing classes at MAZ tend to ignore, for example, the existence of tabloid journalism:⁸¹

One of the major issues that is lacking with regard to writing classes is a clear commitment of MAZ to the existence of tabloid journalism. The curriculum should also integrate a unit on tabloid journalism. Some of the lecturers still try to convince us to believe that it is not possible to do journalism the quick-and-dirty way. (Interviewee 14)

MAZ goes in for quality, fine. But the maxim of our newsroom concept is to publish as fast as possible. I'm having great difficulty in integrating the subject matter of the MAZ course into our online newsroom philosophy. (Interviewee 19)

Although some trainees would wish to be trained in a more tabloid-friendly fashion, most of them acknowledge that their writing has become less time-consuming and basically more efficient since they started the training course.

What some trainees seem to value more than improving their writing skills is how to get to grips with identifying an interesting topic for a story. However, they argue that the capability of knowing when news is news and how to break a story is not a teaching point within the curriculum of journalism training at MAZ:

It's fine if you're taught how to write skilfully and in a stylish fashion and are familiar with the basic elements of news like who, what, when, where, why and how. But to sense a story and act on its plot as journalistic work is usually much harder, however it's still a basic journalistic skill. (Interviewee 22)

It is important to note, however, that a considerable number of trainees argue that the MAZ curriculum places too much emphasis on compulsory courses deemed to be primarily print media oriented and deplore the comparatively scarce range of radio, television and online units in the curriculum:

⁸¹ Tabloid journalism or *Boulevard* as it's called in Switzerland cannot be easily defined. By using this term the trainee journalists usually refer to the daily *Blick* and the freesheets *20 Minuten* and *Blick am Abend* and these papers' websites (also see Chapter Two, section 2.4.).

Although I am a radio journalist, I had to attend all the compulsory course units, which are designed more to train newspaper journalists. I'm not saying that the curriculum as a whole is inappropriate for trainees working in electronic media. But the subject matter turned out to be very much print media oriented. (Interviewee 3)

11.2.2.2. Research and investigation approaches

Regarding the journalistic tasks of researching and investigating, the trainees primarily highlight the time factor. Most of the students' accounts claim that the way MAZ teaches methods and techniques of thorough research and investigation is basically seen as a normative approach. Trainees emphasise that in their newsrooms the time allocated for investigating has constantly shrunk, mainly as a result of newsroom cutbacks:

MAZ lecturers keep cherishing the accurate double-checking of sources and just tend to ignore the fact that the reality of contemporary news production is different. The implementation of MAZ-approved insights just doesn't work with fewer and fewer resources and less and less time for investigation. Although some lecturers occasionally point out this malaise, as a practitioner you're caught up in the reality. (Interviewee 13)

Some trainees point out that news investigation courses have motivated them to look more accurately into sources and try out alternative research tools like scrutinising the trade register instead of only researching online when investigating a company, or searching special online platforms of the Swiss parliament that provide a range of otherwise unavailable documents rather than relying on the results from a search engine:

The special course on researching and investigating techniques was of great help. Although the head of our national news department had given me some advice on searching governing authority websites, I really learnt how to access documents and protocols from the federal parliament that were only available on certain platforms and could not be retrieved by a search engine. (Interviewee 11)

Knowing how to search the trade register, how to access directory files listing all registration numbers, this is all far beyond Google and has enriched my way of investigating newsworthy incidents. (Interviewee 30)

However, not all trainees referring to the matter of research and investigation in the in-depth interviews appreciate old-school research approaches⁸². On the

⁸² By referring to the term 'old-school' research approaches, the interviewees basically mean doing research without using a search engine like the very popular Google.

contrary, some claim them to be fairly conservative and incompatible with the 24/7 rush dominating contemporary news production:

The older gentleman with his peculiar Internet phobia when doing research on political issues is completely outdated. That's not the way research is done today. It might work well if you are a senior freelancer and allowed twelve month's time to investigate. (Interviewee 28)

11.2.2.3. Interview techniques

With regard to the course's capacity to improve trainees' skills, several interviewees underline the progress they have achieved by elaborating on their interview techniques:

I have learnt to strategically plan a radio interview. In the past I would just do it somehow and tried to get grips with a focus when editing it. (Interviewee 17)

The strategic approach I usually apply when interviewing sources, experts or opinion leaders clearly result from training situations. I have learnt to better target an interview, focus on central themes and act appropriately. (Interviewee 6)

Some also indicate that they have become familiar with tactics enabling them to anticipate hoped-for answers by posing the appropriate questions:

I now can make better sense of the backgrounds, structure and mechanism of an interview, which enables me to also anticipate strategies used by the interviewee and act on them in a successful way. (Interviewee 10)

As a general rule, all trainees commenting on the topic of interviewing techniques stress that they have learnt to question interviewees in a more conscious way, which they consider to be one of the more useful practicable insights provided by journalism training.

11.2.2.4. Media ethics

The data emerging from the in-depth interviews also reveal that a number of trainees deem a basic knowledge of media ethics to be important and comment on it with regard to the experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job journalism training. As the procedure of thematic analysis shows, practically all accounts regarding the significance of coping with media ethics highlight an increased wariness on the part of the trainees when dealing with delicate and precarious assignments such as interviewing relatives of victims or offenders:

The course on media ethics made me aware of recognising boundaries when investigating on shaky ground. I now know more about the legal framework in which I work. (Interviewee 23)

Several statements point out the disciplining effect of attending the media ethics course and the fact that the insights gained into compliance with media laws may impact on the persistence of trainees' investigation approaches:

What I learnt from attending the media ethics course has had an immediate impact on my practical work. I now tend to be more careful when dealing with sources and reporting on compromising matters and generally produce more inoffensive stories. (Interviewee 6)

Other accounts indicate that as a result of having discussed these challenges in the classroom at the MAZ, young journalists claim to occasionally refuse to complete dubious assignments:

I sense that the course on media ethics has had a lasting effect on my everyday journalism practice. The other day when I was assigned to do a story about a woman whose husband had been stabbed to death the editor wanted me to shoot a picture of the victim's house. I refused to do it. Maybe that decision also stemmed from my own moral concept, I'm not quite sure. At least, I had reflected on something. (Interviewee 10)

On the other hand, some trainees also argue that as a result of discussing media laws in class they tend to be afraid of manoeuvring their employers into litigation problems and impairing the organisation's credibility when trying to get to the bottom of a sensitive subject:

I have always been a conscientious person. MAZ has even reinforced my feelings that as a journalist one should always be aware of ethical and legal liabilities and not get too risky and put the employer into litigation difficulties. (Interviewee 28)

There are also a few statements insinuating that the subject matter of the media ethics course is considered to be merely normative and has little practical value:

We all are taught proper journalism skills at MAZ. In reality, however, you are forced to act differently. It is quite remarkable how often the subject matter regarding media laws conveyed by MAZ are infringed in newsroom practice. (Interviewee 27)

I really try to pay attention to personality rights. My co-workers, however, don't really care. For example, they quite often film people without asking them for permission. I've done it myself. But at least I now know that it is dubious and actually illegal. (Interviewee 30)

11.2.3. Fostering journalistic innovation (subtheme E2)

Around 12 percent of the data thematically coded with key theme E (impact of curriculum) reveals statements relating to the issue of journalistic innovation. Compared to the fairly large number of statements on the practicality of the subject matter, the trainees' reflections on the issue of innovation and whether an off-the-job training institution like MAZ is capable of supporting it must be regarded as of little significance, at least from a quantitative perspective.

Yet, more than four out of five statements on the question of innovation are connoted in a positive context. Several trainees emphasise that the curriculum of the training course offers them some kind of a sandpit where new approaches to writing, storytelling and editing can be tested:

My writing has changed mostly thanks to lectures on creative writing. I find it very helpful and motivating to be able to try out new approaches to interviewing and reporting, somehow to paint the town red just to hit the wall, things you would never be allowed to do in a newsroom. (Interviewee 7)

It is repeatedly pointed out that off-the-job journalism training as offered by MAZ constitutes a kind of workshop; a journalism atelier that allows trainees to experience themselves in a different media context and gives them an idea of what else exists in the vast world of journalism.

Additionally, some trainees argue that they miss a clear commitment from MAZ to more innovative initiatives; for example, regarding writing and storytelling:

The copy produced by trainees that is sent to the lecturers to be marked tends to be rather bald and humourless. In my opinion it's usually the traditional standard that gets reproduced. (Interviewee 4)

A few trainees also criticise the school for allegedly paying too much attention to the recruitment of big names who, as neo-lecturers, would not necessarily stand for innovation, as interviewee 24 points out:

I sometimes think that creativity is undermined by the teaching of so-called big names from the Swiss media industry that MAZ seems to be keen to work with. Some of these doyens just teach the achievements of their time that made them big. But the world of journalism has changed a lot since. (Interviewee 24)

11.2.4. Fostering critical thinking (subtheme E3)

The data coded with key theme E also encompasses a small number of accounts addressing the issue of critical thinking and its significance as a possible effect stemming from off-the-job training at MAZ (subtheme E3). Compared to the other subthemes of key theme E, mainly key theme E 1 that focuses on the practicality of the subject matter, trainee journalists and their approach to critical thinking seems far from being widely considered. The interviewees who refer to the issue of critical thinking with regard to the effectiveness of off-the-job training speak out in a predominantly positive way. They indicate a more sophisticated and critical approach to their own journalistic work, as well as to the journalistic orientation of their newsroom:

Off-the-job training has influenced me to take a more critical stance to my own work as well as to the journalism produced at our newsroom. Thanks to the information exchange with co-trainees one easily attains an insight into other media outlets from which important inferences can be taken. (Interviewee 26)

Others point out that they have become more sensitive to questionable activities occurring in the running battle of daily news production:

The course on ethics has clearly revealed how often we produce half-legal news pieces. My co-workers call me the social conscience of the newsroom because I keep reminding them of their tendency to stray close to the margins of proper journalism. (Interviewee 25)

It is also emphasised that, due to the constant information exchange with fellow trainees, off-the-job journalism training may have an impact on one's perception of the media industry as a whole:

Off-the-job training has influenced my view of the current media scene. I have become more critical because I can see that some of my trainee friends face partly unbelievable economic constraints and barriers to creativity. I may have anticipated such unpleasant situations. But now I know. (21)

The negatively connoted statements, on the other hand, criticise the lack of deeper analysis when discussing journalism pieces in class and find fault with the lack of reflection on the rapid changes taking place in the media industry:

I would have preferred the curriculum to be more oriented to reflecting journalism. I miss being challenged on a more reflective and critical level. (Interviewee 9)

11.2.5. Value of the certificate (subtheme E4)

After the two-year traineeship and the passing of the final exam, the MAZ journalist novices graduate with a certificate. Subtheme E4 encompasses the coded trainee statements on the anticipated value of the certificate. Out of the 24 accounts, a very small majority display positive expectations. Several trainees state that, from their point of view, the certificate mainly matters as a kind of distinction honouring their efforts to complete the MAZ training course. A few set great store by the fact they have achieved graduation and hope to utilise the certificate for auspicious career moves:⁸³

I expect this certificate to give added value to the advancement of my career, for example, in terms of being in a better position in the context of pay negotiations. (Interviewee 25)

I believe that this certificate is respected by editors. I therefore hope to have a better chance to gain more attractive jobs. It's not only the certificate that counts; my diary, which is full of addresses and phone numbers of important people in the industry, is even more important. (Interviewee 18)

The certificate is worth a lot if it helps you to find a good job. If it doesn't, then it's worth nothing. (Interviewee 26)

⁸³ MAZ states on its website that graduates regularly win renowned journalism awards. The large majority of MAZ graduates go directly into journalism jobs after graduation. www.maz.ch

Other trainees highlight in their accounts that the multifaceted experiences they underwent during the two-year course are deemed to be more relevant than the certificate itself. Only one trainee admits that the sole incentive to enrol for this off-the-job training course was the prospect of graduating.

With respect to the negatively connoted statements, several trainees have grave doubts about the recognition and the effectiveness of the certificate:

I really tend to doubt the prestige of this course. It isn't really difficult for MAZ to be this well-known because they are the only ones offering this kind of journalism training on the Swiss German market. I think it would be different if there were another qualified journalism school in the area. (Interviewee 22)

The problem is that employers don't pay journalists according to their education and training record. So, this certificate, like any other, will not be cost effective. (Interviewee 14)

A couple of trainees place no stock in the effectiveness of journalism certificates and diplomas. They seem to generally negate the practical value of these distinctions:

In journalism practice, diplomas and certificates are insignificant. No one has ever asked me how I graduated from university. Okay, it's nice to have completed this training course. It's just one certificate in credit. All that matters, though, is the question of how I will succeed in doing journalism and coping with my employer's requirements in practice. (Interviewee 21)

This certificate is worth nothing. It's just a piece of paper in return for quite a lot of money. And the certificate will not help you make more money either. Anyway, the really lucrative jobs you only get when you are able to demonstrate your proficiency by sending in copies of your best work at the beginning of an application process and certainly not by presenting your journalism certificates to possible future employers. (Interviewee 7)

11.2.6. Conclusion

There is no doubt that, from the perspective of an off-the-job journalism trainee, as the findings in key theme E clearly show, journalism is first and foremost understood as pursuing a trade. Trainees at MAZ seem to be mostly interested in improving their journalistic skills; for example, with regard to research and investigation approaches, more accurate and efficient writing, structured interviewing as well as basic knowledge about media ethics and the citizen's right to personal privacy.

However, the way in which the subject matter of off-the-job training, for example the improvement of writing skills, can be occupationally implemented remains ambiguous. Whereas some assertions imply that the insights gained into specific skills such as how to construct the beginning of an article, how to write an enthralling report and how to structure one's journalistic composition are quite likely to be occupationally implemented, others claim that effectiveness from journalism practice in the form of classroom simulation is hardly detected in one's everyday work practice.

Hence, it can be argued that this conclusion rather validates the findings of subtheme B2 implying that journalism trainees experience editorial concepts and guidelines as predominant and view them as unlikely to be susceptible to their training-based input such as new approaches to writing reports.⁸⁴

The findings also indicate that the more practice-oriented the subject matter of improving writing skills, the more successful it is perceived to be by the trainees. This is proven to be the case by looking at the mainly positive comments made by the trainees concerning their declared progress regarding a more accurate, direct and compelling writing style.

Otherwise, it is also manifest in the case of trainees' discontent if the taught writing skills don't comply with the writing policy and journalistic guidelines established by the editorship or the employer with whom the trainee journalist works. This is clearly outlined by the trainees' critique of the curriculum in terms of MAZ not putting enough focus on the writing style preferred in tabloid journalism.

The analysis of subtheme E1 raises another issue that seems to impair the usability of taught content. Quite a few trainees who are working as radio, television and online journalists criticise the off-the-job training course for focusing too strongly on print media matters. It thus follows that the level of practicality and effectuality of off-the-job journalism training accomplished at

⁸⁴ See 10.3.

MAZ to some degree depends on the type of media with which the trainee journalists work. Indeed, some trainees claim that journalists who most benefit from off-the-job training are the ones working for a local newspaper.⁸⁵

The findings in subtheme E1 also address lack of time as a concern regarding journalistic research and investigative journalism. Virtually all interviewed trainees claim time is in increasingly short supply in today's newsrooms which they understand to be the result of newsroom cutbacks and technological shifts. There seems to be a shared interest among all questioned trainees in improving research and investigation practices.

However, disagreement has emerged in terms of different approaches to research and investigation and which would make more sense to the individual trainee. On the one hand, trainees appreciate the initiatives of certain lecturers who try to familiarise them with research tools beyond the usual search machines on the Internet such as scrutinising the trade register on a platform beyond Google's search radar. On the other hand, an equal number of trainees clearly consider research and investigation activities on search machines and Google to be the most relevant.

The trainee journalists' accounts on the issue of improving their interview techniques seem to be comparatively undisputed. A fair number of trainees endorse the obvious utility of interview techniques taught at MAZ, mostly in terms of being trained to pose questions in a more strategic, structured and compelling way, often with the objective of anticipating and generating the required answers. These experiences can be seen to be indicative of the phenomenon that off-the-job training is only regarded as successful when its subject matter matches the standards and routine practiced in an ordinary contemporary newsroom.

Several trainees emphasise the point that they have been able to apply knowledge learned from the course about media ethics and the right to personal privacy. Generally speaking, it can be said that trainees seem to exercise greater care when

⁸⁵ My survey of more than 200 MAZ alumni in 2008 revealed that more than two thirds of the surveyed journalists worked in the printed press at the time of their training at MAZ (Bigi, 2009).

working on delicate and sensitive issues. Some even go as far as to say that under these circumstances they tend to be afraid of causing their employers litigation problems and damaging the company's reputation. As a result, they may even abandon getting to the bottom of a story. This phenomenon can be interpreted as an indication of the disciplining force that is claimed to be driving industry-oriented journalism training (McBarnet, 1979; Mensing, 2011) and which is further reflected upon in the following discussion chapter.

In contrast, most accounts coded with subtheme E2 (creativity support) highlight the point that the certificate course offers them the possibility to try out and exercise new approaches to writing, storytelling and editing or allows them to gain experience in different media types and formats.

Nevertheless, it's still debatable whether these experiences of simulated approaches to innovation can also be applied to contemporary newsroom practice. Furthermore, the significance of the stated increase of journalists' critical thinking activities should also be qualified. The quantity of the coded accounts on this subject suggests that it is doubtful whether it is actually a direct effect of MAZ-supported critical thinking.

Otherwise, it should also be mentioned that a few trainees might indeed develop a more challenging mind in regard to themselves as journalists, their newsroom concept or even a more demanding stance on the media and the journalism industry as a whole. This inclination may also be inferred from the findings of subtheme D2, which indicate the benefit of the regular mutual information exchange happening within the group of MAZ trainees that also provides an insight into the pros and cons of the Swiss media scene. On the other hand, and generally speaking, there is no talk of off-the-job training having the capacity to shape journalists' character in a critical way.

