

Exploring perspectives in the public debate with emotional awareness

Design to reduce polarization



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Master Thesis
Design for Interaction, TU Delft
March 2020

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Master thesis

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The term ‘polarization’ has become well-known in the public debate and news. In January 2019, the SCP (Netherlands Institute for Social Research) reported that 77% of the Dutch citizens think disagreements on social issues increase. As we mostly hear and see the more extreme and opposing sides in the media, it seems like society is divided about many issues. Media act as a catalyst, providing the fuel - rigid statements and harsh comments - to ignite the discussion. Extremes use their voice, while the moderate majority stays silent. Currently, the only way to participate in the public debate is by reacting on social media or (news) media websites. This results in limited responses, mostly by people with strong opinions and emotions.

Polarization can be defined as ‘sharpening of opposites between groups in society that can result in tensions between these groups and increased segregation’ (Azough, 2017). In a polarized society we lose our sense for nuance and reasonableness, and turn away from what concerns caused our emotions. One is either positive or negative, with little space for a more nuanced emotional awareness. Yet, all of our thoughts, motivations and behaviours are enriched and influenced by our emotions. Increasing awareness about how concerns influence emotions, and how these emotions cause people’s behaviour, judgements and opinions, can support mutual understanding.

Emotion Studio, a research and innovation agency in Rotterdam, developed an instrument to measure nuanced emotion profiles on products: PrEmo. PrEmo is a non-verbal self-report tool that measures seven positive and seven negative emotions, expressed as 14 cartoons. This thesis aims for a new application of PrEmo on social themes, using emotions to unlock people’s concerns that are hidden behind their viewpoints.

How can media’s fuel be changed, reformed or adjusted to involve more nuanced emotional awareness by applying PrEmo, in order to reduce the perception of polarization?

Main research question

How can news media contribute to depolarization with the application of PrEmo on social themes?

The project focuses on media organisations, that can serve as first communicators of society’s perspectives. By choosing the media context as a field for potential users of a design that generates a more nuanced emotional awareness, the project touches upon the fields of polarization (social sciences), news media (journalism) and design.

Analysis

Through desk research, a literature study, interviews with media organisations, experts and news consumers, the causes, effects and the influence of media on polarization were analysed.

Based on the research phase, depolarization strategies were proposed and four key problems were defined, addressing potential fields for change:

1. An unnoticed majority of society’s perspectives
2. Little emotional awareness & negative feelings
3. News must be clear and attractive to be read and sold, thereby nuance is lost
4. Selective exposure creates different interpretations of reality.

Through the synthesis of the research insights, a design vision was created:

"Design to reduce the perception of polarization by enabling Dutch citizens to explore and contribute to the variety of society’s perspectives on social themes, using emotional awareness."

The target group for design involves Dutch news consumers, especially the silent majority. This majority is rather moderate or neutral in their opinion, and do not take an extreme position in the public debate. The main stakeholders are specifically the news organisations that are interested in strengthening their social role by contributing to depolarization.

The final design proposal, Perspective News, is an online platform on which Dutch citizens will engage with news topics differently: by exploring the variety of society’s perspectives. The platform, integrated into existing news media websites, shows how people feel after reading about social issues in the news, and what concerns caused their emotions.

Perspective News consists of an emotion measurement survey based on PrEmo, that captures people’s emotions and concerns after reading a news article in a nuanced way, and a platform, that allows people to explore all captured perspectives.

The design realizes 1) an accessible possibility for easy participation and 2) an inclusive image of society’s perspectives. Perspective News provides a stage to everyone, as every member of society should be able to have a say in the current situation, developments and events concerning everyone. The platform of Perspective News helps to get a sense of what a significant amount of society thinks and feels. Instead of engaging with harsh and hostile formulated opinions, distrust and fear for ‘the other’ are diminished by understanding each other’s concerns.

Perspective News enables Dutch citizens to participate in the public debate in a nuanced way, to compare their own perspective to others and it supports personal reflection, creating insight in own emotions and concerns. A communication strategy, implementation roadmap and suggestions for long-term development complement the design proposal.

Validation

The concept was positively evaluated by end-users, media editors and experts of polarization and media-content effects. The concept sparks curiosity and is found inviting. Participants of the user test estimated they would use Perspective News in the future, but mostly for the subjects that are important to them. Besides, the design should appear frequently on media channels they already use. Concerning the usability, more feedback guidance can be provided. According to the enthusiasm of the editors and experts, the concept has great realization potential but should be pilot tested in a simplified version. For further development of the concept, recommendations are suggested.

“Perspective News can be a first step towards reducing the perception of polarization, by amplifying the variety of perspectives that exist in society. This first step opens the way to the ultimate goal: supporting mutual understanding and empathy as foundation for a solidary society.”



Preface

This thesis is the result of my graduation project, part of the MSc Design for Interaction at the Delft University of Technology, in collaboration with Emotion Studio. I have worked on this project with great enthusiasm and determination. 100 days of literature diving, interview planning, emotion analysis and continuous iterations have resulted in a final design proposal to reduce polarization in society.

With the completion of this project, my time as a student will come to an end. The context of a graduation project provided the opportunity to fully dive into a topic of interest and for me, this was polarization. The project allowed me to structure and spend time on exactly those aspects of a design process I enjoy most: learning from experts, get to know an unfamiliar context and translate abstract insights into concrete concepts. It also enabled me to discover three new fields: polarization discussed in terms of social psychology, journalism and emotion. I have relished the freedom that was given to explore the topic, using own preferred methods and strategies and utilize personal and academic skills acquired during the bachelor and master.

The ambition I had at the start of the project was to explore what I could create as a designer in a broad societal project where a problem, like polarization, addresses us all. Throughout the project, I have been aware of the limitations that come with such a complex challenge when targeting a solution to a variety and majority of people. I am pleased to finish the project with a result that has a high potential for realization, with many spin-off possibilities.

One thing I especially liked, was meeting many different people, experts in the fields of polarization, news media and emotions. I had the pleasure to gain knowledge and perspectives on the topic and the project, which definitely took the project to a higher level. I would like to thank Jaap, Charlotte, Adrian, Hugo, Felicia, Rens, Bart, Deborah, Ruthie, Nel, Bernadette, Baldwin, Ron, Jorrit, Ib, Casper and Koen, for creating time to hear my thoughts and ideas about the topic as an outsider and providing me new insights and inspiration.

A special thanks to my supervisory team, Pieter Desmet and Silje Delhi, for your trust, support and enthusiasm about the project, taking away my doubts and encouraging me from beginning to the end. Thanks to my company mentors Steven Fokkinga and Sophie Kelder, for dedicating time to this project, sharing your point of view on the topic and thinking along with in-between ideas and proposals. Thank you, Pieter and Steven, for the initial idea for the project and providing me space to delve into it in my own way. A final thanks to all fellow students, friends and family, deliberating with me about the topic and helping with quick-and-dirty testing of my bunch of prototypes.

I hope this thesis might be a small step towards new interventions to reduce our perception of a polarizing society and to create mutual understanding.

Enjoy the read!

“We are in danger that the polarizing climate will become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Supported by a fragmented, fast and highly commercialized media landscape, it is not surprising to assume polarization goes full steam ahead and nuance and reflection are losing out.”

Quote | Daan Roovers (Dutch philosopher, 2019)

Project context

One of today's major concerns is that our society slowly falls apart (Tiemeijer, 2017). We are becoming less a community of citizens who feel interconnected and - so is the fear - increasingly a loose collection of individuals. 'Polarization' has become a well-known term in the last couple of years. The phenomenon can be defined as 'sharpening of opposites between groups in society that can result in tensions between these groups and increased segregation.' According to Ridder et al (2019), 54% of the Dutch population thinks the Netherlands is heading in the wrong direction. They are especially worried about the Dutch community, mentioning increasing intolerance and loss of identity.

In January 2019, the SCP (Netherlands Institute for Social Research) reported that 77% of the Dutch citizens thinks disagreements on social issues increase. However, there is little reason to worry about increasing disagreements. In the past ten years, the Dutch population has reached even more agreement on several themes than before. Thus, what causes this sense of division?

People dedicate their perception of polarization to today's mentality of society, but even more to the new media. Media have a great deal in how people perceive society's state, and here lies the opportunity to act upon it. In a digitalising world, the amount of information sources is endless, and much attention is focused on that what deviates from a normal situation: extreme voices, that often represent only a small part of society. Consequently, the moderate majority feels the pressure to choose a side.

In a polarized debate, one is either positive or negative, with little space for a more nuanced emotional awareness. Yet, all of our thoughts, motivations and behaviours are enriched and influenced by our emotions (Desmet, 2013). Emotions are connected to people's concerns, such as values, needs, and expectations (Meiselman, 2017). Concerns can explain why certain emotions are evoked.

Project aim

Emotion Studio, a design research and innovation agency, developed an instrument to measure nuanced emotion profiles on products: PrEmo. This thesis aims for a new application of PrEmo to capture and represent perspectives on social issues. PrEmo potentially brings nuance in the public debate using emotions to unlock concerns that are hidden behind viewpoints, statements, and judgements.

The argument put forth in this thesis is that Dutch can better empathize with the perspectives of others if they are provided with a nuanced representation of other people's feelings and underlying concerns.

The main research question to be answered in this thesis is:

How can news media contribute to depolarization with the application of PrEmo on social themes?

The project aims to find what helps people to engage with the perspectives of others and to feel represented themselves. Research focused on the influence of media on polarization and how media causes emotions. With these insights, a solution to reduce polarization is designed that supports emotional understanding in the public debate.

An accurate representation from news media (i.e., an image of reality that corresponds as much as possible with the facts), is described as an important dimension to prevent social cleavages (the Scientific counsel for Government Policy, 2017). The more polarized our image of reality becomes, the smaller the chance that parties can be brought together by the distribution of facts, and the bigger the chance this will work out counterproductive, especially for those who already took a firm 'extreme' position (Brandsma, 2016).

Report structure

This graduation report consists of a research and design part. The first part introduces the project context, collaboration partners, project aim, objective and approach (chapter 1) and the key findings from the research phase, categorized in results of polarization (chapter 2), the influence of media on polarization (chapter 3) and emotions caused by news (chapter 4). The report continues with a description of interviews with experts on the topics mentioned above, interviews with media organisations, a creative session with media and journalism master students from the Erasmus University Rotterdam and PrEmo explorations with citizens (chapter 5). The following two chapters present the design brief, including four key problems and design guidelines for ideation and concept development (chapter 6) and the selected solution space for design (chapter 7).

Chapter 8 presents the final design proposal: Perspective News, an online platform on which Dutch Citizens can explore society's perspectives. The perspectives are gathered through a survey based on PrEmo. Next to the concept, a communication strategy is proposed and the unique selling points and indicators of success are described. Chapter 9 continues with the concept's validation by an evaluation with end-users, stakeholders and experts. Based on the validation, an implementation roadmap is created and suggestions for long-term development are proposed. Chapter 10 closes the report with conclusions, in which the project outcome is evaluated with the research questions, design goal, design guideline, depolarization strategies and key problems. The final chapter also addresses points of discussion, possible limitations and recommendations based on validation. Finally, a personal reflection on the project is presented.

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**GOOD
NEWS
IS COMING**

01

The project

This chapter introduces the foundation of the graduation project. The introduction describes society's worries about polarization and the pointing out of media as culprit (1.1). Involved partners TU Delft and Emotion Studio collaborate in this project (1.2). The project case and the PrEmo tool as the starting point of the project are presented (1.3). The assignment focuses on how news media could contribute to depolarization (1.4).

1.1	Project context
1.2	Collaboration partners
1.3	Project case
1.4	Objective and approach

Project context

The term 'polarization' has become well-known in the last couple of years. This chapter describes a short introduction to polarization and the influence of media, the importance of an accurate representation of society, and the focus of this thesis on emotional awareness to capture society's perspectives.

'Dutch people gloomy about polarization' (Deems et al., 2019), 'The extreme voice dominates the moderate' (Roovers, 2019), 'Polarization seems to have become the keynote in social relationships' (Juffermans, 2019), 'The biggest enemy of the truth is polarization' (Desmet, 2019), 'Many worries about increasing tensions' (SCP, 2019).

1.1.1 Worries about polarization

In January 2019, the SCP (Netherlands Institute for Social Research) reported that 77% of the Dutch citizens think disagreements on social issues increase (figure 1.2). This was stated in the published report 'Burgerperspectieven' (tr. citizen perspectives). In response to the results, many news organisations reported about the increasing polarization in the Netherlands and the worries about this development. Polarization can be defined as 'sharpening of opposites between groups in society that can result in tensions between these groups and increased segregation' (Azough, 2017). However, according to the same report, there is little reason to worry about increasing disagreements. We mainly hear and see the extreme statements. In the past ten years, the Dutch population has reached even more agreement on several themes than before, for example, on income levelling, on immigration and the multicultural society (Ridder et al., 2019).

Still, the social debate seems to be hardened: opposing parties make strong statements with little willingness to engage in constructive conversation.

The perception of polarization is caused by political rigidity and populism, online - frequently hostile - discussions between proponents and opponents of a social topic and rebellious actions. An example of the latter is the highway blockade organized by angry Frisians in November 2018, to hold back buses with anti-Zwarte Piet activists on their way to demonstrate (figure 1.1 and 1.4). Outside the Netherlands, the effects of polarization are probably the most visible in the polarizing landscapes between democrats and republicans in the United States (figure 1.3).

According to the SCP, Dutch people dedicate polarization to today's mentality of society, but even more to the new media. The increasing amount of media forms results in a growing ease of spreading information digitally. Research confirms media stimulate the acculturation of ideologies among groups, and polarization may have occurred due to differences between respective online campaigns (Grover et al., 2019). Especially social media work like a self-fulfilling prophecy: extremes get a stage and the moderate feel the pressure to choose a side (Roovers, 2019). Algorithms let people wander in filter bubbles (Pariser, 2011). Clickbait encourages clicking on extreme headlines, a lucrative activity for media (Chen et al., 2015).

Figure 1.1 | "Blokkeerfriezen": a person waving a Frisian flag during the road blockade (image source: Volkskrant)



Agreement with statements

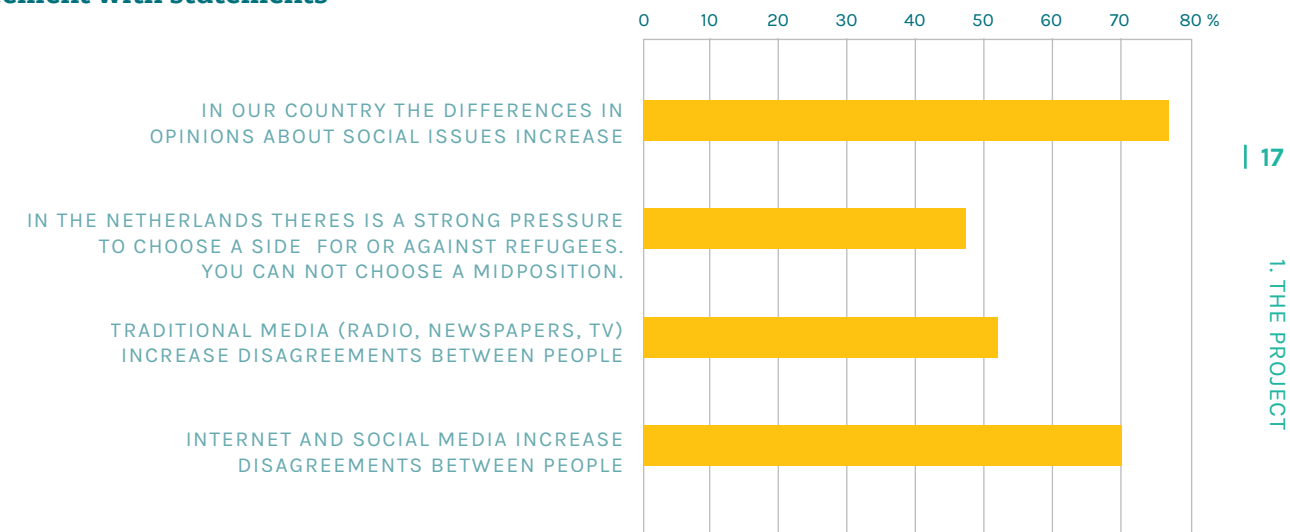


Figure 1.2 | Dutch citizens think differences in opinions about social issues increase (Ridder et al., 2019)

1.1.2 The importance of representation

In 2017, the WWR (Scientific Council for Government Policy) published the report 'What's wrong with social cleavages?'. The report describes that an accurate representation from news media (i.e., an image of reality that corresponds with the facts as much as possible) is an important dimension to prevent social cleavages (Tiemeijer, 2017). This representation should be established from above (a representation of facts presented by authorized institutes), and from below (the possibility for citizens to participate and let hear of them). The more polarized our image of reality becomes, the smaller the chance that parties can be brought together by the distribution of facts. This might even work out counterproductive, especially for those who already took a firm 'extreme' position (Brandsma, 2016). Therefore, media benefit from an image that converges among citizens and public participation. The question here: how could people participate in a way that contributes to an accurate representation of reality?

1.1.3 Limited emotional awareness

In a polarized debate, one is either positive or negative, with little space for a more nuanced emotional awareness. Reactions on news are gauged by thumbs up or thumbs down: 'she did get 100.000 thumbs down on YouTube, but also 2.5 million thumbs up' (Sedee, 2020).

Yet, all of our thoughts, motivations and behaviours are enriched and influenced by our emotions (Desmet, 2013). Emotions are connected to people's concerns, such as values, needs, and expectations (Meiselman, 2017). Concerns can explain why certain emotions are evoked. Understanding the mechanisms of emotion about social topics could support an understanding of which emotions cause people's behaviour, statements, judgements, and choice of words.

Emotion Studio, a design research and innovation agency, developed an instrument to measure nuanced emotion profiles on products: PrEmo. This thesis aims for a new application of PrEmo on social issues, in which the method leads to a better emotional understanding in the public debate and can act as the key to unlock people's concerns that are hidden behind viewpoints.

Figure 1.3 | American public's political values over the past two decades (Pew Research Centre., 2017)

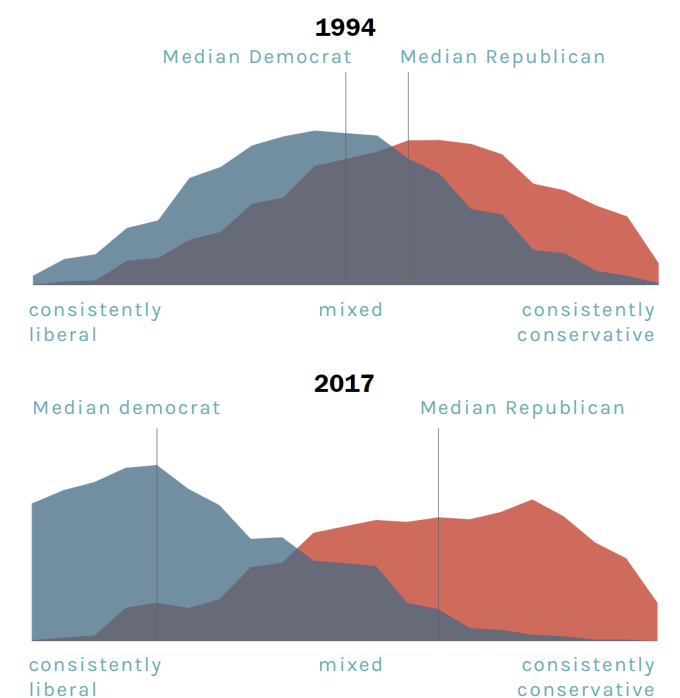




Figure 1.4 | A road blockade to hold back 'anti-Zwarte Piet' demonstrators (image source: de Telegraaf)

An emotional understanding of social issues is useful for a variety of organisations to improve decision-making involving a large target group with people of various backgrounds. Currently, emotion measurement is mostly used for customer feedback, but also on social media, for example on Facebook (figure 1.5). However, the amount, as well as the nuance of the emotions, is limited, compared to PrEmo (figure 1.8).

The application of PrEmo has potential value for news media in particular, as it can provide media the possibility to integrate nuanced perspectives of readers/citizens in the news. This leads to the opportunity for media to not only show the 'extreme' sides, as media play a large role in the perception of polarization (Ridder et al., 2019).

News is - almost without exception - negative. According to Wijnberg (chief editor of the Correspondent), for the first time since the 19th century, a majority of the population in 25 countries thinks the world is going the wrong way. One of the biggest culprits of the increasing disbelief in progress is the daily news we consume. News spreads outrage and pessimism, not knowledge and trust. Thus, it makes us less informed about the world and more sceptical about our ability to change that world (Wijnberg, 2018).

"These are things that people really worry about. That we turn on each other stronger. That nuance is lost. That people become more aggressive in discussions. It is truly a major concern."

Quote | Paul Dekker (scientist at SCP) is concerned about the outcome of the study (NOS, 2019)

Extreme viewpoints are often the most visible because of the pro-active attitude of the ones who like to let hear from them, and their emotions running high at incidents. Besides, our attention focuses on that what deviates from the normal situation. Showing the perspectives of the majority, one could feel better represented. Additionally, one could better empathize, understand what is important to another group of people, and why. In this way, social differences and contradictions can emerge in time. In particular, insight into the underlying concerns is relevant for the decision-making process of a variety of groups.

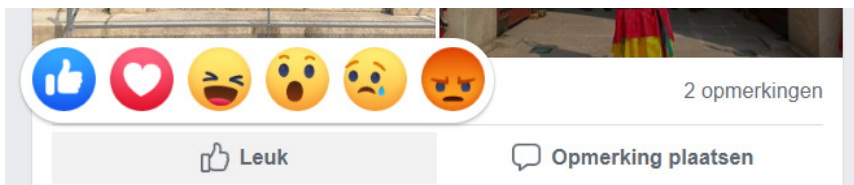


Figure 1.5 | Reaction possibilities on Facebook (screenshot Facebook)

1.2

Collaboration partners

This graduation project is executed on behalf of Delft University of Technology and Emotion Studio. The project is managed and executed by the case-solver representing TU Delft: Marieke van Dijk. Emotion Studio is involved as the case-owner and client of the project.

1.2.1 Delft University of Technology

The TU Delft is represented by Marieke van Dijk, graduating from the Master Design for Interaction, faculty of Industrial Design Engineering. The graduate student is responsible for the management and execution of the project: from research, selection of appropriate methods, and the definition of the design brief to the concept development.

1.2.2 Emotion Studio

Emotion Studio is a research and innovation agency based in Rotterdam. As a spin-off from the design research department of Delft University of Technology, the studio applies the scientific knowledge on emotions to the field of product innovation. Emotion Studio improves products and organisations by the use of self-developed methods. The studio's knowledge and expertise is applied in the process of consumer research, the development of products and services, innovation projects and trainings. The focus of their practice is on the experience and behaviour of the end-user, combining scientific rigor with design thinking and creativity.

Project driven by PrEmo

This project is based on the product PrEmo, an emotion measurement tool developed by Emotion Studio. The emotions evoked by product design are mixed by nature and of low intensity. The Product Emotion Measurement Tool (PrEmo) is a non-verbal self-report tool that measures these typical product emotions.



Figure 1.6 - 1.7 | This thesis is a collaboration between the faculty of industrial design engineering, TU Delft (left) and Emotion Studio (right). (Sources: IDE and Emotion Studio)

1.3

Project case

PrEmo is currently applied to the context of product development but it has the potential to serve other purposes. The initial design brief involved developing an Emotion Barometer, using PrEmo to measure emotions about social topics.

1.3.1 Initial design brief

"In our current society, the social debate has hardened, driven by polarization and opposing parties making hermetic claims with little willingness to engage in constructive conversation. In the public debate about social themes such as immigration and inclusiveness, one is either positive or negative, with little space for a more nuanced emotional awareness. Can we provide a canvas that supports and stimulates a more nuanced emotional discussion in the public debate?"

- Emotion Studio (2019)

The preliminary design brief of this thesis was to develop an Emotion Barometer that uses PrEmo to measure emotions about social topics. These topics can be general themes such as 'immigration', 'Brexit', and 'energy transition', or more specific (local) topics such as the redesign of the Lijnbaan Rotterdam, the public transport in Delft, or the quality of life in the city centre.

The assignment was to identify a case or cases to work with, to develop a procedure for emotion measurement with the use of PrEmo, and third, to conceptualize the generated data in a visual form.

1.3.2 An introduction to PrEmo

PrEmo is a non-verbal self-report instrument that measures seven positive and seven negative emotions (figure 1.8). PrEmo is currently used for evaluating the emotional impact of existing designs (e.g., for creating an emotional benchmark) in the field of consumer products, or for creating insights in the relationship between product features and emotional impact that are valuable in an early design stage. PrEmo differs from other emotion measurement tools by combining the ability to measure subtle emotions (i.e., low intensity) and mixed emotions (i.e., more than one emotion experienced simultaneously) (Desmet, 2007). Furthermore, PrEmo is applicable cross-culturally and therefore language independent, as it does not ask respondents to verbalize their emotions (Desmet, 2003).

Each emotion in the set is portrayed with an animated cartoon character. In each animation, the character expresses 1 of 14 emotions in 1 second including facial, bodily and vocal expression, presented on a computer interface (Desmet, 2003). Participants can indicate their emotional responses to a certain design by selecting the character(s) that correspond(s) with their felt emotion(s).

