Media in Context and The 2015 General Election: How Traditional and Social Media Shape Elections and Governing

Pre-EPOP Workshop

September 11, 2015

Investigators: Susan Banducci, Travis Coan, Gabriel Katz, Dan Stevens
Researchers: John Ault, Iulia Cioroianu, Ekaterina Kolpinskaya
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 09:30</td>
<td>Welcome coffee and registration at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Castle Grounds, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3ER</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:30 – 09:45</td>
<td>Background of the ‘Media in Context’ project</td>
<td>Daniel Stevens</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:45 – 11:00</td>
<td>Traditional and social media as data on the 2015 General Election:</td>
<td>Travis Coan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Media data collection and analysis</td>
<td>Iulia Ciorolănu</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Release of beta instructional data set</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>11:30 – 12:30</td>
<td>Examining media effects: Linkage of media and survey experiment data</td>
<td>Gabriel Katz</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Heterogeneity in Treatment Effects</td>
<td>Susan Banducci</td>
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<td>b. BES 2015 links to media content</td>
<td>Ekaterina</td>
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<td>Kolpinskaya</td>
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<td>12:30 – 12:40</td>
<td>Comments from chair/discussant</td>
<td>Cees van der Eijk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:40-13:00</td>
<td>Questions from audience</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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Background to the ‘Media in Context’ project

Research Questions

1. How do traditional—national and regional/local—and social media cover contemporary campaigns in Britain?
Background to the ‘Media in Context’ project

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Figure 1: The flow of political information during the 2015 election cycle
Background to the ‘Media in Context’ project

Research Questions

1. How do traditional—national and regional/local—and social media cover contemporary campaigns in Britain?
2. What are the effects of this coverage on voting behaviour?
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Research Questions

1. How do traditional—national and regional/local—and social media cover contemporary campaigns in Britain?
2. What are the effects of this coverage on voting behaviour?
3. What is the role of the media in conferring legitimacy on the outcome and in interpreting the government’s mandate during the post-election period?
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Principles of the Research Design

• Analyse election and non-election coverage (in traditional media)
• Make the data publicly available
• Link to a British Election Study that would ask good questions about media use
• Go beyond survey data: field experiment
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*Details of the Research Design*

• Coverage from February 1\(^{st}\) to May 28\(^{th}\)
• Human and automated coding
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Traditional media

National


*Television (6)*: BBC News at 10pm, ITV News 10pm, Channel 4 7pm, Channel 5 7pm, Sky 9pm, BBC2 Newsnight

*Radio (1)*: Radio 4 Today

Scottish/Welsh/regional

*Newspapers (6)*: Daily Record, Scotsman, Western Mail, Evening Standard, Birmingham Evening Mail, Yorkshire Post, Western Mail

*Television (6)*: BBC Wales Today, BBC Reporting Scotland, BBC London News, BBC Midlands Today, BBC Spotlight, BBC Look North (Yorkshire)
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Social media:

Blogs/Internet (6):
Conservative Home; Guido Fawkes Blog; Left Foot Forward; Labour List; Liberal Democrat Voice; bbc.co.uk/news

Twitter (35 opinion leaders)
Coding Media

Stages:
1. 9 coders
2. All given a two hour training session, during which they also made suggestions about coding (which resulted in some changes)
3. First training set: all coders were given the same sample of outlets to code over 10 days. We went over differences and discrepancies in a second training session.
4. Second training set: all coders were given a second sample of outlets to code over 10 days. Levels of agreement were then sufficiently high for independent coding of all remaining stories.
5. Coding of all remaining stories
6. Automated coding
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Length of story</th>
<th>Type of story (for newspapers)</th>
<th>Primary/ Secondary/ Tertiary topic or theme</th>
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Coding Media
Coding Media

Additional codes for election-related stories:

- Election themes
- Primary/secondary/tertiary actor(s)
- Tone of the story
- Disposition of primary/secondary/tertiary actor(s) (defending, attacking etc.)