

Effects Of Developing New Media Environment On The Communication Education

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Abstract

Converging and transforming new communication environments are changing daily lives and business-school agendas of users, educators and students in the field of communications and media. This paper deals with the developments and current situation of new media field in terms of broadcasting and publishing and its effects on updating of education in communication faculties. New media causes fundamental changes in the publishing and broadcasting business and companies are leaving old business models and choosing new ones. One cannot observe the same situation in the communication faculties that provides publishing and broadcasting education. For this paper, a large literature research conducted and leading communication faculties' curriculum from Turkey and around the world analyzed. After the information is given about the changing media and publishing environment, changes in publishing and broadcasting education are addressed, what can be done mentioned and suggestions are listed for the responsible academicians from curriculum and students those are going to be affected.

Keywords: New media, publishing, broadcasting, communication faculty, curriculum, syllabi.

Gelişen Yeni Medya Ortamının İletişim Eğitime Etkileri

Özet

Yakınsayan ve dönüşen yeni iletişim ortamları iletişim ve medya sahasındaki kullanıcı, eğitimci ve öğrencilerin günlük hayatlarını ve iş-okul gündemlerini değiştiriyor. Bu çalışmada yeni iletişim ortamları alanının yayıncılık açısından gelişimi ve güncel durumu ile bunun iletişim fakültelerindeki eğitimin güncellenmesine etkisi ele alınmaktadır. Yeni iletişim ortamları, yayıncılık sektöründe köklü değişikliklere ve şirketlerin eski iş modellerini terk edip yenilerini benimsemesine yol açmaktadır. Aynı durum yayıncılık eğitiminin verildiği iletişim fakültelerinde büyük çapta gözlenmemektedir. Bu çalışma için geniş çaplı literatür taraması dışında, Türkiye ve dünyada önde gelen iletişim fakültelerinin müfredatları da incelenmiştir. Değişen medya ve yayıncılık ortamına ilişkin bilgiler verildikten sonra, yayıncılık eğitiminde görülen değişime değinilip yapılabileceklerden bahsedilmiş ve müfredatı düzenlemekten sorumlu akademisyenler ile bundan etkilenecek öğrencilere yönelik öneriler sıralanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yeni iletişim ortamları, yayıncılık, iletişim fakültesi, müfredat, ders programı.

Introduction

The concept of broadcasting/publishing includes all printed, electronic, visual and auditory media and multimedia. Broadcasting/publishing training refers to the education in communication faculties' departments of journalism, radio and television.

Media becomes digitized, fragmented, approaches to the audience. Information and experiences are becoming more than a product offered to audience, reflections of the communities in communication. Ways of receiving, sharing and experiencing information is changing. Individuals and organizations producing, consuming and sharing media are also changing. To produce content, one must understand how the technology and information is used and shared by audience. How the community produces, consumes and shares information, defines the media experience of individuals. When the monopoly in the production of content is broken, more information and a lot of choices offered to the audience than they may consume.

Contemporary role of publishers and journalists goes beyond the content production. This requires journalists to constantly renew themselves (Whiteman, 2012; Yıldırım, 2010). Audiences have access to online resources. Reporters, then, must sort, organize, synthesize and validate information coming from blogs and other sources. They must inquire sources again, challenge the claims, must investigate the events which do not become news. Audience may share their ideas, analysis and sources for citizen journalism news. Journalists must become community organizers to manage content. This way they can gather bloggers, resources and set up content collection, addition and amalgamation systems. Thus, they can prepare news that cannot become news without using community resources. Journalists must offer more than information. They must talk with users, cooperate with them and guide them, protect them by verifying, analyzing and examining truths they gather.

Converging and transforming environment of publishing, broadcasting and media

The need for the news does not decrease. But, journalism institutions and their functioning are changing. At the same time, access and consumption habits of consumers to the news is also changing. Here, the prominent trends include: abundance, fragmentation and polarization, portfolio development, eroding strength of media firms, power shift in communications (Picard, 2010).

New media is in the convergence point of traditional media, telecommunications and information-communication technologies. It contains Internet, Web, hardware and software technologies. New media contains technologies with these functions: a) information gathering, searching, arranging, transmission, b) production, editing, design, c) distribution, d) access and viewing. Like the situation with cell phones and mobile communication hardware, these functions are often converged (Pavlik, 2002).