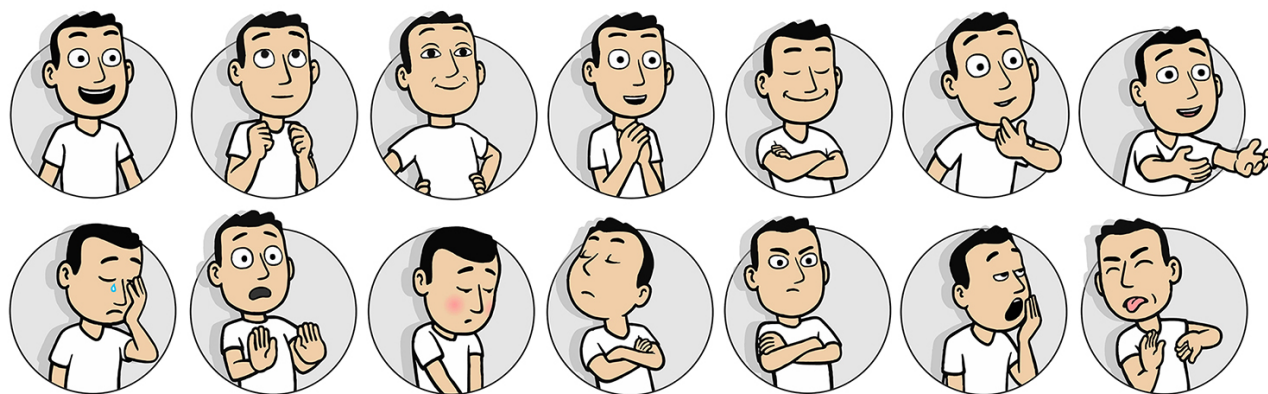
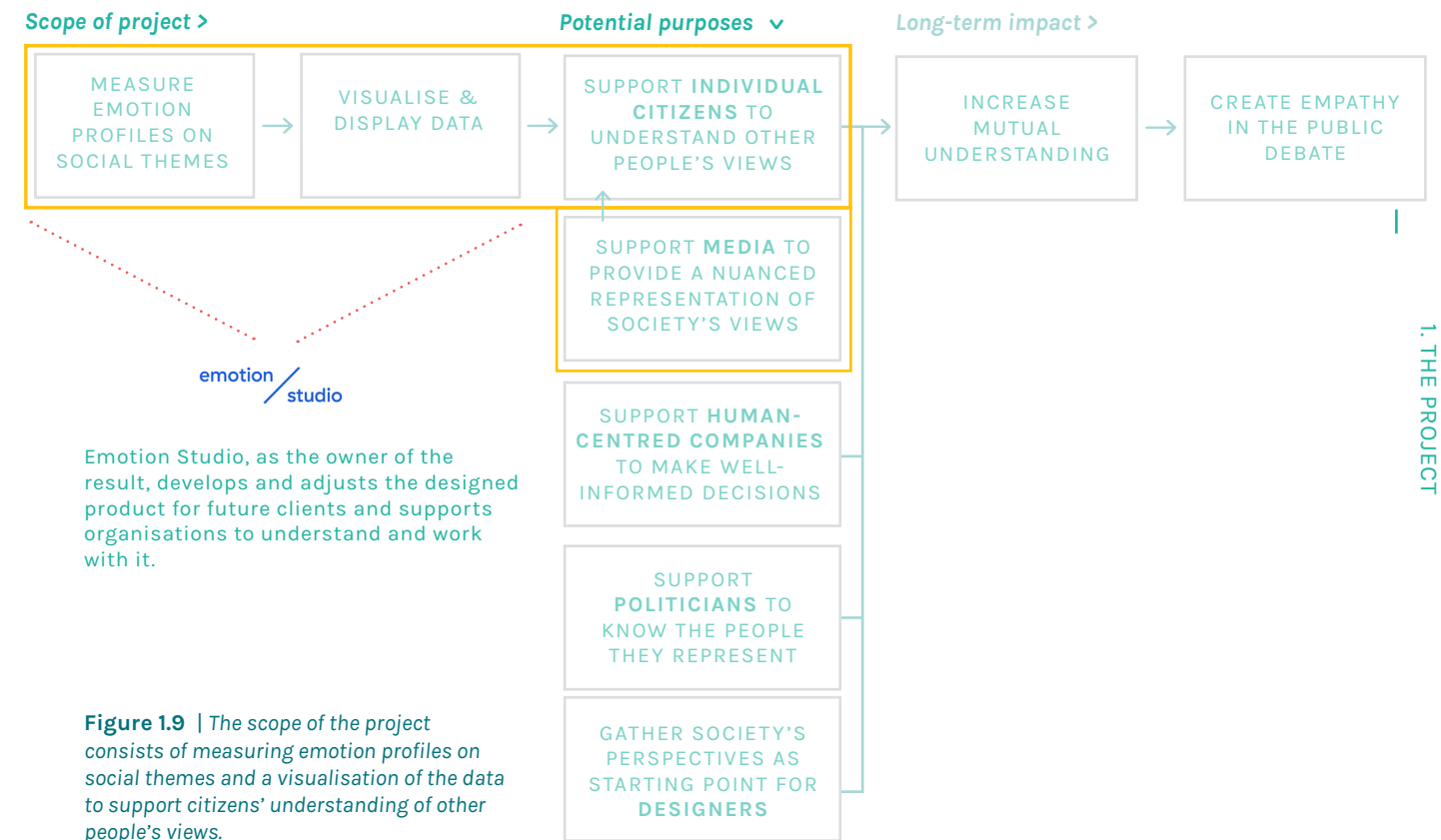


Figure 1.8 | Figures from the Product Emotion Measurement Tool (PrEmo). The figures are small animations expressing an emotion, including an accompanying sound.



1.3.3 Project scope

The project case is pushed by the potential other purposes of PrEmo when applied to social themes. Potential users of an application with PrEmo on social themes can involve any human-centred organisation, varying from the government, municipalities, educational organisations, and even housing corporations. Information about society's perspectives can be of use for politicians, designers, and journalists as well (figure 1.9). Among this broad variety of organisations that might benefit from having more insight into society's emotions and perspectives, media are the first to communicate about social themes that are high on the agenda. Media organisations are the outlets of what is happening in society and target their services to a wide target group. Therefore, the choice is made to narrow the somewhat abstract 'public debate' to media organisations at the start of the project.

Media organisations can serve as first communicators of the generated data from the emotion measurement tool, informing Dutch citizens about social topics with more nuanced emotional awareness. Besides, news reporting affects how we judge current social cohesion and the state of polarization itself. The project aims for a design for media consumers and involves media organisations as stakeholders.

By choosing the media context as a field for potential users of a design that generates a more nuanced emotional awareness, the project touches upon the fields of the social sciences, media, and design.

The scope is determined by the following fields:

1. Social sciences | understanding the phenomenon of polarization
2. Media | expanding on media's news reporting.
3. Design | design for emotion using Emotion Studio's PrEmo (figure 1.8).

Figure 1.10 | This thesis touches upon the fields of social sciences, media and design

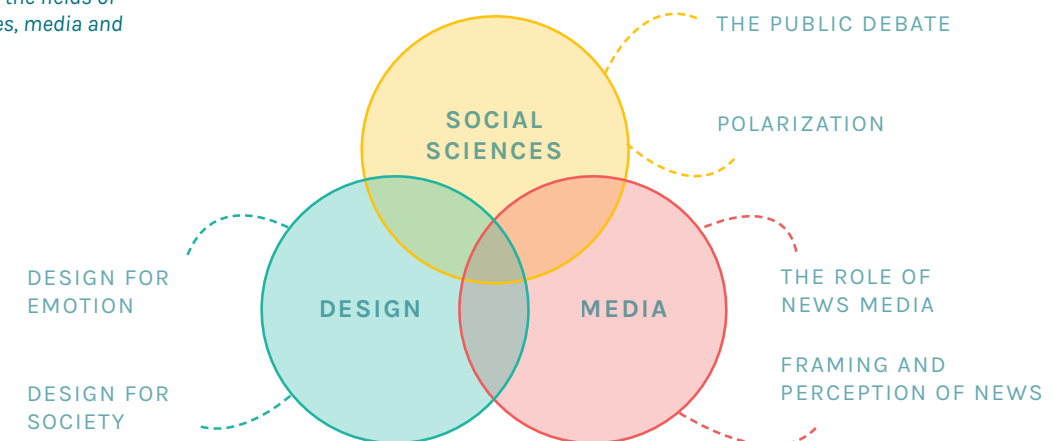
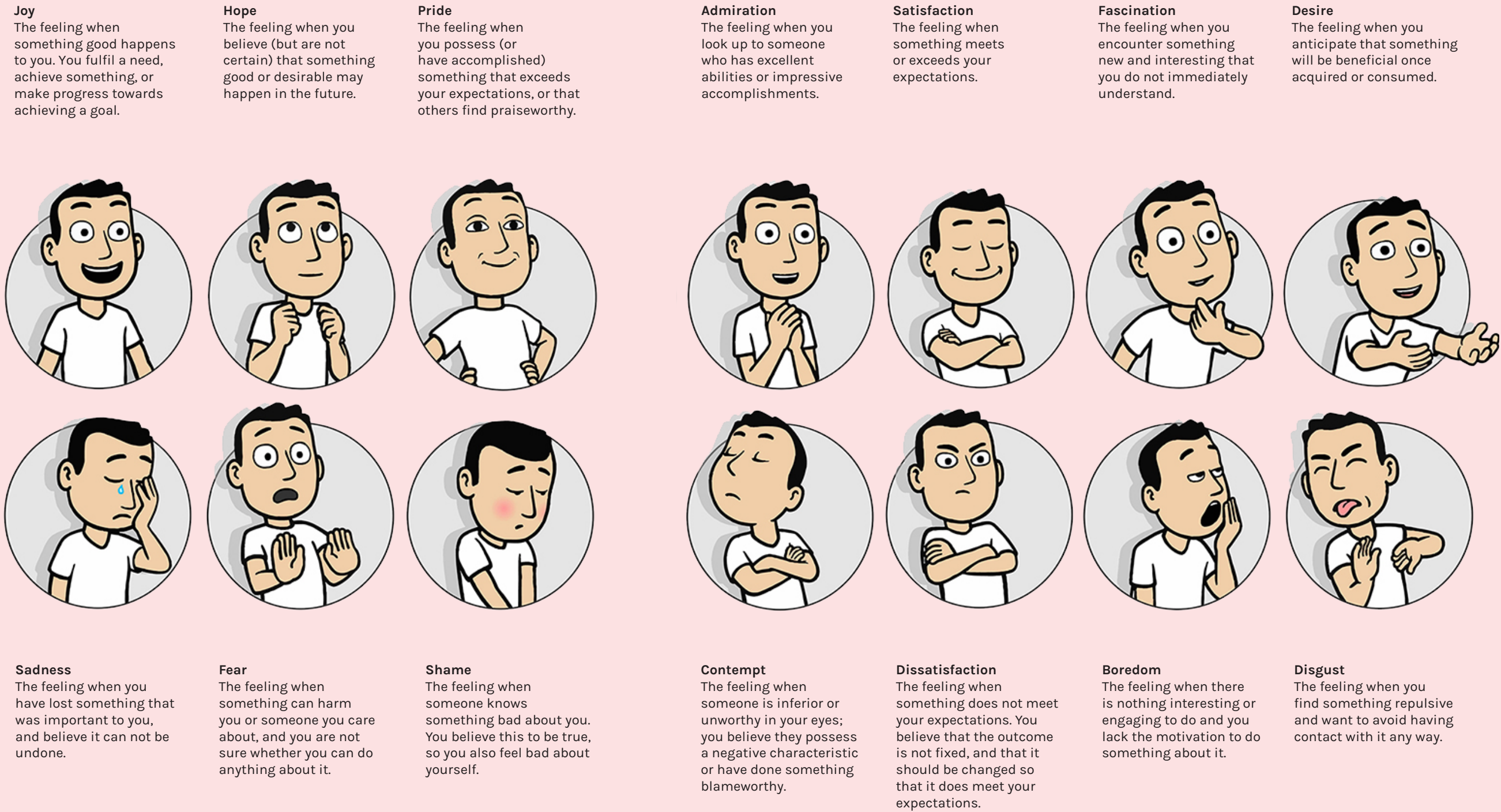


Figure 1.11 | Figures from the Product Emotion Measurement Tool (PrEmo), including explanations of the emotion expressed by the figure.



Objective and approach

"As the current public debate is eager to exaggerate on topics, society is at risk of polarization. In a polarized society, we lose our sense for nuance and reasonableness and turn away from what concerns caused our emotions. Media acts as a catalyst, providing the fuel - rigid statements and harsh comments - to ignite the discussion (figure 1.12). How can we change, reform or adjust the fuel to lower the risk of polarization?"

1.4.1 Project aim

The central aim of this project is to explore how PrEmo can be deployed to bring nuance in the public debate using emotions to unlock underlying concerns. Design to support media in capturing nuanced perspectives on social themes bridges the gap between the social sciences of polarization and the current framing of news.

Focusing on emotions, concerns, and experiences, rather than on what we say, our comments and opinions could change the tone of the debate from rigid and harsh to reasonable and empathizing.

The argument put forth in this project is that Dutch can empathize with the perspectives of others better and engage in a constructive conversation if they are provided with a nuanced representation of the underlying concerns of what people feel.

1.4.2 Main research question

Currently, people's views on reality are diverging, disengaging them from each other and news, which makes it important to investigate what helps people to engage with the perspectives of others and to feel represented themselves. The hypothesis is that the application of PrEmo on social themes can support depolarization. Therefore, the main research question of this thesis is:

How can news media contribute to depolarization with the application of PrEmo on social themes?

Subquestions

- 1.1 What is polarization and what are its causes and effects?
- 1.2 What is the current state of polarization?
- 2.1 What is the influence of media on one's perception of polarization and society's perspectives?
- 2.2 To what extent do news media currently contribute to depolarization strategies?
3. How can PrEmo and the scientific knowledge on emotions be used to capture emotions and unlock underlying concerns on a social topic?



Figure 1.12 | The public debate on fire

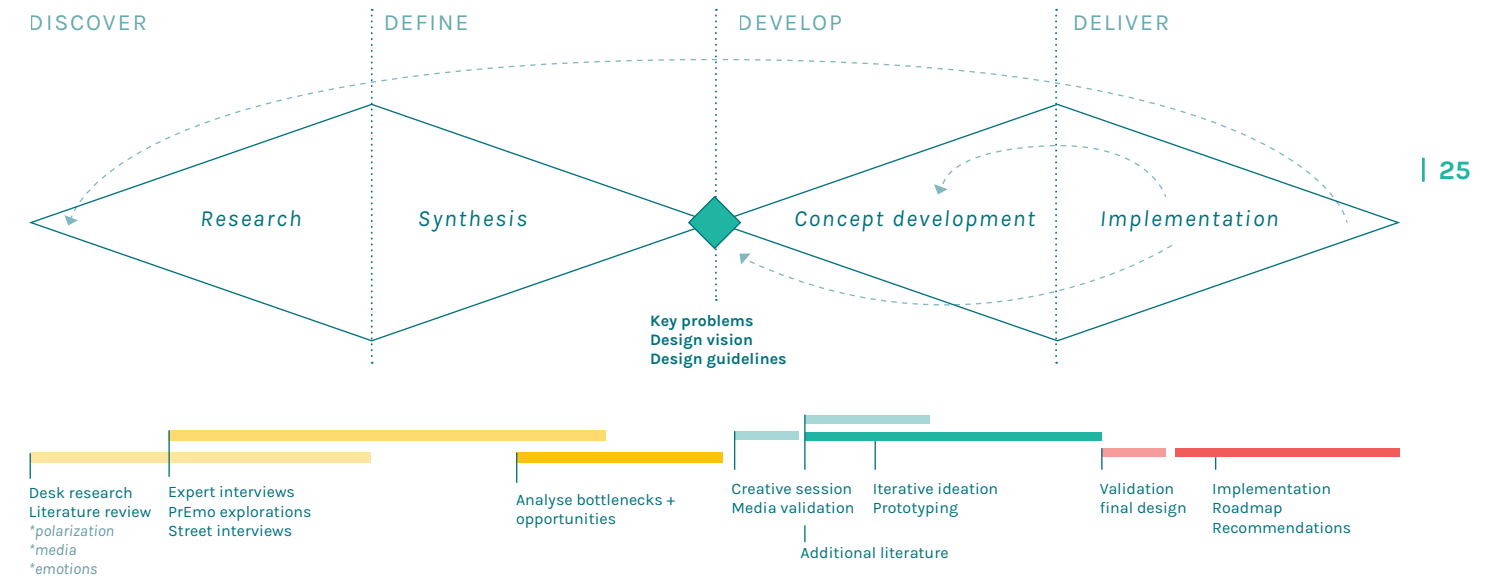


Figure 1.13 | Project phases including design activities

1.4.3 Project approach

In this project, the double diamond framework was used as a guideline, providing room for experimenting and adjustment at the same time (figure 1.13). The framework does not represent a linear process: the dashed lines show points of revision and the iterative nature of the design process. Below the different design stages are explained.

1. Discover Deep dive

The project started with a 'deep dive' into literature about the phenomenon of polarization and the public debate. Once the subject of polarization was explored, the actual effect of (news) media on polarization was researched by desk research and literature research. Finally, emotion theory in general, as well as the effect of media on people's emotions, was analysed.

A walk in the field

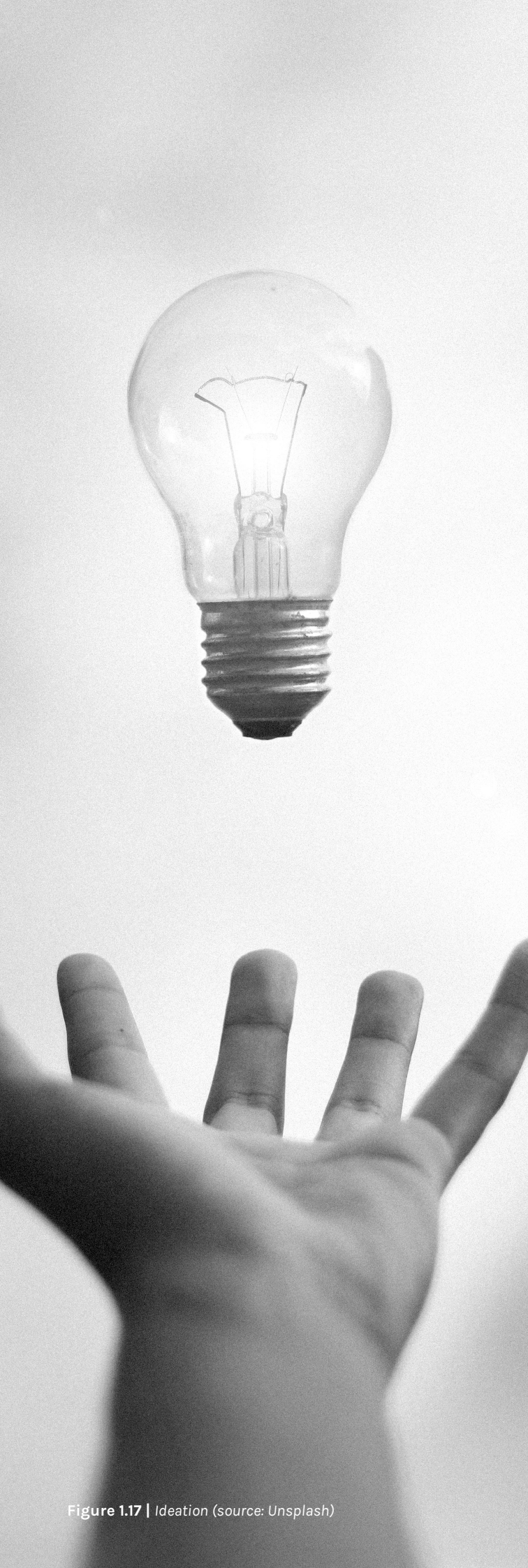
As polarization, journalism, and emotions are huge fields to grasp, expert interviews were conducted parallel to the literature review. The purpose was to confirm obtained insights and elaborate them with a practical view and (research) examples. seven researchers from the field of polarization and journalism were interviewed. Additionally, three interviews were held with media organisations to explore the media perspective.

User research

A survey was conducted to get insight into the user's side of the subject, the media consumer in this project, exploring how people perceive the news. Subsequently, two PrEmo explorations were set-up. In these explorations a total of 33 street interviews were held. The aim was to delve into more views on news and to test the application of PrEmo on news articles.



Figure 1.14 - 1.16 | Top-down: Interview with a participant in the PrEmo explorations, synthesis session with fellow design students and a creative session with media students from the Erasmus university.



2. Define

The second design phase mostly consisted of finalizing the interviews, PrEmo explorations, and analyzing the derived information. Interviews were transcribed and PrEmo insights were mapped per participant. A session was organized with fellow designers to organize all insights and derive bottlenecks and opportunities. The result of this phase were four identified key problems, a formulated design goal and a framework of design guidelines.

3. Develop

The development phase started with a creative session with students media & journalism from the Erasmus University Rotterdam and a validation of first ideas with four media editors. Additionally, a research journalist responsible for a national audience research was interviewed. Then, the ideation and concept development started, consisting of several design cycles in which prototypes were build, tested and improved.

4. Deliver

In the deliver phase a final proposal was created. The proposal consists of the design, a communication strategy, unique selling points and success indicators. The final design was validated through two expert interviews with a polarization and media researcher and two interviews with news media organisations. Additionally, the design was evaluated with eight users, with an age from 18 to 69. Subsequently, an implementation roadmap was created including suggestions for long-term development. The final design is evaluated with the research questions, design goal, design guidelines, depolarization strategies and four key problems. Points of discussion, limitations and recommendations are suggested, based on the evaluations. Finally, the project is reflected upon.

SUMMARY

1. The project

77% of Dutch citizens think disagreements increase

Worries about polarization increase in society. People think disagreements increase, and a variety of media outlets confirm our fear for social cleavages.

Media's guilt

Polarization is not happening as such: we mainly see and hear the most extreme statements that seem to form opposite positions.

Still, the social debate has hardened by rigid statements and hostility, partly by the (anonymous) ability to express and spread our opinions online.

Limited emotional awareness

In a polarized debate, one is either positive or negative, with little room for nuanced emotional awareness. Yet, emotions could support understanding of what concerns causes people's behaviour, statements and opinions.

PrEmo application on social themes

Collaboration partner of this project, Emotion Studio, developed PrEmo, an emotion measurement instrument to measure nuanced emotion profiles on products. This thesis aims to explore a new application of the instrument: using PrEmo to explore citizen's emotions evoked by news.

Project aim

The central aim of this project is to explore how PrEmo can be applied on social issues to bring nuance in the public debate using emotions to unlock underlying concerns. The argument put forth in this project is that Dutch citizens can empathize with perspectives of others better and engage in a constructive conversation if they are provided with a nuanced representation of the underlying concerns of what people feel.

Design approach

In this project, the double diamond framework is used as a guideline for the design process. This framework consists of the following phases:

1. Discover | research
2. Define | synthesis
3. Develop | ideation and development
4. Deliver | final design



02

The polarization phenomenon

This chapter elaborates on the social phenomenon of polarization. An extensive literature review is conducted in which the definitions, causes and effects are explored (2.1). Besides, the current state of polarization in and outside the Netherlands is described (2.2).

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 2.1 | Polarization: definition, cause and effect |
| 2.2 | Current state of polarization |

The polarization phenomenon

This graduation project aims for an understanding of the social phenomenon of polarization and the influence of media in providing fuel for an escalating public debate. The project investigates how an intervention could support media in depolarization. As the foundation of the design project, the phenomenon of polarization has been explored in literature.

The aim of this chapter is to find an answer to the first subquestions proposed in the project introduction:

1. How can polarization be defined?
2. What are its causes?
3. What are its effects?

1. Defining polarization

2.1.1 Definitions of polarization

The term polarization, in general, is derived from **polarity**, which is a state of having two opposite or contradictory tendencies, opinions, and aspects. If these opposites become stronger, polarization occurs. The official Dutch national definition of polarization is 'sharpening of opposites between groups in society that can result in tensions between these groups and increased segregation (i.e., along ethnic, religious and other lines)' (Azough, 2017).

When speaking of opposite groups in society, soon the term polarization is used. However, some nuance can be brought up here: polarization can be manifested in several ways. One form of polarization is **political polarization**, defined as the increasing support for extreme political views relative to the support for centrist or moderate views (McCarty, 2019). **Ideological polarization**, in which disagreements increase on specific subjects, is based on individual or group's opinions, independent of political parties. **Social polarization** is associated with the segregation within society that may emerge from social differences such as income inequality, real-estate fluctuations, etc. (Caves, 2014). The fourth, **affective polarization**, concerns whether political parties have become part of one's social identity and whether this has resulted in greater levels of conflict. Some scholars argue that citizens derive self-esteem and satisfaction from the relative success and status of their party (McCarty, 2019). Affective polarization is present when there is an increase in negative feelings towards people with other political preferences. This can be distrust or even hate.

The variety of definitions show polarization concerns differences between groups that could drive groups apart, based on (extreme) contrasting political views, ideology, social differences or partisanship as social identity. In this thesis, **the focus does not lie on a specific type of polarization**. The project researches the possible influence of (news) media on causing polarization, regardless of the specific ground (such as social or political differences) on which polarization occurs.

2.1.2 A multidimensional term

Bovens et al. (2014) summarizes the several definitions into a multidimensional term, merely focused on the symptoms of how polarization can be recognized:

1. Increasing division across the population, individuals become more distinct from each other
2. Increasing differences in average positions of population groups and more homogeneity within those groups
3. A growing cohesion between political-cultural contradictions: polarization as a broadening of opposites
4. If people think a situation is real, it has real consequences.

>> The fourth dimension indicates that if people think polarization exists, this belief can have real consequences.

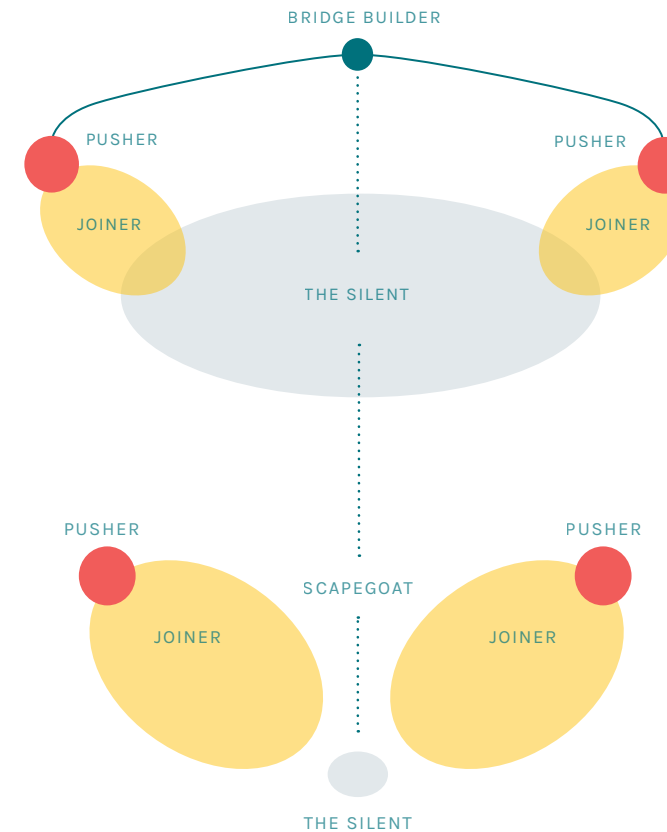


Figure 2.1 | Conceptual framework polarization. Brandsma (2016)

This is a risk because if a certain (doom) scenario is proposed by influencing institutions, politicians, role models or other spokespersons without it being real or existing yet, society might act upon it as though it was real.

In general, when polarization arises, two extreme, opposite views prevail. Therefore, polarization is about differences more than similarities. The differences in opinions of the groups create increasing **us-them thinking**, which results in hateful debates rather than entering into a constructive dialogue (van Wonderen, 2018).

2.1.3 Framework

In line with this, polarization is **a thought construct**. According to Brandsma (2016), this means it is not about a real division or cleavage between groups, but **about the way we think about each other and how we sort ourselves into groups**, based on any categorization that sets our group against another. Brandsma (2016) created a conceptual framework for polarization, in which the roles of (groups of) people are distinguished. The framework serves the purpose of learning to recognize the dynamics of polarization. Figure 2.1 presents this framework and will be explained by elaborating on the five key players.

Five key players in polarization

1. The *Pushers* are found at both ends of the pole and, with their black-and-white statements, they play a leading role in supplying fuel for us-them thinking.
2. The *Joiners* choose a camp, although they are not as radical as the *Pushers*. They can go back to the silent middle, the *pushers* can not.
3. The *Silent* stays in the middle, either because of indifference, nuance or neutrality. In most situations, the silent involves the majority of society.
4. The *Bridge Builder* intervenes and tries to help the poles to arrive at an interchange of viewpoints or visions.
5. When polarization is maximal, a *Scapegoat* is sought, providing an outlet for guilt and anger. The bridge builder (for example, mayors and politicians) or the silent middle can end up in this role, being blamed for not choosing a side.

The Bridge Builder is often the one with good intentions to appease the fight, by naming differences and searching for similarities. Mayors, media and politicians use several strategies to invite pushers to collaborate, which can result in a countereffect.

>> The bridge builder benefits the pusher by providing a stage to expand the pusher's monologue. Pushers are not open to engage in constructive conversation with their opposite and will only strengthen their own opinion.

Cause of polarization

2.1.4 Media’s fuel for polarization

The fourth dimension of the multidimensional term of polarization proposed by Boven et al. (2016) states ‘if people think a situation is real, it has real consequences’. This means that the effect of media on the perception of polarization can be significant. Brandsma (2016) assigns the media as possible bridge builders, providing a stage to the two pushers in one issue. Pushers thrive on attention and deliver ‘fuel’, that media subsequently spread to their media consumers. Chapter 3 goes into more detail about the influence of media.