Finally, the data coded with key theme E also yields several statements on the perceived value of the certificate received at the end of the off-the-job journalism course. The majority of the trainees mention various hopes regarding a range of gratification and career options stemming from graduation. For example, some

expect the certificate to offer added value when applying for a new job or even act as a passport for advancing their career. Others distinctly disapprove of the certificate and its claim to enhance a young journalists' livelihood and further a journalistic career. These trainees seem to strictly deny that a journalism certificate has any value in relation to enhancing the advancement of a career in journalism practice.

11.3. Impact of lecturers and instructors (theme F)

11.3.1. Introduction

Key theme F provides an insight into trainee journalists' experiences with the lecturers and trainers involved in the certificate course at MAZ. Subtheme F1 focuses on the trainees' perception of lecturers' qualifications and the findings in subtheme F2 particularly respond to questions about the perceived bias of 'lecturer-practitioners' in terms of an apparent partiality for the media organisation they represent.⁸⁶

11.3.2. Lecturer qualification (subtheme F1)

Close to two thirds of the statements given on subtheme F1 (lecturer qualification) show that the lecturers involved in the certificate course at MAZ are considered to be adequately qualified. Several trainees claim that they feel privileged to be instructed by highly qualified ambassadors of Swiss journalism whose work they appreciate and admire. They point out that learning from these experts' professional experience is much more applicable to their occupational needs than, for example, being taught different approaches to journalism by a journalism and media theorist.

⁸⁶ By the term 'lecturer practitioner' I am referring to lecturers and instructors who in their main occupation work as senior journalists or editors in the Swiss media industry.

Practitioners are more credible especially when they bring a piece of their work to class and have it critically discussed by us. I consider this an aspect of credibility no theorist could ever achieve. And as an experienced practitioner he knows a lot about our qualifications because he had to go through the same career stages as well, a fact that makes him even more credible. (Interviewee 11)

It is also emphasised that experienced practitioners, in their position as a role model, are able to disclose their own ways to develop writing, editing and interviewing excellence:

A good journalism lecturer needs to be a role model with long lasting practical experience that enables him to disclose the strategies and hints he applies to write an excellent piece of journalism. That's the most important thing. (Interviewee 20)

Nevertheless, about one third of the coded statements regarding this subtheme show a rather negative stance on lecturers' qualifications. A couple of trainees argue that a proficient journalist does not automatically make a well-qualified lecturer. Some trainees lament the poor didactic skills of some of the 'lecturer-practitioners'.

Some of the lecturers at MAZ are big shots in the news industry but haven't got a clue about didactics. (Interviewee 21)

Others point out that highly acclaimed practitioners sometimes tend to be too sophisticated in their approach to journalistic work and show poor knowledge of the needs and challenges a newcomer to journalism faces at the beginning of his/her career:

Some practitioners lecturing at MAZ seem to have lost connection to the reality of everyday news production. If a guy has worked for an international magazine for years he will not be able to put himself in the place of a local radio reporter. These guys tend to talk down to us. (Interviewee 25)

It is further argued that practically experienced lecturers often bring a certain mindset and attitude about the reality of journalism to class which is viewed as an additional challenge:

Lecturers who are still very much involved in practical journalism are most interesting. Often they show an attitude to their work, which they want to be challenged. I think this helps me in developing a mindset of my own. (Interviewee 9)

11.3.3. Lecturer bias (subtheme F2)

Almost 40 percent of the statements coded with key theme F relate to the question about possible 'lecturer-practitioner' bias in terms of a lecturer being partisan to the news production philosophy of the media organisations for which he/she works. The result is unambiguous: nine out of ten coded statements deny the trainee's perception of an ideology-driven lecturer bias.

Clearly, the trainees' statements underline that most of the 'lecturer-practitioners' explain their own philosophy of news production when giving a course at MAZ. In doing so, as stated in the interviews, they enable trainees to gain insight into their news production routine and talk about hands-on experiences with editorial guidelines and standards.

However, the coded accounts indicate that trainee journalists largely don't notice a lecturer's apparent partiality to his or her own newsroom philosophy or a possible hidden agenda:

I think it's really enriching to get to know practice oriented lecturers who talk about their own newsroom philosophy and offer us a glance at the variety of newsroom concepts. It also gives you an idea about the economic conditions that impact news production. (Interviewee 15)

Two out of 21 statements coded with subtheme F2 are negatively connoted. One trainee claims that he sometimes senses an obvious lecturer partisanship to certain news organisations and occasionally a lecturer's intent to inculcate trainees with a certain journalistic concept or philosophy. Nonetheless, he doesn't regard the case as a serious issue:

Most lecturers try hard not to promote their news organisation too much. A few are not immune to using the course for their own purpose and attach great importance to the concept of journalism practice by their newsroom. Still, I think it's up to us as trainees to make sure that we don't get drawn in by possible lecturer's partiality. (Interviewee 2)

Most trainees who broached the issue of the possible impact of MAZ lecturers on their journalistic enculturation state that 'lecturer-practitioners' generally show

good professional conduct in terms of knowing how to differentiate between the purpose of the course and that of their own news organisation.

Lecturers at MAZ are professional enough to adhere to the school's and the course's guidelines and act independently from their news organisation. (Interviewee 7)

Some trainees explain that they do not see a lecturer's newsroom philosophy as relevant, anyway. They tend to be more interested in a lecturer's own personality and journalistic individuality and in his/her personal guide to achieving a successful career.

A few interviewees argue that some practitioners even tend to be more interested in receiving feedback from trainees instead of giving it:

There are lecturers who sometimes have a class analyse their current journalistic pieces in order to get feedback on their work. Needless to say that this cannot be the point of serious lecturing. (Interviewee 3)

11.3.4. Conclusion

When interpreting the trainees' propositions coded with key theme F, I postulated that lecturers involved in off-the-job training are considered to have a certain impact on trainees' experiences of their occupation. However, the findings show that not all lecturers are deemed to be influential in terms of providing trainees with viable ways to improve skills such as writing, editing and interviewing that could be easily adopted and applied in everyday journalism practice. In addition, as the findings of key theme B demonstrate, it is most likely that the organisational concept of a newsroom and the constant pressure of the expectations of editorial staff and co-workers largely determine a trainee journalist's individual behaviour in a newsroom, irrespective of present input generated by off-the-job training.

However, the trainees agree with the view that the more practice oriented a lecturer is, for example by bringing best-practise examples of his or her journalistic work to class to be analysed by the trainees, the more trainees seem to

gain valuable insights which they can then at least attempt to apply in practice in their occupational environment.

Regarding the level of lecturers' qualifications, two thirds of the coded statements indicate that trainee journalists are in general satisfied with the MAZ lecturers' competence. Nevertheless, one third claim that some of the 'lecturer-practitioners' may be proficient journalists, but often lack teaching skills and experiences in didactics.

This impression endorses a common critique that journalism schools have two weak points in their training systems, according to Russ-Mohl (2002, p. 127). Firstly, not every exceptionally gifted journalist turns out to be a likewise proficient lecturer. As Russ-Mohl argues, to most of the lecturing journalists the activities at journalism schools above all mean easy money; as a result, courses are not adequately prepared and taken seriously. Secondly, journalists working as freelance lecturers "stew in their own grease" (ibid) meaning they often tend to be partisan to their own media organisation.

Indeed, Russ-Mohl's second assertion seems to be endorsed by the first impression of the coded statements in subtheme F2. However, virtually all trainees broadly connote the phenomenon of lecturers attaching special importance to their own newsroom philosophy in quite a positive sense, all the more because they don't seem to be drawn in by the possible partiality of lecturers.

From this, it follows that journalism trainees at MAZ are unlikely to attach much importance to a more critical and partly academic approach to the so far industry-oriented training, an otherwise thematised reluctance that has been lamented by various Swiss scholars (e.g. Blum, 2002; Russ-Mohl, 2002).

Hence, it can be argued with reference to the outcome of subtheme E3 (critical thinking support) that the trainees' rather uncritical stance of possible partiality by lecturers may also result from the fact that MAZ does not explicitly define the support of critical thinking as a major issue in the certificate course's

curriculum.⁸⁷ This notion also implies that journalism trainees at MAZ tend to express quite an industry-friendly approach to the assessment of off-the-job-training, as argued in section 10.8.

⁸⁷ In this respect, it must be pointed out that MAZ, in its mission statement, clearly endorses an understanding of journalism that is based on competent, critical, fair and attractive principles. By using the term competent, the mission statement refers to selecting and assessing facts and opinions in a factual and relevant way. By critical, the mission statement means the journalist's duty to present facts and opinion independently and critically question. By fair, it is understood that facts and opinions should be generated in a balanced and clear way. Finally, by attractive, the mission statement implies facts and opinions should be imparted in a comprehensive and entertaining way.

Chapter Twelve: Presentation of Findings (Part Three)

12.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the third part of this study's findings relating to the key themes and respective subthemes of:

The impact of MAZ as an institution (G1 to G3)

The impact of the media and journalism industry (H1 to H3)

The impact on perspectives on journalism's future (I1 to I2)

Similar to the first two parts of the presentation of findings in the previous two chapters, in Chapter Twelve every section focuses on a specific key theme and its respective subthemes. The sections start with an introduction to the key theme and its subthemes, followed by a detailed outline of the respective findings and then conclude with a first weighting of the findings with reference to the discussion chapter.

A final weighting of the findings presented in this chapter and a reflection on its implications for the research questions will be addressed in the discussion chapter (see Chapter Thirteen).

12.2. Impact of MAZ as an institution (theme G)

12.2.1 Introduction

Key theme G manages the question of to what extent institutional, organisational and administrative issues of MAZ, as an example of a stand-alone journalism school, have an impact on trainee journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of the schools off-the-job training. The importance of MAZ as the operator of the off-the-job training Certificate Course in Journalism to the trainee journalists

is demonstrated by the fact that key theme G comprises the second most frequently coded statements of all the data stemming from the in-depth interviews.

Subtheme G1 highlights the trainee journalists' experiences of administrative issues at the school, for example, defining the sizes of course classes, the courses' schedules, or the management of the courses' quality. A secondary emphasis is put on trainees' assessment of the course fees regarding their evaluation of the cost-income ratio (subtheme G2) and a third focus includes trainees' accounts of possible exertion of influence by the media industry on the certificate course's subject matter (subtheme G3).

12.2.2. Administrative issues (subtheme G1)

Almost half of the trainees' statements (n=45) coded with key theme G refer to administrative issues such as course management, the school's philosophy of journalism and how it is taught, as well as business administration matters. It is notable that four out of five coded assertions on this issue are connoted in a negative sense.

Interviewees predominantly criticise the school's policy on class sizes and opine that this has a negative impact on the course's quality:

The school likes to promote itself as offering individual training in small classes. But if you have 19 trainees in one class you can't possibly call this a small-group training unit. You just don't get the individual training benefit you need. (Interviewee 18)

Another frequent criticism refers to the different levels of knowledge possessed by trainees grouped together in the same class. Some of the interviewees argue that the heterogeneity often found in training groups has a negative effect on their learning curve:

I criticise MAZ for often grouping trainees with completely different levels of journalistic background knowledge and vocational experience. For example, the school runs reportage-writing courses and admits people who have never ever

written a longer article. I have and I find it very irritating to work with trainees who have no idea about writing. (Interviewee 7)

Training classes at MAZ are sometimes extremely heterogeneous. A newcomer who has entered journalism practice six months ago has a fairly different requirement from a training course than somebody who has been a practitioner for six years. It sometimes happens that in a course two or three trainees keep asking the most basic questions and the rest of the class gets more and more bored and frustrated. This may lead to the conclusion that only the beginners achieve a learning curve whereas advanced trainees risk missing out. Nevertheless, I think it would be a rather difficult task to divide trainees into newcomers and advanced learners. (Interviewee 13)

Some interviewees would indeed favour segmentation of trainees into newcomer and advanced learner groups, or at least for them to be grouped according to the different media types in terms of holding training classes exclusively for print journalists or radio or TV or online journalists.

On the other hand, a few interviewees are clearly against a division of trainees into newcomers and advanced learners and point out that they appreciate the heterogeneity of classes as an enriching experience:

I find it quite inspiring that some of my fellow trainees never went to university but are more experienced in journalism practice. It is enriching to work with people who have gone through an apprenticeship. The mix of people is stirring. And I doubt that a division of trainees into specified classes of advanced learners, newcomers, and different media types would be feasible. (Interviewee 21)

The school is repeatedly criticised by the interviewed trainee journalists for admitting a constantly increasing number of journalists to its off-the-job training programme. At the same time, MAZ reminds the trainee journalists of the fact that the media market has become very competitive and tight and that building a successful career in today's journalism world is becoming more and more difficult. A few coded statements even allege that the school consciously aims to admit a larger number of applicants to the training programmes for purely financial reasons:

I think it has become obvious that MAZ is in need of more revenue. That must be the reason for the large number of trainees that are of the same intake. However, the school keeps telling us that more applicants passed the entry exam than in previous years, which has consequently led to larger classes. I suppose, though, that the requirements for passing the entry exam have been eased in order to let more applicants start their off-the-job training course. Interestingly, they consider the course to be exclusive. But I've got the feeling that nowadays almost anybody could achieve the certificate if they are able to afford the course fees. (Interviewee 21)

12.2.3. Fees for certificate course (subtheme G2)

The certificate course in journalism, which represents the basic model for off-the-job training offered at MAZ, requires attendance for 90 course days. The total course fee adds up to around 25,000 Swiss francs. About one third of the interviewed trainees pay the costs themselves; the other two thirds are in a privileged position because the course fees are partly or fully paid by their employers due to arrangements in the traineeship agreement. These arrangements usually include an additional work commitment of 12 to 24 months.

Three quarters of the statements coded with subtheme G2 express discontent with the level of the course fee. The trainees who pay the fees by themselves especially tend to lament the cost-benefit ratio:

I pay everything by myself – it's very expensive. The price-performance is not desirable. (Interviewee 4)

The cost-benefit ratio is beyond being appropriate. I don't get enough value for money since classes are too large; the radio studio is in a bad state. Basically the school's infrastructure leaves a lot to be desired, the rooms are sticky and the computers not at all state of the art. (Interviewee 28)

Only a clear minority of the coded statements regarding the issue of course fees indicate a basic approval of the amount:

I paid half of the amount by myself. It is expensive, but I think the price is justified looking at the variety of training units one could get involved with. (Interviewee 22)

12.2.4. Media industry influence on the curriculum (subtheme G3)

Obviously, off-the-job training has the goal of providing trainees with practical experience through classroom training in order to help them become socialised to the required practices in their daily occupational environment. According to Becker et al. (1987), socialising journalism newcomers to the profession is the main goal of journalism education anyway:

The goal of journalism education, whether implicitly or explicitly stated, is socialisation to the profession. In other words, the intent of the curriculum, including the internships and laboratory experiences and the areas of study outside

journalism, is to produce an individual who can effectively and efficiently function in the occupations of journalism and mass communications. (p. 19)

McBarnet (1979) argues that the journalism industry's basic requirement is to train apprentice journalists "in certain techniques of finding and assembling information which make them recognizable to the employer as journalists" (p. 183). Subtheme G3 (media industry's influence on curriculum) examines trainees' accounts regarding the assumption of an industry influence on the training curriculum, especially since MAZ is financially supported by the trainee journalists, their news organisations and publishers, the Swiss national television and radio association (SRG SSR idée Suisse), journalist associations and the public sector respectively.

Although the financial backing of MAZ is obvious, according to several statements the trainee journalists clearly disapprove of the assumption that MAZ's financial backers may seek to exert influence on the curriculum and the course's subject matter. Only one quarter of the coded statements in this subtheme refer to the influence question. All of the statements except one deny the perception of an explicit industry influence.

I haven't been aware of any kind of exertion of influence from publishers, sponsors or other financial backers. If there is an influence, it is definitely not explicitly exerted. (Interviewee 27)

There is no obvious exertion of influence from MAZ's financial backers. Because the range of lecturers is so wide, it would be extremely difficult to consciously exert a particular industry influence on the curriculum. (Interviewee 21)

Some coded statements also underline the fact that big news organisations like the Swiss national television and radio association (SRG SSR idée suisse) or the leading publishing house, Ringier, only send a few of their apprentice journalists to off-the-job training courses on a regular basis, since these organisations operate their own internship models and generally foster in-house on-the-job training.

12.2.5. Conclusion

The findings generated in key theme G (impact of MAZ as an institution) claim that in the case of an industry model of journalism education such as the off-the-job training module operated by MAZ, a journalism school's institutional, organisational and administrative prerequisites may partly impact on trainees becoming socialised to the required practices in his/her occupational environment.

The interpretation of the coded statements shows that issues such as course management, the school's philosophy of journalism and how it is taught, and the handling of business administration aspects (e.g. financing) matter to a varying degree and tend to be perceived in a slightly negative sense by the majority of the trainees interviewed.

Indeed, MAZ is strongly criticised for not handling the administrative issues appropriately according to the trainees' expectations. It is frequently argued that training classes are overpopulated and impair the advantage of assimilating practical experience through classroom training because individual needs cannot be thoroughly met. Interviewees also find fault with the different levels of pre-knowledge and skills of trainees grouped together in the same class and claim that the heterogeneity often manifested in training sessions tends to negatively impact their learning curve.

Accordingly, this raises the question as to whether segmentation of trainees into newcomer and advanced groups would be more favourable to the school's own teaching goals as well as to meeting the trainees' expectations or whether the heterogeneity of classes can provide an enriching experience in terms of a trainee gaining insight into the variety of journalistic workforce.