Among information gathering, searching, arranging and transmission technologies are: Accessing data with Internet browsers, using various Web 2.0 services and e-mail groups of virtual communities. Publishers use open information databases from governments and organizations with data journalism and visualization techniques. Developments in audio visual recording and sensitive hardware revealed that the opportunity to visit physical environments, in three dimensional online forms (Google Art Project, 2012). This in turn, has resulted multimedia journalism (Stevens, 2011).

In terms of production, editing and design, audio and video editing software and systems, advanced word processors, desktop publishing tools, graphic software and web development tools has gained importance. Journalists use products of companies such as Avid, Microsoft, Quark, Adobe and Macromedia in mobile environment or in newsrooms for content production and formatting.

Distribution function, associated with the expansion of wired and wireless infrastructures in telecommunications technologies. Insufficient transmission abilities of copper cables, expands fiber optic cabling. Mobile communication hardware like cell phones are used by 77 percent of world population which is 5.3 billion individuals (ITU, 2010). This in turn, increased importance of wireless communication in publishing/broadcasting.

In access and viewing, next to e-book devices, tablets and notebooks; mobile communication hardware like smart phones are important too (IDC, 2011). Portable, high-resolution, designed intuitive and user-friendly devices are widespread.

Information literacy or new media literacy as an emerging need

The origins of the information literacy concept, dates back to 1974 (Zurkowski, 1974). The concept includes the following skills: to be conscious of the need to Information, be able to determine his/her location in this context, synthesize, evaluate and use information effectively.

An information literate individual; reaches to information effectively, critically evaluates information, uses information accurately and creatively. An independent learner is information literate. This person follows his/her interests, s/he needs information in every form, endeavor to perfection in the stages of exploration and production of information. Information literacy relates to the following concepts: lifelong learning, learning society, new media literacy (Güneş and Holt, 2006).

New media literacy can be defined as the Internet and social media literacy at first. Important issues in the field of media and information literacy, also applies to new media literacy; the same may also be adapted to this area. Thus, the level of awareness of the students and other users in virtual environment can be upgraded. They can analyze existing messages and create new ones in this environment, and they can consume electronic messages consciously (Dijist.com, 2011).

Studies on these issues include these basic learning areas: tool literacy, resource literacy, social-structural literacy, research literacy, publishing literacy, emerging technology literacy, critical literacy (Shapiro and Hughes, 1996). In this context, there are also some standards of student skills for both the K-12 and higher education (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000; Eisenberg, 2008).

Change in the broadcasting or publishing education of communication faculties

USA is the center of leading media companies of world. In USA, as in every other country, media lays off journalists because of financial difficulties especially since 1990. Despite the situation of media, student applications to communication faculties in USA increased since 1990 (Reimold, 2010). According to a survey conducted among people interested about the field of communication education, communication faculties are still seen fit to become a journalist, but the curriculum needs to be updated according to digital media (Glaser, 2011). Applying students are considering taking law, business or graduate degrees

with journalism education. Academy tend to cooperate more with media sector too, by giving students applied projects and publishing results (Baker, 2010).

There are important effects of new media and technologies to the publishing/broadcasting education: a) transformation from educators' and researchers' point of view, b) transformation in terms of educational materials, subjects and contents, c) transformation in terms of communication faculties of universities, institutes and departments, d) transformation on relationships between publishing/broadcasting educators and students.

This study is not structured in terms of technological determinism. However, the new media technologies have led to some transformations in communication and broadcasting. Transformation in the publishing education is also required. New media in broadcasting and education does not carry value only because of their unique properties. Therefore, the outcome is not certain at the end of those made. The Internet was a project of the U.S. defense ministry and is shaped by the intention of users. Instead of pornography and hate crimes, it can also be used for mutual understanding, communication, education and training. New media are not a goals, but tools.

From educators and researchers point of view, transformation by new media increased the speed of research and cooperation in research. E-mail is now a major communication medium. Microblogging services like Twitter, provides sharing information with shorter messaging. Moreover, free online resources available to educators and students are also increasing (Lule, 2011). In Turkish communication faculties, lessons are given on new media and new media departments are beginning to establish (Akser, 2011).

Transformation in terms of educational materials, subjects and contents, can be seen in the prevalence of online resources and mobile communication hardware like tablets and smartphones (Franzen, 2012; Capeloto, 2011). Educators use presentation files to enrich lessons in the classroom. With dynamic and multimedia contents, this presentation files, allow students to understand complex subjects easily and completely.