2.1.5 The fundamental problem

The fundamental problem underlying polarization is that people are **particularists by nature**. This means people feel more connectedness, solidarity and trust towards their own family, friends, and acquaintances: ‘the own group’ (Tiemeijer, 2017). People naturally tend to identify with an “us” with whom they consider themselves connected, and that contrasts with a “they” with whom they have less solidarity.

>> People naturally feel less solidarity to whom they consider as ‘the other group’.

Social identity theory

People want to maintain or enhance their self-esteem. The evaluation of one’s own group is determined by comparisons with other equivalent groups that are associated with negative or positive connotations (undertones) (McCarty, 2019). This is in line with the **social identity theory** (Tajfel, 1979). A social identity is one’s sense of who you are, based on your group membership(s). The groups that people belong to are an important source of pride and self-esteem (McLeod, 2008). For example: ‘I belong to the Netherlands, the best country in the world!’ Groups give us a sense of belonging to the social world. We divide the world in ‘us’ and ‘them’ by a process of social categorization. Also, stereotyping is based on a normal cognitive process: the tendency to group things. In this, we exaggerate the differences between groups and the similarities of things within the same group.

>> We tend to notice individual differences and diversity within our own group, but perceive the other group as uniform.

In social psychology, this is called **outgroup homogeneity** (Park et al, 2014).

Belief constraint

Once adopting one type of viewpoint, one could start sticking to the same ‘set’ of views or beliefs. Someone can have ideologically consistent views. For example, a voter either has all liberal, moderate or conservative views. Ideological consistency increases the tendency of **belief constraint**, which means the degree to which holding some belief implies holding other similar beliefs (McCarty, 2019). Belief constraint can be problematic for society when people actively engaged in politics only ‘believe’ one type of viewpoint, and hold on to that type in several issues (Abramowitz, 2010).

>> The increase in belief constraint increases the percentage of consistent extremists, even when the overall public stays moderate.

This is a form of polarization. Looking at the framework of Brandsma (2016), pushers are more likely to have strong belief constraint. At that point, counterviewpoints do not stimulate compromises or a change of mindset anymore but reinforce the person’s own beliefs.

2.1.6 Political influences

Elite and mass polarization

In political polarization, a distinction can be made between elite polarization and mass polarization. The latter represents normal voters and citizens, where elite polarization entails divisions among officeholders, party officials, policy intellectuals and activists (McCarty, 2019). Both concepts of elite and mass polarization are often not closely related. For instance, when politicians appear to be strongly divided in their viewpoints on topics (elite polarization) but citizens do not represent active support for one side or vote for nonextreme policies (no mass polarization). The other way around, a society can become quite divided even where an elite consensus could persevere. Representatives are generally found to take positions that are considerably more extreme than those of their voters. This relates to the need for politicians to attract voters to sustain their party.

>> The elite could represent a polarized world, whilst the overall public opinion converges. Elite’s need to attract voters can be taken into account here. When the elite polarizes but the mass does not, citizens might be influenced by an unrealistic representation of society’s opinion.

2.1.7 Issues susceptible to polarization

According to McCarty (2019), at least political polarization can happen across several issues:

- 1. **Sovereignty**
Immigration, naturalization, and civil rights.
- 2. **Organisation and scope of federal government**
Government organisation and constitutional amendments.
- 3. **International affairs**
Defence and international political economy.
- 4. **Domestic affairs**
Agriculture and food, social policy, and planning and resources.

Recent research on American viewpoints finds most polarization in categories 1 and 3, sovereignty and international affairs. Polarization in domestic affairs has always been high, but the growth rate is slower than in the other categories.

According to the social identity theory, strong identity-related issues are more susceptible to polarization, especially when people feel threatened in their identity status. Topics within the aforementioned categories will have a higher susceptibility to polarization when a strong ‘us’ and ‘them’ can be formed and appointed. For example, the original inhabitants versus the immigrants, the Dutch versus the Germans, the religious versus the atheists, the higher-educated versus the lower-educated, the climate activists versus the indifferent, etc.

>> Topics will have a higher susceptibility to polarization when a strong ‘us’ and ‘them’ can be formed and appointed

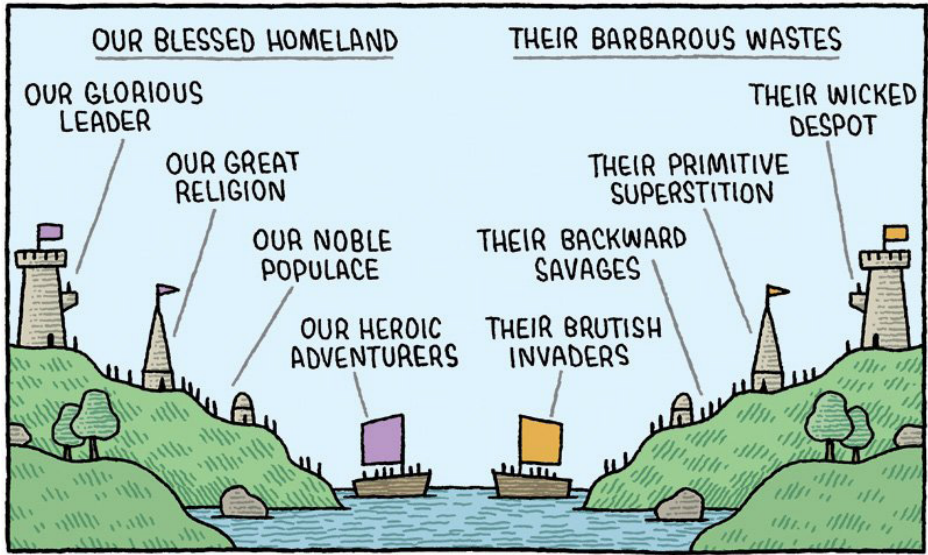


Figure 2.2 | Social Identity Theory (source: simplypsychology.org)

2.1.8 Effects of polarization on society

According to the Tiemeijer (2017), polarization manifests itself in social corrosion:

1. Collaboration and cooperation can not take off.

Polarization obstructs making compromises. According to Wijnberg (2018), polarization drives people apart and increases distrust and undermines the idea of a shared reality. Moreover, it can create **fear and suspicion for 'the other'**. The ability to live together in the long-term becomes more difficult if people sort into groups that will not collaborate and cooperate.

2. Loss of money and energy on conflict resolution

According to Brandsma (2016), polarization can set countries and heads of governments apart and split complete population groups, whether it is caused by differences in concerns, religious variety or just because people differ in skin colour. Polarization can easily debouch in aggressive dynamics that increase fear and violent behaviour.

>> If tensions escalate, conflicts arise, whereafter resolution can be time-consuming and expensive.

3. Disintegration of the political community

Ideally, all population groups are proportionally represented in political organs. In practice, this is not feasible. Therefore, the elected representatives should map the interests and wishes of the underrepresented groups as well as possible, taking them into account during decision-making, and make this visible.

In a situation of polarization, some groups are overrepresented, whereas certain groups are invisible or silent. When politicians are unable or unwilling to fill the gap in political representation, certain groups are left out. The possible consequence is that people withdraw from politics, which undermines the foundation of democracy: an accurate representation of society's citizens.

2.1.9 The benefits

Although polarization appears to have only negative effects, in a way, it can also benefit society. Being part of group offers **psychological comfort**. Furthermore, in a situation of too little polarization, there is little **motivation for social progress and reform** (Roovers, 2019). Polarization creates the incentive to put important issues on the agenda (Tiemeijer, 2017). Besides, democracy works best when representatives provide **distinctive positions** regarding a subject, in which voters can all be represented (McCarty, 2019). Additionally, discussing the different positions improves the quality of democracy. To some degree, polarization is necessary for political representation and **who to hold accountable** when a policy approach fails.

The question put forth by the Tiemeijer (2017): when are social cleavages a problem? Some inequality, such as material inequality or education difference can be enhanced by government policies. Yet, how do we 'repair' social cleavages that incorporate mutual distrust and a lack of feelings of solidarity?



Figure 2.3 | Conflict resolution

2.2

Current state of polarization

One of today's major concerns of the Dutch population is that our society slowly falls apart (Tiemeijer, 2017). The Dutch think they are becoming less a community of citizens who feel interconnected and - so is the fear - increasingly a loose collection of individuals. Such a situation is found very undesirable. The motto of the last Balkenende cabinet was: 'working together, living together', and the second Rutte cabinet used 'building bridges'. From a survey on future wishes of Dutch citizens, people classified 'solidarity' as the highest value and 'a society with a sense of community' as the most preferred future scenario (Schnabel, 2004). According to Ridder et al (2019), 54% of the Dutch population thinks the Netherlands is heading in the wrong direction and are especially worried about the community, i.e., increasing intolerance and loss of identity. What is the current state of polarization?

According to Bovens et al (2014), there is little reason to worry about increasing political-cultural polarization in the Netherlands. In general, the Dutch population has not become more divided. Besides some specific polarizing and depolarizing cases, differences between population groups did not enlarge. The most recent report of the 'Citizen perspectives' shows the agreement in public opinion has not decreased.

Also in the United States, which appears to have the most polarized society with a strong division between the republicans and democrats, there is no strong consensus found in literature whether polarization is in fact strongly happening among voters (McCarty, 2019). On general measures of ideology, there is a downward trend in variation and no trend in bimodality of responses. Most Americans still indicate moderate or centrist positions, even on very divisive issues such as abortion and sexuality. Moderate responses have not declined over time.

One recent well-known political development is the success of radical right, which fosters worries of extremization and polarization. Donald Trump won the elections in the US, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil and Narendra Modi in India. In Europe, support for radical right-wing parties has been obtained from less than 5% two decades ago to around 15% now. However, voters have not become more radical right. Results of the European Social Survey show there is no universal or structural increase in negative views on immigration between 2002 and 2018. The increased success of radical right political parties is probably the consequence of 1) the increased importance of the immigration theme and 2) the increased volatility of voters, i.e., change of voting behaviour between elections (Rooduijn, 2020).

Apparently, polarization is not strongly happening among the population (figure X). Yet, we are worrying about polarization: 75% of the Dutch population think opinion differences on social issues increase. This is a significant increase compared to previous years. People cite the media - especially new media such as the internet and social media -, the mentality and multicultural society (Ridder et al, 2019). The top 3 of national problem awareness consists of **concerns about 1) the way of living together** - growing intolerance, social behaviour and the me-culture, **2) immigration and integration** - including the arrival of refugees and the integration of minorities and **3) income and economics** - poverty and income differences.

People see the largest division between poor and rich people (noted by 76% of respondents), the differences between immigrants and natives and lower and higher educated come in second place (both 66%). About half of the people agree with the statement that regarding the refugee issue, there is strong pressure to choose a side. However, in surveys, people still take intermediate positions often.

The report 'Citizen perspectives' shows Dutch people think opinion differences are stronger than they are in reality. As mentioned before, the danger here is: *if people think a situation is real, it has real consequences* (Tiemeijer, 2017). Also, in polarization we are dealing with a thought construct: it is not about real differences, but our own perception of us against them (Brandsma, 2016). This implies only the perception of polarization can already have real effects.

The perception of polarization is partly caused by (news) reporting of media organisations. Therefore this thesis continues with background research on the influence of media (chapter 3).

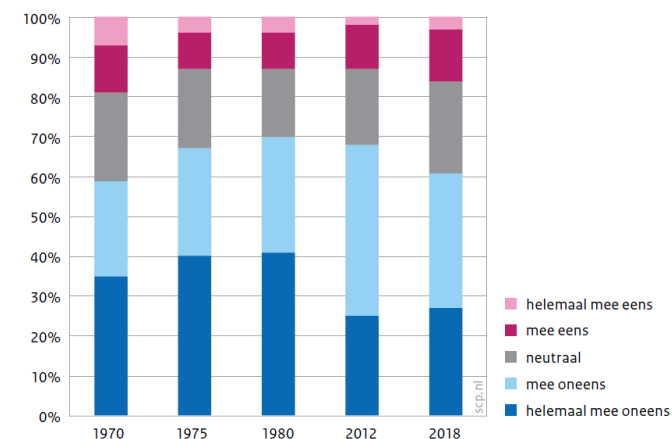


Figure 2.4 | No decline in conformity of the public opinion can be found

SUMMARY

2. The polarization phenomenon

Definitions

Polarization comes from polarity, which is a state of having two opposite or contradictory tendencies, opinions and aspects.

The commonly used definition for polarization is 'sharpening of opposites between groups in society that can result in tensions between these groups and increased segregation.' Polarization involves:

1. More distinction between individuals
2. Increasing distinctions between groups, more homogeneity within a group
3. A broadening of opposites

The polarization framework

Dutch philosopher Bart Brandsma developed a polarization framework in which the extreme positions are embodied as 'pushers', the less extreme but supportive ones as 'joiners', the moderate views as 'silent majority' and people trying to encourage a constructive dialogue as 'bridge builders'.

Causes

Fundamental causes of polarization involve particularism (feeling more solidarity towards one's own group), the social identity theory (the sense of who you are is based on your group membership(s), outgroup homogeneity (see the outer group as one instead of a collection of individuals) and belief constraint (holding one belief implies holding other, similar beliefs)

External influences

- elite vs. mass: if the elite represents a polarized image, this does not have to count for the mass (society).
- media representation: the media tend to capture the extreme views as they are more visible and attractive than the moderates.

Effects

1. Collaboration and cooperation can not take off. Increasing fear for 'the other one'.
2. Loss of money and energy on high transaction costs and conflict resolution
3. Disintegration of the political community

In polarization, there is a tendency of cohesion within groups, and a tendency of differentiation in between groups. The perception of polarization alone can already affect the real world.

Citizens' general wishes for the Dutch future involve social cohesion, solidarity and a sense of community.

Current state of polarization

One of today's major concerns is that our society slowly falls apart. Solidarity and 'a society with a sense of community' are Dutch preferred future wishes. Politicians have been focusing on 'building bridges' for years.

However, the Dutch population has not become more divided and differences between population groups did not enlarge. Besides, the worry about radical right (parties) and their influence on extreme negativity about the immigration issue is unjustified: there is no universal or structural increase in negative views on immigration between 2002 and 2018 (Rooduijn, 2020).

However, "if people think a situation is real, it has real consequences". Even the perception of polarization contains real risks.



03

The media effect

In several (Dutch) research reports the importance of representation of society in politics as well as in the media is stressed. This chapter explains why social cleavages must be prevented (3.1), the influence of media on the perception and possibility of polarization (3.2) and media consumption in the Netherlands, including Dutch citizen's media profiles (3.3). The chapter closes with an analysis of current depolarization attempts in the field of media (3.4).

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 3.1 | The importance of representation |
| 3.2 | The influence of media on polarization |
| 3.3 | Media consumption in the Netherlands |
| 3.4 | Current depolarization attempts |

3.1

The importance of representation

Dutch citizens attribute their perception of polarization to the media. 70% criticise the new media (internet and social media) and 50% the traditional media. This chapter first elaborates on the importance of representation and subsequently investigates the influence of media on polarization, to work towards an intervention that could reduce polarization.

In 2014, the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) and the SCP published a study on socio-cultural differences, 'Gescheiden Werelden' (segregated worlds), after which several media summarized the report with the same headline: "Dichotomy threatens Dutch society" (Tiemeijer, 2017). The choice of words in the headlines posted by media organisations sets the tone of a society in danger. How media reports about events and situations influences the way people form their opinion and how people develop their worldview.

3.1.1 The importance of representation

Tiemeijer (2017) approaches the concept of polarization by means of indicating social cleavages in Dutch society. The study proposes a diagnostic instrument for the qualification of a cleavage on three different dimensions: **1. differentiation** - the extent to which objective differences exist between groups (e.g., income or health), **2. identification** - the extent to which people identify with one of the distinguished groups and **3. representation** - the extent to which the distinction between these groups is suggested by politics and media as such, figure 3.1. The higher the distinctions between groups score on these dimensions, the more reason there is to speak of a social cleavage. The third dimension of representation is most relevant for this thesis and therefore elaborated on in the next paragraphs.

The concern here is that **if social groups develop such strong different interpretations of reality, there is no basis for agreement anymore**. If people fundamentally disagree on basic facts (e.g., "Does climate change exist?", "Is poverty due to your own fault?"), politics and society lose their problem-solving capacity (Tiemeijer, 2017). Representation is a basis for agreement on issues and knows three levels:

Coverage: there are real existing differences between groups, but those are hardly or not visible on important forums of representation.

Correspondence (desired): differences in society 'proportionate' on relevant forums, so there is a certain fit between reality and representation.

Overdetermination: one representation becomes so dominant that it replaces all others. Everything is perceived and interpreted as expressions of one central us-them opposition. For example, in the United States, the contrast between conservatives and liberals is so dominant that everything is given meaning from that frame.

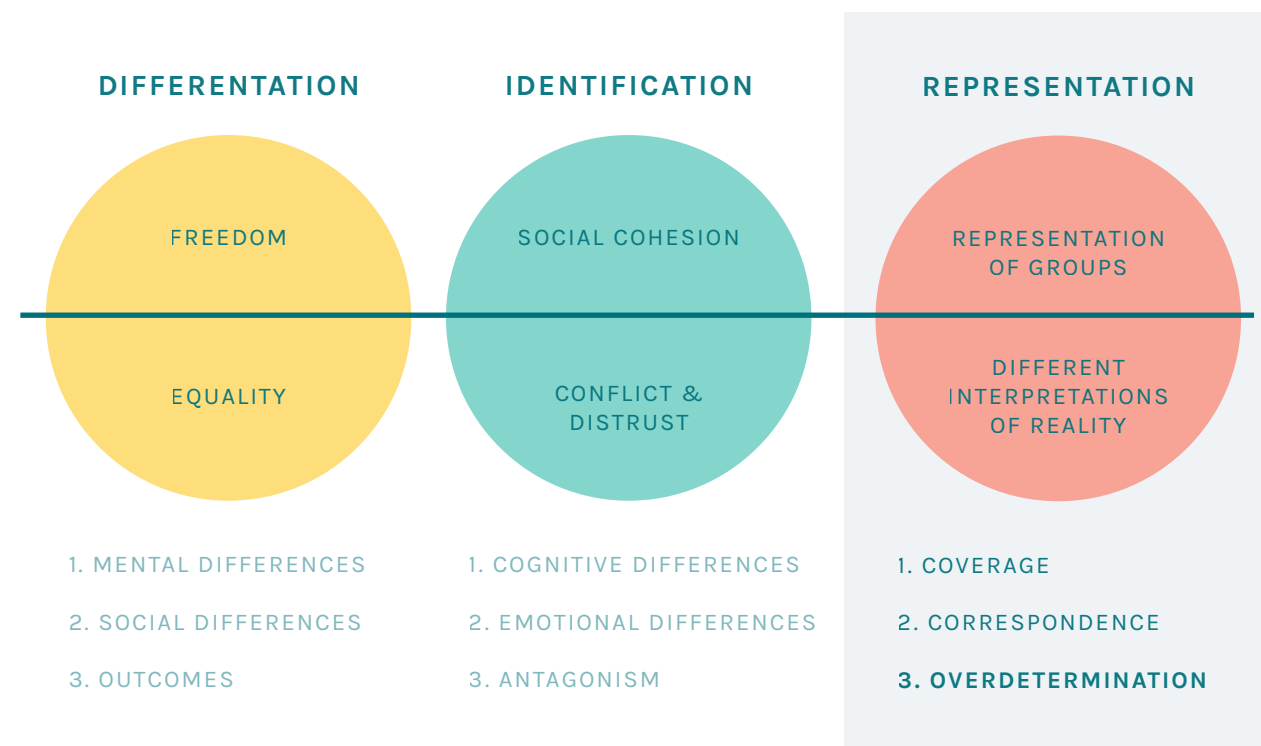


Figure 3.1 | Qualitification of a social cleavage on three dimensions

3.2

The influence of media on diverging worldviews

3.2.1 Causes of diverging worldviews

Media channels are the pipelines through which citizens learn about issues outside their immediate life space. Moreover, media introduce information and viewpoints that foster (dis)agreement, discussion, and democracy. Not surprisingly, the news media are central influences on individuals' attitudes, cognitions, and behaviours (Moy, Tewksbury & Rinke, 2016). **The mission of media and science is to find true facts**, in which accuracy is required. However, the representations of reality that social groups account to be true can vary widely and sometimes have nothing to do with the facts. Three factors influence the agreement on 'what is true' (Tiemeijer, 2017):

1. Psychological: motivated reasoning

Human perception and interpretation are driven not only by 'accuracy goals' but also by 'directional goals', which explain the psychological need to arrive at a certain desired conclusion (Kunda, 1990). People mainly observe things that are in agreement with their feelings and related goals. In psychology, this is known as **motivated reasoning** (Kunda, 1990). Offering reliable, factual, and balanced information could actually lead to a hardening of one's viewpoint and **attitude polarization**.

- A) Due to motivated reasoning, factual information is not always perceived as how it was meant.
- B) Perception and interpretation can be driven and distorted by pre-existing beliefs and goals.

2. Sociological: symbolic society

According to Elchardus (2009), we live in a **symbolic society** in which our thinking, feeling, and acting is determined by **producers of symbolic content, in particular education and the media**. Education and media exert their influence through perception- and interpretation schemes, generation of desires, shaping of self-images, and spreading symbol structures, such as stories, scripts, and rolls. Although people's social origin plays a role, the type of symbolic content that is consumed influences which route one will take through distinguished socialization spaces (e.g., the lower social class often implies lower education, watching commercial broadcast, etc.)

- A) This creates **interpretative communities** (Fish, 1980), that exist of groups of people that developed common ways of selection, perception, and interpretation of symbol systems - based on education, media, and biography.

- B) Due to digitalisation, group forming increased. It became easier to find like-minded people and close off people with other opinions. This fostered divergence of representations and worldviews, by strengthening each other in a common perspective (Schkade et al., 2007) and can lead to **group polarization**: groups becoming more extreme in their viewpoints.

3. Political: the message of politicians

Politics are a social system that spreads representations of society that influence what someone considers to be true. This makes politics itself an interpretive community through policy texts, speeches, and media appearances.

- A) If someone strongly identifies with a certain political party, **the party is an important authority for 'what is the truth'**. Even when someone is less politically involved, the words and deeds of politicians are important cues. People will judge the pronunciations of politicians of their own political party less critically.
- B) As the parliament should be a representation of society, the party constellation already suggests certain group distinctions. However, this constellation could not match reality. If certain themes or conflicts gain enough support, it can change the existing party configuration (e.g., green parties that arose in the seventies, populist parties around 2000).

According to Tiemeijer (2017), the causes of diverging worldviews are manifested in psychology (motivated reasoning), sociology (interpretative communities) and politics (media appearances, and representation of society in the parliament) (figure 3.2). These factors influence the way we perceive and interpret facts and can lead to overdetermination (figure 3.1).

On the next page, further elaboration is given on media factors influencing polarization, found in literature.

WHAT WE SEE

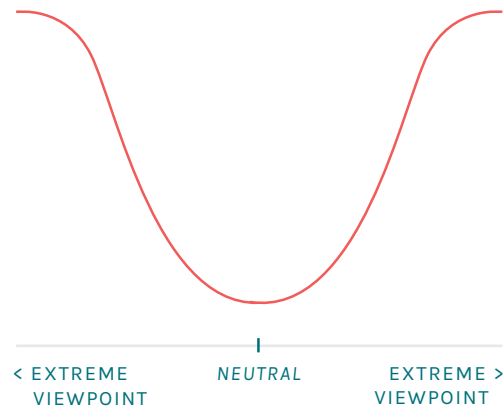


Figure 3.2 | Our perception of extremity in viewpoints often does not match reality

4. Spiral of silence

Next to motivated reasoning, the spiral of silence theory explains another psychological concept that might affect one's perception of the world as well. The spiral of silence theory states that individuals have a fear of isolation, which results from the idea that a social group or society in general, might isolate, neglect or exclude members due to the members' opinions (Noelle-Neumann, 1974). This fear for isolation consequently leads to remaining silent instead of voicing opinions. Media is an important factor that relates to the perception of the dominant idea and the freedom people feel to deviate themselves from the dominant idea.

>> The fear of deviating from the dominant idea, as proposed in media, might lead to people remaining silent. This could result in more attention for people who dare to speak up (the pushers) than for the ones who doubt (the silent).

3.2.2 Influences from media practices

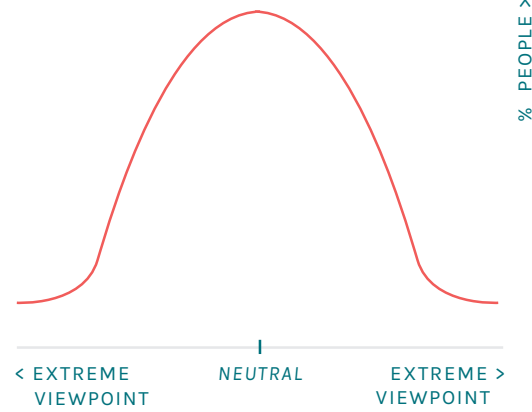
In addition to previously discussed factors, some concrete media practices influence the possibility of diverging worldviews as well.

5. Concepts in news reporting

Moy et al (2016) addresses three theories that shape collective understanding of how individuals perceive and respond to their political and social worlds: agenda-setting, priming, and framing.

Agenda-setting refers to the ability of the mass media to signal to the public what is important. By providing differential levels of coverage to specific issues, the media shape individuals' perceptions of the relative importance and salience of these issues. The arrival of digital media has strengthened agenda-setting: unlike hard-copy newspapers - which can surprise readers with unexpected headlines or compelling photographs as they are forced to turn the page - newspaper websites are more linear, organizing stories on topic and importance.

THE REAL SITUATION



The **priming process** consists of two stages:

1) information received through a media channel activates pre-existing related knowledge in the mind of the receiver, 2) this knowledge, now more accessible, is more likely to be used in interpreting and evaluating subsequent information. A media priming effect occurs if the receiver applies primed (activated) information to new information when someone otherwise would not have done this.

Priming effects primarily depend on political preference and trust in news sources. The effects appear to be strongest if a prime resonates with one's political preferences. For instance, an environment prime will generally have a stronger effect on liberals than on conservatives (Moy, 2016). Also, if people have high trust in a media source, they are more likely to integrate a primed concept with their existing beliefs and attitudes.

Framing refers to selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way to promote certain aspects of the topic. The framing of news stories influences the audience's understanding of issues and problems. Chapter 4 elaborates on the concept of framing and the effect on emotions and opinion-forming.

Right of reply

It is the common opinion that the media should show the contrasts on topics (Brandsma, 2019). 'Pro and con' and 'right of reply' are general used concepts in news reporting, providing a stage to the pushers and the joiners (framework of polarization, p31). Staging a dialogue on television about a 'hot topic' is often more interesting if we see two opposing extremes. The bridge builders (television show hosts), with the best intentions, provide the material (setting) for a fire, the pushers (guests) deliver fuel and the media act as the catalyst of polarization by spreading the fuel.

McCarty (2019) proposes three ways in which the overall media environment can contribute to polarization and partisan sorting among voters: selective exposure, persuasion, and disengagement. These three influences are elaborated on including additional findings from literature.

6. Selective exposure

Tiemeijer (2017) proposes interpretative communities as a cause of diverging worldviews. One aspect of an interpretative community is selective exposure, in which **the audience can self-select their sources of information**. Selective exposure consists of two elements: 1) information and sources are selected based on existing perspectives, preferences, views and thoughts and 2) information that fits well with existing ideas is accepted while conflicting information is ignored. The latter is also referred to as "**cognitive dissonance reduction**". This will rather lead to confirmation or even strengthening of existing views than being subjected to a diversity of viewpoints (Bovens et al., 2014).