Regarding the fees for the certificate course, most trainees consider the amount of approximately 25,000 Swiss Francs to be high or too high. The majority of the coded statements clearly claim that the cost-benefit ratio inherent to this course is far from appropriate. Three quarters of the accounts coded with subtheme G2

(fees of certificate course) express a clear discontent with the price-performance ratio.

On the other hand, the trainee journalists don't seem to detect an explicit industry-oriented and commercial exertion of influence on the curriculum of off-the-job training courses and, consequently, doubt that the media industry (whose publishers partly subsidise MAZ as a journalism training institution) inculcates specific classroom training, which would be clearly designed to their requirements.

The findings originating from key theme G demonstrate that an off-the-job journalism course has to be understood as basic training for the manufacture of news. In the eyes of most trainees, it is perceived to be an almost ideal preparation for successfully socialisation to a journalist's occupational environment and also for meeting the requirements of the employer.

As findings from key theme E confirm (see above), the more practice-oriented practical experience through classroom training is, the more trainees cherish the model of off-the-job training. They tend to cast a positive light on the course and care little about the common scholars' critique that an industry model of journalism education focuses too greatly on the teaching of skills and techniques (Dickson, 2000; de Burgh, 2003; Mensing 2011).

The trainees' distinct industry-friendly approach to their assessment of off-the-job training can also be seen in the findings from subtheme E3, which indicates that most interviewees hardly notice a lack of specific initiatives to foster trainees' critical thinking about their job, their education and journalism in general.

Thus, it can be taken as an empirical fact that trainees involved in the off-the-job training model operated by MAZ generally neglect to engage with the philosophy, traditions, and culture of journalism while developing journalism skills and becoming socialised to their occupational field. Employability with regard to pleasing editors and media owners seems to be more crucial than ensuring accountability to the citizen.

12.3. Impact of the media and journalism industry (theme H)

12.3.1. Introduction

Key theme H features the trainees' accounts regarding how they see the media and journalism industry's stance on off-the-job training, how they as novices view the rising commercial pressure exerted on the managing of newsrooms and how these perceptions may inform the socialisation of their occupation in connection with off-the-job training at MAZ. Subtheme H1 (industry's estimation of journalism education) reveals the trainees' notion of how the news industry estimates the value of journalism education in general and the model of off-the-job training in particular.

Subtheme H2 (commercial pressure on journalist's work) tackles the issue of journalists being exposed to commercial pressure in today's newsroom and how this impacts on trainees and the practicality of the subject matter gained at MAZ. Subtheme H3 then deals with the trainees' awareness of the media industry's ability of self-criticism and how this could impact on a journalist's occupational experiences as a result of off-the-job journalism training.

12.3.2. Industry's opinion of journalism education (subtheme H1)

Five out of 659 coded statements relate to subtheme H1. All are negatively connoted and allege that, in the view of the trainee journalists interviewed, the media industry in general and employers in particular underestimate the necessity of and benefit to be gained from off-the-job training. They point out that the industry's lack of esteem for journalism training can be interpreted as a repercussion of the diminishing revenues and staffing cutbacks the media industry has been facing lately. One respondent argues that some employers tend to exploit the contemporary and rather dire situation of the job market in the sense that:

some publishers make you feel that they can exploit you and your job situation in the way they like. They know that there are always quite a few newcomers waiting just to get your job. (Interviewee 16)

Another trainee claims that a senior journalist or editor's disrespect of journalism training may also refer to a personal lack of journalism training experiences:

The estimation of journalism training on the part of our editorship is very low. This has to do with the fact that no one else in our newsroom has ever attended a journalism-training course. So they just don't want to grasp what you can learn from training. (Interviewee 5)

12.3.3. Commercial pressure on journalists' work (subtheme H2)

Only two percent of a total of 659 statements are coded with subtheme H2. This result proves that, to the vast majority of the examined off-the-job trainees, commercial pressure exerted on daily journalistic work by the editor or the employer does not seem to be a major issue. The few trainees who address this topic in the interviews tend to disapprove of the increasing tendency for business economists to occupy top-management positions in media organisations, with an only marginal understanding of journalism, or none at all.

The thing that concerns me most when looking at today's media scene is the phenomenon that at the top of news organisations we have a growing number of people who have no idea about the craft of journalism. I have personally experienced how publishing executives endowed with an MBA select journalistically designed radio programmes and have realised that their objective is solely to increase advertising turnover. (Interviewee 28)

Another interviewee picks the salary issue as a central theme regarding the impact of commercial constraints:

From conversations with fellow trainees at MAZ, I have learnt that some media companies making huge profits often pay their young journalists low salaries, although the newcomers sometimes represent more than 50 percent of the newsroom staff. (Interviewee 14)

Interviewee 11 alleges that, as a result of the slump in advertising revenues, employers deliberately pay their trainees and interns low salaries:

I get the impression that in economically hard times employers consciously pay their trainees and interns worse than in better times. (Interviewee 11)

Two interviewees perceive their exposure to commercial pressure at work as not necessarily constraining. One reason given by a newcomer who has been in the occupation for only two years is that he has never experienced anything other than being under constant commercial pressure:

To a novice in television, reorganisation seems a normal process. I find it quite common that programmes get dumped and new shows screened till the day when they get disposed as well. These processes can be quite exciting. Perhaps I'm not senior enough to really bother about the structural changes taking place in the media world. (Interviewee 30)

12.3.4. Industry's ability of self-criticism (subtheme H3)

The interviews also generated a few trainees' accounts regarding the news organisations' ability to take a self-critical stance on their role in the media landscape. The three statements (coded with subtheme H3) refer to the issue of the media industries' ability to pass criticism on themselves and how off-the-job trainees perceive it.

The very small number of statements in this respect shows that the impact of this issue on trainees' experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job training is very weak. The findings basically point out that media organisations tend to be self-opinionated and quite reluctant to be critical of the media as a branch and seem to even more hesitant to be self-critical on their own part.

12.3.5. Conclusion

About three percent of the relevant data generated through the process of thematic analysis relate to the coded key theme H (impact of media and journalism industry). Regarding the quantitative description of the frequency of key themes and subthemes emerging from the trainees' accounts during the interviews, key theme H is ranked at the bottom of the key theme chart (see Table 4, section 9.5). The few interviewees addressing the issue of the media's stance on

training and its impact on trainees' experiences of their occupation resulting from off-the-job training claim that they perceive a general disrespect to and underestimation of the value of journalism training on the part of the industry.

Furthermore, the few trainees who have commented in the interviews on the issue of commercial pressure maintain that media companies are increasingly staffing their top-management with business administrators who do not have any experience in journalism, a phenomenon labelled and criticised as an additional industry initiative to further position journalism as a mere entrepreneurial business entity. It goes almost without saying that those trainees who are critical of the rising commercialism in the media industry in the interviews also criticise the news organisations' avoidance of a self-critical stance on their role in the media landscape.

To put it in a nutshell, from a quantitative as well as qualitative perspective, the findings of key theme H in comparison to those generated in practically all other key themes must be seen as an insignificant feature of the data and are thus of marginal importance to the findings of this study as a whole.

12.4. Impact on perspectives regarding the future of journalism (theme I)

12.4.1. Introduction

Key theme I explores the notion of how journalism trainees' perspectives on the future of journalism are affected by attending an off-the-job training course and how they perceive and anticipate the advancement of their own careers.

Subtheme I1 (own career perspectives) addresses the issue of trainees' perspectives on their careers and to what extent attending an off-the-job training certificate course influences these views.

Subtheme I2 (journalism and media development) questions the interviewees' perception of the structural transformation of the media landscape and the advancement of journalism as the key supplier of information and opinions about public affairs, as well as an occupation allowing journalists to make a living.

12.4.2. Career perspectives (subtheme I1)

Only two percent of the statements emerging as relevant data from the interviews are coded with subtheme I1 (career perspectives). Of those, two thirds are connoted in a negative context. Some trainees are concerned that their employment could cease due to impending economic problems and hope that their graduation from the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism would contribute to safeguarding their employment:

I suspect that journalism prospects are rather dire. I'm not sure whether I will still have a job in six months. My newspaper just got sold and I don't know if I can stay. I don't have many options. I may try to find a job in corporate communications. (Interviewee 4)

With the completion of my training course at MAZ, the Volontariat will be finished as well. I doubt that I will find a new job soon. Every day I go on the Internet and look for job offers. There are no vacancies except a few internships. (Interviewee 19)

A few trainees point out that they regard their present journalistic activities as trivial and that they wish to practice journalism of a more serious sort:

I'm often concerned about my high occupational expectations and my occupational image. I have a problem in doing justice to our readers. I worry quite often that I may fail my own high standards. Therefore, I'm telling myself to either start looking for employment that will correspond more to my journalistic self-image or I will definitively quit and do something completely different. There are enough people doing journalism and being unhappy, and there are enough people wanting to enter the profession. (Interviewee 7)

Others claim that occupational and especially promotion prospects within media companies are limited and journalists are hard to find at the top of major organisations. This is alongside the frequent argument that today's deadline-driven occupational requirements in the news business threaten to wear journalists down:

Of course you can rotate within the journalism scene from newsroom to newsroom, quasi horizontally. However, after the fifth job rotation you've seen it. I don't believe that journalism really is an occupational field where you age with dignity. (Interviewee 26)

Doing journalism is like getting sucked up by a strong vacuum cleaner. You are forced to constantly provide personal output because you are a journalist 24 hours and seven days a week. Perhaps I'm not a born journalist and had better look for another occupation. (Interviewee 28)

12.4.3. Perception of journalism and media development (subtheme I2)

About six percent of the total number of trainees' accounts is coded with subtheme I2 (impact on perception of journalism and media development). Of these, 60 percent are negatively connoted in the sense that the majority of trainees who mention the issue in question are rather sceptical of future prospects regarding their field of work. Several interviewees simply worry about the changes to journalistic operations such as the increased implementation of multitasking:

I doubt that the newly implemented system of multitasking will contribute added value to news production. I disapprove of the idea that every journalist ought to be able to function in multiple ways such as completing different journalistic tasks at the same time. Each one has his own special competence as well as incapacity. It looks as if a non-plus ultra robot is needed! (Interviewee 6)

I don't like the multifunctional requirements. Their sole purpose is to speed up journalistic output. They prevent you from reflecting on your assignment and make you just do it the quickest way. Perhaps some day journalists will function like a flock of laying hens. (Interviewee 10)

This multifunctional mode of operation like a video journalist who has nowadays to balance three to four different journalistic tasks and is also now required to edit his own news report can become a maddening endeavour. Local TV stations just don't have the means to be profitable. As a consequence they are reducing staff. (Interviewee 13)

Others are concerned about the common assumption that newspapers will vanish because of the immense power of the Internet and also blame publishers for offering news content for free on their websites and hence running the risk of cannibalising their own newspapers:

Publishers scored an own goal by investing in their websites and not charging for online content. Users have become used to taking free news content for granted. It's basically the publishing industry's own fault. (Interviewee 19)

Some interviewees criticise the rising blurring of journalistic and PR oriented content and claim that in their view journalism has become less accountable to the public interest and is following a business model too closely. In this respect, they also make the case that journalism as a profession will further lose its boundaries against other related occupations like public relations and corporate communications.

On the other hand, two out of five statements on the future of journalism and media are connoted positively in the sense that the corresponding trainees perceive the ongoing changes and transformation to be challenging and quite positive. For example, the impact of developments in digital media technologies:

I suppose that journalists in the future will have to be even more flexible. One of the very basic characteristics of the future journalist will still be curiosity. Those who are now afraid of losing their jobs don't seem to fulfil this essential characteristic. There is definitely a future for journalism because people will want to be informed as always. That's why I'm being optimistic although I can imagine that today's journalistic formats will change quite a lot. (Interviewee 18)

I'm quite convinced that talented and proficient journalists will always be needed. Perhaps we'll have less bad journalists in the future. The most important thing is to stay flexible as I have no guarantee that in 10 year's time I will still be working for the same free paper. I believe that printed magazines will still have a bright future whereas I'm more sceptical of the future of the paid dailies. (Interviewee 22)

A few trainee journalists express their hopes for a rising tendency to standardise journalism professionalism and believe that journalism training could play an important role in initiating and helping to develop such a process:

The good thing about journalism training is its capacity to professionalise the craft. Perhaps the Swiss government and its appropriate authority will even accredit journalism training some day. If education and training becomes more institutionalised, journalism's reputation and its position within society will also improve. (Interviewee 30)

12.4.4. Conclusion

The findings interpreted in key theme I reveal that when asked about the effectiveness of off-the-job training on their socialisation to everyday journalistic work, the interviewees also broach the issue of how they anticipate the future of journalism. Compared to the concentration of statements coded with other key

themes, for example E (impact of curriculum of certificate course) or G (impact of MAZ as an institution), the significance of the outcome of the analysis regarding key theme I must be put into perspective.

Yet, the statements coded with subtheme I2, for example, being sceptical about the implementation of multitasking and the increasing blurring of journalistic and PR-driven content, especially suggest that journalism novices' perception of the future of journalism and the media as an industry may be influenced by insights from off-the-job training. Therefore, off-the-job training can be regarded as having a certain impact on young journalists' reasoning about the future of journalism.

By and large, it cannot be concluded that the completion of off-the-job training and the practicality of the subject matter have a substantially positive and reassuring effect on journalists' views on the future prospects of their field of work. Nor do training experiences seem to influence their perspectives on the future of journalism in an overly negative way. Nevertheless, the results of key theme I produce a valuable snapshot of the current state of mind of young Swiss journalists with regard to their perception of pursuing a journalistic career in particular and their belief in the future of journalism and media organisations in general.

The findings in subtheme I2 (impact on perception of journalism and media development) imply that journalism trainees who expressed their views on the issue of future prospects in the interviews seem to be quite concerned about the fashion journalism as an occupation and the news media cope with ongoing technological innovation, content diversification and structural transformation.

Accordingly, subtheme I2 comprising 39 coded statements is ranked fourth in the chart of the frequency of subthemes that have emerged from the interview data, a result that can be interpreted as significant for the outcome of the examination, as discussed in the next chapter. Clearly, the trainees' concerns about their careers should not be overemphasised, since they must also be understood as a common phenomenon that often emerges in times of dramatic change in an occupational

field. Such significant changes cause workers to worry about the outcome of those changes and the future prospects that will be likely to affect their career.

Nevertheless, there is evidence that the trainees' repeatedly voiced concerns about the impact of developments in technologies, new business models as well as the shifting of organisational structures can also be inferred from the regular information exchange and discourse on journalism work with co-trainees (see subtheme D2).

As the findings from the analysis of subtheme D2 indicate, a regular information exchange on journalism work and media issues with co-trainees from different news organisations can provide a useful assessment of the current state and quality of Swiss journalism. This discourse that will also encompass questions about the future of journalism may raise concern about future prospects even more than routine discussions among co-workers in their own newsroom.

Furthermore, a comparison of the findings generated in subtheme I1 with those in subtheme C1 also seems to be insightful. Findings in key theme C (and in subtheme C1 in particular) underline that off-the-job journalism training has a considerable impact on journalists' belief in themselves and their abilities. This suggests that certain characteristics of off-the-job training may have a bearing on the trainees' own perspectives on their careers. Obviously, regular meetings and subsequent information exchange with trainees from other media organisations at MAZ courses, and the trainees' position of being embedded in a collaborative learning system may facilitate their individual positioning as journalists and help reinforce feelings of self-confidence and self-awareness.

Hence, the declared increase of self-confidence and self-awareness as a result of off-the-job journalism training may not only result in more adequate positioning as journalists in the job market, but may also implicate a more conscious and self-critical perception of trainee journalists' career perspectives.

Chapter Thirteen, as the study's discussion chapter, finally reflects on the implications of these findings for the research questions that have driven the present study.

Chapter Thirteen: Discussion

13.1. Introduction

13.1.1. Reflecting on research questions and research literature

This chapter now sets out to reflect on the implications of this study's findings for the research questions stated in Chapter Eight and in the thesis introduction. As a reminder, the basic research questions that have driven this research are:

- How does off-the-job journalism training impact on journalists' hands-on experiences of their occupation?
- How does off-the-job training affect a journalist's self-conception?
- What impact does off-the-job training have on a journalist's sense of his or her accountability to the public?
- What effect does off-the-job journalism training have on the journalist's employability?
- How do trainee journalists perceive the involvement of the journalism industry in off-the-job training?

Discussing the findings' significance and the implications that stem from them, in this chapter I provide a point-by-point analysis of how the results answer these research questions. The findings will be discussed and evaluated in comparison with the literature on journalism education and training reviewed in Chapters Five and Six.

13.1.2. Reflecting on the 'Tartu-Declaration' as a guiding principle for training

Additionally, some of the findings will also be discussed in relation to the mission statement and competency goals set up as a general principle for journalism

training by the ‘Tartu-Declaration’, an agreement initiated by the members of the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA). As introduced in Chapters Two and Three, in June 2006 the members of the EJTA (including MAZ) adopted a resolution called the ‘Tartu-Declaration’, signed in Tartu, Estonia, committing the members of the organisation to educating and training their students in the principle that journalists should serve the public by:

- providing an insight into political, economic, socio-cultural conditions;
- stimulating and strengthening democracy at all levels;
- stimulating and strengthening personal and institutional accountability;
- strengthening the chance for citizens to make choices in societal and personal contexts;

while:

- feeling responsible for the freedom of expression;
- respecting the integrity of individuals;
- being critical of sources and independent of vested interests;
- using customary ethical standards.

After their education or training, students should possess the competence to:

1. Reflect on the societal role of and developments within journalism.
2. Find relevant issues and angles, given the public and production aims of a certain medium or different media.
3. Organise and plan journalistic work.
4. Gather information swiftly, using customary newsgathering techniques and methods of research.
5. Select the essential information.
6. Structure information in a journalistic manner.
7. Present information in appropriate language and an effective journalistic form.
8. Evaluate and account for journalistic work.
9. Cooperate in a team or an editorial setting.
10. Work in a professional media-organisation or as a freelancer.