Transformation in terms of communication faculties of universities, institutes and departments, can be exemplified with increasing distance learning opportunities (İstanbul Üniversitesi, 2012). In an era of increasing importance of new media, considering making education the most efficient and effective, courses are now becomes indescribable conceptually in a physical classroom environment, defined as time periods for the semester, and particularly limited to a narrow scientific area (Kessler, 2011; Chopra and Pathak-Shelat, 2011). For example, e-mail groups and online forums can trigger participation and sharing not provided in the classroom (Heiman, 2008; Tao and Boulware, 2002).

Transformation on relationships between publishing/broadcasting educators and students, basically, increasing interaction and freedom is dominant. One-way class environment based on the explanation of the educator and student note-taking, with the use of technologies, turns towards an interactive, multifaceted environment ongoing outside the classroom. Educator now, is not the sole owner and distributor of knowledge. Also, different sources certainly shared. Role views are changing from the understanding the educator as someone who knows everything and does everything to the educator as an experienced and critical guide. Role of the student also changes from absorber of information, to the discoverer, interpreter and synthesizer.

In Turkey, Cyprus and Kyrgyzstan, there are 41 Turkish communication faculties. Training for new media began to gain importance in these faculties. However, there are many curricula needs to be renewed (Varol and Alemdar, 2007). Almost all communication faculties have some courses focused on new media. But most of the faculties gave only basic information on new media. There are not comprehensive and widespread courses or syllabi on new media and publishing/broadcasting. The names of these courses, which are only one semester long, vary in different faculties: Internet Journalism, Desktop Publishing, Graphic Design, Digital Montage and Editing, New Communication Environments, New Communication Technologies, Interactive Journalism, New Media and Communication Technologies, Social Media, Information Technologies and Media.

There are not a directly focused department in Turkish communication faculties on new media other than Kadir Has and Bahçeşehir Universities' New Media bachelor degree departments and Galatasaray University's Journalism and Internet Publishing/Broadcasting bachelor degree department. Furthermore, Mustafa Kemal, İstanbul Bilgi, İstanbul Arel and İstanbul Aydın Universities have two year duration Internet Journalism and Publishing/Broadcasting programs in their vocational schools (Yüksel, 2011; Renkliweb.com, 2011).

Suggestions on updating the curriculum, education methods and tools

Basic publishing skills accepted by international news agencies include: critical, strategic and analytical thinking, to separate the facts and comments for the news, to transfer contents written, aural or visual, having ethical values. The media wants to have these issues in the curriculum of communication faculties (McKinsey and Company, 2005; King, 2005).

Because there are new journalistic fields are growing into a strategically more advantageous position like technology reporting, Internet and mobile media are affecting publishing and journalism (Bentley, 2012). Also, journalism increasingly renewed in terms of economic and business ideas. Also, publishers need their vocational knowledge to be up to date to fulfill their duties with better quality, more quickly and in accordance with current conditions. These are considered, curricula of communication faculties must be updated with a new perspective. Curriculum renewal may also trigger a broader initiative which may include training of academics.

Considerations in the context of the various journalistic issues, which have gained importance nowadays, summarized as follows:

Data journalism: It is implemented in several publications, monitored by media and is formed based on infographics (The Guardian, 2011). In terms of important issues in the context of data journalism, curricula can be updated. Data journalism is spreading and there are free tools available for data journalism training (Mediapusher.eu, 2010). Data visualization is an important concept in this area and there are up to date books (Yau, 2011). Examples of data-driven journalism can be shown to students with a course to be created, and fundamental concepts and applications, can be taught.

Social communication media and participation: Social networking environments are effective in promoting content and attracting user traffic to websites. Media knows and uses this. Educators should consider how the social communication media or social media can be added to the curriculum (Gibbs, 2011). Young users are active in social networking environments. However, this does not mean that they

can use these environments for journalism ethically and efficiently. Employees in the media sector also updating their information on current issues. For example Al Jazeera is a television station that draws attention on Middle East with alternative broadcasts. Channel provides training on social media for its English and Arabic speaking employees (The Economist, 2011; Gibbs, 2011). Another example is Time Inc. from USA. Company has 115 magazines all around the world and in its four year old in-house university provides 150 different one-day courses named like “10 Things You Need to Know to Run a Digital Business”, “The Beginner’s Guide to Mobile”, “How to Get the Most Out of Breaking News Online”, “Building an Audience Through Social Media” (Ellis, 2011). BBC also established its education institute “” with the help of Oxford University Press (Oxford University Press, 2010). From these examples one may conclude that it seems like media sector is finding shortcuts to solve education needs of its employees.