In the United States, media and think tanks are strongly segregated. This causes people to not only live in another world but also see other worlds (McCarty, 2019). Digital media, particularly social media, encourage **social polarization**. For instance, new media played a vital role in the political Arab uprisings in 2011. Media outlets catered to political niches, caused Islamists and anti-Islamists to watch entirely different sets of television stations and twitter feeds. This caused the consolidation of democratic institutions to fail (Lynch, 2015).

>> Selective exposure is caused by the individual choice of preferred information and information sources, the catering of media outlets into (political) niches, but also by digital media methods, such as recommender systems, that create so-called 'filter bubbles'.

Algorithms and filter bubbles

Social media websites like Facebook support clustering friends and acquaintances into homophilous circles.

Machine learning algorithms tailor information to the user: news is directed towards people's pre-existing (political) beliefs. Besides, social news sites gather recommendations from their users and rank order the results for others to see. Similarly, bookmarking or file sharing sites point users to the most recommended or viewed items. The algorithms create the so-called **filter bubbles** (exposure to tailored information) and **echo chambers** (clusters of like-minded people) (Webster, 2011).

7. Persuasion

Ideological outlets persuade voters to accept more extreme positions or adopt positions on specific issues that are more ideologically consistent. Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.) can automatically highlight media among large networks of acquaintances. Even online versions of traditional media now point to their most popular stories (Thorson, 2008). Many articles also feature a row of icons that will flag the piece to your preferred social medium (Webster, 2011). The highlighting of headlines to stimulate 'clicks' is referred to as clickbait: content whose main purpose is to attract attention and encourage visitors to click on a link to a particular webpage. Clickbait has been implicated in the rapid spread of rumours and misinformation online (Chen, Conroy & Rubin, 2015).

8. Disengagement from hard news

Changes to the economics of journalism that have reduced the coverage of certain aspects of issues may be to blame. People disengage from issues as they take advantage of other media options such as **entertainment and soft news**, to avoid hard news and politics (McCarty, 2019).

1. **The expansion of tv** contributed to this by causing a drop in the consumption of newspapers and radio.
2. **Expanded reach of national newspapers:** highly educated people read less local newspapers, whereas lower educated read more local newspapers in which national and international topics are less covered.

Figure 3.3 | Selective exposure, influenced by people's personal choices



SUBJECTS INFORMATION ON THE WEB

9. Increasing distrust in media

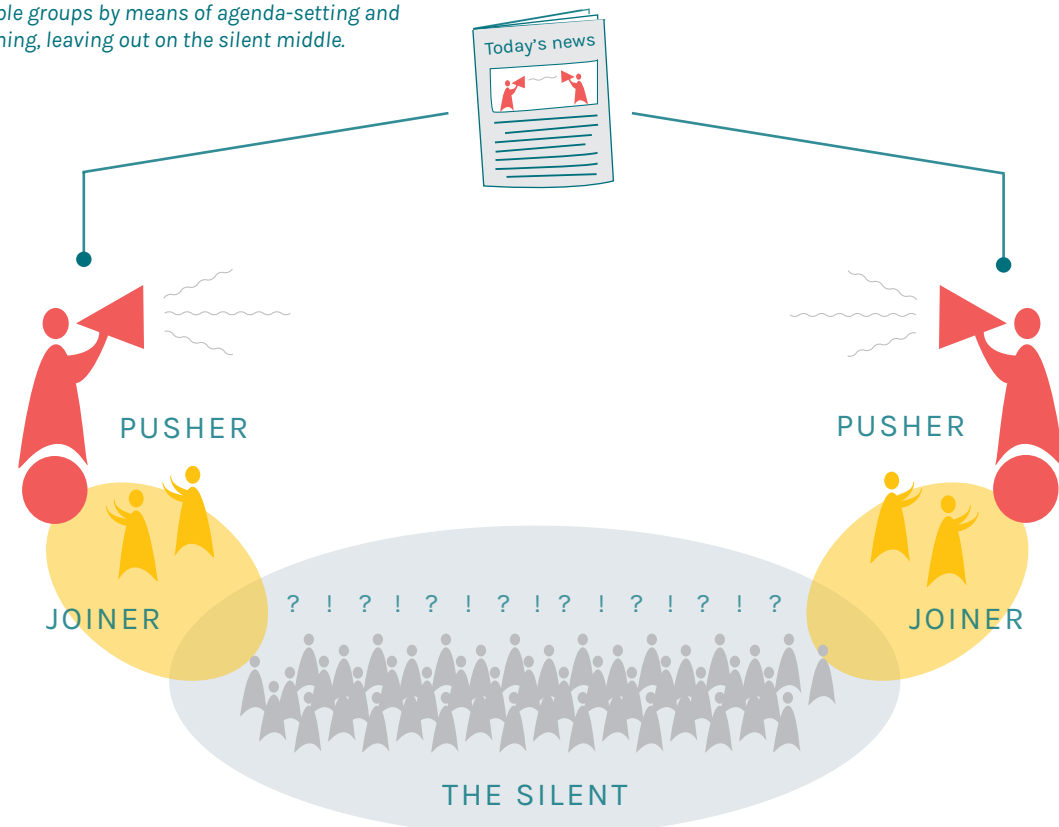
The trustworthiness of sources that aim for objectivity - sciences and mainstream news media - are increasingly being undermined (Oreskes en Conway 2011, Mooney 2006). This has to do with the rise of the global concern about fake news.

Fake news can be defined as fabricated information that mimics news media content in form but not in the organisational process or intent. In turn, fake-news outlets lack the news media's editorial norms and processes for ensuring the accuracy and credibility of information. (Lazer et al, 2018). Fake news might have huge global effects: according to Bovet & Makse (2019), 25% of tweets from 2,2 million users in the five months preceding election day in the United States spread either fake or extremely biased news. According to Allcott & Gentskow (2018), from the known false news stories that appeared in three months before the election, those favouring Trump were shared a total of 30 million times on Facebook, while those favouring Clinton were shared 8 million times (Allcott & Gentskow, 2018).

Misleading real news

According to Rob Wijnberg, founder of the Correspondent, real news is as misleading as fake news and misleads on a more fundamental level. 'Real news' is usually what stands out and revolves around the most visible events. Yet, an exploded bus can be filmed, the suppression of everyday freedom can not. News gives a wrong image of probability, history, progress, development, and relevance (Wijnberg, 2018).

Figure 3.4 | News media expose the most visible groups by means of agenda-setting and framing, leaving out on the silent middle.



"People also react more aggressively towards each other. They think both they are right and that makes me think that opposites are getting bigger."

Quote | woman, 55 years old (Ridder et al, 2019)

Additionally, due to blurred boundaries between news, fake news and advertisements, it becomes more difficult to form a well-founded opinion (Wennekers & de Haan, 2017)

3.2.3 The main problem

A polarizing image in the representations of reality by media is highly undesirable. When certain groups are missing in the parliament, the solution is available: the chosen representatives need to be informed as entirely as possible about the concerns and wishes of the left-out group and take these visibly into decision-making. Yet, the solution is less clear when social groups can not achieve consensus about basal facts. Normally, this can be counterbalanced by telling real facts, provided by authoritative institutions. However, when identity, concerns, and imaging become too intertwined, and sources' trustworthiness declines, spreading neutral information does not help anymore or even leads to further polarization.



Figure 3.5 | The Daily Fake News (source: Freepik)

3.3

Media consumption

As the importance of representation and the influence of media on the occurrence of polarization are researched, the question is how citizens are informed by news, through which channels and what sources and how this differentiates between groups of people. This chapter sets out news media consumption in the Netherlands.

Now that everyone can distribute information via the internet, for instance, by posting on social media or blogs, the importance of reliable information is increasing (Wennekers & de Haan, 2017). Editorial offices of newspapers, magazines, radio, and television programs are still seen as gatekeepers of reliability. However, the use of news media differs significantly among citizens. This has social consequences concerning informing citizens and the development of public opinion. This chapter discusses the extent to which Dutch people are informed about news and through which channels.

3.3.1 Digitisation of the media landscape

The Dutch media landscape has long been characterized by clear social differences. At the time of the pillarization, every social group had its own place of residence and its own newspaper (Bakker and Scholten, 2011). When journalism professionalised, journalists started to follow the pillarization columns less. At the end of the eighties, the Dutch public got access to new channels. Due to digitisation and news platforms, the supply and flexibility of media consumption strongly increased (Bos, Kruikemeier & de Vreese, 2014). Especially the increasing popularity of online platforms like Facebook, Youtube and Twitter had a great influence on the daily media consumption. News is gradually becoming more consumed on the internet. In no other country than the Netherlands so many people have access to highspeed internet and make use of social media (Bos et al., 2014). However, 54% of online media users still uses traditional media for news, such as television and newspapers.

3.3.2 Polarized as the United States?

Due to this change in the Dutch media landscape, the question is whether the Netherlands is heading in the direction of the United States, where the media landscape is highly polarized. With fear for decreasing quality of the public debate, the political dividing line between the conservatives and the liberals has received considerable attention. The cultural war between conservatives and liberals in the United States is fueled by a strong partial media system (Bos et al., 2014). Conservative America uses completely different sources than the liberals and therefore, receives a different picture of reality. A wide media offer allows people to follow different media diets.

From a democratic point of view, this could be worrying, as one of the main functions of mass media is to inform citizens about political developments and events (Bos et al, 2014). Since the vast majority of society does not regularly come in direct contact with politics daily, the media are the central link between citizen and politics. Therefore, it is important to know what information citizens choose or neglect. Partial exposure to differentiating standpoints between citizens touches the quality of democracy.

3.3.3 General media consumption

On average, Dutch people spend 3,5 hours a day on media, involving reading newspapers, watching television, listening to the radio, surfing the internet, gaming, and searching for information (Bos et al, 2014). If we add our passive media use as a side activity, media consumption is one of our most important activities in daily life. The percentage of people that reads a newspaper weekly has decreased, but compared to other countries, the Dutch still relatively often read the newspaper. Every day 3,4 billion paid newspapers and 1,2 billion free newspapers are handed out.

3.3.3 Media profiles

According to the empirical research of Bos et al (2014), media consumers can be categorized into 4 groups with different media use patterns. The characteristics of these groups are explained below.

Minimalists (66%)

Minimalists consume media the least of all groups (on average less than once a week). This group hardly watches current affairs programs or reads a newspaper. The minimalists do not completely evade news: they do watch television news programs on an average of two days a week (RTL News, NOS Journaal) and follow online news, nu.nl or traditional newspaper websites. Minimalists are less interested in politics than the other media consumers.

Public News Consumers (22%)

The public news consumers watch the NOS Journaal nearly every day. They also watch current affairs programs such as Nieuwsuur and EenVandaag the most of all groups, on average every other day.

Popular News Consumers (6.7%)

The third group is small (6.7% of the research sample) and distinguishes itself by watching commercial channels the most of all groups. They also stand out for their frequent use of free newspapers and read the Telegraaf the most compared to the other groups.

Omnivores (6)

Omnivores use all news and current affairs media at least once a week. Besides, they read the Volkskrant or NRC. Omnivores watch the NOS Journaal often, make the most use of online media, are relatively 'left' in the political spectrum but also read the Telegraaf.

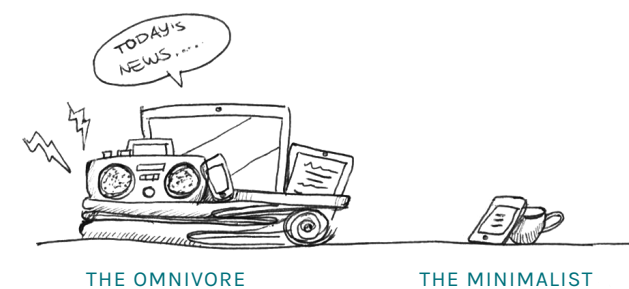


Figure 3.6 | Differing media diets

3.3.4 Dividing lines

Several dividing lines in the use of media channels and news sources are discussed here, based on entertainment preference, education level, age, and political party preferences.

Entertainment preference

Prior (2007) states that the 'entertainment preference' creates the first dividing line between citizens that avoid news and those that search for news and information. Political selective exposure arises here if some prefer entertainment and others prefer news and current affairs.

Education

In general, newspapers are read by lower as well as higher educated people but television is more popular among lower educated. In general, television is the most popular medium. Television consumption seems to increase: from an average of 11 hours a week in 2006 to 14 hours in 2011. People also increasingly watch delayed television via mobile devices. At the same time, higher educated make more use of online media. Lower educated tend to prefer popular, **soft news** – incidents, personalities, and entertainment and a more dramatic and sensational tone. On average, higher educated choose **hard news** more – which is socially relevant and served profoundly with a rational, impersonal and non-emotional tone. Intermediate educated people combine the use patterns of both groups.

Political preferences

More right-voters choose popular, soft news programs over hard news. Besides, newspapers do have a slight political colour: the Volkskrant is more left-progressive, the NRC left-liberal and the AD and the Telegraaf more to the right (Bos et al, 2014).

Age

The biggest differences in the use of news media are related to age (Bos et al., 2014). Only a quarter of the teenagers uses news media every day, whereas older cohorts read and watch public broadcasting regularly. People older than 50 spend relatively much time (about an hour) on reading the newspaper, compared to other age groups. Remarkably, the same pattern occurs when reading digital newspapers. Classic media are still dominant, but the new media will gradually prevail. The older group is increasingly being replaced by younger, poorly reading and commercial channel watching cohorts (Huysmans et al., 2004). From the media profiles, the public news consumers and omnivores are in general older and higher educated.

Online and offline media

No dividing line exists between people who only use online media and people who only use offline media, as everyone uses online media at least two days a week. Furthermore, the NOS is a binding factor between groups: the broadcaster plays a central role in a fragmented media landscape. In every media profile, this news organisation is in the top three of the most used sources. 75% of media consumers watches the Journaal at least once a week.

3.3.5 Moment of consumption

Today's 24-hour programming allows people to consume media anytime. Yet, the collective rhythm in people's viewing behaviour has not completely disappeared: the evening is still the most favourite time to watch television (Wennekers & de Haan, 2017). At 8 p.m., a quarter of the Dutch citizens watches news on television, where information is often presented with interpretation and a story. The morning is the most popular moment for reading the newspaper and people listen to news radio throughout the day. Rad often the first touchpoint for news (Olij, 2016). News sites and apps are fairly evenly distributed over the day and evening and mainly used for facts and background.

3.3.6 Media use capabilities

According to Wennekers & de Haan (2017), 6% of the Dutch population indicates to be (very) poor skilled in using the internet as an information source and 10% thinks their skills are not bad, but not good either. Among this 6%, elderly, lower educated and women are overrepresented. Skills concerned information, use, social and (content) creation abilities. The vast majority considers themselves to be well able to search for information online.

What can not be verified is to what extend Dutch citizens could avoid filter bubbles, recognize fake news, can adequately protect their privacy and reject or ignore advertisements. For policy-making, citizens should be well-informed about news and it is essential that they can defend themselves. Therefore policy should keep paying attention to people's digital skills. The resilience of the Dutch must increase: individuals will need to have more control over their media use as well (Wennekers & de Haan, 2017).

3.3.7 Conclusions

1. Selecting information that matches existing views

Since the depillarization, the Dutch media landscape has become very diverse, making it easier than ever to select from a variety of media sources and channels without coming into contact with political information. Likewise, it has become easier to select information that matches existing views.

2. Minimalist media consumers prevail

Different media profiles can be indicated, of which the minimalists are the biggest, with 66% of all media users. Minimalists use the least amount of news media, but there is no division between people that use only online media and people that only use offline media. Everyone uses media sometimes.

3. Small dividing lines

Selective exposure and dividing lines in media use do exist in the Netherlands but are significantly smaller than in the United States. Influencing factors on media use are age, education level, and partly political preferences. Age is the most influencing factor.

4. Attention to digital abilities

A gradual shift towards new media is present; adolescents already use online media more than the traditional media. The shift will go faster for younger age groups. Attention must be paid to people's digital abilities, especially for the elderly and lower educated.

3.3.8 Design potential

Maintain an overarching source or binding factor

In a fragmented media landscape, more selective exposure will occur, which is a risk for clear and unambiguous distribution of information. An overarching source would be able to reach all citizens, such as the national broadcaster NOS.

A wide audience, but specific subgroups

As all citizens do use news media, news media channels provide great potential to reach a large audience. However, information and design should be tailored to different media profiles. Their exact sources and channels need to be investigated.

Capitalizing on the right moment

The different media channels meet several needs, which vary according to the time of the day. Newspapers are relatively often read in the morning, online news media and radio are mostly consumed during daytime and television is primarily watched in the evening. A potential design should be targeted at the right moment.

3.4

Current depolarization attempts

Although media organisations probably do not frame depolarization attempts as such, several organisations already make an effort to depolarize. Initiatives range from ways to involve citizens in news coverage to a more nuanced way of presenting the information. Some remarkable, convenient or well-known initiatives are presented and analysed here.

3.4.1 Goal

Depolarization can be defined in several ways. It can involve a focus on a more realistic representation of society's perspectives, giving voice to 'the silent middle', or a more nuanced way of presenting information. The goal of this study is to get insight into the best aspects of current depolarization practices. The conclusions will be used to form a design vision and serve as input for ideation on solutions for depolarization with PrEmo.

3.4.2 Method

During the literature review, several websites were encountered that can be addressed as a depolarization attempt. Also by expert interviews and following news, initiatives to depolarize were found. These initiatives were analysed on the following aspects: reach, participation possibility, nuance, low-effort, and clarity.

3.4.3 Analysis of initiatives

In this paragraph, the analysed initiatives are given a short introduction.

Kialo

Kialo is a platform that represents structured discussions on topics, by organizing the pro's and cons per statement. Thereby, every pro and con statement has its own pro's and cons. The upper statements are decomposed in pro's and con's until the contributions stop. Everyone can contribute.

The bias barometer

The bias barometer indicates the political nature of the articles you have read. It tracks whether the articles are liberal, neutral or conservative, based on the news sources.

Eenvandaag opinion panel

Eenvandaag has an opinion panel in which every citizen can participate. Currently, around 50.000 people are involved. The Eenvandaag regularly proposes a statement on which one can agree or disagree. The result is displayed as 'Figure Today' (e.g., 'success in your job a factor for happiness? 51% agrees.').

Election results

Several websites offer visualisations of election results. The incentive is low: if you have voted, you probably like to discover what the rest of your country has voted, to benchmark yourself in the political landscape. As most citizens vote, the results include not only the pushers. The threshold is low, but reasons behind voting remain unclear. Mapping voting results on location could polarize: 'Of course all the people from South-Holland again voted for political party X'.

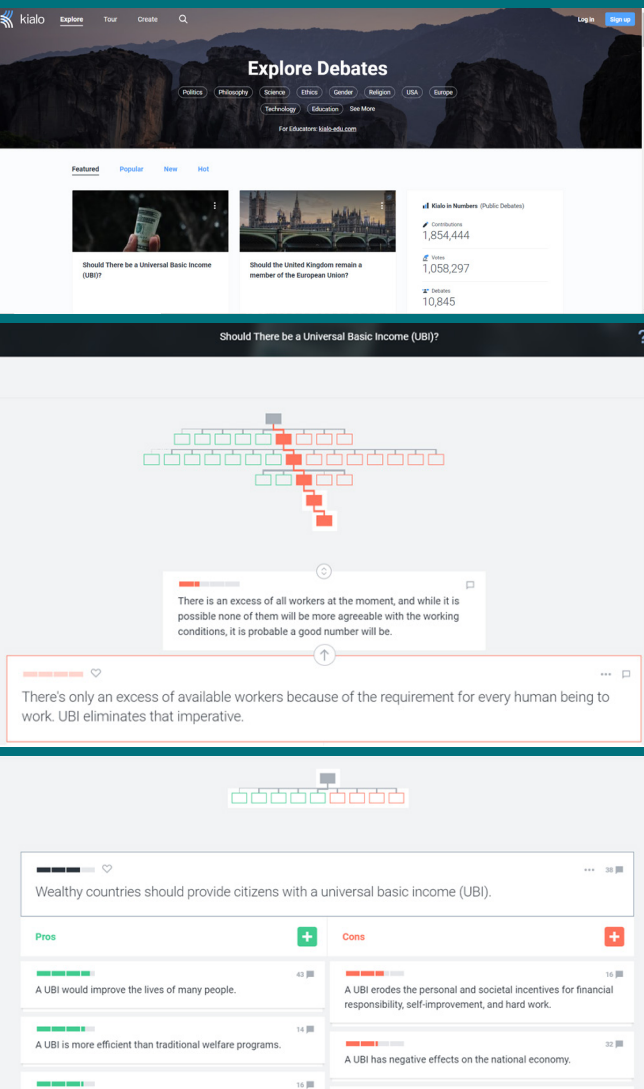
Votecompass

The Votecompass offers a survey to record your political views. After filling in, you can immediately explore your views compared to others. Quite some personal information is asked, such as zip code. The Votecompass is similar to the Dutch Stemwijzer and Kieswijzer and gives voting advice.

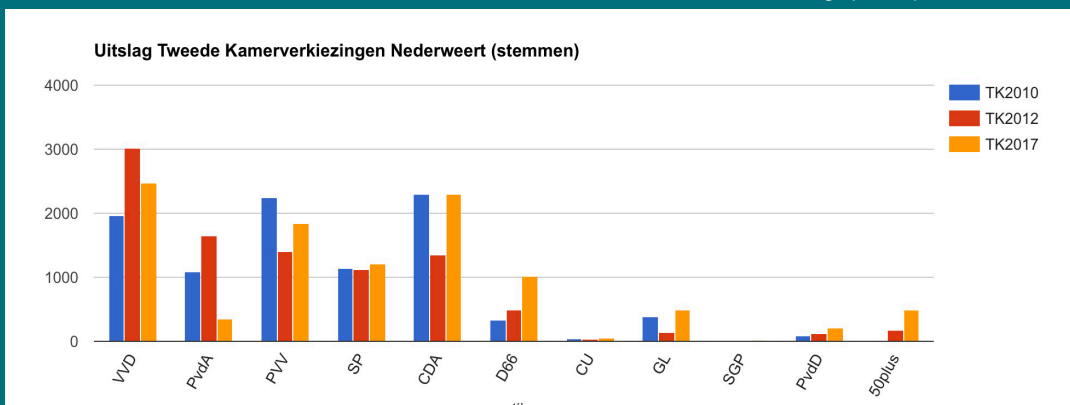
ISideWith

ISideWith is an American platform that involves a quiz that matches your political preferences with a politician. The quiz involves statements on which one can answer 'yes' or 'no', but also several more nuanced stances such as 'Neither, I am satisfied with the current amount of spending' or 'Yes, but with public subsidy'. Besides, at every statement, one can click 'learn more', 'discuss', 'stats' and 'news'. 'Learn more' will provide information on the statement, 'Discuss' links to a discussion platform, 'Stats' shows current statistics on the particular statement, answers categorized on state, city, income, education and ethnicity. 'News' leads to news about the topic. It further provides information on the current political state and debate and election results of the past 20 years.

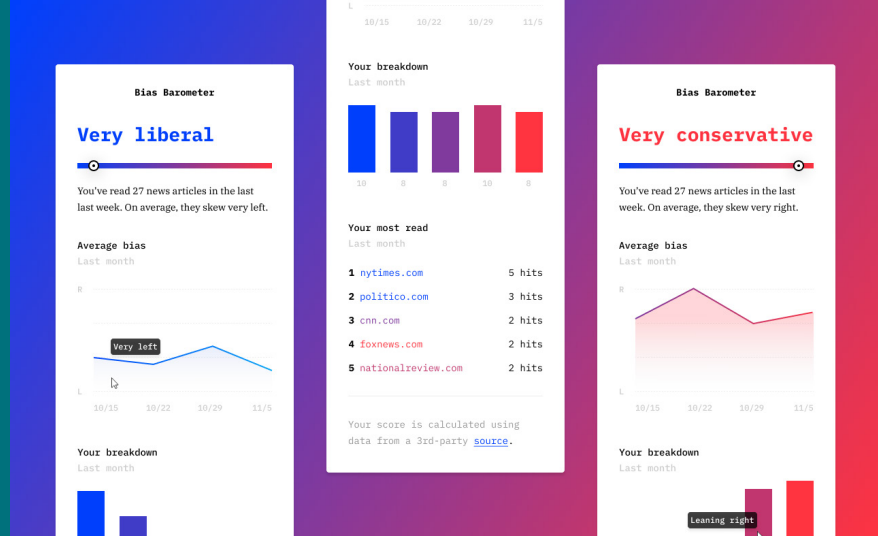
Figures of the selection of initiatives are presented on the next page.



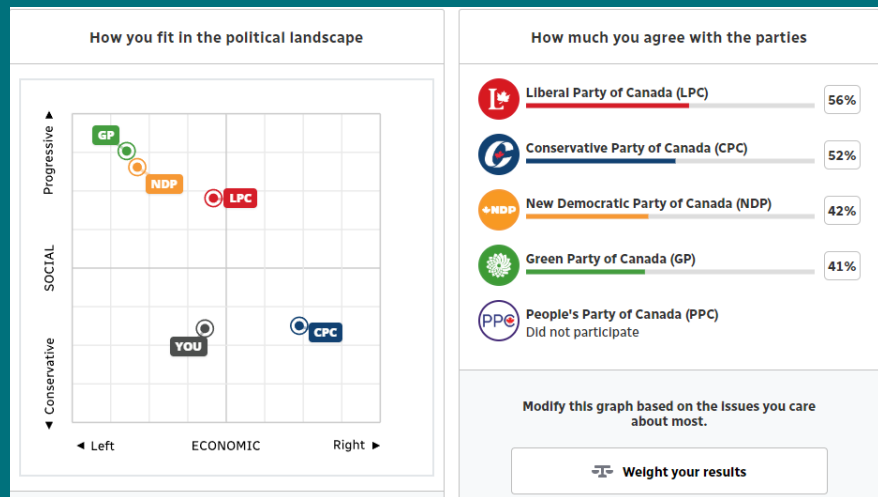
Kialo



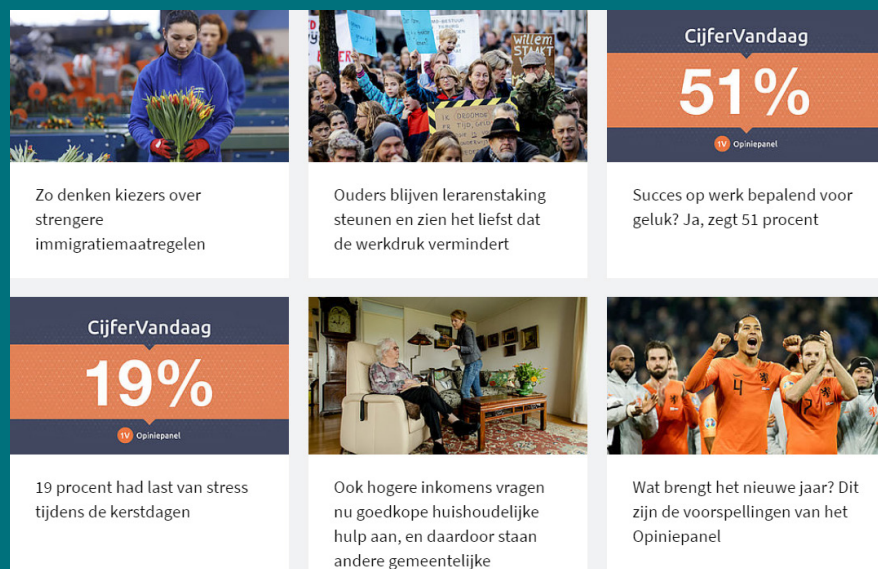
Election results



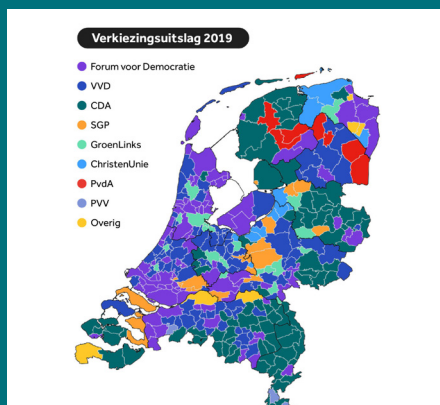
Bias Barometer



Vote Compass



EenVandaag opinionpanel



ISideWith (all figures below)



NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES

Should the President be able to authorize military force against Al-Qaeda without Congressional approval?