(EJTA, 2006)

Hence, by additionally comparing this study's findings with the declared journalistic competencies regarding the principles of the "Tartu-Declaration" I seek to give a useful insight into the extent to which Swiss trainee journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job training match the goals set by the members of the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA).⁸⁸

13.2. Implications for hands-on experiences of journalists' occupation

13.2.1. Practicality of subject matter

The findings of this investigation's thematic analysis clearly demonstrate that trainee journalists regard the practicality of the subject matter of an off-the-job training course as paramount. This is because it impacts on journalists' experiences of their occupation in terms of improving basic journalistic skills such as enhancing research and investigation approaches, fostering more accurate and efficient writing and advancing structured interviewing, as well as providing general knowledge about media ethics and human rights such as the right to personal privacy.

Furthermore, an off-the-job training setting endows journalists with opportunities to test their creativity, try out and exercise new approaches to writing, storytelling and editing and also enables them to experience different media types and formats.

With reference to the competency goals set up as a general principle for journalism training by the 'Tartu-Declaration', the findings suggest that off-the-job training has a positive effect on competencies such as organising and planning journalistic work, using standard newsgathering techniques and methods of research, selecting the essential information, structuring information in a journalistic manner and cooperating in a team or an editorial setting.

⁸⁸ The entire contents of the 'Tartu-Declaration' can be seen in the Appendices part of this thesis.

However, as the analysis reveals, the above-mentioned impact seems to only fully take effect if the achieved progress in journalistic skills complements the existing editorial guidelines and concepts that usually determine a trainee journalist's everyday work practice. This insight will be further discussed later in this chapter (see section 13.2.5). This point is endorsed by the findings showing, for example, that the majority of trainee journalists most value the taught interview techniques when they include strategic and structured approaches, with the objective of anticipating and generating the (editorially) required answers.

Likewise, it is important to note that the trainee journalists, as a result of courses on law as part of the curriculum of off-the-job training at MAZ, tend to handle human rights and media ethics more carefully so as not to cause their employers litigation problems and impair their companies' reputations. To some extent it can be argued whether this issue must be interpreted as a means of self-censorship.

As a matter of fact, self-censorship is considered to be a common phenomenon in today's news media all over the world. Several scholars have discussed professional principles of journalism in terms of journalistic objectivity; for example, the separation of editorial and advertising sections, documentation and fiction, and facts and opinion as a means of self-censorship (e.g. Pöttker, 2004). In the US, research by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (2000) reveals that one of the constantly occurring kinds of self-censorship is the avoidance of stories that could damage news organisations or the parent company, as well as advertisers and friends of the boss.

In this context, I claim that the results of the present study contribute new insights by suggesting that self-censorship in terms of avoiding possible damage to news organisations is already inculcated in journalism newcomers by practices and techniques imparted by off-the-job training. These findings matter because journalism education is generally seen as building the foundation for the knowledge and attitudes of future journalists. Thus, I argue that in the case of the mission statement of the 'Tartu-Declaration' it is debatable whether indications of self-censorship (as a result of disciplining trainees by making them particularly aware of avoiding possible damage to news organisations) still comply with the

declaration that journalists should be trained to serve the public by “stimulating and strengthening democracy at all levels” (EJTA, 2006).

Nevertheless, it must also be pointed out that the trainee journalists commenting on the issue of handling media ethics don’t seem to be aware of any self-censorship aspects. This perception also relates to and endorses Bourdieu’s arguments on journalism and self-censorship. In his critical analysis of the impact and pretensions of television, he claims that journalists practice self-censorship “without even being aware of it” (1998, p. 47).

As discussed in this study’s literature review, in McBarnet’s (1979) earlier investigations into training methods he also addressed journalists’ compliance with the goals of news organisations in the context of editorial self-censorship and gatekeeping and argued that “training provides an entrée into both the disciplining of journalists and the discipline of journalism” (p. 181).

Considering the fact that, when asked to gauge the added value of off-the-job training, the trainee journalists in this study put the greatest emphasis on the enhancement of skills, it can be concluded that this study’s findings clearly confirm the results of McBarnet’s earlier research on journalism training. This refers to the claim that it is basically a training format for the manufacture of news, or as McBarnet puts it, “a reflection of the end product” (p. 186).

In doing so, this study’s findings eventually support McBarnet’s argument that journalism in a mass media context is being reproduced in its own image, which (as this analysis also reveals) reduces the chances of journalism turning into a more critical instrument. The trainees reinforce this argument by declaring that their main purpose for becoming involved in off-the-job training is to attain the knowledge and techniques that promise to strengthen their employability, which must be regarded as a media-centred and not society-centred attitude.

13.2.2. Role of journalism school

As the present analysis further shows, as the entity delivering off-the-job journalism training, schools such as MAZ in the German-speaking part of Switzerland are likely to have implications on the socialisation of a trainee journalist to the role of a professional journalist. In the case of MAZ and its model of off-the-job training, the findings imply that not only the content of the course, but also the school's leadership, its philosophy of journalism and how it is conveyed, and the handling of business administration aspects such as financing (e.g. course fees) can impact on the trainee journalists' perception of the effectiveness of off-the-job training in different respects.

Strikingly, these parameters all seem to be related to the issue of the practical value (practicality) of the subject matter that is expected to deliver the required skills. First and foremost, everything that impairs the practicality of the subject matter, be it the overpopulation of classes, or the different levels of knowledge and skills possessed by co-trainees grouped together in the same class, seems to be viewed with disapproval by the trainee journalists.

Hence, on the grounds of these findings, I postulate that the more practice-oriented and individually customised the subject matter that is imparted through classroom training is, the more it is likely to impact on journalists' experiences of their occupational environment. This is a valuable insight that will be addressed as one of this study's theoretical propositions later in the conclusion chapter.

The findings make it clear that, above all, off-the-job journalism trainees expect to learn skills that will support them in achieving conformity with the existing production practices required and applied in their newsrooms from a training institution like MAZ. By exhibiting such behavioural patterns, trainee journalists indeed contribute to the reproduction of tried-and-tested journalistic habits, which ultimately comply adequately with the basic intention and interests of their news organisations and underpin a core aspect of journalism training that has traditionally been preparing journalism trainees for jobs in the media industries.

The newly acquired insights from this study's findings also demonstrate that training journalists to reproduce approved news manufacture practices does not only lie in the best interests of the news organisations. It is of equal interest to the trainee journalists themselves, who regard the advancement of their careers and the securing of future employability as key issues. This phenomenon is further discussed in section 13.5 and conclusively addressed in Chapter Fourteen.

The findings further reveal that if the institution delivering off-the-job training courses does not fully comply with the above-mentioned wishes of the trainees, it risks having its role perceived as unsatisfactory, which to some extent does indeed seem to be the case according to the examined trainees' critique of MAZ's management and business administration performance.

Seeing journalism training through the eyes of trainee journalists in the context of this study's findings, I am disposed to reach the conclusion that the various calls to reinvent journalism education (e.g. Medsger, 1996; Reese and Cohen, 2000; Carey, 2000; Macdonald, 2006; Deuze, 2006; Josephi, 2009; Mensing, 2011) are unlikely to be echoed in the world of Swiss off-the-job journalism training. Therefore, it is argued that Mensing's firm belief that "teaching students attitudes and skills that fit a journalism of the past is a disservice to the industry, to students and to the credibility of the university" (2011, p. 17) needs to be put into perspective, at least in the Swiss context.

The findings of this investigation clearly endorse the fact that such a well-approved model as the off-the-job training system in question still successfully centres on the reporter and the basic and classic functions of information gathering, evaluation, production, and distribution.

In doing so, it can be argued that the model of off-the-job training has created a win-win-situation for the stakeholders involved in the system, i.e. the journalism school is happy because its industry-oriented training curriculum receives financial backing from the industry and the government, the industry is happy because it obtains skilled and disciplined journalists as repayment for its financial backing of the training system, the government is happy because the system

produces employable journalists, and the journalists are happy because they can attain (better) work.

What Mensing and others seem to have overlooked is the insight that, as the outcome of this study suggests, journalism training seen from the trainees' and the industry's perspectives is first and foremost about journalists' employability and the news industry recognising what assets it already has or is in need of and thus looking for these elements in new recruits. This common occurrence, however, does not imply that off-the-job training courses need be completely devoid of innovation and should avoid the adoption of new journalistic practices in their curriculum.

In other words, an off-the-job training system such as that run by MAZ is easily capable of adopting and imparting new trends emerging in journalism practice as a result of the fact that constant first-hand input can be delivered by the school's mostly industry-related lecturers and instructors. In this respect, the school is able to sensitise the trainees as to the best practices in contemporary journalism. Therefore, by training them MAZ indirectly contributes to the prevailing journalistic standards required by the industry.

It is important to note, though, that journalistic trends are not necessarily set by the journalism school's innovation, but rather are addressed as a reaction to their emergence in journalism practice and its susceptibility to changes of media use. Still, it should be pointed out that it is not only the news industry calling for journalism schools to face the challenges of multimedia qualification demands and to provide their journalists with more adequate skills. Equally, the trainees' self-interested ambition aims to increase their employability in the context of pursuing a career by keeping up with the latest technological challenges and innovations.

As the findings further demonstrate, a close alliance between the news industry and the off-the-job training journalism institution gives little leeway for alternative approaches to training journalists. The notion of journalism education and training needing additional academic input, as claimed in the last decade by scholars like de Burgh (2003), seems to have practically no relevance for the cause

of journalists being trained in an evidently industry-oriented training system as is the case in the Swiss German part of Switzerland. As addressed in Chapter Three of this study, the long-established dismissive attitude of many Swiss publishers, media managers and editors towards institutionalising and standardising journalism education continues to exist and there is no substantial indication that this might change soon.

However, the scepticism about alternative and more academic approaches to journalism training is not only a matter of long-lasting distrust by the news industry. It also seems quite inherent in journalism trainees who, according to this study's findings, do not expect journalism training to change the world or at least transform journalism because they believe that is not what journalism training is for. The findings clearly show that the practicalities and the structures that are in place within an off-the-job journalism training system leave little room for change.

It can be argued that journalists who are employed by news organisations involved in mass media news coverage are trained to produce news as a special form of daily product, which is predictable and comforting to its audience that wants to know what it will receive. It thus follows that the core skills in producing news can be understood as producing something new in an old shape and form using old words, phrases and clichés. After all, this is the pattern with which the mass media audience is familiar.

In other words, the only aspect that is really new is the fact that the event that is covered happened yesterday or a couple of hours ago. However, it is conveyed in an old framework that the audience has learnt to accept and therefore trusts. Thus, as a further contribution to the existing knowledge, the present investigation shows that these conventions are not only embedded in the efficiency of routinised news production (as addressed in Tuchman, 1978 and Fishman, 1980), but also in the approaches to off-the-job journalism training.

13.2.3. Impact of lecturers

The trainee journalists' industry-friendly stance on off-the-job training as an industry-driven training model is also apparent when looking into the perceived impact of lecturers and instructors at MAZ. Analogous to the information that has already been assessed regarding the role of MAZ as a well-established off-the-job training institution, the analysis of this factor suggests that the more practice-oriented a MAZ lecturer acts, the more trainee journalists claim to perceive a benefit for their daily journalistic practice.

In this context, it is claimed that lecturers have a strong influence on trainee journalists' hands-on experiences of their occupation to the extent that 'lecturer-practitioners'⁸⁹ in particular are usually in a position to demonstrate best-practice insight into their own, mostly senior journalism activities to the student journalists. Therefore, it is no surprise that practically all the trainee journalists in this study don't seem to ponder a lecturer's possible partiality very much.

On the contrary, as the appropriate findings show, most of them appreciate lecturers who clearly attach special importance to their own newsroom philosophy, which again relates to the trainees' basic intention and hope to gain the best possible insight into the distinct world of journalism practice. The latter provides them with useful basic knowledge about the manifold characteristics of the contemporary journalism and media scene and indirectly boosts their employability.

Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that there is one special element that can hamper the socialisation process for the trainee journalist: a lecturer's unsatisfactory skills and experience in didactics. In this context, the findings of the present study support Russ-Mohl's (2002) claim that not every exceptionally gifted journalist is automatically a likewise proficient lecturer (see also section 11.3.4).

⁸⁹ For the exact definition, see Chapter Ten (section 10.7.1.)

13.2.4. Influence of co-trainees

The findings further imply that the regular information exchange and discussions on journalism work amongst trainee journalists can have a positive impact on their experiences of their occupation. These conversations may provide them with greater insight into the structures and mechanisms of the journalism and media industry and offer the ability to compare and analyse different working conditions, which can help journalists-to-be to better position themselves in their occupational environment.

Additionally, the helpful and constructive impact of a constant information exchange with fellow trainees can be considered to have an influence on the trainee journalists' self-conception. This is in addition to regular and appropriate feedback from co-trainees and lecturers that also contributes to the strengthening of a trainee journalist's self-confidence and self-awareness. This phenomenon also answers Research Question 2 and is further discussed in section 13.3.

Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates that the trainee journalists' construction of a professional network is likely to have advantageous implications for their hands-on experiences of their occupation with regard to the chance of becoming more familiar and up-to-date with the ongoing processes and developments occurring in the Swiss media scene.

Networking with co-trainees and lecturers also helps to maintain awareness of relevant issues. For example, useful hints for handling specific sources and exchanging information on working conditions and job offers, the latter being of particular importance since the school-initiated network includes journalists and lecturers from all over Switzerland who could indeed be personally contacted whenever support were needed.

13.2.5. Influence of employment and working conditions

As the analysis of the interview data further shows, in an off-the-job training model such as the one examined for this study, it is very likely that the issues of employment and working conditions with reference to the trainee journalists' situations play another important role in their socialisation to the professional world of journalism.

The findings reveal that most trainee journalists fail to challenge the predominant editorial concepts and guidelines while trying to implement their off-the-job training expertise into daily newsroom practice. This is the case unless the gained expertise is attuned to the prevailing working techniques, which as the data unveils often seems to be the case.

In this context, it is again argued that if knowledge and expertise from journalism training are to be successfully applied in journalism practice, they have to fit into the routinisation of institutionalised and mass-produced news. Interestingly enough, the results of the present study also clearly demonstrate that the prevalence of the organisational concept of a newsroom and the continuous pressure stemming from expectations of employers, editors and co-workers are not regarded as a key problem by the trainee journalists.

On the contrary, the majority unambiguously indicate their wants and needs for journalism training to be delivered in a fashion and under conditions of practice that closely match the challenges (such as constant rush and strain) of contemporary newsroom practices.

Eventually, it is claimed that this insight can be interpreted as an inference from the trainee journalists' basic and prevailing interest. As the outcome of this research demonstrates, this is first and foremost the desire to boost his or her employability by completing a preferably industry-oriented off-the-job training certificate course, an argument that also unambiguously answers Research Question 4 and is further discussed in section 13.5.

13.3. Implications for journalists' self-conception

13.3.1. Self-awareness instead of control over journalistic jurisdiction

The analysis shows that in the eyes of the examined trainee journalists, off-the-job training is regarded as having a positive impact on their self-conception. It is broadly claimed that the experiences gained from the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism increase the trainees' self-beliefs and help foster their professional journalistic individuality.

It can therefore be assumed that, according to the respective findings, the strengthening of trainee journalists' self-conception to a large degree arises from regular information exchange and network activities with co-trainees and lecturers at MAZ, enabling them to better gauge their current position and career chances in the journalism job market.

It must be pointed out, though, that according to this study's findings, the increase in trainee journalists' self-confidence and self-awareness only seems to particularly manifest if the transferability of the expertise gained from off-the-job training matches the requirements and beliefs of the editorial concept guiding the appropriate newsroom culture. Thus, the trainee journalists' dependency on editorial and corporate guidelines indicates that their range of authority is rather small. Improving journalistic self-conception does not automatically mean improving control over journalistic jurisdiction.

With regard to the discussion in Chapter Five about Swiss journalism's struggle to achieve control over its journalistic jurisdiction, it is argued that it cannot be assumed that off-the-job training is capable of compensating for lost opportunities. This is mainly due to the long-lasting tight alliance of Swiss journalism with Swiss politics and the traditional partisanship between the two groups hampering journalism from becoming an autonomous profession.

As long as key stakeholders of Swiss journalism like journalists' associations, journalism schools such as MAZ and the country's leading publishers continue to

object to systematising and standardising journalism education, journalism jurisdiction, in the sense of having ultimate control over one's work, and boundary-binding, meaning ultimately legitimising an occupational group as one whose work is regarded indispensable, will not be easily won.⁹⁰

13.3.2. Concerns about careers and the future of journalism

As stated in the findings chapter, the interviews with the 30 trainee journalists prompted a large number of statements on how they perceive their own, and ultimately journalism's, future. The widespread notion of future prospects can also be understood to be linked to the strengthening of trainee journalists' self-conception. Because trainees seem to know more about who they are and how they can position themselves in a competitive occupational field, they tend to regularly think about their future prospects and how to plan further career steps.

As the findings in Chapter Ten reveal, most of the trainee journalists commenting on the issue of the future of the media and journalism industry express concerns about the impact of developments in technologies and new business models on their future daily work, as well as the shifting of organisational structures. Print media journalists seem to be especially sceptical about the increasing implementation of multitasking and the blurring of journalistic and PR-driven content.

However, by and large it cannot be ascertained beyond doubt that the completion of off-the-job training and the transferability of the skills learnt prompt a substantially positive and reassuring effect on the student journalist's view of the future prospects of their field of work.