News audience and readers are now a part of the distribution system. If they wish, even they can collect news, verify and prepare for publication (McAdams, 2008). At the same time, from e-mail groups and social media sites, they can share interesting pages and may offer advice and information to other individuals and groups that are in need of this kind of help (The Economist, 2011).

Participatory journalism is related to the role of the audience played in determining the agenda of journalism. This is an environment defined by these characteristics of reporting: Journalists listen to their audiences more. Traditional news sources are experts and official parties. However, nowadays journalists listen to other parties that are important for news. They are trying to go beyond artificial and sometimes condescending method of “man on the street” reporting. Another important concept is crowdsourcing. Meaning of the term is, to openly invite and let a very large group of people achieve a certain task generally with the help of online services such as polling systems or submission forms. Crowdsourcing is a system that, consumers gave the details of a service that will be offered to consumers like themselves. With the help of electronic voting systems, the consumer votes some of the things like product design, restaurant menu, and features of an electronic device. Top-rated product begins to be produced. This is a way to provide audience participation for the collection of information for news reporting. Crowdsourcing is used in the following areas: renewal of the law, development of free software, even efficient exploration of mining lands (Castella, 2010). Crowdsourcing is especially used in local journalism (Muthukumaraswamy, 2009).

Journalism education requires multimedia examples from life itself, to foster concepts in the students’ minds (Capeloto, 2011b). In education, in the context of communication and participation in the social media, students should be taught to use them for certain reporting and broadcasting applications. Following projects can be given in this topic: identification of experts, utilization of crowdsourcing, transferring data into suitable formats for showing crises on maps (Talbot, 2011). At the end of courses, social media projects can be archived on a page. While the curriculum is being prepared, faculty members must work together to avoid unnecessary repetitions in courses and projects. For example, blogging or micro-blogging projects in two different courses can be identical. Social media is very easy to add any course; therefore faculty needs to pay attention about repetition. Project repetition reduces importance given to the experience gained by completing necessary tasks by students. To solve this, the use of social media in courses can be discussed with a meeting. (Sinker, 2011; McAdams, 2011). Also, the decisions must include part-time lecturers. At this point, role of the head of department is important.

Presentation of news: This is not a subject of design such as print page design and layout. This is the last issue to be addressed in news production. News sites and many news applications produced for the

mobile communication equipment, pushes readers. Among the reasons for this, there is also the lack of importance given to the design (Rutledge, 2011). Students of communication faculties may not be familiar with information technologies (IT) and use of IT in journalism as much as necessary, even at least at the level of a simple user. The same students are, instead of reading texts, using social media and watching online videos mostly. However, after graduation, students believe they will work only in text based journalism. They think that, techniques and methods of multimedia news presentation are generally unnecessary and too technical to concentrate and learn, or at least their daily practices told so. When students begin their careers they need to be able to use multimedia for completing and presenting their daily tasks. Because of this educators must give assignments that are format-agnostic (Oransky, 2012).

When newspapers began to add photos, “Photographs attracts and draws the reader, sells newspapers and let the readers read the news” idea was also prevalent. Formatting and font size are really made journalism more attractive. When the product became attractive, then people approached and read it. Since the mid-1990s, many digital and online news products are being designed in a way to entice but at the end repelled people. To prevent this, publishers must be able to realize that their sites has designed badly, loading slowly, hard to read, creepy, repellent and difficult to use. Journalists do not follow this, because they do not have design tasks. Readers opinion must be considered, if not Journalists may fail to grasp the effects of their digital products, or ignore their bad design.

News site design evaluation projects can be given to students and there are a variety of resources available to this kind of projects that require knowledge about different online design features and usability rules (Krug, 2007; Weinschenk, 2009). There should be a mandatory course about journalistic presentation and design in the context of the visual design. With this course, students learn to make the following appealing and useful: a text, video, picture, frame, page or screen. The goal of this course is not to train resourceful designers. Students must be trained for efficient, effective, easy to understand and successful presentation of news.

Industry representatives from media, begins to ask universities for potential staff trained in the new communications media, at the end of 90s (Smith, 1998). The acquisition of basic knowledge and skills in new media field cannot be possible through one or two courses only. To achieve more holistic results, almost all courses must be accommodated with the new communication media. All courses should be reconsidered by the evaluation of media, content and presentation together.

Students start publishing with their first online comments, profile pictures or status notifications. Even if it lasts short, the possible news or information has already forwarded to the network. Students, who act this way, can produce journalism in the future. So, in fact, the students have already started their careers in journalism. Students of communication faculties are who only want to improve themselves. To own a group of online followers or audience, provides power for the business seeking “candidate journalist”.