[LEARN MORE](#) | [DISCUSS](#) | [STATS](#) | [NEWS](#)

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other stances

Should the US assassinate suspected terrorists in foreign countries?

[LEARN MORE](#) | [DISCUSS](#) | [STATS](#) | [NEWS](#)

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other stances

Nuance

- The structure and amount of comments on Kialo make the discussion very nuanced and rational. Arguments go into depth on both sides. Votecompass only shows results on the left-right scale.
- Compared to EenVandaag, ISideWith provides many nuanced answers to statements on top of ‘yes’ and ‘no’. Election result pages categorize results on place of residence but more nuance can not be found.

Low-effort

- On Kialo and ISideWith many topics can be found, which makes it easy to find the ones you are personally interested in. However, unravelling all statements takes time and motivation, especially on a platform like Kialo, where all results are verbal.
- ISideWith and Votecompass’s main attribute is the vote quiz, which requires some time to fill in. For Kialo, it is not required to participate. The Bias Barometer is quite easy to install and it automatically analyses your news sources. EenVandaag requires making an account and is not particularly inviting. However, it is understandable through clear statements. Also, checking election results is easy: results are shown immediately and are on a basic level.

Clarity

The platform Kialo visualises your ‘path’ through the pro’s and con’s you have clicked: this makes it easy to track how ‘deep’ you are in the statement arguments. Also, election results are visual and simple: votes are shown on a map, or per political party. All initiatives are quite clear, especially structure and graphics (Kialo, Vote Compass) help to show the user what he or she is looking at.

3.4.5 A final note

Platforms that are normally not suited for nuance, such as Twitter, can still be used for depolarization: to show nuances or the other side of a topic. An example of this is how people try to argue constructively and with reasonableness.

Furthermore, also personal portraits of people that are normally not visible in news (silent middle) in news media, interviewing people on the street, intern public research and constructive journalism that aims to offer perspective, contribute to depolarization attempts.

3.4.6 Conclusions

From analyzing the initiatives, a couple of main conclusions can be made.

1. A clear benefit must be stated

If the outcome of the program or method concerns your personal life in any way, the incentive is bigger. A depolarization design should contain a clear benefit: why would I dive into nuance? Why would I check out the results of society’s opinion? None of the platforms clearly state the benefit(s) for the user.

2. Visual guidance

To *seduce* a user to explore opinions, statements or topics, the user must immediately know what he or she is looking at, and why. Graphics and structure in presenting information help to obtain results quickly. Visual guidance is more efficient than text. Also, a tour (Kialo) that introduces a new user to the platform, provides visual guidance. ISideWith fulfils user’s needs such as ‘obtaining knowledge’ and ‘room for conversation’ by providing options like ‘learn’ and ‘discuss’, but does not promote these features.

3. An account should contain privileges

Creating an account creates a threshold to participate. Therefore, it should be clear why one would participate, e.g., checking your own results over time and positioning yourself to others. A depolarization design could also tailor information to the preferences of a person, which helps a person to efficiently find information of their interest.

4. Nuance in a low-effort manner

Nuance and low-effort are often connected in a trade-off: the more nuance, the more effort. However, nuance can be provided in a low-effort manner if the right information for the right person is presented immediately and if information comes in steps. For example, by unfolding layers of nuance by diving deeper into the topic gradually. An immediate information overload is not inviting for the user.

5. Show impact through contributions

Kialo, ISideWith and Vote Compass state their participants or number of contributions. This increases the perception of reliability and encourages the user to participate as well. However, attention must be paid to possible prejudices that can be reinforced, e.g., ‘of course, Limburg voted for ...’.

6. Because, but, however

Showing openness on the other side helps people to see nuance and create an open environment where people are encouraged to share their opinion reasonably. Highlighting comments such as ‘but, however, I also see’ could support people empathize with others better.

SUMMARY

3. The media effect

Importance of representation

The main concern here is that **if social groups develop such strong different interpretations of reality, there is no basis for agreement anymore**. If people fundamentally disagree on basic facts (“Does climate change exist?” “Is poverty due to your own fault?”), politics and society lose their problem-solving capability. Representation is a basis for agreement on issues and knows three levels:

- 1. Coverage:** visibility of differences in society.
- 2. Correspondence:** fit between reality and representation.
- 3. Overdetermination:** overrepresentation of one idea, that becomes so dominant that everything is given meaning from that frame.

Causes of diverging worldviews

1. Motivated reasoning (psychology): people mainly observe things that are in agreement with their feelings and related goals and interpret things in a way that only supports the desired conclusion.

2. Symbolic society (sociology): especially media and education influence the representations of reality one is confronted with, and the way one perceives and interprets facts.

3. Message and presentation of politicians: if someone strongly identifies with a certain political party, **the party is an important authority for ‘what is the truth’**. People will judge pronunciations of politicians of their own political party less critically and rather endorse them.

4. Concepts in news reporting: in using concepts that aim to show two, often extreme sides, the media act as a catalysts of polarization.

5. Spiral of silence theory: media is an important factor that relates people’s perception of the dominant idea. When one disagrees with the dominant idea or has a neutral or moderate opinion, fear for social isolation could lead to remaining silent instead of voicing opinions.

6. Selective exposure: selective exposure is caused by the individual’s choice of information sources, sorting of media outlets into (political) niches, and by digital media methods that create the so-called ‘filter bubbles’.

7. Persuasion: ideological outlets persuade voters to accept more extreme positions or adopt positions on specific issues that are more ideologically consistent.

8. Disengagement from hard news: people disengage from issues as they take advantage of other media options such as entertainment and soft news, to avoid hard news and politics.

9. Increasing distrust in media: due to the rise of the global concern about fake news, the trustworthiness of sources that aim for objectivity - sciences and mainstream news media - are increasingly being undermined. This can increase disengagement with news.

News media consumption

On average, Dutch people spend 3,5 hours a day on media. Due to digitisation, the supply and flexibility of the media offer strongly enlarged, allowing people to follow distinguished media diets. This has social consequences concerning how citizens are informed and the development of public opinion.

Concerns have arisen whether the Netherlands is heading in the same direction as the United States, in which the cultural war is fueled by a partial media system. This is not the case so far, although some small dividing lines on entertainment preference, education level and age exist. However, all media consumers use online media. Additionally, the national broadcaster NOS is in the top 3 of every media profile.

News is gradually becoming more consumed on the internet. Attention must be paid to citizen’s digital skills. 6% of the Dutch population indicates to be (very) poorly skilled in using the internet as an information source. It becomes increasingly important that citizens can defend themselves against filter bubbles, fake news, advertisements, and can adequately protect their privacy.

Current depolarization attempts

A selection of depolarization initiatives was analysed on five aspects: incentive, reach, participation possibility, nuance, low-effort and clarity. Conclusions for design are:

1. A clear benefit must be stated
2. Visual guidance to attract and clarify
3. An account should contain privileges
4. Nuance in a low-effort manner
5. Show impact through contributions
6. Address openness of ‘the other side’



04

Emotional awareness in news

This thesis explores the application of PrEmo on social themes. In order to understand how PrEmo could be applied and what 'emotional awareness' involves, scientific literature on emotions is analysed. In this chapter the essential knowledge behind emotions and underlying concerns is described (4.1), as well as the effect of media on the elicitation of emotions (4.2).

4.1
4.2

Emotions and concerns
Emotions evoked by news

Emotions and concerns

'How can PrEmo and the knowledge about emotions be applied to capture emotions and unlock underlying concerns on a social topic?' To design a canvas that could support and stimulate a more nuanced emotional discussion in the public debate, a significant understanding of emotions is essential. This chapter elaborates on emotion, its appraisal processes, and concerns.

4.1.1 Emotions

Emotions are central to human existence: all of our thoughts, motivations, and behaviours are enriched and influenced by our emotions (Desmet, 2013). People are likely never in a state entirely free from feeling, which means that all mental states, including thoughts and perceptions, are infused with affect (Halperin et al., 2015). Each separate emotion also involves a motivation to act, or withdraw from acting in a certain way, corresponding to the specific goals associated with the emotion. Emotions thus serve as powerful engines driving human behaviour in response to a range of stimuli (e.g., Arnold, 1960; Frijda, 1986).

Although emotion can be perceived as mysterious and perplexing, in the research field a variety of workable definitions for the complex phenomenon are proposed (Meiselman, 2016). Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) evaluated 92 definitions, of which several definitions emphasize different aspects of emotion. For instance, some have focused on the psychological aspects of emotions, others on the behaviours that result from emotions. As a result of the definition analysis, Kleinginna proposed the following definition:

"Emotions are gateways to what people really care for."

Citation | Frijda (1988)

"Emotion is a complex set of interactions among subjective and objective factors, mediated by neural/hormonal systems, which can (a) give rise to **affective experiences** such as feelings of arousal, pleasure/displeasure; (b) generate **cognitive processes** such as emotionally relevant perceptual effects, appraisals, labelling processes; (c) activate widespread **physiological adjustments** to the arousing conditions; and (d) lead to **behaviour** that is often, but not always, expressive, goal-directed, and adaptive."

According to this definition, emotion creates feelings, affects cognitive and physiological processes and eventually influences behaviour.

Sander (2013) states an emotion can be defined as an event-focused, two-step, fast process consisting of (1) relevance-based emotion **elicitation mechanisms** that (2) shape a multiple emotional **response** (i.e., action tendency, automatic reaction, expression and feeling).

This definition also addresses a *stimulus* that evokes emotion and takes *elicitation mechanisms* into account. These mechanisms and their effects on emotional response are presented in figure 4.2 (explained in paragraph 4.1.2). Emotion has a quick onset and emotion duration is brief, in which subsystems of the organism are influenced by an event considered relevant to an individual's needs, goals, and/or values. Frijda (1988) explains this in the 'law of concern': emotions arise in response to the individual's goals, motives or concerns.

4.1.2 The appraisal process

An appraisal is defined as a quick evaluation of a situation with respect to one's well-being (Frijda, 1986; Lazarus, 1991). Appraisal theories contribute to the understanding of mechanisms leading to the elicitation and the differentiation of emotions. During an appraisal process, the event's significance is determined. We can think of an appraisal as an answer to the question: 'what does this situation mean for my well-being?' A positive answer would elicit a positive emotion, a negative answer evokes an unpleasant emotion.

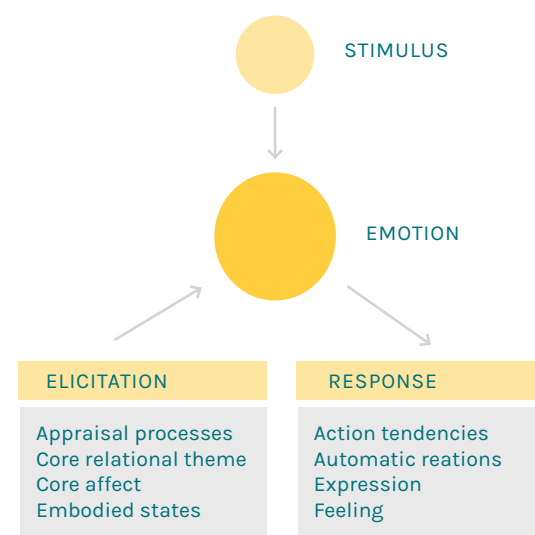


Figure 4.1 | Emotion is an event-focused, two-step fast process consisting of elicitation mechanisms and emotional responses. (Visualisation based on figure 1.1 from Meiselman, 2016)

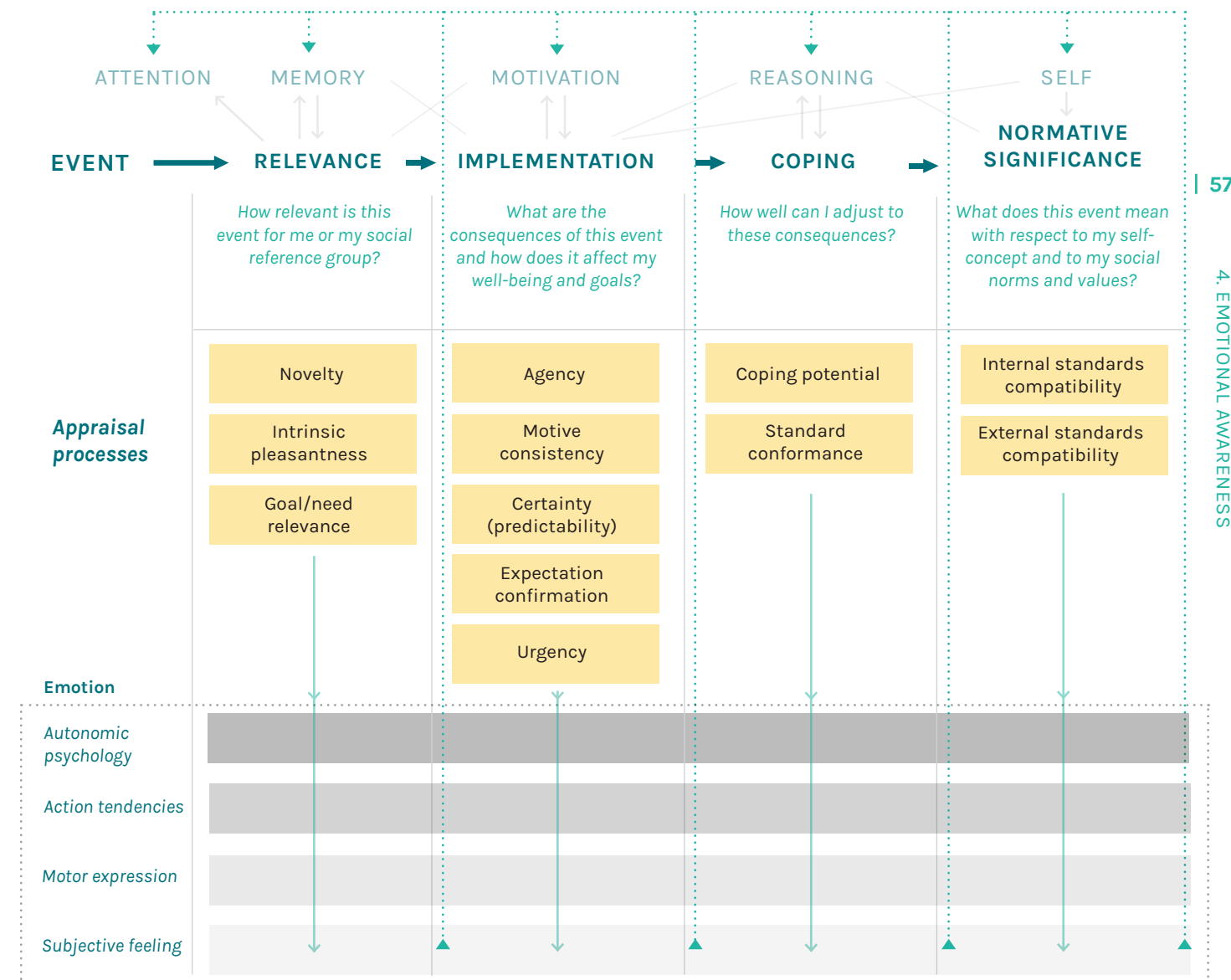


Figure 4.2 | Stages of emotion elicitation including appraisal components. (Visualisation based on figure 1.4 from Meiselman, 2016)

Appraisal components

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Motive consistency | Situation consistency with one's motives |
| 2. Intrinsic pleasantness | Direct sensorial pleasantness |
| 3. Expectation confirmation | If actual outcome of event confirms/violates an expectation |
| 4. Standard conformance | Responsibility for situation |
| 5. Agency | Relation to social norms and standards |
| 6. Coping potential | Whether one can handle/change aspects of situation |
| 7. Certainty | Certainty about event (hope/fear) |

Figure 4.3 | Appraisal components

Brosch and Sander (2013) proposed a cognitive process model of appraisals (figure 4.2). The appraisal process starts with an event. The individual evaluates step by step the event's relevance, the consequences (implementation), one's ability to make adjustments (coping) and what the event means to one's social norms and values (normative significance). The evaluation happens quickly and mostly unconscious. The process will lead to several response layers: autonomic psychology, action tendencies, motor expression (e.g., facial and bodily expressions),

and subjective feeling. Per step several appraisal components can be applied (figure 4.3) such as motive consistency - 'Is the situation consistent with my motives?', or certainty - 'Am I certain about this event?'. This model provides insight into how an event can elicit emotion in an individual, at what points and by what appraisal components.

4.1.3 Concerns

Emotions come up in response to events that are important to us, and the level of importance we address to the event - the importance we *appraise*. Emotions occur when a change is appraised as relevant to our personal concerns (Ben-Ze'ev, 2001). Every emotion hides a concern, which is, a more or less enduring disposition to prefer particular states of the world. Concerns can explain why we feel emotional about something, and what we are emotional about. We suffer when we lose someone or something we care about, we feel fascination when we come across something particularly interesting, we feel pride when we achieve something that we personally consider as success.

A hidden concern may be different between several appraisals of emotion. We feel joy as well as anger for many different reasons. Furthermore, emotions can mean different things across countries and cultures. Therefore, mild anger may be rated as more intense in contexts that discourage anger and vice versa (Meiselman, 2016).

Concern is an umbrella term for needs, values and goals, which are about what people want, need or expect. People's individual concerns will lead to specific appraisal processes, resulting in a certain level of emotion. The same emotion(s) may not be elicited in someone else or be elicited in another level of intensity. The relevance of concerns in the specific situation also plays a role.

NEEDS

Our fundamental needs are universal. Regardless of culture, age and lifestyle, everyone ultimately has the same set of needs (Desmet & Fokkinga, 2018). People aspire to fulfil every type of need to a certain level, maintaining overall life's satisfaction. Furthermore, every need has specific sub needs. For example, the need for acknowledgement - getting appreciation for what you do and respect for who you are - includes the sub needs appreciation, attention, respect and status.

VALUES

A value is a stable belief that a specific mode of conduct is preferable to an opposite mode of conduct (= manner or way of doing). Values correspond with character strengths: aspects of our personality that are morally valued. To say that someone has a value is to say that someone has a belief about what is the correct way to behave. Some values overlap with needs. For example, order, a human fundamental need, can be one's value as well, meaning that they believe that order is a preferred mode of conduct. Examples of values are gratitude, curiosity, kindness and modesty.

GOALS

Goals are beliefs about what we want to achieve. Goals are, like values, guiding principles in people's lives for the selection of behaviours and the evaluation of themselves, events and other individuals. The function of values and goals is to guide human action in daily situations. The fulfilment of a goal can lead to positive emotions, whereas failing a goal can lead to negative affect such as frustration, anger or shame, regarding the context and importance of the goal for the person.



Relations (need)
"Having warm, mutual and trusting relationships with people whom you care about."



Self-regulation (value)
"You can control what you feel and do in order to live in accordance with your standards."



Career aspirations (goal)
"Having a steady or challenging job, nice colleagues, obtaining recognition or managing your own business"

Figure 4.4 - 4.6 | Examples of a need, value, and goal.



Figure 4.7 | Emotion suppression can work counter-effective (source: Bustle)

4.1.4 Emotion suppression consequences

Adults—in Western culture at least—typically do not express all that they feel (Gross, John, & Richards, in press). We often appear to be less emotional than we really are. We tend to hide our shame if something discomforting happens to us in public, we conceal our anger if staying polite is a priority in a certain (professional) context, we suppress joy when a colleague next to us did not get the desired promotion we got. In these cases, emotion suppression can have social benefits. Emotion suppression allows us to modulate our behaviour and handle emotional situations calmly. However, suppression may also change how we think. According to Richards & Gross (1999), suppression also has clear cognitive consequences. Emotion suppression impairs our memory for encountered information, while emotion-expressive behaviour rises.

In general, in the field of emotion regulation, it is found that suppressing emotions works counter-effective and is a cognitively demanding form of self-regulation. People do have a need for emotion expression, in which the extent to which they do depends on factors such as the type of emotion, gender, and age (Pliskin, 2019).

“Emotion suppression impairs our memory for encountered information, while emotion-expressive behaviour rises. It works countereffective and cognitively demanding.”

Citation | Richards & Gross (1999)

4.1.5 Design implications

The central aim of this project is to explore how PrEmo can be applied to social issues, to eventually bring nuance in the public debate. An understanding of emotions and underlying concerns supports the argumentation for the application of PrEmo on social issues: emotions form the prime material in the exploration of an individual's concerns (Frijda, 1988). To build a realistic and nuanced representation of society's perspectives, these perspectives need to be measured. PrEmo measures emotions, emotions are gateways to concerns, concerns allow for a nuanced explanation of one's opinion about a topic. Asking how someone feels about a topic, and why, can unlock an opinion that touches one's real worries and hopes. Furthermore, different types of concerns, such as needs, values, and goals, allow for different explanations of the elicited emotion.

Besides, the knowledge about the stages of emotion elicitation, including appraisal components, fosters inspiration for what aspects to ask about when aiming for an in-depth perspective of a person. For example, asking about one's motives can result in an understanding of a person's goals and aspirations. Asking about novelty can unlock people's expectations about a situation, or previous knowledge or experiences concerning the topic. Concerning normative significance, it would be interesting to ask someone about their social norms and values, promoting an understanding of what is important in life to that person. Furthermore, people need to express their emotions, as emotion suppression is found to be counter-effective. In this design process, an opportunity can be given to people to express emotions regarding a news issue.

Next to using emotions as a means to discover concerns, emotional awareness can be a goal in itself. Creating emotional awareness can help media consumers to understand where certain statements and judgements come from. Even the most harsh comments can be led back to one's deeper concerns.

Emotions evoked by news

Emotions are evoked by stimuli - events that are relevant to one's personal situation. The unconscious evaluation of an event, the appraisal process, results in a certain level of emotion. Consuming news is an activity that can elicit emotions, depending on the subject, event or situation shown on television news or described in a news article. This chapter focuses on how news can elicit emotions.

According to Lecheler et al (2015), investigating the role of emotions in the effect of news is particularly interesting when considering political topics or events that are afflicted with a high level of emotive language in the press: the topics that can cause 'hot' public debates. In this, emotions act as mediators from news to policy opinions, attitudes and behaviours (Brader, Valentino, & Suhay, 2008; Verkuyten, 2004).

4.2.1 News causing negative emotions

One appraisal component, an influencing factor in the elicitation of emotion, is coping potential. Coping potential means whether one can handle or change aspects of a situation. As news is often about large events, developments or issues outside people's daily life, the chance one can individually handle or change aspects of the situation is probably small. This explains the negative feelings news can cause, as **there is often little one can do about it.**

4.2.2 Emotions caused by news frames

Besides the topic itself, the way a topic is reported influences our emotions. **News is inevitably framed** by the choices that have to be made for the presentation of an event or situation. Choices are made regarding the specific words used, sequence, facts that are involved, sources, people interviewed, etc. These aspects determine the way a story is presented and influence our interpretation. Journalists gather information that can be used in a story, choose elements of a situation and decide how to present the story in an appealing and comprehensible fashion.

"To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993).

Different news frames emphasize different values, facts, sources or quotes. In line with the appraisal theory - the idea that emotional response is based on how an individual evaluates a specific issue or event— **each news frame is likely to lead to different emotional patterns within the individual** (Nabi, 1999).

For instance, framing climate change in terms of public health is most likely to elicit emotional reactions consistent with support for climate change mitigation and adaptation (Myers et al., 2012). Framing climate change regarding costs and expenses, necessary to adapt our current energy resources and practices, would probably lead to opposite emotional reactions.

4.2.3 Framing effects in detail

Nabi (1999) argues that different frames cause different emotional responses, depending on what they represent to the individual. For instance, a frame may cause sadness, if it appeals to 'irrevocable loss' within the individual, whereas a frame is perceived as 'demeaning offence' by the individual will lead to increased anger.

Frame valence and frame type

A frame's **valence** (the positivity or negativity of a frame), as well as the **type** of frame, determine the emotional response (Gross, 2008; Levin et al., 1998). Yet, research has shown that almost all types of frames could potentially be positive or negative (de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2003). Frames can be categorized in **thematic frames** (portraying public issues in a general context) and **episodic frames** (focus on a specific event or topic). Other more content-related aspects of a news frame might also influence the extent to which specific emotions are affected.

Increase popularity by appealing to emotions

Several studies show that the emancipation and multicultural frames cause the most emotional response. These frames are reoccurring in the Netherlands as well as in other European countries (e.g., Roggeband & Vliegenthart, 2007). Verkuyten (2004) demonstrates that the extent to which either sympathy or anger is connected to immigration support depends on the way asylum seekers were framed in the study. The effect of framing is significant: anti-immigrant parties, which have occupied a strong position in many West-European countries, **keep the immigrant issue on the political agenda by appealing to emotions**, by framing with populist rhetoric (Mudde, 2013).

"Why should we study emotions? Because they are both powerful and changeable, and thus their power may play an influential role in sustaining as well as resolving intergroup conflict."

Citation | Pliskin (2019)

4.2.4 Emotions caused by framing influence opinion-forming

Emotions evoked by news subsequently influence our opinions about the information, by acting as a mediator. Numerous studies have shown that the particular frame imposed on an issue or event can shape opinions on related policies (Gross, 2008). The research of Gross shows that episodic framing, in which an issue is more emotionally engaging presented from the perspective of a victim, elicited more sympathy and pity for the main character than the thematic frame, in which an issue is placed in the broader context. Iyengar (1991) argues that the **continuous repetition of episodic framing in political news coverage diverts attention from societal responsibility** and leads people to hold individuals responsible for their own actions and circumstances. It also decreases the influence of government programs designed to address problems and shields leaders from responsibility (Gross, 2008).

Limited view on reality

Citizens continuously exposed to the same type of frame, lack a diverse image of reality and the variety of contexts that exist. Frames, such as the episodic type, especially probe for emotions and show a narrow view on the issue, often taking only a single person's perspective on the issue. People consuming news presented through this type of frame can develop increasing anger or dissatisfaction towards particular issues or problems. The evoked emotions act as mediators, reinforcing a negative opinion about an issue. This applies the same way to positive emotions. The risks are both a limited view on reality and the strengthening of one's opinion about an issue, increasingly denying other perspectives. According to Iyengar (1991), **citizens begin to fail to see the connections between problems** such as poverty, racial discrimination, and crime, when they are presented as discrete and unconnected.