As the analysis shows, it can be assumed that these concerns are the results of the regular information exchange between co-trainees and lecturers at MAZ, which could be interpreted as having a considerable impact on a trainee journalist's self-

⁹⁰ Also see Chapter Five of this thesis (section 5.2.3).

conception. The latter obviously also includes reasoning about future prospects, not least about future employability. Around half of the interviewed trainee journalists emphasise their confidence in certain areas as a consequence of completing an off-the-job journalism training course. The findings also reveal that the majority of the novices studied hope that the course's certificate will turn out to give added value in terms of career building and when applying for more important and better-paid jobs.

In this context, it is interesting to compare the findings on trainees' self-conception with regard to career expectations with the results of a survey of 220 alumni of the MAZ Certificate Course in Journalism I conducted in 2008 (Bigi, 2009). The inquiry revealed that four out of five graduates remained faithful to the trade, 14 percent qualified as heads of departments in news organisations later in their careers, but only six percent achieved the status of a chief editor.

In other words, the findings of the above-mentioned survey imply that having graduated from the MAZ certificate course can help advance a Swiss journalist's career, but it certainly is anything but a passport to a job as editor-in-chief or to achieving another top executive status in the Swiss journalism industry. On the other hand, there are admittedly few of these editorial jobs available, meaning that relatively few MAZ alumni can theoretically win them, anyway.

13.4. Implications for journalists' accountability to citizens

13.4.1. Little interest in accountability to the public

The analysis of the data stemming from this study clearly shows that trainee journalists involved in an industry-oriented training system like that delivered by MAZ tend to ignore accountability to citizens. Since off-the-job training brings together a striking array of 'lecturer-practitioners' and several dozens of fellow trainees and hence provides access to the practical world of contemporary Swiss journalism, as we have seen, trainees are first and foremost interested in improving their journalistic skills in order to enhance employability. Thus, the

focus on strengthening the trainee's awareness of the self as a result of skills- and industry-oriented training leaves very little or no room for questions about a journalist's accountability to the public.

On the other hand, this more or less expected insight does not imply that trainee journalists are not at all interested in the audience of the media outlets for which they are working. On the contrary; trainees, especially those working for private radio, commercial television and news websites, readily display a concern for and interest in their media outlet's audiences, a phenomenon that also endorses the results of the two large national surveys of Swiss journalists (Marr et al., 2001; Wyss & Keel, 2010).

However, statements from journalists in the two national surveys, as well as from this study's trainees, indicate that journalists working in a market-driven news production environment understand the audience of their media outlets more as consumers and less as citizens. To put it in a nutshell, they seem more interested in serving the market than in serving the public.

13.4.2. Skills-oriented and industry-driven

Gaunt (1992), in his groundbreaking international comparison of education and training systems, argues that journalism training programmes differ quite considerably in terms of curriculum, control, mechanisms, location and also in terms of the nature of the lecturers and trainers, as well as the nature of the appropriate students.

In the case of MAZ and its delivery of off-the-job training, the prevailing curriculum that is primarily consigned by instructors who are or have been journalism practitioners comprises above all improving skills in order to make trainees fitter for the journalism industry and not so much the conveyance of critical thinking about the norms of the profession and its accountability to citizenship.

As a consequence, and indeed as this study's results firmly suggest regarding the question of how off-the-job training can impact on a journalist's accountability to the citizens, off-the-job trainees reveal themselves to be clearly skills-oriented, eschewing academic approaches to their journalism education and generally behaving in an industry-friendly manner.

Thus far, these results add to the systematic journalism education research by Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha (2003), discussed in this study's literature review (see section 6.4.). They clearly underpin the authors' claim that "the way journalists are educated influences their self-perception" (p. 319).

The findings of the present research project also reveal that if journalists are trained within an industry-oriented system, the chances are that they think and act in a predominantly industry-friendly way and are not as society-oriented as, for example, the 'Tartu-Declaration' and its mission statement established by EJTA would suggest.

The results in question seem to be in accordance with the findings from a recent study on the weighting of different journalistic competencies by European editors in chief from 16 countries, a survey that has already been addressed in this study's literature review (see Chapter Six). The cross-national survey was conducted by the IAM Institute of Applied Media Studies of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (2010). A comparison of its results with the findings from this study follows in the next section.

13.5. Implications for journalists' employability

13.5.1. Impact of training on journalistic competencies

As discussed earlier in this chapter (see section 13.2.1.), the present study's findings clearly show that the interviewees regard the practical value and usefulness of the content of an off-the-job training course to be paramount. The results suggest that off-the-job training has an advantageous effect on basic journalistic competencies such as organising journalistic work, using standard newsgathering techniques and investigation methods, as well as selecting the essential information, structuring that information in a journalistic manner and cooperating in a team and, thus, is able to foster journalists' employability.

However, I have also argued that the above-mentioned impact seems to only thoroughly take effect if the achieved progress in journalistic skills and competencies match the existing editorial guidelines and concepts enacted by editors in chief and employers. Hence, the question about a journalist's employability clearly relates to the requirements of employers and to what they consider to be the most important competencies a journalism school graduate can possess.

13.5.2. Weighting of competencies by editors-in-chief

This study's findings regarding the trainee journalists' views on the question of employability and their own weighting of journalistic competencies can now be compared with the outcome of the above-mentioned survey by the IAM Institute of Applied Media Studies (2010), which focused on the weighting by editors-in-chief. The analysis of the IAM survey generated eight factors, which are rated as important skills and competencies to be achieved when completing professional journalism training in a European context. They are as follows:

- Personal competencies
- Analytical competence/competence to select

- Technical competence
- Societal role awareness
- Accountability
- Genre awareness
- Public (civic) awareness
- Narrative competence

Comparing the present study's findings with this competency list, it can be established that off-the-job training, as exercised at MAZ, addresses at least five of the listed key competencies, namely: personal competencies, analytical competence/competence to select, technical competence, genre awareness and narrative competence. From this perspective it can be inferred that there seems to be conformity between the expectations of editors-in-chief and the experiences of trainee journalists, which are in favour of fostering employability.

Regarding the achievement of 'personal competencies', findings of this study clearly show that off-the-job training can have an impact on trainee journalists' self-conception (also see section 13.3.). Further findings also suggest that off-the-job training can help trainee journalists to achieve progress in competencies such as 'analytical competence/competence to select', 'technical competence', 'genre awareness' and 'narrative competence', provided that the practicality of the course content conforms to the requirements of editors-in-chief and employers (see section 13.2.1.).

On the other hand, according to the requirements of the surveyed editors-in-chief, three competency factors seem rather irrelevant to the trainee journalists and their sense of journalistic aptitudes. According to this study's findings, it can be assumed that the average trainee journalist completing off-the-job training does not weight 'accountability', 'public (civic) awareness' and 'societal role awareness' amongst his or her core competencies and consequently does not fully comply with all the standard requirements of editors-in-chief.

Nevertheless, this shortcoming cannot be deemed to have large consequences for a trainee journalist's employability, since the qualifications indicated as

‘accountability’, ‘public (civic) awareness’ and ‘societal role awareness’ were weighted by the editors-in-chief as the least important competencies a journalism school graduate should possess. To sum up, it is argued that off-the-job training has to be regarded as having a conducive impact on a journalist’s employability, according to the perception and occupational experiences of trainee journalists as well as the ways different journalistic competencies are weighted by editors-in-chief.

The phenomenon endorsed by the present study’s findings that journalists primarily tend to seek to improve their employability when taking an off-the-job training course supports the notion that journalists are “rational actors seeking to promote their own interests” (Fengler and Russ-Mohl, 2008). As discussed in this study’s literature review (see Chapter Five), Fengler and Russ-Mohl opine that self-interested behaviour has become a vital factor in a journalist’s career management and they call for an economic theory perspective on future journalism studies.

The findings of this study regarding the economic perspective on employability seem to endorse such a call, since results show that economic self-interest such as valuing employability above all other things is already prevalent in industry-oriented journalism training, not least because off-the-job trainees are in close touch with fellow and senior journalists in their newsrooms, as well as with ‘lecturer-practitioners’ and co-trainees at MAZ. All in all, it is a highly competitive environment that seems to cause the trainee journalist to become aware of self-interested behaviour at a very early stage of their careers.

13.6. Implications for journalists' perception of the media industry and its involvement in journalism training

13.6.1. Job satisfaction depending on type of medium

As the trainee journalists' desire to improve their employability can be regarded as a key reason for completing off-the-job journalism training, by and large their general stance on the news industry appears to be favourable and rather uncritical. Around 80 percent of the trainees examined for this study declare general satisfaction with the performance of the Swiss journalism industry and their employers in particular.

On the one hand, this is a manifestation of the phenomenon that journalists often declare high job satisfaction when being studied. This was said to be the case in the latest survey of American journalists by Weaver et al. (2007), which revealed that around 84 percent of the surveyed journalists declared themselves to be "fairly satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their jobs (p. 107), and around 80 percent felt that their organisations were doing a "good" or "very good" job (p. 90).

On the other hand, this study's findings seem to contradict to some extent the latest national survey revealing that Swiss journalists' job satisfaction is decreasing. As pointed out in Chapter Four (see section 4.4.3), Bonfadelli et al. (forthcoming) assume two factors to be responsible for the apparent decrease in job satisfaction: the growing workload for little pay, and the widespread job insecurity, both reflecting that the media crisis is partly due to effects of the economic downturn and partly to the structural transformation taking place in contemporary journalism.

Furthermore, a recent survey on journalists' job satisfaction in Switzerland conducted by the Center for Research on the Public Sphere and Society – fög, and the research institute GfS-Zürich, has specified that the older and the more established Swiss journalists are, the less satisfied with their work conditions they become (Stadler, 2009). The findings of that investigation indicate that older

journalists working in national newspapers have the highest levels of job frustration. Naturally, the study points out that newcomers like trainee journalists such as those examined in this study and especially those working for entry-level media such as free papers and local radio, are generally not (yet) affected by job frustration and tend to have a positive sense of identification with their work.

13.6.2 Perception of industry involvement in journalism training

As discussed earlier in this thesis, the examined off-the-job model of journalism training is, in different respects, fairly dependent on the news industry. For example, news organisations allocate trainee journalists to the Certificate Course in Journalism on a regular basis. It could be immediately suggested that such strong ties raise questions about the school's dependency on the industry's educational policies.

However, this project's in-depth interviews with 30 MAZ trainees generated very few negative statements about the influence of the Swiss media industry on journalism education and training. As emphasised earlier (e.g. section 11.2.) the trainee journalists seem far more focused on the impact of the transferability and the practical value of the subject matter than on involvement in and the implications for the news industry regarding the effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training.

Nevertheless, the few trainee journalists who commented on the disposition of the journalism and news industry don't spare criticism on certain aspects inherent in the sector. For example, they blame the news industry for its poor estimation of journalism education and training, as well as its lack of ability with regard to self-criticism.

Trainee journalists also tend to criticise media companies for staffing their top-management with business administrators with no journalistic experience. When assessing the few trainee journalists' accounts of the status of journalism and the

news industry, it can be observed that scepticism about and criticism of rising commercialism in the industry is spreading.

Yet, it should be noted that in the analysis of the data that have emerged from the in-depth interviews only about three percent of the coded accounts relate to the key theme 'media industry critique'. Thus, it can be said that implications for journalists' perception of the media and news industry in general and its involvement in journalism training as a result of off-the-job training have to be considered to be marginal.

The next chapter will finally provide the synopsis and the conclusions of the present study, and will address the implications of the findings, not only for the journalists and the news industry, but also for journalism's vital role in the democratic process and in forming public opinion.

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PART SIX
SUMMARY, OUTCOME, AND QUALIFICATIONS

Chapter Fourteen: Synopsis and Conclusions

14.1. Introduction

This last chapter is composed of two main sections: the synopsis and the conclusions. In the first section I will provide a synopsis of the present thesis entailing a summary of the key steps that have established the basis for this investigation. The synopsis will then detail a round-up of explicit discussions with regard to the implications of this study's key findings for the applied research questions.

In the second and concluding section, I will finally bring home this investigation's key implications for the occupational role of Swiss journalists, the system of Swiss journalism education and training, the country's news industry, and on a larger scale, the role of journalism serving a vital democratic function in our society. The conclusions section will finally provide answers to the two questions I posed as a starting point for the present investigation in Chapter One:

- Firstly, how does journalism training impact on journalists' experiences of their occupation, their self-conception as professionals, and the achievement of their control over occupational jurisdiction?
- Secondly, how is journalism education and training empowering the current journalists to adapt to the fast changing news world in order to guarantee the improvement of journalistic quality and to serve a vital democratic function in our society?

After addressing potential limitations that might have occurred during the present research and how I dealt with them, I will then suggest theoretical propositions drawn from this study's findings that promise to be suitable to be tried out and tested as hypotheses in the context of further research on journalism education, in particular, off-the-job journalism training. I will end this chapter by proposing areas for further research.

14.2. Synopsis

14.2.1. Summary part one: establishing the basis for the investigation

This investigation has set out to examine Swiss journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job training. Establishing a relevant basis for researching this topic, I initially outlined the historical development that led to the predominant journalism training model within the Swiss German news ecology by specifying the forces that shaped the training system in place, particularly focusing on the importance of MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism, a stand-alone education and training institution that has provided off-the-job journalism training courses for almost 30 years. I have illuminated and discussed the different ties, dependencies and facilities that are manifest and inherent in such a journalism training system with regard to its close relationship to and dependency on the news industry.

As a rationale for discussing journalism and its development into an occupation, I have drawn on insights stemming from research on the sociological theory of work, occupations and professions completed most notably by American scholars and discussed their contribution to understanding journalism's process of becoming an occupation (e.g. Hughes, 1958; Abbott, 1988; Dooley, 1997).

Drawing on those theories, I debated the enduring struggle of Swiss journalism, its hesitance to become an occupation and the consequent implications for the development of journalism education and training. I have also pointed to the influence of the country's long-lasting political parallelism on the creation of journalistic occupations and argued that it must be doubted whether Swiss journalists under those circumstances have really achieved control over occupational jurisdiction and the efforts of the members of their group to secure this.

Attempting to provide an adequate theoretical framework as a useful background theory to this study, I have discussed relevant perspectives drawn on operational

and normative theory, as well as addressed approaches grounded on the political economy that promised to be appropriate to theoretically inform the overall shape of this research project.

As a further step in elaborating this research project, I have reviewed the existing literature on journalism education and journalism training in particular and deplored the lack of theoretically informed and conceived studies. I have made a case for the need to generate relevant data and insights to be contributed to the scant existing knowledge about the implications of off-the-job training for journalists' experiences of their occupation and hence for the Swiss news industry.

As a key text underlying the objective of exploring the effectiveness of journalism training, I have particularly highlighted the findings of McBarnet's (1979) examination of journalism training and the disciplining of journalists, one of the rare approaches to examining journalism training as a specific part of journalism education.

Regarding the methodological considerations informing this study, I have outlined the main epistemological and ontological arguments for the decision to select qualitative research as a strategy to investigate the effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training on the socialisation of young journalists to their occupational life. I further especially emphasised the approach of seeing the research problem through the eyes of the studied trainee journalists.

I have further discussed the research questions underlying this project and outlined the sampling procedure by introducing and discussing the selected purposive approach, as well as exploring the issues of saturation and sample size. I then outlined my decision to conduct semi-structured interviews and provided a detailed account of the realisation of the in-depth interviews, highlighting their settings, recording conditions and transcription processes.

With regard to the collection of data and the mode of analysis, I laid emphasis on the nature of qualitative data analysis as a result of this study's methodological

considerations and discussed the mode of thematic analysis as the chosen approach. I then explained the coding principles and, by means of a special matrix-based method, delineated the chosen framework accountable for ordering and synthesising the data from the 30 in-depth interviews with trainee journalists attending the Certificate Course in Journalism at MAZ, The Swiss School of Journalism in Lucerne.

14.2.2. Summary Part two: relating key findings to research questions

Informed by multiple key aspects that have established the basis for this investigation, the present research has scrutinised off-the-job journalism training and its implications for journalists, journalism training and the journalism industry from various angles. Summary part two condenses the relationship of the key findings with the applied research questions.

First of all, I examined how the training model impacts on journalists' hands-on experiences of their occupation (relating to Research Question 1) and how this affects a journalist's self-conception (relating to Research Question 2). I further scrutinised the impact journalism training makes on journalists' accountability to the public (relating to Research Question 3), the effect it has on journalists' employability (relating to Research Question 4) and how trainee journalists perceive the involvement of the news industry in the conception of off-the-job training (relating to Research Question 5).

Relating to Research Question 1, the findings stemming from the thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with the 30 journalists completing the Certificate Course in Journalism at MAZ reveal that first and foremost trainee journalists involved in a model of off-the-job training rate the practicalities and the transferability of the courses' subject matter as most important and sustainable. However, the practical value only seems to manifest on the condition that the content of the course matches the requirements and expectations of the newsroom and the respective news organisation that generally determines the journalists' occupational practices.

The findings in the context of Research Question 1 further imply that a regular information exchange on journalism work amongst trainee journalists is regarded as having advantageous implications for the experiences of their occupation in terms of enabling them to gain an exclusive look into the structures and mechanisms of the journalism and news industry. The analysis also underlines that the trainee journalists' employment and working conditions can be expected to play a vital role in the trainees' socialisation to the professional world of journalism by stating that the better training knowledge and expertise fit into the routine of institutionalised and mass-produced news, the more successfully they will be applied to journalism practice.

With reference to Research Question 2, the findings also demonstrate that off-the-job training, as it is practiced in the German-speaking part of Switzerland and through its leading journalism training institution, MAZ, can boost a journalist's self-confidence and self-awareness. This is again provided that the transferability of the gained expertise of off-the-job training meets the requirements and expectations of the editorial policies guiding the newsroom cultures in question.

In relation to Research Questions 3 and 4, the findings additionally indicate that journalists involved in off-the-job training do not seem to care much about journalistic accountability to citizens, but are all the more keen to be trained to become fitter for a successful career in the journalism industry and thus increase their employability.