Educators in universities may have begun their careers with media apprenticeships. They may also direct students to the hard path of internship, rightly. But how an editor who wants to add a new graduate student to his/her team looks at the situation? Let’s assume there are two candidates: First candidate has news clippings from university newspaper and has strong references from educators. Second candidate has, in addition to first candidates advantages one more thing: has a personal blog that reaches thousands of unique visitors every day. In short, as an individual, ability to use the new communication media outside the corporate infrastructures is important in finding a job.

Success in a journalism career is associated with the power of that individual's personal business network. For a communications faculty student, building and having strong relationships with educators and doing an internship in the right place was very important in the past. Now almost all business relationships are beginning online. Smart students are following these sites for finding potential future business colleagues and publishing their content: Blogger, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and related e-mail groups around the internet. Using social media for a course is said to be bringing more harm than good such as distraction (Bordelon, 2011). Nevertheless, educators may give journalism students some projects by using some online services such as Facebook, Instapaper, Storify, Twitter, Google+ and Google Reader (Fincham, 2011; Sivek, 2011).

Students may develop their business networks by producing online content. For this reason, students must be presented with opportunities to specialize in one of their passions while they are still in universities. In universities with a double major or minor in their curriculum options, courses can be taken to specialize on the desired area.

Students should be advised the following: When you share an online content, think of it as an online Publisher/broadcaster. If they do not protect necessary seriousness when sharing or creating online content, their prestige will be damaged. This is negative in terms of their potential employers' selection criteria. Students should read, watch and listen with a view to making news. Thus they can find interesting subjects to share online (Niles, 2010).

New publishing and broadcasting business models and issues such as budgeting are gaining importance in the media. Students may analyze, interview and search details and examples outside of their coursework, from sector firms (Benkoil, 2011; Niles, 2011). In terms of course materials, instead of printed sources, teachers may use online services and electronic documents (Capeloto, 2011). Important institutions that can be followed on these issues include: The Nieman Foundation for Journalism, The Poynter Institute, The American Press Institute, The Knight Foundation and The Society of Professional Journalists.

Conclusion

New journalism skills resulting from new communications environment, requires journalists to improve themselves continuously. Nowadays, journalists are forced to learn following skills and to offer products/contents to the new communication environments: video and audio editing, page and web design, photography and editing, graphics design and animation. Therefore, journalists are expected to have multiple abilities. Following talents are seen as key to success in new media journalism: To solve complex problems, carry out customer relationships, managerial skills such as effective use of resources, sales and marketing. New media professionals are expected to have these skills.

New communication media environment and business processes are providing flexible employment structures. For this reason journalists were faced with unfavorable conditions. Increasing problems include the following: Increasing free working hours, liquidation of former employees without the required new skills, lack of job security and corporate training in adaptation to new skills.

Educators should explore requirements of this and next age. It is incorrect to educate a new generation of students with familiar topics and theories of old times. Because in this way, it is impossible to prepare students to the future. Preparations for the curriculum and applications of the four-year undergraduate education should be in a way that thinking at least four years later. Suggestions mentioned above, should be evaluated in this respect.

In written and oral exams, conceptual knowledge is measured mainly. Instead, weight to be given to projects and professional practices. Thus, knowledge and skills of students' who has no intention to pursue an academic career can be evaluated and measured.

Perhaps the greatest problem can be described is as follows: lack of developing alternatives in the usage of technology for requirements of students. At the moment the idea of class in education is commonly limited to a specific time and place. As a result, course schedules are determined. Students also attend the course in the physical locations and times that they are required to be. This must be overcome and all other ways of training as it can be organized should be considered. It is important to the widespread use of distance education technologies. Continuing vocational training and lifelong learning are not an option anymore, they are now a requirement. In this respect, for the graduation of students with different demographic properties, they should be able to take a certain number of course credits with flexible and timely manner.

Once in the realm of economics, in the context of the "new economy", the concept of electronic commerce or e-commerce was used as a new term. Over time, with widespread applications of this concept, e-commerce began to be called only "commerce". The same situation may also be considered in the field of publishing in the context of the concepts "new media" and "new communication technologies". Electronic publishing/broadcasting and traditional publishing/broadcasting coincide in time, only to be referred as publishing/broadcasting.

This situation can be considered in the context of updating education of communications faculties. The same thing can be repeated and instead of the traditional journalism education, training for the new communications environment could become the standard curriculum.

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