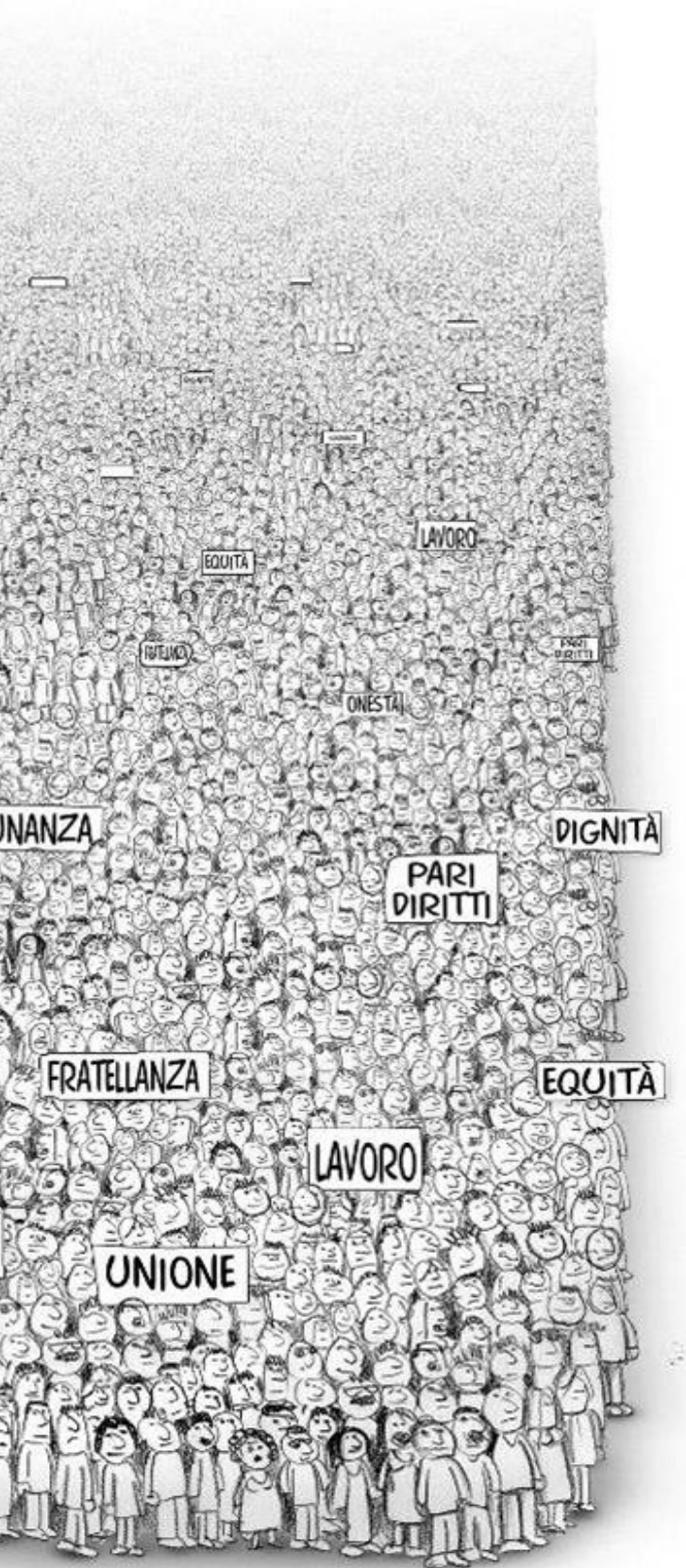
4.2.5 Design implications

Attention should be paid to the type of frame used when reporting a story, as a frame's type and valence influence people's opinion about a subject. People should be exposed to a story through multiple frames to keep a realistic image of reality. Episodic frames could create empathy as they focus on one event or one person's situation, but being exposed to only episodic frames can create a narrow view and **impede people from having an overview of a public issue**. Some political parties even exploit a certain type of frame to appeal to emotions. If different groups of people encounter an issue in different ways, this could increase polarization between groups.

A way of depolarization is to shed light on different sides of a story, using different types of frames. Therefore, **involving different perspectives from society in the design of an intervention can be stressed here**, the more varied the perspectives, the better. Besides, the thematic and episodic frame should be used both, thus placing an issue in the broader context and showing it in a more emotionally engaging way.



Figure 4.8 | How media can visually frame a situation (source: Steemit)



SUMMARY

4. Emotional awareness in news

Emotions

An emotion can be defined as an event-focused, two-step, fast process consisting of (1) relevance-based emotion **elicitation mechanisms** that (2) shape multiple emotional **responses** (ie, action tendency, automatic reaction, expression and feeling).

The appraisal process

An appraisal is defined as a quick **evaluation of a situation** with respect to one's well-being. We can think of an appraisal as an answer to the question: 'what does this situation mean for my **well-being**?' During an appraisal process, the event's significance is determined.

People need to express their emotions, as emotion suppression is found to be counter-effective.

Concerns

Every emotion hides a concern, which is a more or less enduring disposition to prefer particular states of the world. A concern is what gives a particular event its **emotional meaning**.

Concern is an umbrella term for **needs, values, goals, and standards** and is about what people want, need or expect. People's individual concerns will lead to specific appraisal processes, resulting in a certain level of emotion.

Emotion elicitation by news

News is inevitably framed by the choices that have to be made for the presentation of an event or situation. Choices include the choice of words, sequence, facts that are involved, sources, people interviewed, etc. These choices determine the way a story is presented and influence our emotions, which subsequently act as mediators from the stimuli to our interpretation.

Framing

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

Continuously repeating of frames

Each news frame is likely to lead to different emotional patterns within the individual. If an individual is exposed to one frame continuously, the risks are both a limited view on reality and the strengthening of one opinion about an issue, increasingly denying other perspectives.

Design implications

Emotions form the prime material in the exploration of an individual's concerns (Frijda, 1988). Asking how someone feels about a topic, and why, can unlock an opinion that touches one's real worries and hopes. PrEmo supports measuring emotions, emotions, in turn, are gateways to concerns, and concerns allow for a nuanced explanation of one's opinion about a topic.

As a frame's type and valence influence people's opinion about a subject, a way of depolarization is to shed light on different sides of a story, using different types of frames. Therefore, **involving different perspectives from society in the design of an intervention can be stressed here**. The knowledge about emotion elicitation can foster inspiration for what aspects to ask about when aiming for an in-depth perspective of a person.



05

Views from the field

In this chapter, generative research is discussed as complement of the literature review. First, experts from the field of social sciences, media and emotions were interviewed (5.1) in which the relations between polarization, news, and emotions were investigated. Additionally, journalists and editors were interviewed to collect media perspectives. Also, a creative session was organized with 18 students from the master Media & Journalism (5.2 and 5.3). Finally, first explorations with PrEmo were accomplished to test its usability and effectiveness and to get insight into citizens' views on nowadays news (5.4 and 5.5).

Part 1:	Experts' stance
5.1	Relations between polarization, media, and emotions
Part 2:	The media perspective
5.2	Constructivism and self-criticism
5.3	Creative session with media & journalism students
Part 3:	The readers's viewpoint
5.4	Perceptions of news
5.5	PrEmo explorations

PART 1

Experts' stance

What problems and opportunities do experts from the fields of polarization, media and emotions see in designing for a representation of society's perspectives and emotional awareness?

5.1

Relations between polarization, media and emotions

| 67

5. VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

5.1.1 Goal

In a literature study conducted in a couple of months, one can only get a grasp on the extensive research fields. To elaborate on the literature findings and confirm insights, a series of interviews was conducted to explore the relations between polarization, media, and emotions.

5.1.2 Method

Semi-structured qualitative interviews were held with 3 polarization experts (Brandsma, van Wonderen, Pliskin) and 3 media experts (van Gorp, Kester, Vliegenthart). All experts are researchers in the field of social sciences or journalism. Interviews covered several topics involving: (current state of) polarization, the influence of media on polarization, framing and concepts in news reporting, the role of media in society and emotional effects. An interview guide can be found in appendix K.

Participants

BART BRANDSMA - PRACTICAL-MINDED PHILOSOPHER, TEACHING AND ADVICE ON POLARIZATION STRATEGIES
Bart Brandsma developed the framework of polarization in which he identified the key roleplayers in a situation of polarization (page 31) and offers advice to use the framework in practice.

RON VAN WONDEREN - SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGIST, COORDINATOR KIS (KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM INTEGRATION & SOCIETY)
Researcher Ron van Wonderen is specialized in social cohesion and tensions in neighbourhoods, social stability, radicalisation and safety experience. Van Wonderen wrote 'dealing with social tensions' and 'from polarization to connection', published to provide professionals and policymakers with a structured approach on how to deal with tensions on districtlevel.

RUTHIE PLISKIN - ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, LEIDEN UNIVERSITY
Pliskin's central areas of interest are intergroup relations, emotions, emotion regulation and political psychology. Her research examines the psychology of intergroup hostility and conflict, focusing on how group member rationalize a sense of superiority.

BALDWIN VAN GORP - PROFESSOR OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT AT THE INSTITUTE FOR MEDIA STUDIES
Main topics of interest of Baldwin van Gorp are news framing of social issues, the production side of journalism and strategic communication. Van Gorp published widely on various topics within the field of journalism and specifically on framing.

BERNADETTE KESTER - ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATION AT ERASMUS UNIVERSITY, ROTTERDAM (THE NETHERLANDS)
The teaching and research activities of Bernadette Kester involve journalism studies, media and representation, and film history. Besides doing research she is the academic coordinator of the master media & journalism of the Erasmus University (Rotterdam).

RENS Vliegenthart - PROFESSOR OF MEDIA AND SOCIETY, SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR OF THE AMSTERDAM SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH
The research of Rens Vliegenthart focuses on media-content and effect, on citizens and public opinion as well as on politicians and political decision-making.

Procedure

Experts were selected and approached based on their research fields and possible contribution to this thesis. Interviews were mostly held face-to-face, after which they were transcribed. Quotes are included in the findings.

5.1.3 Findings

Findings derived from the set of interviews partly overlap findings from the literature review. Therefore only findings are included that contributes to a deeper understanding of the topic or illustrate theories, for example in a practical context or examples of relevant studies.



Figure 5.1 | Interviewing

5.1.4 Polarization

The pressure to choose a side

According to Pliskin, the spiral of silence theory (page 42) explains how polarization can reinforce itself. If a person reads most people feel a certain way, the time that person has to answer a poll, it feels like he or she should express a true opinion, which means that after every poll, things get a bit more extreme. Polls polarize by nature: ‘what do you think, yes or no? Agree or disagree?’ without providing any nuances. Media can enlarge this pressure to choose a side if the extreme side of a story is repeated continuously (van Wonderen).

>> However, most of us have several contradicting ideas at the same time: positive, negative or neutral. It depends on the context, what ideas or opinions appear in mind or are mentioned (van Wonderen).

Self-esteem derived from group status

As discussed in chapter 2, we tend to identify ourselves with different groups and thereby strive for a positive identity. People always catch up with people that are like them (van Wonderen). We see our own group as superior to others (social identity theory, Pliskin). According to Brandsma, polarization is about feeling-dynamics: who do we *feel* we belong to?

Globalisation increases the perception of diversity

Nowadays, globalisation plays an important role in people’s anxiety about an increasing complex society. People are worried their certainties and traditions are being taken away. Globalisation creates the feeling of diversity rather than unity, which increases the chance of alienation, exclusion, misunderstanding, and conflicts on the neighbourhood level (van Wonderen).

5.1.5 Media as fuel for polarization

Exposed to negativity and diverging opinions

According to Kester, **news ‘values’ decide whether an event is newsworthy or not**, which are: conflict, negative news, deviating news, closeby news, elite (politicians, celebrities), shareability and sometimes positive news. To make news interesting, often problematic subjects are selected. We are continuously exposed to the idea that things are not going well. Even an article with a positive approach discussing how to prevent or improve something implicates the current situation is not good enough. We also just engage more with negative than positive news - **the negativity bias** (Pliskin).

The negativity increases our distrust in media, as we are shown more extreme opinions than our own environment has (Van Wonderen, Vliegenthart).
1. Groups mostly appear in news by an incident, which creates most likely negative news reporting.
2. Incidents and scandals come in big articles: they are **easy to understand and sell well**.

“Extreme voices are just more interesting. ‘I don’t know’ is not a story.”

Quote | van Gorp

“The neighbourhood appears negative in news, journalists speak of riots, and national politics is also involved. All the media attention will derail the situation.”

Quote | van Wonderen

In the end, we see and learn much about a couple of particular incidents as they are shown regularly, more than about other subjects that are harder to grasp.
>> **Media deliver the fuel by reporting judgements from one group about the identity of another group (Brandsma).**

The normal people’s perspective

In many (television) programs the same carousel of well-known names and experts passes by all the time. Capturing the silent middle is a challenge. Kester criticizes interviewing ‘the normal people’ on the street: these people are often no experts and their opinions are influenced by media and their environment. However, to bring representative news, media should not only show the extreme opinions.
>> **But where and who are we searching for? How do we start capturing the ‘silent middle’?** (Kester).

5.1.6 The role of news media

The main roles of news media are to (Kester):

1. **Inform:** show most important, reliable and argued information
2. **Interpret:** give meaning to information
3. **Activate:** constructive journalism
4. **Agenda-setting:** select most important issues

Constructive journalism

In general, news media have the social ‘duty’ to inform the countries’ citizens. Constructive journalism is on the rise: journalism that focuses on people’s interests and solutions. It encourages action and provides more space for background stories. The Correspondent is an example of this: this organisation takes more time for research (Kester).

5.1.7 Challenges for media organisations

Giving a realistic as possible representation of topics, events, and situations, involves several challenges. Besides a **complete** and **nuanced** story, a story must be **clear** at the same time and speak to a **wide target group**. A journalist must build up a **network** to be informed about new developments, for knowledge and to find new stories or perspectives of a story.

High time pressure

One major challenge for media organisations is high time pressure. Because of the **digitalisation**, there are no fixed deadlines anymore: everything must and can be produced fast. The **continuous refreshment** of news forces journalists to maintain a high-efficient work attitude and make **quick decisions** (Kester). Journalists do not have time to change their minds after an interview (van Gorp).

Expert vs. generalist

As a journalist, you can either be an expert or a generalist (Kester). Both are important: to know the nuances of specific topics and to have knowledge about a large number of topics. A pitfall of being a generalist is that you easily accept information as being the truth. **To be critical** about information you derive from sources, **expertise is often essential** (van Gorp). An expert has a better sense of how to interpret information and the interesting aspects to report.

Nuance takes time and knowledge

Short and superficial articles are easier to grasp. However, in short articles, you miss a large part of reality (Vliegenthart). Here lies the continuous journalism dilemma of nuance: nuanced articles require effort and concentration. Furthermore, a balanced, nuanced article sells less. It takes more time to create the article as you need more voices, more expertise and more knowledge of recent developments. Finally, you must be given permission and space to bring all the nuances (van Gorp).

“The reader needs to be guided and expects the journalist to be the expert on a topic: what should I believe about this?”

Quote | van Gorp

An entire factual story does not exist

Some journalists think the perspective from which the article is written is dictated from the incident and that facts go without saying. Nevertheless, van Gorp confirms you always have to make choices on subject and approach. Here **framing** sneaks into the production process (page 70). You always need a certain perspective or frame of meaning, otherwise, the story does not make sense.

Sensation for sales

A journalist wants to create **engagement**. Articles need to be read and seen, subjects need to feel important (Pliskin). Through online channels, **journalists know well which pieces are read, clicked, liked and shared**. The trend: lighter, sometimes banal and sensational articles, especially on social media. To collect likes, adding **that extra sentence to recommend an article is often more ‘coloured’, emotional** (van Gorp). At the same time, journalists are expected to bring information rationally (Kester).

Trade-off reality and marketability

In both the selection of topics and the way the topics are presented, the media focus on their target group. Newspapers have relatively old readers, thus retirement pensions are often discussed. The result: other economic issues are less reviewed. The dilemma: a true correspondence with reality versus marketability. One can not focus on both: it’s always a trade-off (Vliegenthart).



Figure 5.2 | Sensation attracts

5.1.8 Design's benefit for media organisations

When explaining the aim of this thesis to the experts - reducing (the perception of) polarization, representing all perspectives of society and using emotions to capture those perspectives - estimations were made about the benefits for media and their audience.

Polarization awareness

Media do not directly benefit from reducing polarization: it sells - sensation attracts - and there is **little evidence of real polarization**. Furthermore, the journalistic principle 'Hoor en Wederhoor' (right of reply) suits a polarizing image: for every opinion, provide a counter opinion (Vliegenthart). Media often bring things, partly unconsciously, **more polarized than they actually are**.

Uncomfortable discussion on the influence of media

Media feel uncomfortable talking about their effect on polarization (Vliegenthart). When selling advertising space, media know exactly which influence and reach they have, but talking about influencing opinions creates an uncomfortable discussion. Discussing the **effect of media on polarization** implies media should change things, **which soon turns into criticism**. Media are convinced that they represent the objective reality. But in the end, news needs to sell too.

Presenting the data in public

The media would like to know their audience's emotions, but they are not eager to present the information, as they can be called upon the effect of their provided information. On the other hand, **if the information attracts more readers**, they might become interested (Vliegenthart). Furthermore, data of perspectives on news could help to **decide on the next frame** or to present the article in a certain way: "the next article should emphasize this part of the situation/event".

5.1.9 Benefit for the reader

Understand the effect of news

Many people will be interested in extra information about perspectives. It will help people to understand better how things are reported and what it does to people. Albeit, it should be brought in an accessible manner without a complex analysis (Vliegenthart).

The unexpected perspective

Nuance can be found, not in bringing all perspectives, but in showing the unexpected and new perspectives (van Gorp). Make people think: 'Hey, I haven't read this yet, this is surprising' or 'I have not thought about it in this way'.

"If people care about something, they will feel emotional about it."

Quote | Pliskin

5.1.10 Emotions - popular in the scientific field

Currently, researchers work on what type of information causes which emotions, how those emotions influence people's opinions, and how emotions act as mediators from content to opinion (Vliegenthart).

Emotional, only if you care

If people care about something, they will feel emotional about it. **Moderates care less** about a subject and therefore do not react as emotional as extremes, regardless of what the emotion is. And emotions lead to action. That explains the concept of **a silent majority** (Pliskin).

Subjects susceptible to polarization

Subjects with a high emotional level are susceptible to polarization: subjects that have a certain impact on ourselves. For instance, it has become clear that the emergence of riots is not only about physical or socio-economic aspects, but cultural and moral aspects play an important role, too (van Wonderen).

Effect of news on our emotions

Vliegenthart confirms much of news reporting and the process to receive attention runs through emotions. It is not very surprising that frames focused on a threat, such as terrorism, create fear. If you think, that can happen to me too, that type of emotion increases. Online media **play with people's emotions to gather likes** (van Gorp). Some media organisations provide more short, catchy and sensational stories that respond to one's emotions. It's in the word: it works on your senses (Kester).

5.1.11 Expert's depolarization advice

1. Signal subcutaneous tensions

Signal and share tensions that exist in and between groups. Analyse trigger factors: incidents that can foster dissatisfaction or fear such as an attack, incident or statement (van Wonderen).

2. Identify the us-them groups and their common concerns.

Understand the causes of a us-them contradiction, and with which group people identify. Then search for common interests: think less about specific concerns, but dive deeper into people's desires. What is the binding question - what do all stakeholders desire (Brandsma)?

3. A feeling of certainty

Respond to people's concerns and try to take them away; explain the situation well. Recognize, share and respect people's concerns. Give people a feeling of certainty, of control (van Wonderen).

4. (Counter) framing

First, acknowledge one can not work without frames (van Gorp). A frame is needed to give meaning to a story, otherwise, it does not make sense. Then a journalist can reflect: what frames do I use often? What are the possible alternatives? Counterframing can be enriching, by showing the other side of a story. Be aware of your prejudices and turn them around: what if the opposite is true? So instead of problematizing an issue (the elderly are naive) use a counter frame (elderly are wise through life experience).

"I think media often, partly unconsciously, bring things more polarized than they actually are."

Quote | Vliegenthart

SUMMARY PART 1

Experts' stance

Polarization

Polarization can reinforces itself, through opinion pressure and polls. People derive their self-esteem from others and feel their own group is superior to others. Polarization can increase anxiety and can make integration more difficult.

Media as fuel

People are continuously exposed to negativity and diverging opinions. Hereby the media delivers fuel for polarized thinking.

Challenges

Media encounters several challenges in news reporting. First, it is hard to catch the normal people's perspective as they are less visible. Nuance fosters a complete picture but takes time and knowledge. High time pressure is one of the major challenges. Sensational articles are less desirable but attract, thus sell. Here lies a trade-off between correspondence to reality and marketability. Lastly, framing is needed to give meaning to a story, but different frame should be used to ensure showing multiple sides of a story.

Benefit of this thesis' research

Talking about influencing opinions and polarization creates an uncomfortable discussion. The effect of news reporting is interesting for media themselves, but they are not eager to spread this. The media would only be interested if more readers can be attracted or new stories can be found.

Emotions

An emotional subject creates more responses and more action but leaves out the silent majority. Some news organisation play with emotions on purpose.

Depolarization advice

1. Signal tensions
2. Identify groups and concerns
3. Recognize, share and respect concerns
4. Use counter framing

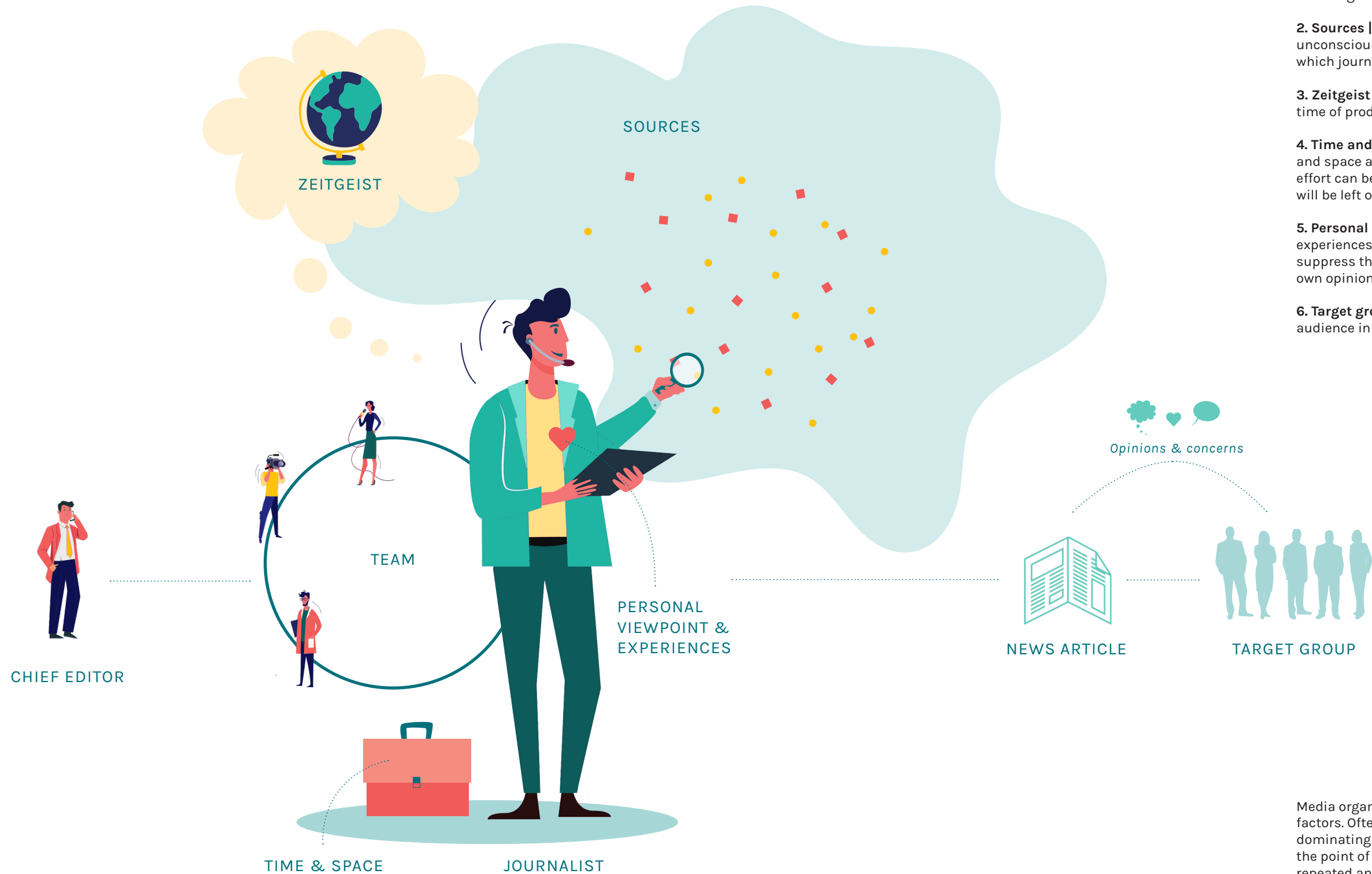


Figure 5.3 | Factors influencing the news production process

Influencing factors in news production

1. Work context | A journalist always works in the context of editors, chief editors, image editors. Everyone makes choices towards framing, sources, facts, etc. It is not just the journalist that wrote the news piece, but the result of a production process involving different people (Van Gorp).

2. Sources | Sources entail - sometimes unconsciously - certain perspectives or viewpoints which journalists literally quote or paraphrase.

3. Zeitgeist | The way we look at the world at the time of producing the article.

4. Time and space | The time to create the article and space available to post it determine how much effort can be put in the news production and what will be left out.

5. Personal experience | Journalists' own experiences or viewpoints. The intention is to suppress those, but sometimes journalist use their own opinion unconsciously or on purpose.

6. Target group | journalist always have their audience in mind. How relevant is this for them?

Media organisations are not always aware of these factors. Often patterns can be found in some dominating perspectives, which eventually become the point of view for that subject. Some frames are repeated and shared so widely that people start to think: this is the truth (van Gorp). In journalism, you have to draw a line at what you (do not) report. Thereby, many choices are involved. For example: how extensive do you want to give a stage to political parties? (Kester).

PART 2

The media perspective

How do media organisations see their influence on polarization? What do they think of involving their readers more and creating emotional awareness using PrEmo?

5.2

Constructivism and self-criticism

| 75

5. VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

5.2.1 Goal

Multiple interviews were held to explore the media's perspective on (their influence on) polarization.

5.2.1 Method

Two interviews were held with editors from a national news media organisation (indicated as A1 and A2) and two with an editor and journalist from a regional organisation (B1, B2), who prefer to remain anonymous. The following topics were addressed: their perspective and influence on polarization, the role of news media in general, the journalism practice and current depolarization efforts.

5.2.2 Polarization awareness

A1: In our organisation, polarization plays a role. I am not sure if we are aware enough of this, but at least we are **self-critical**. We want to keep each other sharp: 'Do we address this concern enough?' Sometimes we go back to a place where something happened and check: how is the situation after months?

We want to represent society as well as possible. On the other hand, the **moderate middle is not that interesting**. Should all perspectives be integrated in a news article? The extremes are probably presented in the news sometimes, and perhaps that can be a good thing, so things can be said that would otherwise not be discussed at all.

5.2.3 Media's social role

A1: We have a **legal task**. Everyone must be able to identify with the information we provide. We are found a bit boring, but also very **reliable**. According to the SCP (the Netherlands Institute of Social Research), we connect people. That's good, but not our priority. **We inform but do not guide**.

B1: Because we are a regional broadcaster, our job is to provide the news that concerns the work and life of people living in this area. We make choices: does this serve our audience? Long-term thinking is usually not attractive, for example, because of expensive climate regulations. Journalism, and other organisations that do not have an interest in votes, in contrast to politicians, **can and should think in the long term**.

5.2.4 The vision of constructive journalism

Since 2 years, the regional broadcaster practices constructive journalism. Instead of imitating other news organisations, they aim to create their own stories and show those people to take action for improvement.

Offering perspective

B1: Constructive journalism is about offering perspective. We try to tell a story by showing someone who is trying to do something about it, to **inspire people**. B2: It is not necessarily about positive stories, but about the **actions**. We provide a stage to people with intrinsic motivation to make the world a little better, not to the ones that yell along the sideline. The 'screamers' are not willing to listen anymore because they frame themselves into their role.