Finally, relating to Research Question 5, it is not surprising that the results also indicate that trainee journalists are unlikely to be critical of the news industry having a considerable stake in shaping the model of off-the-job training. The findings in this context reveal that the MAZ trainee journalists generally behave in quite an industry-supportive manner and above all strive to acquire the skills currently required by their news organisations. In relation to the declared journalistic principles of 'The Tartu Declaration' (EJTA, 2006), the findings illuminate that the journalists scrutinised for the present investigation seem to possess more or less all the competencies proclaimed by the declaration, except the ones referring to bearing responsibility towards society and democracy.

14.3. Conclusions

14.3.1. Implications for Swiss journalists, education and the news industry

14.3.1.1. Improving journalists' basic skills and self-conception

By means of the present analysis, I have demonstrated that formal journalism education in the fashion of off-the-job training does indeed have various implications for journalists' experiences of their occupation. Regarding the practical value of the subject matter of off-the-job journalism training, especially the way it is delivered at MAZ, multiple advantageous implications for the socialisation of trainee journalists to their everyday life of journalism practice have been identified.

Due to this study's copious body of findings, I can claim that one of the biggest benefits of off-the-job journalism training clearly manifests itself with regard to its capacity to improve a trainee's basic journalistic skills such as enhancing research and investigation approaches, boosting more accurate and efficient writing and developing a structured interviewing technique, as well as providing newcomer journalists with general knowledge about media ethics and human rights.

From this it can be inferred that journalists who have completed off-the-job training are most likely to be well prepared for the structural, technical, economic and editorial challenges of contemporary newsroom practice. With regard to the issue of skills, it can clearly be asserted that journalism training, particularly in the case of an industry-driven model as explored in this study, is capable of empowering the current journalists.

This investigation has also shown on various occasions that off-the-job trainee journalists not only feel their skills in daily journalistic work in their newsrooms have been enhanced, they also emphasise that they have a broader understanding of contemporary news production processes. Due to the regular information exchange on journalism work with co-trainees and lecturers, who often have responsible and much-valued jobs in Swiss journalism, off-the-job training

according to the MAZ model also provides trainee journalists with a more accurate understanding of the structures and mechanisms that are inherent in the Swiss news industry.

The trainees' exclusive insight into the manufacture of local, regional and national news offers them the opportunity to better compare and evaluate the standard of different production processes and also provides them with a valuable overview of contemporary working conditions regarding the Swiss journalism market, which of course can support young journalists in better positioning themselves in their occupational environment. Thus, I propose that the privilege of having access to an experienced professional workforce at a very early stage of a journalist's career must be regarded as another valuable benefit offered by the system of off-the-job journalism training.

In this specific respect, I can also conclude that off-the-job journalism training can have useful implications for trainees' self-confidence and self-awareness on their route to becoming professionally skilled journalists. The respective findings from this analysis indicate that classroom experiences tend to increase the trainee's self-beliefs and help foster their journalistic professional individuality. It can be assumed that the declared strengthening of trainee journalists' self-conception is significantly promoted by the regular information exchange and network activities with co-trainees and lecturers, thus enabling the trainees to better evaluate their current position and career perspectives in the Swiss journalism job market.

However, the improvement of skills and the strengthening of journalists' self-conception in the context of an industry-driven educational environment is only half the battle. It is important to point out that the stated increase in journalists' self-confidence and self-awareness only seems to come into full effect if the practical knowledge generated by off-the-job training conforms to the requirements, journalistic convictions and corporate policies of senior journalists, editors-in-chief and employers. As explicitly discussed in Chapter Thirteen, off-the-job journalism training, although capable of developing a trainee's journalistic

self-confidence and self-awareness, seems unlikely to ‘guarantee’ the journalists complete authority and control over their occupational jurisdiction.

14.3.1.2. Enforcing reproduction of the news industry

Considering the historical background of Switzerland’s journalism and its education system with historically established strong ties to the news industry, another phenomenon thoroughly analysed in this study, it is argued that it is anything but surprising that the present analysis has revealed that off-the-job journalism training is basically an educational format enforcing the reproduction of the news manufacturer in its own image, thus minimising the chances of Swiss journalism changing into a more critical instrument.

As broadly discussed in Chapter Thirteen (see section 13.2.1.), the findings of the present research endorse an earlier argument that training the journalists provides “an entrée into both the disciplining of journalists and the discipline of journalism” put forward by McBarnet (1979, p. 181). From McBarnet’s argument, it can be inferred to some degree that ‘disciplining the journalists’ as a training strategy may turn out to be an industry-friendly means for inculcating some sort of self-censorship in journalists-to-be. This may even give rise to the assumption that journalism training, by providing the disciplining of journalists as well as the discipline of journalism, can be seen as a means to nourish journalists’ self-censorship at the mercy of their employers.

Without wanting to oversimplify this rather delicate issue, based on respective findings this study suggests that a journalist’s predisposition for self-censorship may already be inculcated in journalism newcomers through practices and techniques imparted by off-the-job training. For example, this may occur if trainees are being briefed on investigation activities that could cause possible damage to the employer or important stakeholders. It must be underlined, though, that according to the trainees’ accounts regarding questions that tackle this issue, they do not seem to consider such scenarios to be a problem at all.

In other words, off-the-job training, as a well-approved system in Swiss journalism education, above all impacts on journalists' hands-on experiences of their occupation with regard to reproducing the core skills required for contemporary news production. This basically means producing something new in an old shape and form, using old words, phrases and clichés. Arguably, such strategies of reproduction can hardly be seen as a means of making news production more innovative, but by all means they reliably support the system in place.

14.3.1.3. 'Homo oeconomicus' instead of community worker

From a broader and more informed perspective with regard to the political economy, I can therefore claim that this study's analysis has demonstrated in practice how an industry-driven educational system, and ultimately capitalism, is reproducing itself. From this argument it can further be inferred that off-the-job journalism training is not about radicalising the potential of trainee journalists, but is first and foremost about making them employable. As the findings of this investigation have variously revealed, the mode of off-the-job journalism training is fairly conducive to the predominant requirements of the news industry that is primarily interested in perpetuating journalism in the fashion that meets its contemporary demands.

On the other hand, it would be naïve to conclude that it is only in the interests of employers for journalism to be perpetuated through off-the-job training. Respective findings from this analysis have occasionally shown that the journalists studied consider the desire to improve their employability to be a key economic reason for taking an off-the-job training course.

Therefore, it is argued that self-interested behaviour, which is claimed to be increasingly apparent in approved media professionals (e.g. see Fengler & Russ-Mohl, 2008), is also setting foot in the field of industry-driven journalism training. Around half of the trainees interviewed for this research project have indicated that they are confident about receiving recompense as a kind of reward for

completing off-the-job training and hope that the course's certificate will provide them with added value for their career building with regard to applying for more prestigious jobs.

Furthermore, this study's outcome endorses results from earlier journalism education research claiming that the way journalists are educated and trained will also influence their self-perception (Fröhlich and Holtz-Bacha, 2003). Therefore, I feel that the present findings justifiably give rise to the conclusion that journalists who have completed off-the-job training perceive their *raison d'être* less as the role of community worker, but all the more as 'homo oeconomicus'.

The findings have also shown that the trainee journalists' stance on the news and media industry is generally quite favourable and rather uncritical. This may well explain why the strong involvement of the news industry in off-the-job training systems like that established in the Swiss context of the MAZ is generally welcomed and hardly regarded as a debatable issue by the journalists. The majority of the examined trainee journalists have stated in their interviews that they clearly support journalism training being delivered in a fashion and under conditions of practice that closely fit the challenges they face and that serve the editorial and economic objectives of their news organisations.

On the basis of this study's ample findings, I can claim that an industry-dominated journalism education system such as the one in place in German-speaking Switzerland is unlikely to fundamentally change by its own choice in the near future, whatever technical, structural and economic challenges occur. The news industry will always be able to reproduce itself, as it has demonstrated since its early days, no matter what happens to the journalists.

Summing up this part of the conclusions section so far, it has been argued that journalism training as it is conceived in the off-the-job model practiced by MAZ is first and foremost empowering current journalists to adopt the required industry-compatible skills in order to achieve satisfying and solid employment prospects in a fast changing news world. However, it is still arguable whether off-the-job journalism training also empowers the journalists to guarantee the improvement

of journalistic quality, in order to further carry out the task of serving a vital democratic function in our society.

14.3.2. Implications for journalism's role in a democratic society

14.3.2.1. Employability instead of control over occupational jurisdiction

The findings regarding the issue of the journalists' and news industry's role of serving an essential democratic function in our society show that trainee journalists completing off-the-job training like the Certificate Course in Journalism delivered by MAZ barely weight accountability, civic awareness and societal role awareness as core journalistic competencies.

The trainees' self-centred approach to the value of journalism training leaves little room for journalistic principles that are normatively conceived to be pursued. These include stimulating and strengthening democracy, feeling responsible for freedom of expression or strengthening the chances for citizens to make choices in societal and personal contexts, all of which are journalistic principles declared in the international journalism school agreement, the 'Tartu-Declaration' which was also ratified by MAZ.⁹¹

Constant reflection on the societal role of journalism and its accountability towards society, both regarded as core competencies a journalist should possess after education or training according to the 'Tartu-Declaration', could not be identified in this investigation with regard to the trainee journalists' accounts of their experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job training.

Returning to the broader questions of journalism and the news industry's role of serving a vital democratic function in our society, I postulate that the nature of contemporary journalistic occupation has changed a great deal compared to the way it has been theorised by sociological theories of work, occupations and

⁹¹ For details on the 'Tartu-Declaration' see Chapter 13 (section 13.1.2.) and the Appendices

profession (e.g. by Hughes, 1958; Abbott, 1988; Dooley, 1997) discussed earlier in this thesis (see section 5.2).

In Chapter Five I exemplified that at the beginning of journalism's route to become a profession, boundary-binding activities and the achievement of control over occupational jurisdiction and the efforts of members of an occupation to secure this helped US journalists in the second half of the 19th Century to take their political place. I also outlined that due to the long-lasting tight alliance of Swiss journalism with Swiss politics and the traditional partisanship between the two groups, Swiss journalists missed out on achieving control over occupational jurisdiction

With regard to this study's findings, I claim that theories of work by the above-mentioned theorists in the context of journalism as an occupation need to be revisited. The arguments of Fengler and Russ-Mohl (who have called for an economic theory perspective on journalism studies, see section 5.4.) that current journalists need to be understood as "rational actors seeking to promote their own interests, reacting to material and non-material incentives and rewards" (p. 667) could be further developed in the context of journalism education and training. The theoretical propositions relating to this study's findings presented later in this chapter (see section 14.3.5.) may point future theorists approaching this task in a further appropriate direction.

It is quite clear that the findings of this investigation shed a different light on the formation of the contemporary journalistic occupation than what had been established by the sociological theories of work, profession and occupation addressed in Chapter Five. On one hand, the present research has shown how the journalists' search for autonomy and control battles against industry and employment imperatives that force them to neglect or even ignore the values and principles that might give them the control they have traditionally sought, were they to be pursued more vigorously. On the other hand, this thesis has above all shown that news manufacturers at the beginning of the 21st century, and in particular those trained in an industry-supported off-the-job model, no longer

seek control over occupational jurisdiction in the first place, but strive to improve their employability instead.

On the grounds of this study's empirically generated findings, I therefore claim that the nature of contemporary journalism, especially in its shape of 24/7 news production, tends to become first and foremost employment-driven and the respective training model is adequately fashioned to provide the skills that will secure that employment.

To put it simply, the paramount objective Swiss German journalists first and foremost strive for when becoming involved in journalism training must be regarded as increasing one's employability. Needless to say, this is an objective also targeted by editors-in-chief, employers, journalism schools and generally the whole system of news and the journalism industry, although not necessarily with the same purposive ideas and aims as the findings of this investigation have revealed.

14.3.2.2 The risk of losing values and principles

Of course, it can be argued that striving for (better) employability broadly makes sense, since no one in our society has an interest in alighting unemployed journalists. On the other hand, a journalism training system that is highly dependent on the condition of the news industry and is principally steered towards making trainees fit for the journalism market, over and above making them accountable to the public, always runs the risks of manoeuvring journalists into a sensitive dependence on that market. To put it in a nutshell, if the market fails, employability fails too. A certificate in journalism awarded by a journalism school, even by a renowned industry-supported institution such as MAZ, would hardly help the situation.

Regarding future objectives proposed to systematise and standardise Swiss journalism education, I again argue that, based on this study's findings, a market-oriented and well-tried system of journalism training does not seem to be well

positioned to support external (that is, not industry-made) initiatives of systemisation and standardisation. Not only has a range of standardisation objectives, presented in a widely debated strategy paper by the journalist union *impressum* (see Chapter Five, section 5.3.), been rejected by important stakeholders in the Swiss journalism education field (publishers, employers and even the establishment of Swiss journalism schools), but also none of the journalists scrutinised for this investigation has made a case for the need for further standardisation and formalisation of journalism training.

Therefore, it can be assumed that a significant proportion of the latest generation of Swiss journalists will not be interested in supporting future standardisation and formalisation initiatives, as is already the case with their publishers and employers. Nor is it likely, according to the present study's results, that the new generation of journalists will reflect more on journalism's role of serving a vital democratic function in our society, although journalism schools like MAZ unambiguously claim that their mission and objectives do not only include the fathoming of the needs of the market, but also cherish the constant activity of reflecting them (MAZ, website).

The findings of the present study lead me to cast serious doubt on whether Swiss journalists trained in an industry-driven off-the-job context will ever seriously question the quality of their daily journalistic output with regard to its democratic function and responsibility for our society and gauge their understanding of that journalistic quality with the evidence of the analysis presented in the *Yearbook* (2010).⁹² The outcome of this investigation basically confirms the *Yearbook's* overall bottom line, as it claims that Swiss journalism and news production on the whole risk becoming so strongly commodified that values and principles of journalism as a traditional democratic function to serve Swiss society are at stake.

⁹² The authors of the *Yearbook 2010* particularly lament the increase in soft news and episodic journalism as a result of the rising market dominance of what they denote 'poor-quality media,' meaning free papers, news websites and commercial TV channels. The scholars assume that in future those media types and forms "which are currently contributing little to quality journalism will continue to gain importance" (Eisenegger et al., 2010). Also see Chapter One, section 2.1.2.

4.3.2.3. Calling for measures from a broader social and political scope

On the grounds of this study's results, it is argued that journalism in its most influential form of 24/7 news production is closely tied to a model of journalism training which provides the profession with the required skills, resulting in the journalism industry repeating itself. This ensures that it will be unable to respond to journalism's traditional but dwindling mission to first and foremost serve a democratic function in our society. The remedies and restorative injections will have to come from the outside and from a broader social and political scope.

Since the main focus of the present examination is on journalism training and its implications for journalists' experiences of their occupation, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to further argue and thoroughly discuss possible radical changes that might change an industry-driven news ecology into a more society- and community-oriented media arena. On the evidence of this study, however, it is clear that it is fairly safe to say that if a possible paradigm shift regarding the commodity-oriented nature of contemporary journalism is to be achieved, it will hardly be triggered off by the news industry and its respective concepts of journalism training.

On the other hand, in this respect not much support can be expected from the governmental side. The Swiss Federal Council is admittedly aware that the media is facing some difficult changes.⁹³ Nevertheless, the Federal Council considers that it is up to the industry to keep pace with constant structural changes. This is the bottom line drawn in a recent report in response to a postulate submitted by a leading member of the National Council (2011, website).⁹⁴ The report is based on the Federal Council's conclusions regarding several national studies on currently debated issues such as the economic development of the media, media concentration and pluralism and the implications of the Internet on journalistic practice.

⁹³ See Chapter One, section 1.2.1.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

In other words, the Federal Council still opts for self-regulation of the media. On the grounds of this study's findings, however, it must be seriously doubted whether self-regulation will foster the vital role media ought to play in the democratic process and in forming public opinion, which is fundamental to the Swiss system of direct democracy, or whether self-regulation will simply further help the industry to reproduce itself. I therefore feel that if journalistic values are to be further cherished and practiced in today's Swiss media landscape in addition to economic goals, the recent decision of the Swiss government on the status quo of the Swiss media must be called into question.

Contrary to the way the issue has been addressed by the Swiss government, several scholars have postulated a number of actions to be taken in order to 'remedy' Swiss journalism and its growing addiction to a primarily profit maximising media industry and to restore journalistic values and principles. Kurt Imhof (2010, website), co-editor and one of the main authors of the *Yearbook 2010*, amongst others, has called for a substantial public debate on quality in the media, the elimination of free journalistic content on paper and online, supplementary quality-oriented support of the news media funded by civic society and the state, and the introduction of media literacy as a compulsory subject in Swiss grammar and secondary schools.⁹⁵

With reference to Imhof's propositions, it is argued that the request for media literacy particularly needs to be additionally supported because it promises to play a vital role in guiding journalism indirectly on the road to upholding the important function it plays in the democratic process and in forming public opinion, especially in these uncertain times of heaped technological, structural and economic obstacles. As claimed in the introductory chapter of this thesis with reference to Meikle (2009, p. 18), news is not only a product; it is above all a complex of practices including production, distribution and reception.

The practice of reception is obviously subject to the audience and its media literacy. In this context, it is argued that media literacy is not an academic skill

⁹⁵ Kurt Imhof is the director of the fög – Forschungsbereich Öffentlichkeit und Gesellschaft an der Universität Zürich (Foundation for the Public Sphere and Society at the University of Zurich).

learnt, for example, by studying a book and being tested. Media literacy needs to be understood as a process in which media consumers learn how to ask critical questions about the media. Or, as declared by UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, information and media literacy enables people to interpret and make informed judgments as recipients of mediated information, as well as to become creators and producers of information and media messages in their own right (2010, website).

Thus, a media-literate audience is vital for journalism and its democratic function for our society because the practices of news include aspects in which we all participate: “story-telling and argument; reading, viewing, listening and discussing; gossiping and explaining; believing and, at times, scorning and dismissing” (ibid). I therefore endorse Meikle’s claim that news is too important to be left only to journalists. On the evidence of this study, I am even going one step further and concluding that not only news and the news industry, but also journalism and, hence, journalism education are too important to be left only to journalists.

14.3.3. Limitations

When conducting qualitative research for this thesis, I always aimed to be precise and transparent about what I pursued, examined and analysed, and how I arrived at this study’s conclusions. Considering the sporadic critique of qualitative research being too subjective, I am aware that a certain degree of bias might have occurred in trainee journalists’ depictions of the experiences of their occupation as a result of off-the-job training.

On the other hand, it is argued that it is simply not possible to eliminate all doubt about the genuine nature of the journalists’ individual and personal assertions because there are hardly reliable means to verify them. As a matter of fact, such a possible limitation is per se inherent in the nature of qualitative research and its method of interview naturally expresses great interest in the interviewee’s point of view, which is normally beyond the interviewer’s control.

Nevertheless, while conducting the in-depth interviews I was fully aware of the issue that responses of participants to qualitative researchers may sometimes be affected by the characteristics of the researcher and that the interpretation of qualitative data could be influenced by a researcher's subjective leanings. Thus, extra caution was exercised since most of the investigated trainee journalists already knew me by name at the time of interview due to my status as a journalism lecturer and long-time journalism practitioner on the Swiss German media scene.

I am also conscious of the fact that, although I have always made the independence of this research project transparent to the participants, the probability of occasional bias in an interviewee's behaviour could not be fully eliminated.⁹⁶ It could be conceivable, for example, that a trainee would want to promote his or her importance as a participant in the study by being particularly critical of their experiences with the effectiveness of journalism training. It is not out of the question that such behaviour could then possibly lead to subjective leanings of the researcher when interpreting the respective data.

Being fully aware of the eventuality of such limitations, I have deliberately attempted to structure the qualitative data in the largest possible way to make this research replicable, as mentioned in the methodological chapter. On the other hand, it is worth pointing out once more that my specific status as a partly in-situ researcher provided me with valuable access to the relevant and appropriate participants to be interviewed for this investigation.

Therefore, I opine that, in the context of this investigation, the advantages of close access to the social world of the journalists studied and the ability to see that world through the journalists' own eyes weigh a great deal more than the contingency of possible limitations. Close access to relevant data sources is crucial in qualitative research because, in contrast to quantitative research, qualitative researchers need to be closely involved with the people being studied, so that they can better understand the world through the participants' eyes.

⁹⁶ An overview of the ethical considerations of this investigation is presented in Chapter Eight (see section 8.4.4.)

When deciding to conduct in-depth interviews as a core research approach, I also became aware of possible limitations regarding the generalisation of the data. The 30 trainee journalists who were interviewed for this research project obviously are not meant to be representative of the population of all journalists taking classes in journalism training.

On the other hand, as I have already pointed out in the chapter on methodological considerations, the findings of this study, as of any qualitative research, are first and foremost to be generalised to theory rather than to representative populations.⁹⁷ Along with Bryman (2008) and his reasoning on the reliability of qualitative research, it is argued that it is not just the size of the population, but to a greater degree the quality of the theoretical inferences made out of qualitative data that is important to the assessment of generalisation.

14.3.4. Suggesting theoretical propositions

As a result of this investigation's analysis and its respective findings, it is suggested that the following notional inferences presented in five theoretical propositions can be made:

- The more practice-oriented and news industry-driven the subject matter of classroom training, the more impact that off-the-job training has on journalists' hands-on experiences of their occupation.
- Journalists taking off-the-job training courses act more self-consciously at work as a result of regular information exchange and networking with co-trainees and lecturers, provided that the practical value of classroom expertise matches the editorial principles applied in their newsrooms.
- Journalists trained within an industry-driven system are more likely to predominantly think and act in an industry-minded manner and are not as

⁹⁷ See Chapter Eight of this thesis (section 8.2.4.)

society-oriented as a normative perspective on journalism education would expect.

- Off-the-job training increases journalists' employability in terms of improving their personal, analytical, narrative and technical competencies and provides the bedrock for developing self-interested behaviour.
- Journalists completing off-the-job training have a consistently favourable and rather uncritical stance on the news industry, which eventually supports their employability and enables the industry to reproduce itself.

With the outcome of the present investigation in mind, I can claim that some valuable ground has been laid for applying theoretical approaches to better understand the mechanics and effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training and finally shed light on an educational format that has been playing an important role in Swiss journalism education for several decades.

Therefore, it is suggested that it is possible to try out and test these five theoretical propositions as hypotheses in the context of further research on journalism training and in particular off-the-job training within research fields addressed in the following final section of this chapter.

14.3.5. Suggestions for further research

As a line of research to be continued from this work, I can envision an investigation into occupational experiences of Swiss journalists who instead of taking off-the-job training have completed a Bachelor's degree in journalism and communication offered by several universities of applied sciences in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. A comparison of the findings stemming from an appropriate research project with those delivered by the present study promises to be quite indicative for the debate on how to formalise, standardise and possibly academise journalism education in Switzerland.

Considering the fact that new types of journalism and communication colleges such as the Institute of Applied Media Studies (IAM) in Winterthur near Zurich attempt to balance aspects of professional practice and theory in their curricula, it can be argued that it would be useful to discover whether journalists possessing a more academic knowledge base about journalism, due to a more theory-oriented Bachelor's curriculum, experience their occupational environment differently. With regard to the questions of journalism quality in the context of news production as an important means for responsibly informing a democratic society, it would be interesting to establish whether these journalists tend to be more critical of the rising commercialism that is driving mass market news production and would eventually be more sensitive to the issue of journalism serving a vital democratic function in the Swiss society.

Further research could be conducted in the field of on-the-job training and its effectiveness on journalists' experiences of their occupation by employing the concepts and theoretical propositions of the present study and then comparing the respective data. Such a project would not only gauge the significance and effectiveness of off-the-job journalism training as a traditional format in the Swiss journalism education landscape in comparison to the equally common fully industry-supported in-house training, but also might possibly contribute further relevant aspects to the picture of the forces that are shaping contemporary Swiss journalism.

As another direction for research informed by this work, I can imagine investigating journalists taking off-the-job-training at training institutions and journalism schools in other European countries that deliver programmes similar to that offered by MAZ. It is conceivable that the findings of the present investigation could give rise to undertaking similar research in the context of the different training formats practiced by the members of the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA), whose 60 members work together to improve journalism education in Europe. This enables members to collaborate on

exchanges and teaching and research projects, and meet regularly to swap ideas and information.⁹⁸

Furthermore, the theoretical propositions generated by the present study (see section 14.3.4.) could also be regarded as a valuable contribution to the growing efforts of international journalism education research to seek ways to create more global networks of journalism education and programmes, as well as improve cross-pollination of research approaches. In this respect, it is to be very much hoped that an international map for future journalism education and training will also encompass how journalists experience their occupations as a result of journalism training, especially with regard to the important issue of employability. This study has only broken the first ground.

Hence, whatever the calls to reinvent journalism education, and however journalism education may be realigned in the future, this study demonstrates that the latest generation of journalists working in 24/7 news production no longer seems to seek control over occupational jurisdiction in the first place. This would enable the young journalists to serve a vital democratic function in our society, but by showing increasingly self-interested behaviour, they strive for profitable employment instead.

Having explored journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training and having suggested further research in this context, I therefore call for a clearer understanding of the issue of employability. This is a vital force that considerably influences the effectiveness of journalism training on the individual journalist and his or her perception of the function of journalism as well as the success of the news industry by enabling the latter to reproduce itself. This is particularly true of Switzerland, but surely also applies elsewhere.

⁹⁸ For further details see Chapter One of this thesis (section 1.2.7.).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

The 'Tartu-Declaration' verbatim

The ‘Tartu-Declaration’

As an indicator for gauging journalistic quality for the purpose of the present investigation, this thesis has drawn on the ‘Tartu Declaration’, an agreement initiated by the members of the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA) whose mission statement and competence goals set up general principles for journalism training (EJTA, 2006). The key principles and competences have been addressed in the main body of the thesis in Chapters Four and Thirteen. To give full insight into the agreement’s content, Appendix A provides the exact wording:

Members of the European Journalism Training Association educate or train their students/participants from the principle that journalists should serve the public by:

- providing an insight into political, economic, socio-cultural conditions,
- stimulating and strengthening democracy at all levels
- stimulating and strengthening personal and institutional accountability,
- strengthening the possibilities for citizens to make choices in societal and personal contexts,

while:

- feeling responsible for the freedom of expression,
- respecting the integrity of individuals,
- being critical of sources and independent of vested interests,
- using customary ethical standards.

After their education or training students possess the competence to:

- 1 Reflect on the societal role of and developments within journalism.
- 2 Find relevant issues and angles, given the public and production aims of a certain medium or different media.
- 3 Organise and plan journalistic work.
- 4 Gather information swiftly, using customary newsgathering techniques and methods of research.
- 5 Select the essential information.
- 6 Structure information in a journalistic manner.
- 7 Present information in appropriate language and an effective journalistic form.
- 8 Evaluate and account for journalistic work.
- 9 Cooperate in a team or an editorial setting.
- 10 Work in a professional media organisation or as a freelancer.

Competence Goals

1. The competence to reflect on the societal role of and developments within journalism

- 1.1 have a commitment to your society/community/audience and knowledge of societal developments
- 1.2 have insight in the role and influence of journalism in modern society
- 1.3 be able to develop a grounded point of view on the most important developments within journalism
- 1.4 have an understanding of the values that underlie your professional choices
- 1.5 be able to make grounded choices concerning your own development as a journalist

2. The competence to find relevant and newsworthy issues and angles, given the audience and production aims of a certain medium or different media.

- 2.1 have the knowledge of current events and be able to analyse if a subject is both interesting and newsworthy enough
- 2.2 know the possibilities of the medium or media you are working for, in order to determine whether or not the subject/angle is suitable
- 2.3 know your audience well and be able to determine the relevance of a subject or angle for that audience
- 2.4 be able to analyse public opinion and to stimulate debate

3. The competence to organise and plan journalistic work

- 3.1 be able to make a realistic work plan
- 3.2 be able to work under time pressure
- 3.3 be able to adjust to unforeseen situations

4. The competence to gather information swiftly, using customary newsgathering techniques and methods of research

- 4.1 have a good general knowledge and societal insight, especially in economics, politics and socio-cultural issues
- 4.2 know all required sources, including human sources, reference books, databases, news agencies, the internet
- 4.3 know how to use your sources and your own observation effectively and efficiently
- 4.4 have the will and ability to balance your stories by using methods such as check/double-check and balancing systematically
- 4.5 have the will and ability to interact with your public in different ways, personally as well as with the aid of (new) media

5. The competence to select the essential information

- 5.1 be able to distinguish between main and side issues
- 5.2 be able to select information on the basis of correctness, accuracy, reliability and completeness
- 5.3 be able to interpret the selected information and analyse it within a relevant (historical) framework
- 5.4 be able to select information in accordance with the requirements of the product and medium

5.5 be aware of the impact of your information on sources, the public and the public debate

6. The competence to structure information in a journalistic manner

6.1 be able to use different types of structuring

6.2 be able to fine-tune content and form

6.3 be able to structure in accordance with the requirements of the product and medium

6.4 be able to structure on the basis of relevance

6.5 be able to structure on the basis of alternative storytelling techniques

7. The competence to present information in appropriate language and an effective journalistic form

7.1 have an outstanding linguistic competence, oral as well as written

7.2 be able to make information visual, for example in the form of images or graphics, and to present it in all kinds of combinations of words, sounds and images

7.3 master the most important genres, including their style-techniques and basics of lay-out

7.4 be able to work with relevant technical equipment and software

7.5 be able to cooperate with technicians and know the possibilities of their instruments

8. The competence to evaluate and account for journalistic work

8.1 have a clear image of the required quality of journalistic products

8.2 be able to give a critical and comprehensible review of your own work and that of others on the basis of that clear image

8.3 be able and willing to critically reflect on and take criticism of your work

8.4 be able to explain and take responsibility for the choices you made with regard to sources, approach and execution

8.5 be able to take responsibility for product as well as process on the basis of ethical standards

9. The competence to cooperate in a team or editorial setting

9.1 have good social skills

9.2 be reliable

9.3 show dedication and initiative

9.4 have insight in your strengths and weaknesses

9.5 have feeling for (hierarchical, democratic) relations

10. The competence to work in a professional media-organisation and as a freelancer

10.1 be creative and innovative and able to present your ideas

10.2 know your rights and obligations and be able to critically evaluate your working conditions

10.3 have knowledge about objectives, financial and market conditions, organisational structures and processes in media organisations

10.4 be able to evaluate the strategic options and editorial policy of a media-organisation

10.5 know the practical aspects of being a freelancer / entrepreneur

APPENDIX B

Matrix Excerpt for the Thematic Analysis of Key Theme E (Impact of Curriculum)

Matrix Excerpt for the Thematic Analysis of Key Theme E (Impact of Curriculum)

The excerpt of the matrix displaying key theme E and its respective subthemes illustrates how the coded text relating to key theme E, which focuses on the impact of the course's curriculum on journalists' experiences of their occupation as a result of journalism training, is thematically organised and presented. For further details see Chapter Nine, section 9.4. (ordering and synthesising data: key themes, subthemes).

For organisational reasons, the excerpt of the matrix displayed on the following pages only shows the coded text drawn from the statements of 10 out of the total of 30 interviewees. The entire matrix with all the key themes and subthemes was stored as Excel document on a separate DVD, together with all the interview recordings as mp3 files.

E) IMPACT OF THE CURRICULUM

	Practicality of subject matter		Fostering innovation		Fostering critical thinking		Value of certificate
Interviewee 1	Ich konnte die konkreten Tipps in der Praxis umsetzen, z.B. wie schreibt man ein Porträt, eine Reportage (S2)	p			Das kritische Denken am MAZ wird schon geschult, aber eigentlich nur in einzelnen Kursen. Es wird vor allem das Bewusstsein geschärft. (S 26)	n	Ich bin mir nicht sicher, was das Diplom wert ist. Es ist sicherlich nicht hinderlich. Das MAZ hat ja auch einen sehr guten Ruf. Vielleicht hilft bei späteren Bewerbungen. (S 19)
	Ich lernte die Richtlinien für Reportagen, für Porträt, was ist ein guter Text etc. kennen (S 4)	p					
	Kritik habe ich zum Beispiel am Porträtkurs. Es war schwierig, die Erkenntnisse in der Praxis umzusetzen. Ich meine, ich kann nicht jemand zwecks Porträt drei mal treffen. (S 27)	n					
	Vieles wird eben auch unbewusst umgesetzt. Das Feilen an den Texten am MAZ landet of unbewusst in den Artikeln in der Praxis. Es ist eben nicht so, dass man den MAZ-Ordner neben sich auf dem Pult hat und damit Artikel schreibt. (S 29)	p					
Interviewee 2	Für mich war alles neu, darum fand ich es am Anfang sehr lässig. Gerade auch weil das MAZ auch noch Ansätze zum Auftreten bringt, das bringt einem schon was im Leben. Wie man lockerer sein, all diese Kurse finde ich auch gut. (S 1)	p					Wenn das MAZ den guten Ruf, der jetzt meiner Meinung gefährdet ist, nicht verliert, dann hat die Ausbildung auch in Zukunft einen gewissen Stellenwert. Mir war die Ausbildung, das zu erstrebende Diplom, anfänglich auch mehr wert. Jetzt, wo ich immer wieder höre, dass sie eigentlich jeden, der will und zahlt, aufnehmen, finde ich es nicht mehr so cool. Trotzdem: die Kurse, die meisten, sind interessant und bieten auch einen Mehrwert. (S 21)
	Bei der Fragestellung im Interview kann ich schon Tipps vom MAZ einbringen, die Technik, auf den Interviewpartner zugehen, beim transkribieren nicht zwingend, aber so die Technik eben. (S 4)	p					
	Das MAZ bietet viele Schreibkurse, Reportage etc., das bringt mir als Online-Journalistin nicht viel. Porträt schreibe ich auch selten. Also auf das Online ist es nicht so abgestimmt. (S 6)	n					

Practicality of subject matter		Fostering innovation	Fostering critical thinking	Value of certificate
	Es wäre vermutlich auch sinnvoller, wenn ich jetzt bei einer Zeitung arbeiten würde, ich könnte das am MAZ gelernte wohl besser umsetzen. Ich mache vieles für die Schublade. Aber ich kann die Erfahrung womöglich später dann umsetzen. (S 7)	n		
	Also wer diese MAZ-Ausbildung angeht, würde besser bei einer Zeitung arbeiten. Vielleicht auch beim Radio, dass weiss ich jetzt nicht. Wenn du nur online arbeitest, dann bekommst du schon eher wenig Lehrreiches mit. Als Onliner bist du automatisch im Printkurs. (S 8)	n		
	Ich glaube schon, dass es mir später etwas bringt. Ich kann mir vorstellen, dass ich dann durch das MAZ schon einmal gewisse Sachen schon kenne, dass ich dann schon eine Ahnung habe über das Reportageschreiben, Berichte oder Porträt schreiben. (S 9)	p		
Interviewee 3	Das Heterogene in den Kursen wirkt unterschiedlich – manchmal kann es bereichernd sein, andererseits aber auch hindernd, v.a. auch wenn Gäste in den Kursen sind. (S 3)	nt		Mit dem Diplom habe ich zumindest etwas in den Händen, du hast zusätzlich eine gewisse journalistische Bildung und nicht nur die Praxis und ich hoffe auch, dass ich mit dem Diplom einen Schritt weitergehen kann. (S 19)
	Bei den Stimmkursen merkst du relativ schnell, was das bringt. Z.B. Stimmtraining. Man macht durch das MAZ Fortschritte, ohne dass man das selber sofort wahrnimmt. Aber man merkt es häufig am positiven Feedback von aussen. (S 4)	p		
	Am meisten gebracht haben für mich die Stimm-Kurse, die Stimmschulung. Dann auch die TV-Kurse, weil das neu ist und die Kamera im TV-Training doch Aufschlussreiches über dein Auftreten dokumentiert. Das bringt's auch im Radio, es hilft dir, erfolgreicher auf andere Menschen zuzugehen, wenn du einigermaßen weißt, wie du wirkst, da du es schon mal gesehen und analysiert hast. (S 9)	p		