Seduced by the fire

B1: You can only create constructive stories if you give your journalists time to search for the silent middle. We are tempted to stay with 'the fire', which is a short satisfaction. But by reporting a strike, we only help the activists. Whose purpose do we serve here? **We should not get seduced by 'the fire'**. What happens to the neighbours when the fire is over? What is the meaning of the fire? We started reporting second-line stories, the more in-depth contextual stories revolving around an incident or event.

"The most important thing: people must keep hope. That is why we want to offer perspective."

Quote | B2, chief editor

5.2.5 Evoked emotions by news

Emotion expression on online media

A1: People get offended and pour their hearts online. This is dangerous, especially regarding twitter: all **nuance is lost**. Polarized opinions keep sharp, but I realize: I should not go along with it too much. These reactions do not represent society: **you do not want to give the 3% extremes half of the article**.

A1: In 2014, we had to report about some tough subjects week after week. We got some responses like ‘I can not watch it anymore, it makes me **despondent**.’

B2: When we posted a story about a Rotterdam citizen we got many reactions, under which a **deeper layer was hidden**: ‘This is Rotterdam’, ‘This is only possible in our city’, **‘We are one’**. We are definitely interested in why certain news evokes certain emotions.

The need to express your emotions

B1: People get angry, want to do something with their emotions, react on social media and get likes. Then **it feels like it makes sense** as if you are changing something. People want to give their misery a place, they want to have control. You might meet this need with this tool (*PrEmo*). B1: It’s often about **safety and accessibility**, in the broadest sense of the word. To drive without traffic, to be able to pay for your house (financial safety), to get enough care for your parents, sufficient supervision for your children, etc.

Social media’s likability

B2: A very positive story is suitable for online media. For likes on Facebook, for hearts on Instagram. **Emotions like dissatisfaction stay hidden**. We have to watch out that the news becomes too likeable.

A1: There certainly is much **clickbait**. Just look at the newspapers online, these are totally different from the paper ones. Yet, we do not have a commercial interest. For us, **facts are holy**. We always mention the same figures in our news outlets.

5.2.6 Audience relationship

A1: We established a social media editorial team to **be aware of society’s discussion**. ‘Do we pick up that story enough?’ or ‘Damn, we didn’t pay any attention to that.’ Besides, we also do **public research**, where people are asked what subjects are on top of their minds. We categorize the data into population groups such as age groups, gender, culture, etc. and **explore what moves them**.

5.2.7 Aspects of quality journalism

A network for knowledge and stories

B1: The most important job for a journalist is to create a network. A network will generate stories. Gain trust, build relationships, work in the community centre, talk with people about what’s going on.

A1: We employ many specialists here. Legal affairs, health care, education etc. They all have their own resources, network.

Critical leaders

A2: **We benefit most from a diverse editorial team and critical colleagues that look beyond their prejudices and gut feeling**. Having a critical eye: what is important about this, what questions do we overlook? B1: You need good, critical leaders that know the principle of constructive journalism.

Variety and diversity: the complete picture

A2: You want to have a varying journal. **Balance and variation** in light-heavy, domestic-abroad. There is a constant discussion about which stories we show and which not. We make human-centred stories, but also dose them. Besides, our online editorial team currently focuses on diversity. In cultures, backgrounds, gender. In this, we try to break patterns.

B2: A complete story is one with a connection between facts - the background of a story - and a personal, inspiring perspective.

A1: To make a portrait of the people who do not demonstrate at Sinterklaas’ entry, is very interesting from a journalistic point of view.

5.2.7 Journalism developments

1. Television and online have become equal (A1).

2. More human interest (A1).

3. Quotes rather than complete debates

10 - 15 years ago we reported many debates. Now we only report them if someone says something important that generates news (A1).

4. More room for background stories

We used to look at what other newspapers had written and then created our own interpretation. Now it is important to make our own stories. Our pillars: constructive journalism (offering perspective) and second-line journalism (reporting others that are also affected by the event or situation) (B1).

5. Focus on audience ratings, less nuance.

A1: We need to know that people are interested in what we do. Stable audience ratings are an expression that people have faith in you.

B1: As soon as the audience ratings become interesting, media make the conflict bigger than it is.

6. An eye on social media

Both media organisations have set up a social media team that follows social media stories.

5.2.8 PrEmo’s benefit

Emotional topics that come close

B2: This tool is especially interesting for local and regional areas. There, news comes closer to people and evokes very strong emotions.

Make or find stories

B1: We are always eager to know about innovations that can improve or strengthen news reporting. I am interested in how you would report the results. It could help finding more stories and reach more people. Imagine people show much anger or dissatisfaction. Are these people the nurses, the farmers, the teachers? Where do these emotions come from?

A reliable source for emotions

A1: We also have the feeling that the Zwarte Pieten debate is about something bigger, about dissatisfaction that might relate to globalisation. But you can not bring assumptions based on gut feeling, you need to refer to something.

A way for the moderate to express themselves

B1: Where’s the client (*reader*)? He is not asked anything. As a journalist, you tell the topics you think are interesting, the way you think it’s interesting, in a certain order. People walk away from traditional news outlets, as they are not heard. B2: It would also be nice if people could respond more constructively, that people can ask a question or receive advice.

“We also have the feeling that the Zwarte Pieten debate is about something bigger, dissatisfaction that might relate to globalisation. But you can not bring assumptions based on gut feeling, you need to refer to something.”

Quote | A1, editor

“Facts are holy, absolutely.”

Quote | A1, editor

“In 2014 we had to report about tough subjects. The response: *I can not watch it anymore. It makes me despondent.*”

Quote | A2, editor

5.3

Creative session with media & journalism students

In thinking about how polarization could be diminished in the field of media, media & journalism students are experts. The master media & journalism entails theories about the effect of news and media and encourages students to look at the news with a critical eye. In this session, there was ideated on the role of news media and how society's perspectives could be integrated in news.

5.3.1 Goal

The goal of this creative session was to kick-off ideation on applying PrEmo and to look at polarization from a critical media-perspective.

5.3.2 Method

18 students participated in the session. After an introduction to the project, four assignments were executed. First, students drew the media as an animal that possesses media's most important characteristics. Second, a personally selected high-quality news story was analysed on best aspects concerning structure and content. Besides, areas of improvement were addressed. Third, a datasheet was provided with four perspective profiles (appendix D), derived from previous PrEmo explorations. Students ideated on what this data could mean for news media. Finally, an analysis of frames that influence polarization was executed.

At the end, the results and ideas were discussed. Assignments 1 and 3 provided the most useful results for the project, and are presented in key findings.

5.3.3 Key findings

Assignment 1. The role of news media

The role of news media was drawn as a butterfly (flutters everywhere), parrot (imitates others), spider (central in the web of society) and a variety of other animals, including notes on characteristics that can be applied to media (figure 5.6).

In general, news media were characterized as holistic, all-inclusive and having the situation's overview. This means that the media involves everyone: the wolves as well as the sheep. Media are independent and powerful, thereby guarding democracy. They can connect and awake people for the most important things. The risk is that media becomes 'toxic', when everything is being reported as danger. Several students mentioned the imitation behaviour of media: media respond or adapt to the tendency of society. Media are not always critical and objective, and 'please' people by providing sensation. Additionally, some students noted how powerful news media could be, but how media is now often deployed as an entertainer of the people.

Assignment 3. The application of PrEmo

The emotion profiles of four people were presented including indicated emotions, needs and quotes after reading a news article. How could this information be used?

A. Usefulness of the data

Background and nuance

The most extreme perspectives can be nuanced by showing the specific interests of those people. This helps to not just show 'the tip of the iceberg' but to go deeper by showing multiple perspectives. More background information of the individuals (such as culture, location, thoughts) can be given. Idea: create an animation or video about the profiles.

Emphasize the middle

It would help to show multiple sides of the story, the pros, cons and especially the group in between.

A common ground

PrEmo could support the search for a common ground between people. Show how some people may seem different, but have similar needs. Provide examples where people with different opinions engage in conversation or work together.

Solution-oriented

Translate needs into what people find important, link it to their quote and integrate perspectives in solution-oriented writing.

Teach citizens

Teach citizens how to deal with the media. Create awareness: what are the dangers?

B. Potential follow-up questions

The students identified several questions that they would like to be asked to citizens if they could ask everyone anything.

News engagement

The students would like to ask if someone has read the article and if he or she has read the whole article. Why did they read the article? Did they have previous knowledge about it? How engaged do they feel with the subject? How important is the topic?

Representation

Concerning representation, the students would like to know if people are black/white or more in the middle? They would like to ask if people feel represented, which news organisation or channel represents them the best, and which is the most trustworthy.

Personal issues

Finally, the students probed some personal questions. What is bothering about a situation for someone, to what extent does it relate to and has consequences one's personal situation? How do opinions differ in their social environment and what determines their opinion (such as family, friends, emotion, education, work)? With what position do people agree?

Desired solutions

Furthermore, the students would like to know what people think what the cause and solution is for the discussed issue, what they think of the proposed solution, and who has the power or responsibility to change something about the situation. Do people feel called to action? What would they do if they were 'the other'? Lastly, what is their ideal society or worldview concerning this issue?

People's interest in the subject

What do people miss in the article? What would they like to know more?



Figure 5.4 | Creative session with 18 students



Figure 5.5 | Noting frames that influence polarization

Figure 5.6 | The media drawn as an animal



Figure 5.7 | Students discussing assignment results



5.3.4 Conclusions

Polarization and the effect of news are often discussed themes in the master. The most important conclusion that can be drawn from the creative session is that media play a major role in showing what is happening in society, being a *guard of democracy*, but can anticipate people’s entertainment preference too much. While the media should and can be objective and wise, the media can also be reluctant by just imitating events without a critical eye and interpreting what is most important.

The students suggest using PrEmo’s data to dive deeper into topics, search for the right nuances and a balanced view of perspectives. Objectivity is key. Besides, common ground can be searched for when people’s individual needs are known. Also, citizens can be taught on the effect of the news.

From a media perspective, students have suggested some follow-up questions to improve news quality. The suggestions concern **news engagement** (what do news consumers read and why, with which topics do they engage the most), **representation** (do people feel represented, are positions equally presented, with who do they identify?), **personal issues** (how does this affect one’s personal situation), **possible solutions** (what do you think is the cause and the solution for the situation?), people’s **worldview** and finally, people’s **curiosity** to know more about a topic.

SUMMARY PART 2

Media’s perspective

5.2 Interviews media editors & journalists

Polarization awareness

Media organisations are aware of polarization, but are not sure if they pay attention to it enough. Besides, sometimes it is good if the extremes are shown.

Media’s social role: media have the social duty to correspond to reality and bring the news that is relevant to their news consumers.

Constructive journalism is about offering perspective. Media should be resistant to seduction by a ‘fire’: the most sensational event.

Emotions evoked by news

People need to express their emotion, which often happens online. Media need to be shared, read and liked, but it should not become too ‘likeable’.

Quality journalism consists of having a broad network for knowledge and stories. Media organisations benefit from critical leaders and variety and diversity in news stories.

Developments journalism

- 1. More online, less tv
- 2. More human interest
- 3. Less debates, more quotes
- 4. Room for background stories
- 5. Less nuance
- 6. Active on social media

5.3 Creative session students media & journalism

Role of news media

Media play a major role in showing what is happening in society, thereby *guarding democracy*, but they can anticipate people’s entertainment preference too much.

PrEmo would be interesting for:

- Providing background and nuance
- Emphasize the middle
- Searching for a common ground
- To find solutions
- Teach citizens to deal with media
- More objectivity

Interesting information from citizens:

- Their news engagement
- To what extend they feel represented
- Personal issues

PART 3

The reader’s viewpoint

How do people perceive news?
Are people able to indicate
their emotions evoked by
news, using PrEmo? What
are their bottlenecks in news
consumption?

Perceptions of news

Media organisations have their viewpoint on what they should report and what role they fulfil in society. In this project, the aim is to design something that can be implemented in the context of media but will be used by the media's consumers: the reader. In this part, the reader's viewpoint can be found.

5.4.1 Goal

To kickstart exploring how people perceive news, a small study was conducted. The objective was to gain first insights into news type preferences and emotions evoked after reading a news article. The following research question was addressed:

How do people perceive news, and what emotions are involved?

5.4.2 Method

In total eight participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire. The survey served as a pilot for explorations on reflecting on emotions. In this questionnaire, PrEmo was not used yet. The first questions in the questionnaire were related to the consumption of recently read or watched news, followed up by in-depth questions on emotions and opinions. The second category of questions were about their general news consumption.

5.4.3 Key findings

Participants' recently read articles were related to a variety of topics: money and happiness, economy, meat consumption, foreign news such as the Brexit and about Trump, pensions and climate change. Two read a newspaper, one watched the NOS journaal and others used a news app.

Choice of news item

The choice of news item was based on one of the following 1) professional or private interests, 2) direct or indirect influence on the participant's life, 3) the item was concerned with what the participant thinks about or daily engages with, 4) the wish to know what's going on in the country and the rest of the world.

Emotions

Participants reported the following emotions after reading or watching a news item: **content, fine, sceptical, disappointed, sad, positive, triumphant, satisfied, frustrated and upset**. Several participants noted that most news is negative. One participant mentioned following a news Instagram account where more positive news, remarkable actions or charities are discussed, what makes it more fun and easy to follow the news.

"I felt miserable after reading the article. The most news that changes your mood is not the most fun news to read. You remain being stuck with a pessimistic view of the world, and I must say it does not look like it will get any better in the future, actually, on the contrary."

Man, 27 years old

"This intrigues me. The new legislation can cost me my job. Others like me feel impotence, incomprehension and anger by a lack of acknowledgement."

Man, 57 years old

Curious about other opinions

Participants were divided in curiosity towards other people's opinions. Confirming answers reported it would help in decision-making and convincing others, a better understanding of in-depth information, outsourcing black-and-white statements and learning about the different sides to a story. Negative answers reported there is enough consideration on perspectives around the topic or 'I want the news to be as factual and objective as possible'. Albeit, all participants mention it is good to discuss topics.

News source and form of use

Participants consume news between three to seven days a week. News is consumed mostly in the morning, while waiting and before going to sleep. News is mostly consumed online, news websites and apps as NOS and Nu.nl are mentioned most. Participants like to easily encounter news, in forms such as news apps or by a read-aloud function. One participant uses NOSop3 on Instagram because information automatically appears in her feed, otherwise, she might forget reading the news. Besides, NOSop3 brings news in varying ways: videos, pictures, animations, graphs, etc. Themes are discussed through specific situations, events or people which makes it more relatable and less abstract.

5.4.4 Conclusions

- Participants find it important to know what is happening in the country and the rest of the world.
- Participants **engage with news most when they can relate to it**: when the subject addresses their professional/private interest.
- Among the participants, a variety of emotions are mentioned, negative as well as positive. The emotions are evoked by **news content, the form** in which the article is presented or **trustworthiness**.
- Routines** are needed to keep up with following news. It helps if the news is discussed through specific events or presented in pieces.
- Some participants mention to like reading substantive reactions of others on news, but on social media, it seems people hide behind **anonymous** accounts by making offensive, blunt or black-and-white statements.

"I like it when news is relatively neutral and trustworthy"

Woman, 26 years old

"Knowing more about the perspectives of others can support decision-making and conviction."

Man, 57 years old

"Sometimes I feel frustrated when they only mention facts, and not what we can do about it."

Woman, 25 years old

5.5 PrEmo explorations

Through applying the PrEmo tool, developed and validated by Emotion Studio, we know animations expressing emotions can be of great value in interpreting emotions in product evaluation. In this thesis, the hypothesis is set PrEmo could be valuable to the field of journalism as well, as a means to reflect on emotions caused by news reporting. In this chapter, two PrEmo explorations are described.

5.5.1 Goal
Two explorative studies are conducted with applying PrEmo on news articles. The goal was to get insight into how PrEmo could support people in indicating how they feel about a news article and why. The first study involved PrEmo in a short semi-structured interview. In the second study, PrEmo was integrated into a guided walk-through questionnaire.

5.5.2 Exploration 1
The objective of the first PrEmo exploration was to identify participants' ability to use a paper version of PrEmo and explore what the outcome could be. The following research questions were addressed:

- 1. Are people able to indicate their emotions on a news article and mark what text, in particular, caused the emotion(s)?
- 2. Does using PrEmo right after reading a news article stimulate a nuanced explanation of what people think and feel concerning the subject?

5.5.3 Method
This study was conducted at the public hall of Rotterdam central station, where people wait for acquaintances to arrive or spend waiting time before taking their train. The central station is a convenient place for conducting the study as the public space of the station is open to everyone. Also, the study should involve participants with a variety of backgrounds, ages, jobs, political preferences etc., to compose a representation of society.

In total 15 passengers, waiting or walking in or around the public waiting area were asked to participate. Attention was paid to selecting people from a variety of ages and asking men as well as women.

The participants were asked to read a short news article and mark the emotion(s) the article evoked, by drawing a circle around one or multiple of the 14 PrEmo figures. Subsequently, the participants were probed to mark the specific sentences or words that caused the emotion (figure 5.9). Then, a semi-structured interview was held, asking for an explanation of what the participants marked and why. Follow-up questions were asked such as 'why is that important to you?', 'do you feel personally concerned with the topic?', 'do you identify yourself with ..., why?'. Next to content-related questions about the articles, questions about news consumption were asked, concerning preferred news sources, identification with news, the importance of news and improvement of news. All interviews lasted between 5 and 15 minutes.

The participants were given one out of three articles with - at that moment - recent themes about the farmer protest, the Zwarte Pieten debate, and Greta Thunberg, a young climate activist (figure 5.8). The articles were retrieved from a known news organisation but shortened.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed. From the data, participant profiles were created (figure 5.11), containing their read article, marked emotion(s), sentences and a key statement. Notes on their news consumption were included as well.

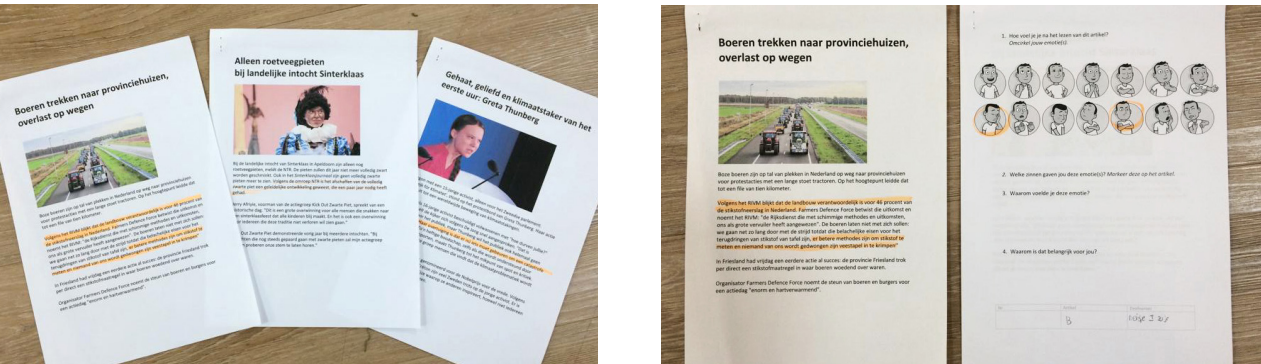


Figure 5.8 - 5.9 | left: three selected articles. Right: article about the farmer protest and question sheet.

5.5.4 Findings PrEmo 1

1. PrEmo emotions as a starting point
For some, it was easier than for others, but all participants were able to indicate their emotions, except for a visually impaired participant and an elderly participant who refused to draw. Some participants asked what the cartoons exactly meant (on which the answer was given: 'according to your own interpretation').

Emotions seem to serve as a good starting point for an in-depth conversation. The question 'how do you feel?' implies a softer, friendlier answer than 'what do you think?' and sets a more vulnerable tone. Using the follow-up questions easily resulted in nuanced viewpoints, addressing several aspects of the topic and involving personal concerns in the answer given. Marking sentences was harder, as people instantly start talking about (the cause of) their emotions, in more general terms than specifically reflecting on sentences of the article.

2. Opinions about the news
Negativity can rule
Almost half of the participants mentioned the negativity of news, stating that people of society are very dissatisfied, or 'we all go to hell'. Negative news can create a threshold to keep on reading.

Exaggeration of topics
Many participants noted media are exaggerating on topics too much. Especially when participants read the Zwarte Pieten article, they act bored and dissatisfied; 'Are we addressing this topic again?'

People should show more action
A couple of participants thought 'Dutch people should stand up and open their mouth'. This was mentioned spontaneously among people reading different articles. For instance, one participant thought the farmer demonstrations to be very inspiring and said we should show our opinions more.

Reliability and structure
Some participants noted they need security, reliable information and news sources, and structured information. One participant noted: 'we have to make sure we do not miss out on groups.'

"If we would show just a little bit more solidarity towards each other. Start with yourself, I always think."

Woman, 52 years old

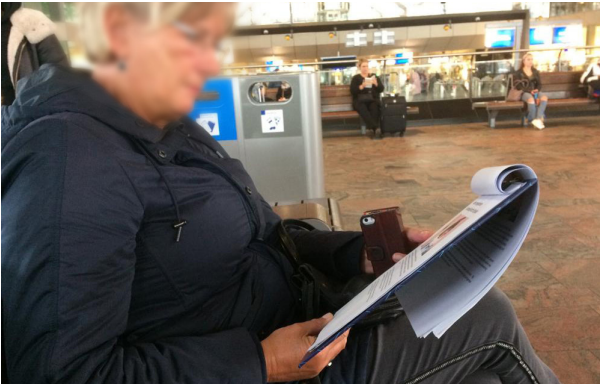


Figure 5.10 | Participants of PrEmo exploration 1

4.	Woman - 20 years old
	Farmers move to provincial houses, nuisance on roads
Emotion	Sentences
 sadness	"According to RIVM, it appears that agriculture is responsible for 46% of the nitrogen precipitation in the Netherlands."
 dissatisfaction	"... there are better methods to measure nitrogen and none of us should be forced to shrink his livestock."
I think it's sad that the government didn't come up with a better plan. For the farmers: it is their job, they also need to earn their money. I think it is important to have clean air. The government needs to work harder for people living in this country.	

Figure 5.11 | An example of a participant profile (PrEmo exploration 1)

5.5.5 Conclusions

From PrEmo exploration 1, it appears emotions are a good starting point for a conversation that unlocks people's underlying needs, values, desires. People can identify their emotions and provide an explanation accordingly. Multiple participants think media can exaggerate on topics, although this might depend on personal preferences of what information the media should show and to what depth. People confirm negativity can rule, as discussed in the expert interviews. The notion that 'people should demonstrate more' is caused by a lack of opinions in the news of 'the normal people', in line with the focus of this thesis.

In this thesis, the aim is to design an *online* tool that can be used where no interviewer is present to improvise and probe questions during an interview based on the participants' responses. Therefore, the follow-up question for the next exploration is: how to obtain nuances in emotions and concerns *without an interview*?

"Opinions are everywhere, but they simmer. We are a paralyzed folk. Nowadays we do not achieve anything because we let our mouth shut."

Man, 60 years old

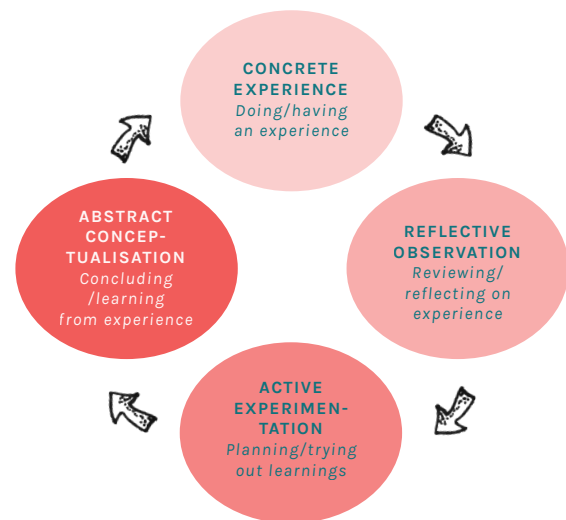


Figure 5.12 | Kolb's reflective model

5.5.6 Exploration 2

In the second exploration, obtaining perspectives has to be conducted by more self-reporting, simulating online use without an interviewer present. The research questions:

1. Can nuanced opinions be gathered with the least conversation as possible?
2. How to guide people in reflecting on their perspective?

5.5.7 Method

For a set-up of PrEmo exploration 2, literature on reflective models is explored. An example is Kolb's reflective model, presented in figure 5.12. Reflective models often start with a 'what': an event or description of the event. The second step is reflecting on feelings or experiences. The models continue with a reflection on where the feelings or experience comes from, and why? Finally, the models end with a future plan or action, based on the reflection.

These steps formed the foundation for PrEmo exploration 2. In this, reading an article is the 'what', the event. The second step is, similar to PrEmo 1, marking emotions and sentences. In the third step, there is asked about people's needs concerning the topic, to connect their feelings to a deeper concern. Last, participants are asked to reflect on their hopes and worries for the future regarding the read article. Although most reflective cycles aim for personal action plans, this part is not relevant for this project as the aim is to stimulate *reflection* on an issue, intending to create a viewpoint, not an action plan.



Figure 5.13 | Participants of PrEmo exploration 2

In the second PrEmo exploration, participants were probed to write down their answers. In a few cases, information was provided to explain the questions or to probe a more in-depth explanation. The study was again executed in and around Rotterdam central station. In total 18 participants were selected and read one of the same three articles used in PrEmo exploration 1 (figure 5.8).

5.5.8 Findings PrEmo 2

Although the focus was on the questionnaire with more structure and less conversation than in PrEmo 1, still, in a face-to-face conversation, it feels more natural for a participant to add comments orally. Furthermore, not everyone was willing to write down their explanation, wrote keywords or elaborated on the answer aloud. The results of the questionnaire are again clustered into participant profiles (figure 5.15, page 88). Spoken comments are noted in italic font.

What sentences evoked an emotion?

Most participants did not find any difficulty with marking sentences. When asked for an explanation, around one third reflected on the sentences specifically, the rest on the article in general.

Marking needs

The selection of needs served as a probe to tell more about their personal viewpoint on the topic. However, some participants marked the needs related to the main character from the article or marked needs they find important in general.

Future worries & hope

Like indicating emotions, participants seem to find it easy to reflect on what they worry about, or hope.

5.5.9 Conclusions

An incentive to reflect

In this study, the incentive to reflect on one's viewpoint is the interviewer who asks if a person would like to participate. Most people seem to enjoy participating. In the public hall of the central station of Rotterdam, people with a variety of backgrounds can be asked to participate. However, without the context of this research, one must discover the survey and have an incentive to participate: the benefits and goal of participating must be clear. Also, participating must be interesting to all age groups and backgrounds, whereas this thesis aims to find perspectives of a representation of Dutch society.

What insights are needed

Concluding from both explorations, varying and interesting perspectives can be found. However, the questions asked to discover underlying concerns need to be researched more, on two grounds: 1) what questions will lead to the most interesting insights on perspectives that will help people to understand and empathize with others and 2) how do emotions, concerns, and future aspects form a logical individual perspective (so that concerns explain why certain emotions are felt).

"The news is the source to bring the different, unexpected things to daylight, but they shouldn't scandalize everything."

Man, 18 years old

Figure 5.14 | Guided reflection of PrEmo 2

Summarized:

1. Read the article
2. Mark emotion(s) + explanation
3. Mark sentence(s) + explanation
4. Needs connected to emotion + explanation
5. Note worries and hope for the future

Hoe voel je je na het lezen van het artikel? Omcirkel jouw emotie(s).

Met welke behoeften hebben deze emoties te maken? Omcirkel jouw behoefte(n).

Waarom deze emotie(s)? Noteer hier je antwoord

Welke zinnen gaven je deze emotie(s)? Markeer ze op het artikel.