Practicality of subject matter		Fostering innovation		Fostering critical thinking		Value of certificate	
	Es gibt Kurse, da müsste man die Teilnehmer besser aufteilen. Als Radiojournalist besuchst viele obligatorischen Kurse, die ganz klar für Printjournalisten konzipiert sind. Das sind zwar häufig spannende Erfahrungen, aber teilweise für meine Bedürfnisse überflüssig. Fürs Radio muss ich ja nie riesige Texte schreiben. (S 10)	n					
	Es wäre vielleicht sinnvoll, Radio und TV-Journalisten für gewisse Kurse zu trennen. Z.B. beim Storytelling-Kurs war wieder alles nur auf Printgeschichten konzipiert. Mir wäre aber mehr geholfen, Storytelling mit einem Radioexperten zu behandeln. (S 11)	n					
	Aber gewisse Aufgaben, Buch zusammenfassen, Kurs zusammenfassen, solche Aufgaben („Ärbetli“) sind mühsam und bringen nicht viel. Du investierst dafür Zeit, die du besser hättest nutzen können. (S 22)	n					
	Die Schule scheint schon ein Problem mit dem Boulevard-Journalismus zu haben. Der „Blick“ wird immer als negatives Beispiel genommen, man sagt dann, „das geht so gar nöd“. Man lernt den Journalismus auf einer seriösen Linie kennen. Es wird unterrichtet, wie der Journalismus sein müsste. (S 28)	n					
	Trotzdem finde ich, dass diese Arbeit von Journalismusausbildung nahe am Ideal ist. Gewisse negative Punkte muss man halt in Kauf nehmen. (S 23)	p					

Practicality of subject matter		Fostering innovation		Fostering critical thinking		Value of certificate	
Interviewee 4	Ich bin schon der Meinung, dass man vom MAZ profitiert. Im Schreiben, texten, Stil etc.(S 1)	p	Ich glaube bei den Porträts, wie man die besser machen kann, da habe ich vor allem profitiert, wie ich über eine Person mehr herausfinden kann. Und auch die szenischen Aspekte, wie man das genau beschreiben kann. Man lernt hier mit der Sprache Bilder zu kreieren, weg von den Allgemeinplätzen. (S 8)	p	Ich finde, die Schule vermittelt recht wenig an Theorie. Der Normalfall ist der, dass der Dozent einfach seine Erfahrungen einbringt. Ausser bei Medienrecht und Medienethik. Man weiss ja, dass am MAZ eigentlich alles auf Dozenten beruht. (S 4)	n	
	Z.B. die Online-Sachen waren sehr oberflächlich, ich wusste schon wie ein Blog schreiben. Ich dachte,	n	Auch meine Texte sind mittlerweile weniger langweilig. (S 14)	p			
	An der Schule wird immer wieder betont, man solle die Arbeit planen, einen konkreten Auftrag befolgen. In der Praxis ist es aber oft so, dass man einfach mal da oder dort hin muss um herauszufinden ob es eine Geschichte gibt. (S 7)	n	Es gibt einen Kurs, der handelt von Boulevard. Aber eigentlich wenig. Man müsste ja auch nicht alles so ernst nehmen. Die Texte, die eingeschickt werden von den Studierenden, sind schon eher trocken. Ich habe das Gefühl, dass das Traditionelle immer noch klar Vorrang hat.(S 33)	n			
	Ich fände es schon wichtig, wenn man mehr vom MAZ generierten Inhalt in der Praxis umsetzen könnte, wenn man bei der Arbeit, beim Umsetzen des Gelernten mehr Zeit zur Verfügung hätte.(S 16)	n					
	Einen weiteren Mehrwert ist zum Beispiel auch das TV- und Kameratraining, wo man sich selber einmal sieht. Das ist sehr hilfreich, man erfährt in einem geschützten Rahmen einiges über seine Auftrittskompetenz, die Art und Weise, wie man wirkt. (S 31)	p					

Practicality of subject matter		Fostering innovation		Fostering critical thinking		Value of certificate
Interviewee 5	Vor allem mein Schreibstil hat sich verändert, ich schreibe direkter, schnörkelloser, flüssiger. Man lernt auch die journalistischen Grundregeln kennen (S 2)	p				Ich erhoffe mich mit dem Diplom eine gewisse Anerkennung bei Redaktionen. Dass ich es auch als Lohn annehme für 2 Jahr Arbeit. Ich kann jetzt sagen, ich bin Journalist, ich habe die Ausbildung geschafft. (S 25)
	es ist schwierig, weil das Redaktionsgeschäft schon nicht mit dem thematisierten Stoff an der Schule korrespondiert. (S 10)	n				
	Es kommt immer wieder vor, dass ich in Kursen mit Stoff konfrontiert werde, der mir nichts bringt, weil wir das in unserer Redaktion nicht umsetzen können. Wichtig ist, dass man offen ist, denn das Spektrum ist mega-breit. (S 12)	n				

Practicality of subject matter		Fostering innovation		Fostering critical thinking		Value of certificate	
Interviewee 6	Den Transfer der Ausbildung am MAZ in meine Praxis spürte ich z.B. bei der Gestaltung von Kurzinterviews beim Praktikum Glanz & Gloria. Ich hatte Politiker zu interviewen, innert kürzester Zeit mich vorzubereiten für Leute, die nicht wirklich interessiert waren, mir Interviews zu geben. So legte ich mir einen strategischen Plan zurecht, der darauf abzielte passende Antworten für meinen Bericht zu generieren. (S 3)	p	Ich sehe die Ausbildung und die Kurse für mich auch als Ideen-Pool. Ich habe nicht das Gefühl, ich sei extrem kreativ. Oder dass das MAZ extrem experimentierfreudig wäre. Aber ich lerne sicher interessante Konzepte von verschiedenen gestandenen Journalisten kennen. Ich werde immer wieder mal in eine Welt geführt, in die ich sonst nicht gehen würde. (S 10)	p			
	Die Interviewstrategien habe ich ganz klar vom MAZ mitgenommen, z.B. Fragen aus Themenkreise zu generieren. Ich habe gelernt, ein Ziel zu definieren, einen entsprechenden Fokus zu setzen und dem entsprechend auch zu agieren. (S 4)	p					
	Es nimmt natürlich auch eine gewisse Spontaneität, das ist die Gefahr. Gerade am Anfang habe ich vielleicht fast zuviel verplant, gebündelt, statt einfach mal losziehen. Den Zufall mitspielen lassen ist sicher reduzierter. (S 9)	n					
	Das was im Kurs Medienrecht und Ethik unterrichtet wird steht schon in krassem Gegensatz zu meiner Arbeit. Es ist schon hart, diesen Kurs durchzustehen, denn jedes zweite negative Beispiel betrifft mich indirekt (den Blick direkt...). Der Alltag auf der Redaktion wird nicht leichter nach diesem Kurs. Bei jeder Sitzung, bei jedem Auftrag, den ich fasse, läuten natürlich die Alarmglocken. Z.B. das geht nicht, was wir vorhaben, das ist Privatsphäre, gibt es ein öffentliches Interesse darüber zu berichten? (S 15)	n					

Practicality of subject matter		Fostering innovation	Fostering critical thinking	Value of certificate
	Für mich ist das MAZ sehr praxisnah. Ich erlebe Konzepte, Strickmuster, die einfach zum Umsetzen sind. (S 18)	p		
	Überflüssig finde ich zum Teil die Online-Kurse – ich weiss genug übers Internet und die für den Journalismus nützlichen Tools. Ich kenne die Abläufe an meinem Arbeitsplatz, das System, wie ich meinen Inhalt entsprechend einspeisen kann. Auch den Kurs über das Blogging – das kann man in einem halben Tag vermitteln und braucht nicht drei Tage. (S 22)	n		
	Was ich im Medienrechtskurs lerne, hat schon einen Impact in meiner Praxis. Ich versuche, wenn immer möglich, harmlosere Geschichten zu machen. (S 16)	p		
Interviewee 7	Ich finde es auch tragisch, dass man den Diplomabsolvierenden etwas verspricht, was die Branche nicht einhalten kann. (S 9)	n	p	Ich bin auf dieses Diplom nicht angewiesen; für mich ist es ein guter Zusatz. (S 12)

Practicality of subject matter		Fostering innovation		Fostering critical thinking		Value of certificate
Interviewee 8	Für mich ist die Ausbildung definitiv um etwa 40 Tage zu lang. Vielleicht müsste man die Kurstage auf eine längere Periode verteilen. Dass man z.B. bei einem Reportagekurs auch mal Reportagen schreiben könnte. Sonst ist es einfach ein Abhaken eines weiteren Kurses. Man sollte viel intensiver an der Sprache arbeiten, an Formen, am Erzählen, also Storytelling, Dramaturgie etc. Wenn man in einem Porträtkurs das Gleiche erzählt bekommt wie im Reportagekurs, dann fängt das an zu langweilen. Die besten Kurse waren die Kurse, wo es um das kreative Schreiben gegangen ist. Wenn ich an einem Reportagekurs bin und nur vier Sätze pro Tag schreibe, kann ich es mir auch nicht verinnerlichen. (S 25)	n				
						Das Diplom ist einfach nichts wert. Es ist ein Zettel, für den man viel Geld bezahlt hat. Einmal viel Geld verdienen, weil man dieses Diplom gemacht hat, wird sich auch nicht einstellen. Viel Geld im Printmedienbereich verdient man bei grossen Verlagen. Die lukrativen Jobs im Journalismus bekommt man nicht wegen einem Diplom sondern aufgrund der Arbeiten, die man bei der Bewerbung einreicht. (S 24)
Interviewee 8	Tipps zu bekommen, wie man recherchiert, was medienrechtlich, ethisch vertretbar ist, das kommt im hektischen Redaktionsalltag viel zu kurz. Für das braucht es die Schule. Auch mehr Zeit zu haben, besondere Texte zu schreiben, die nicht in meinem Medium erscheinen würden, aber für die Übung ist das gut. (S 2)	p	Die grösste Praxisrelevanz hatten für mich Kurse, die sehr eng am Text waren. Einerseits sprachlich – journalistisches Texten 1 und 2, also grundlegende sprachliche Sachen, die man häufig falsch macht – das sind Sachen, die mir bei jedem Artikel in den Sinn kommen. Z.B. keine Passivsätze, mehr Verben, Nomen vermeiden etc. (S 5)	p		Das Diplom ist weniger wert als die Erfahrung, die ich gemacht habe. Aber im grossen und ganzen ist der Abschluss schon wichtig für mich. (S 25)

Practicality of subject matter	Fostering innovation	Fostering critical thinking	Value of certificate
<p>Zuerst haben wir viel Textkritik gemacht – solche Erfahrungen sind wichtig, gibt es im Alltag nicht. Ich hatte das Gefühl, ich arbeite schon 6 Jahren und kann doch schon einiges, aber dann merkt man, wo die Defizite sind. Man wird hart kritisiert – das ist gut so. Der Anfang zeigte mir, ich kann schon einiges – aber an dieser Schule kann ich noch vieles lernen. (S 4)</p>	p		
<p>Man hat meine Veränderungen, Verbesserungen auf der Redaktion schon wahrgenommen. Man hat es natürlich nicht direkt auf das MAZ bezogen. Ein gutes Beispiel war der MAZ-Porträt-Kurs, an dem wir ein Porträt schreiben mussten. Da habe ich mich sehr eng an die Richtlinien und Tipps des Porträtkurses gehalten. Als das Porträt in der Zeitung erschien, haben sie mich gelobt. (S 6)</p>	p		
<p>Das MAZ ist sehr praxisnah, auf jeden Fall. Das Gute ist ja, man arbeitet zeitgleich mit dem Studium. Ich habe gemerkt, wie ich schneller geworden bin im Schreiben, schneller beim Recherchieren, dass hat man nicht, wenn man ein halbes Jahr Schule hat. Dieses Model verhebet. (S 20)</p>	p		
<p>Bei den 40% handelt es sich in erster Linie um Handwerkliches, dann aber auch das konzeptionelle Denken. Ich bin strukturierter, fokussierter, arbeite strategischer. Ich suche auch das Spezielle, das Überraschende. Aber auch das Bestreben, ausgewogen zu berichten. Das lernt man auch in den Kursen Medienrecht, Ethik etc. Ich bin auch als Zeitungsleser sensibilisierter auf gewisse heikle Themen. (S 8)</p>	p		

Practicality of subject matter	Fostering innovation	Fostering critical thinking	Value of certificate
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	Verbessern sollte man den Link mit dem Alltag. Viele Kurse müssten mehr mit Arbeiten in der Praxis verbunden werden. Für jede Gattung sollte eine Arbeit abgegeben werden, der Lerneffekt wäre riesig. Oft war es so: ich war drei Tage in der Schule, dann musste ich in den Alltag zurück und dann hat du womöglich mit völlig anderem zu tun als mit der Materie, die du im Kurs behandelt hast. (S 18)	n				
	Was ich nicht gut fand, war zum Beispiel der Feedback-Kurs, das war sehr auf der Meta-Ebene. Wichtig ist doch das Kerngeschäft. Auch der Kurs Journalismus-Konzepte ist mir sehr theoretisch vorgekommen – sehr weit weg von der Realität. (S 17)	n				
Interview 9	Hartnäckigkeit, nochmals genau hinschauen, Präzision, Systematik, Techniken werden am MAZ gefördert. Haltung zu den Medien hat sich aber NICHT verändert. (S 7)	p			Reflektion über den Journalismus: hätte ich mir mehr am MAZ gewünscht. Mir hat es gefehlt, dass Leute auf einem anderen Niveau noch gefördert werden (Print). (S 10)	n
	Praxisnähe: schon da, aber was nicht vorkommt ist Beispielsweise Deadline Management: wie gehe ich mit Lieferdruck um. (S 14)	n				
	MAZ Ausbildung = Gütesiegel, Legitimation, Carte Blanche im Redaktionsalltag. 2Der hat schon eine Ahnung, der ist am MAZ“. Die Leute können sich wahrscheinlich eher in einen Redaktionsalltag integrieren, als ein Uniabgänger, da Teil der Ausbildung ja auch Praxis in Redaktion ist. (S 18)	p				

Practicality of subject matter	Fostering innovation	Fostering critical thinking	Value of certificate
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Inter view ee 30	In der Recherche habe ich sehr viel gelernt am MAZ, das ich heute anwende. Dass man Zugriff online auf das Handelsregister hat, dass man Autonummern nachschauen kann, dass ist alles jenseits von Google und sehr wichtig. Dass man ehemalige Websites nachschauen kann, erfahren kann, wem welcher Domain gehört etc. welches die Verwaltung einer Liegenschaft, ich wusste nicht, dass man das herausfinden kann. (S 1)	p	Ich achte mehr darauf, wie ich einen Text strukturiere. Ich überprüfe, ob es Passivkonstruktionen hat, welche Zeitform ich verwende, Fremdwörter, kurze Sätze. Natürlich hört man das überall in der journalistischen Praxis; aber am MAZ wird es bewusst strukturiert. Zum Beispiel Storytelling, wie baust du die Geschichte, wie formulierst du den Text. Da habe ich sehr viel profitiert. (S 3)	p		
	Ich achte auch mehr auf Persönlichkeitsrechte. Viele meiner Redaktionskollegen wissen wenig über Persönlichkeitsrechte. Da werden einfach irgendwelche Leute abgefilmt, ohne dass man bei ihnen das Einverständnis holt. Ich habe das auch schon gemacht; aber ich weiss dann wenigstens, dass es eine Verletzung ist. Ich versuche, dies auch möglichst zu vermeiden oder wenigstens das Einverständnis zu holen. (S 2)	p				
	Mit gewissen rechtlichen Themen kommst du nie in Kontakt wie z.B. Musikrecht, Urheberrecht. Ethik finde ich ein ganz schwieriges Thema. Es ist so persönlich, wo die eigene ethische Grenze ist. Es ist gut dass man reflektiert, aber ich habe sehr wenig daraus gezogen. Die Printkurse konnte ich als TV-Journalist auch nicht so brauchen. (S 6)	n				

Practicality of subject matter	Fostering innovation	Fostering critical thinking	Value of certificate
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Als TV-Journalist hätte ich gerne mehr TV-Kurse gehabt. Es war sehr printlastig. Als TV-Journalist hätte ich auch gerne mehr über die verschiedenen TV-Formate gelernt: wie baut man eine Reality-Show, eine Doku-Soap etc. Oder z.B.: wie macht man eine Sendung über vermisste Menschen? Wie macht man eine Nachrichtensendung? Was mir auch gefehlt hat, ist das Thema Boulevard, das ist recht ausgeklammert worden, obwohl das heute immer mehr dominiert – auch in sogenannten seriösen Medien. Auch die internationale Perspektive hat mir gefehlt – wie funktioniert der Journalismus in anderen Ländern? Aber auch die Geschichte des Journalismus – das gibt es praktisch nicht am MAZ (S 15)	n		
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Absolute total: 195

	Practicality of subject matter	Fostering innovation	Fostering critical thinking	Value of certificate
Total	135	23	13	24

Thereof positive	64	20	9	12
Thereof negative	69	3	4	8
Thereof neutral	2	0	0	4

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