Waarom deze zinnen precies? Welke woorden in het bijzonder? Noteer hier je antwoord

Welke zorgen heb je over dit onderwerp? Waar ben je hoopvol over? Noteer hieronder.

2.	Woman - 28 years old	
	Hated, beloved and climate striker of the first hour: Greta Thunberg	
1. Emotion(s)		
	Dissatisfaction	Adults that criticise as child on her actions. Also here one side of the story is highlighted.
	Sadness	
2. Sentences		
"..., makes Thunberg the target of ridicule and criticism"		Because a girl gets mocked and criticizes while she knows what's she is talking about. She is just right. Adults respond to her as if she were a child. She is 16, she already has sense of how the world is nowadays.
3. Needs		
	Purpose	For a better climate
	Impact	
	Acknowledgement	That Greta finds acknowledgement for what she's doing.
	Morality	A better climate for everyone.
4. Future perspective		
Worries		
- That the world does not cooperate. <i>I only worry about the climate. We can hardly save it anymore. The Netherlands want to, but the rest is not collaborating.</i>		
- Abuse of power, not using the power for the right purpose		
Hope		
-That the eyes will still open for many people		
Additional comments		
I just thought it was good. She's just right. The world is actually ruined by our parents, grandfathers and grandmothers and people before. They do not want to change because they never had to. And that went down the wrong way for many people. The older generation can be criticized too. Elderly, just like the youth, do not have respect for other people. Social media too hostile now, that's why I do not feel like typing anything. If there was a way to respond on news in a more reasonable way I still would not necessarily give a reaction, but I would like to read other, more reasonable responses.		

Figure 5.15 | An example of a participant profile (PrEmo exploration 2)

PrEmo explorations

- Indicating emotions using PrEmo works well and emotions are a good starting point for viewpoint reflection
- Results are promising: answers provide an interesting overview of varying viewpoints on news.
- Telling what people think is easier than noting
- People enjoy reflecting on what they think/feel
- News is found quite negative and think the media often exaggerate on topics. People like structure and trustworthiness of sources.

Using PrEmo on news articles should be tested without an interviewer present. Furthermore, an incentive is needed.

5. Views from the field

Part 1: Expert's stance

Experts confirm the polarizing tendency from media repeating the extreme side of a story, and the polarizing nature of polls, that force people to choose a side. However, few people are radical, most of us have positive, negative and neutral views on one subject. Another factor for polarization is our self-esteem, that is derived from the status of the group we feel we belong to. Globalisation also plays a role, raising anxiety about increasing complexity and creating the perception of diversity rather than unity.

Part 2: Media's perspective

Media organisations are aware of polarization, but are not sure if they pay attention to it enough, although showing extremes is not always a bad thing. The media want to provide complete and reliable news, and sometimes even offer perspective and inspiration. Media need to be shared, read and liked, but think they should resist sensational events. Media organisations mention they benefit from critical leaders and variety and diversity in news stories. According to media students, media play a major role in showing what is happening in society, thereby *guarding democracy*, but they can anticipate people's entertainment preference too much.

The students think PrEmo would be interesting for:

- Providing background and nuance
- Emphasize the middle
- Searching for a common ground
- To find solutions
- Teach citizens to deal with media
- More objectivity

Part 3: User's viewpoint

From both PrEmo explorations, it appears indicating emotions felt after reading a news article and providing an explanation accordingly is easy. In a face-to-face conversation is was more difficult to write down some answers: the next exploration should be executed digitally.

People like news to be structured and reliable. It helps if it is presented in pieces or through various forms such as animations, video's, text, visualizations, etc. Participants of the explorations think news can exaggerate on topics too much sometimes.

A. Strategies for depolarization



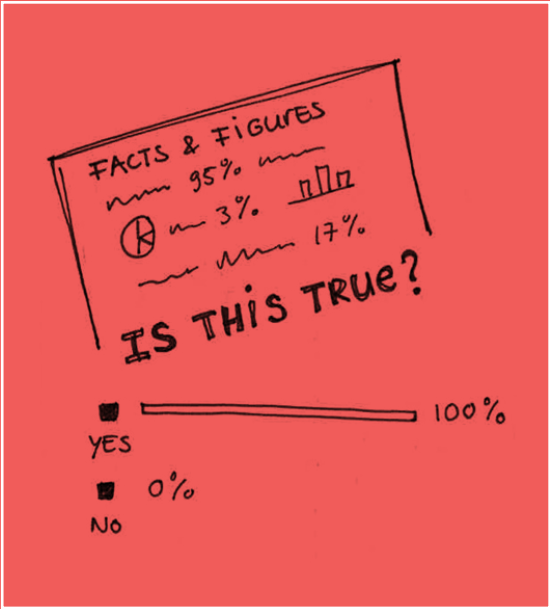
1. LOW THRESHOLDS FOR A REALISTIC REPRESENTATION



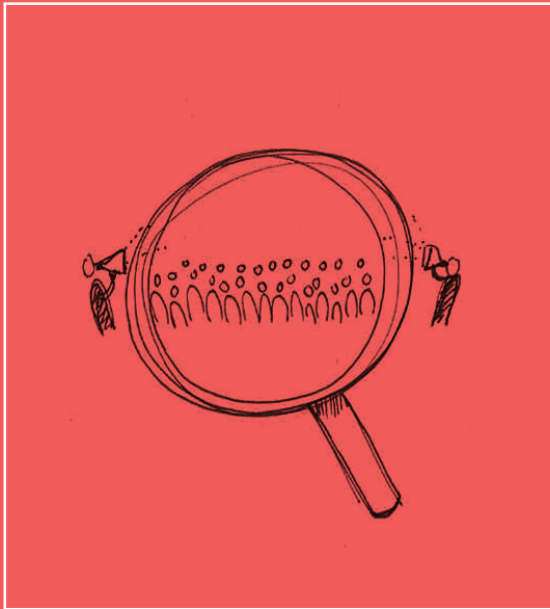
2. SOCIAL COHESION BY SOCIAL IMMERSION



3. MAINTAIN AN OVERARCHING IDENTITY



4. PROMOTE CONSENSUS OF THE FACTS



6. AMPLIFY THE PRESENCE OF A SILENT MAJORITY



5. SHOW THE OUTGROUP DIVERSITY



7. MULTIPLY (DOMINANT) IDEAS

The seven strategies are clarified on the next pages.

A. Strategies for depolarization

The literature review includes many theories on the causes of polarization. These causes can be get dealt with through strategies for depolarization, envisioning how these causes can be prevented or diminished. Together with depolarization theories from the Scientific Council for Government Policy, experts’ ideas on the subject and other insights from the research phase of this thesis, several strategies for depolarization can be proposed.



According to Brandsma (expert), polarization is present on micro-, meso- and macrolevel of society. This means strategies must be specifically targeted at one level, depending on how and where polarization is happening. The strategies in this chapter, concerning the scope of this thesis, are aimed at the macrolevel.

The WWR (Scientific Council for Government Policy) proposes nine strategies to prevent cleavages of which five are relevant for this graduation project.

1. Watch out for a lack of recognition
2. Maintain an overarching identity
3. Ensure a realistic representation of society
4. Promote consensus of the facts
5. Keep the thresholds low for representation

These strategies are combined with experts’ depolarization suggestions and insights from the literature review, into seven depolarization strategies. The strengths and limitations of these strategies are discussed below.

1. Low threshold for a realistic representation

Concerning strategy 3 and 5, the WWR emphasizes the importance of ample opportunity for people to make their voice heard, in fora (media) and institutions (politics) where decisions are made about the society’s course. It is undesirable if polarization leads to **under- or overrepresentation** of particular groups, because then, the number of representatives of relevant groups is not in proportion to the actual size of the group. Secondly, the extent to which different experiences, interests, and concerns are represented could be unequal.

>> Not only a relative difference between reality and representation in the number of voices that are heard should be avoided, but also the loudness, comprehensibility and content richness of what these voices have to tell.

2. Social cohesion by social immersion

These risks of under- or overrepresentation can be reduced by qualitative information gathering and a wide range of sources including social immersion. For media and politics, this implies they **can not rely on just one source** but have to make use of a variety of methods to represent society’s groups.

Whereas most people are particularists, current society asks for universalism (Tiemeijer, 2017). Welfare and prosperity are best realized when social cohesion is stretched to all members of the community. Dimensions of social cohesion are synchronous - the extent to which people feel connected based on the now, e.g., by language, traditions or mentality - or diachronous - the extent of connection based on collective memories and shared plans. Strategies to encourage social cohesion on these dimensions involve the **contact theory**. This theory entails encouraging people from different backgrounds to **interact within functional contexts**, e.g., the work environment and **connection in time**: binding by a (presumed) shared history, experience or future on which one can identify with the nation as a whole: **nation-building**.

The contact theory - to stimulate interaction between groups - does not always work. Exposing opposite groups towards each other could make people feel threatened in their identity. Van Wonderen (expert) confirms a dialogue between two fighting groups is often counter-effective: the groups tend to even reinforce their own viewpoint and increase resistance to compromise, instead of empathizing with the other. Additionally, our **feelings of connection, trust and solidarity are in general limited to our own social reference group**. Dialogues can foster trust towards those with whom one actually has contact, but do not lead to more trust to the outgroup in general.

>> Attention must be paid to general trust in groups or society. Identification with a nation as a whole is one strategy, in which (a memory of) shared experiences are needed. Nonetheless, connection in time requires time and effort. Besides, some groups like migrants, do not just fit into a nation’s (his)story. Strategies for ‘glueing’ social cohesion appear to be complicated which makes **prevention is better than cure**.

3. Maintain an overarching identity

The third strategy involves formulating a **common and overall identity**. This requires re-categorisation: emphasize what people share instead of their differences. Important is not to work with superficial symbols or cliché’s, which could threaten people’s identity, but with deeply connecting similarities.

4. Promote consensus of the facts

Recommender systems, algorithms, the media and the readers themselves make choices towards what stream of information is consumed. The inevitable framing of news ensures a **story is never complete** or completely neutral. Also, people’s psychical environment and social relations affect what is consumed, read or seen. These processes influence the creation of interpretative communities and filter bubbles in which people consume different streams of information.

A **condition for a qualitative democracy** is consensus of ‘what is the case’ among a country’s citizens, therefore politics and media should strive for a consensus of the facts. Individual realities should not diverge too much. Hence, promoting consensus of the facts is required. Additionally, media should use frames consciously and become aware of the effect of frames on emotions.

5. Amplify the presence of a silent majority

As noted in strategy 2, fostering a dialogue between two presumed opposite groups does not always work. Media and politicians try to appease the fight, which works counter-effective. This *bridge-building*, initiated from good intentions, focuses on the pushers. The pushers are the ones with the most extreme opinions, visible in the media and online platforms, by their eagerness to make their opinion public. Hereby, the **silent majority** of society, the ones with a moderate, neutral or no opinion, **pass by unnoticed**.

>> Amplifying the presence of a silent majority would help people to understand society is not as divided as it might seem.

More reasonableness can be found in this majority too. Furthermore, the strong opinions of the pushers attract, which creates opinion pressure: the feeling one has to choose between two seemingly opposite positions. Noticing a silent majority would reduce this opinion pressure, showing the more moderate, nuanced and reasonable perspectives. Amplifying the presence of a silent majority would require new methods for media organisations.

6. Show the outgroup diversity

We tend to notice individual differences and diversity within our own group, but perceive the other group as uniform. Also our belief constraint - our preference to belief merely the perspectives that correspond to our pre-existing perspectives - makes us less willing to see the differences between viewpoints within a group we do not refer to as ours or do not identify with. Therefore, showing the diversity within the ‘outgroup’ is a strategy for depolarization.

>> The variety, diversity, and richness in society’s perspectives should be emphasized.

7. Increase number of (dominant) ideas

When overdetermination occurs (the overrepresentation of one group or viewpoint), the perception of one dominant idea is created. **One keeps silent by disagreeing with the perceived ‘dominant idea’ in society or being neutral** about the issue. This phenomenon is explained by the spiral of silence theory.

Hence, showing multiple ideas at the same time can encourage the understanding and acknowledgement that there are many different, also moderate opinions, within a **person can always identify with one**. Besides, a rational environment is needed in which a ‘moderate’ feels safe to express his or her opinion. This relates to the first strategy in which creating a low threshold for representation is advocated for.

B. Target group

The news consumers

The initial target group consisted of Dutch citizens, all people that are part of the Dutch society. Based on literature review and generative research, this group is narrowed down to the silent majority of the citizens that consume news.

News consumers

The target group of the intervention involves news consumers from the Netherlands. On average, Dutch people spend 3,5 hours a day on media and all consumers use online media sometimes. Four different media profiles can be distinguished, on differences in news source selection and news types. Small dividing lines in media consumption exist based on age, education level, and political preferences. For example, some people avoid hard news and prefer entertainment, others actively search for information (Bos et al, 2014).

The silent majority

The design will be specifically aimed at the silent majority of the news consumers: the ones that do not take an extreme position in the public debate. The people from this group do not speak up in public or visibly express their opinion. The main characteristic of this majority is that people are moderate or neutral in their opinion about issues.

Not taking an extreme position often indicates the tendency to consider multiple aspects of an issue, thereby reasoning with more nuance. Nuance can be found in considering the multiple stakeholders and thus several different viewpoints on one topic.

The level of nuance, reasonableness, and moderation will differ per individual. Not every member of the silent majority is moderate in the same way, various other factors can influence people not expressing their opinion in public. For instance, one does not have the ability or the preferred means to do so. Furthermore, one's moderation can differ significantly among several topics, as it depends on how much one cares about the topic and the level to which someone relates to the topic. It also depends on the amount of impact on one's personal life, concerning how close the event, situation or incident comes to the news consumer's personal life.



“The news is all just drama. Nowadays many do not trust the news, they think it is a sensation seeker. Take it easy, and tell us what is really true.”

Man, 18 years old

“Extreme views are everywhere. That’s worrying. It is a trend all around the world. People judge each other continuously. It is because of how things are arranged, and because of populists who are quite mighty. They feed people with what to think.”

Man, 60 years old

Their needs

News consumers' needs listed below are based on the perception of news study, interviews held with users during PrEmo explorations and insights from expert interviews.

1. Relevance

News is interesting when it comes close - literally and figuratively. People's identification with local news from and about unfamiliar places is low: news must be relevant to read it.

2. Attraction

Although readers are often interested in the background story, soft news attracts and responds to one's short-term satisfaction. People are short in time and motivation to read long stories and engage with the topics that could have a personal (emotional) impact. News must include an appealing factor.

3. Clarity

The reader expects the journalist to be the expert, who guides in understanding what or who is right. Nuance could undermine the clarity of a story.

4. Identity preservation

Identity issues are often very sensitive, as people strongly identify with groups. Part of people's self-esteem is derived from their group's status, therefore people benefit from comparing their position to others. The identity of the group(s) someone belongs to, should be appreciated and acknowledged.

5. (Emotional) expression in a moderate way

Online communication is often hostile, rough and unnuanced. Besides online discussion platforms, there are not many other options to participate in the public debate. The majority that does not have a strong opinion is not eager to participate in such online discussions. However, people want to make sense of their emotions and express themselves in a non-hostile, moderate way, as they are interested in more rational discussions. Also, suppressing emotions works counter-effective. The target group would like to express themselves moderately, by discussing with nuance and reasonableness, being challenged to think about subjects and increasing their knowledge.

6. Possibility for equal participation and representation

To have a say in what issues news media report about, but also to have a say in decisions for society, a news consumer needs a possibility for participation. Also, the news consumer benefits from feeling represented themselves and from an equal representation of the whole society as the foundation for a qualitative democracy. It is important to reveal hidden dissatisfaction and worries in time that otherwise could escalate in conflicts in the long-term.

7. Tolerance and solidarity

The silent majority values tolerance and solidarity to a large extent. To tolerate and feel solidarity towards someone else, one must at least understand (aspects of) the other perspective that one does not immediately identify with. To understand, we need to know why someone 'feels that way' of 'thinks like that'. The explanation of new, unexpected perspectives can help. Identification can be encouraged by searching for similarities or concerns people can agree on.

8. Trustworthiness

News consumers benefit from trustworthy news. If you can not rely on the public broadcaster, then how do you get truthful information about the country and the rest of the world? It is important news is reliable and can be presented objectively. Dutch citizens should be able to trust news media organisations for important and relevant information they can engage with.

9. Encouragement

As news can leave the consumer with a despondent feeling, a little encouragement and optimism is required. Constructive journalism already aims to motivate and encourage readers by showing the inspiring actions of people who try to make the world a little better. In a complex world, people like to be reassured and want to see things put in perspective.



C. Stakeholders

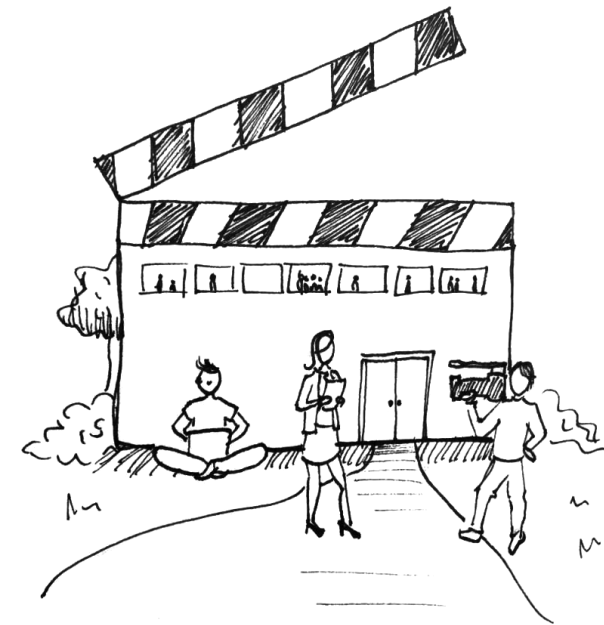
The stakeholders in this project, focused on depolarization, involve case-owner Emotion Studio, (news) media organisations, politicians, province mayors, municipalities, social workers and many more. In this project news media are the main stakeholder, having the highest potential to reduce polarization by improving a representation of society through design. This subchapter describes news media organisations, their journalists and their needs.

The main stakeholder: news media organisations & journalists

The Dutch media landscape is dominated by six media companies. These include the NPO, DPG Media, Talpa Network, Mediahuis Telegraaf Media Group, RTL Group, and Sanoma Media. The national news organisation NOS belongs to NPO (The Dutch public broadcaster) and does not have a commercial interest, although NOS should appeal to every Dutch citizen. Most news brands belong to DPG Media, among which the largest are AD, de Volkskrant, Trouw, Het Parool, many regional newspapers and subject-specific news brands. Mediahuis involves the well-known Telegraaf, Privé, Metro and NRC Media Holland. Mediahuis and DPG Media (both from Belgium) hold 85% of the print market (Consultancy.nl, 2019).

Strengthen the social role

The project is specifically aimed at those news media organisations that are interested in strengthening their social role. Most news organisations strive for objective, factual and relevant news for their news consumers. At the same time, they do not always pay attention to the effect of their news reporting, as there are limited sources available to know this effect. Also, the factors that influence news reporting can sneak into the news production process without being noticed (page 72). However, the polarizing tendency of news, for example, by only showing two sides, can be diminished. The news media brands, national as well as regional, that who would like to contribute to depolarization are the main project stakeholders.



“A complete story is one with a connection between facts - the background of a story - and a personal, inspiring perspective.

Quote | Journalist, regional news media organisation

“We need to know that people are interested in what we do. Stable audience ratings are an expression that people trust you”.

Quote | Editor, national news media organisation

Their needs

1. Network building

According to the editors interviewed, one of the most important jobs for a journalist is to create a network: a network generates stories and provides (connection) to sources of information.

2. Reliable sources

To provide a consistent image of one topic and to ensure a true and factual story, the media organisations need reliable sources. This will also support the readers' perceived trustworthiness of the media organisation.

3. Efficiency

Due to time pressure, an efficient planning is essential. News comes in ups and downs, on which dynamics journalists have to anticipate constantly.

4. Self-criticism

‘We benefit most from critical colleagues that look beyond their prejudices and gut feeling’. Journalist need a critical mindset that analyses what is important, overlooked or irrelevant and is aware of the influence of own feelings and prejudices.

5. Target group knowledge

To create stories that are relevant for the target group, a journalist needs to know what is important to them. There is no time to interview everyone, so a more efficient way is necessary to investigate the audience.

6. Target group engagement

Target group engagement is essential for the survival of the media organisation itself. The organisation has the need that their news is being read, watched and shared, which can be measured online. Therefore, stories should ‘serve’ the news consumer, addressing relevance, clarity, and trustworthiness.

7. Tunnel vision release

The extremes/fighters/activists are easy to find and capture. They want attention. ‘The fire’ attracts and creates a tunnel vision that focuses on the drama of the incident instead of the context and wider consequences. Journalists need to stay away from sensation and explore the context.



06

Design brief

The design brief is based on the insights derived from the research and synthesis phase. Subchapters 6.1 and 6.2 summarize the insights in 4 key problems. Then a design vision and design framework are proposed (6.3 and 6.4).

- 6.1 From insights to design
- 6.2 Key problems
- 6.3 Design vision
- 6.4 Design framework

From insights to design

To translate broad research insights from the literature review and generative research into an accessible design framework, all information gathered is synthesized. The depolarization strategies found, target group and stakeholders were presented in the research recap. From the synthesis, four key problems are identified and a design goal and design vision were created. These form the foundation for the design framework. The goal of this framework is to provide clear design guidelines. The framework, together with the design vision, is the foundation for the ideation phase.

Synthesis

A synthesis session was performed together with fellow designers. The input of this session were quotes from transcribed interviews, insights from literature and PrEmo explorations. Information was categorized, dilemmas were identified and the most important pains, gains, and desires for media organisations and consumers were captured.

Key problems

The four key problems serve as conclusions from the research phase. The problems are 1) the unnoticed majority's perspectives of society, 2) we mainly see and hear rough statements through media channels, but are not aware of the concerns behind these viewpoints, 3) news must be clear and attractive to be read and sold, whereby nuance is lost and 4) selective exposure creates different interpretations of reality.

Target group

Polarization can happen among all citizens, but news media consumers can be especially influenced by media. Therefore, news consumers form the target group for which design has the most potential impact. As media organisations have a great deal in how we perceive the state of our society, they act as the main stakeholder in the project.

Design vision and framework

Next to the design vision, the design goal is presented, the current situation and desired change. Essential and important aspects and three layers of impact are defined. From the design vision and design goal, a framework with design guidelines is set up and serves as the foundation for ideation.

Figure 6.1 | Part of the synthesis session: analyzing quotes from transcribed interviews



1

An unnoticed majority

As the extremes are easy to find, a key to the moderate silent majority of society is missing.

1. Extremes are most visible

At the start of the research, it is known in news relatively more extremes are presented than in reality. A 'newsworthy' situation starts where people have strong disagreements. Conflicts are easy to find: being moderate or neutral is no news. Also the widely used journalistic method 'Right of Reply' (the Dutch 'Hoor & Wederhoor') in principle shows two opposite views. According to media experts, this can cause opinion pressure: the pressure to choose between two extreme viewpoints.

2. Moderates do not express themselves

As the moderate group is big, this group certainly involves an enormous amount of interesting, probably more reasonable, viewpoints. But as they do not express themselves strongly, they are passed by unnoticed.

3. Journalists can be seduced by 'the fire'

According to media organisations, a fire, conflict, riot or incident attracts. These events feel more important than long-term societal developments and create a tunnel vision: all attention is focused on the event.

4. The spiral of silence

The perception of the dominant idea keeps the ones that have other or more moderate opinions silent, caused by the fear of being excluded (spiral of silence theory, p42, confirmed by polarization expert Pliskin).



2 Little emotional understanding

Our real concerns are invisible behind rough comments, firm statements and strong emotions.

1. Hidden causes of our actions

We are not always aware that what people say and express, is influenced by emotions. If people care about something, they will feel emotional about it. Moderates care less about a subject and therefore do not react as emotional as extremes, regardless of what the emotion is, and emotions lead to action (Pliskin, 2019).

2. A despondent feeling

News is mostly negative and, by nature, deviating from the normal situation. A continuous repetition of subjects that are negative or need to be improved, creates a despondent feeling and can result in people's disengagement from the news. Furthermore, our negativity bias makes us engaging with negative news more than positive.

3. Agenda-setting problematizes issues

Media's role of agenda-setting - creating attention for those issues that need to be addressed by those responsible (the government, politicians, companies and/or individuals) - can turn in problematizing issues that we can not individually deal with. This elicit emotions (p60).

4. Hostile communication

The amount of possibilities to respond to issues on social media anonymously is endless. As people do not know each other, reasonable conversations easily turn into hostile discussions where none is willing to give in, without noticing what people's real (perhaps common) concerns are.



3 Clarity and sensation above nuance

News must be clear and appealing in order to be read and sold, therefore nuance is lost.

1. A commercial interest

News must sell, otherwise, it can not be produced. The commercial interest of many organisations has resulted in persuading concepts, such as clickbait, sensational subjects and tone of voice. Public media organisations may not have this commercial interest, but also their news must be consumed to sustain their existence.

2. Sensation above background stories

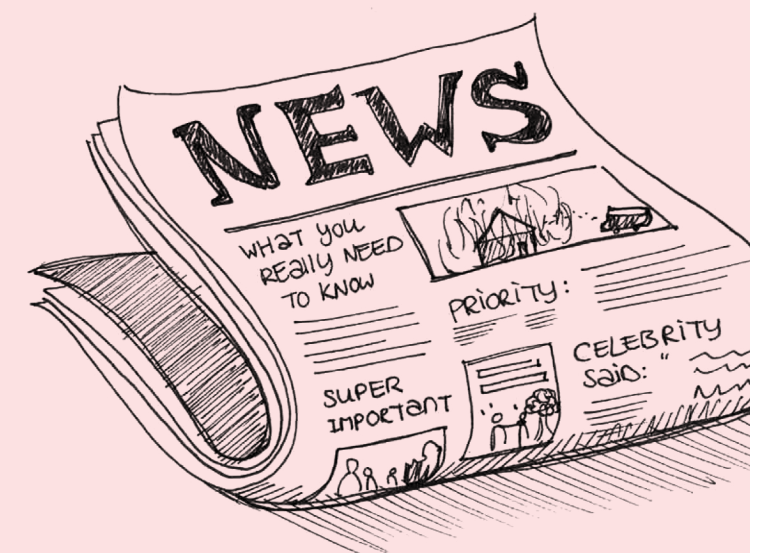
The first dividing line in media consumption is based on entertainment preference: consuming sensational items rather than factual, objective information. People not always have the time, ability and want to consume long stories. Although many might be interested in the background stories behind subjects, still many people are attracted by soft news (incidents, personalities, and entertainment) and sensation. This increases disengagement from hard news. Nuance takes time to produce and to consume.

3. News must be clear

Media aim for a complete, nuanced item but need to interpret the facts too. Nuance can confuse. People want to be guided and expect the journalist to be the expert: 'What to believe? Who's right about this?' Furthermore, people tend to read stories that are clear and easy to read. News can be consumed anywhere, anytime and on any kind of device. New online and widely used applications (such as social media) demand for short and 'easy to grasp' stories.

4. Relevance for the target group

Media aim to show a balanced view on an issue but need to take the subject preferences of their target group into account. Different groups care about different subjects, and to let them feel represented, news must be tailored to their consumers.



4

Distorted realities

The fragmentation of the media landscape and selective exposure result in different interpretations of reality

1. Selective exposure by personal interests

In a fragmented media landscape, one can self-select news sources, type of news, news channels and subjects according to personal interests. This creates selective exposure.

2. Selective exposure by recommender systems

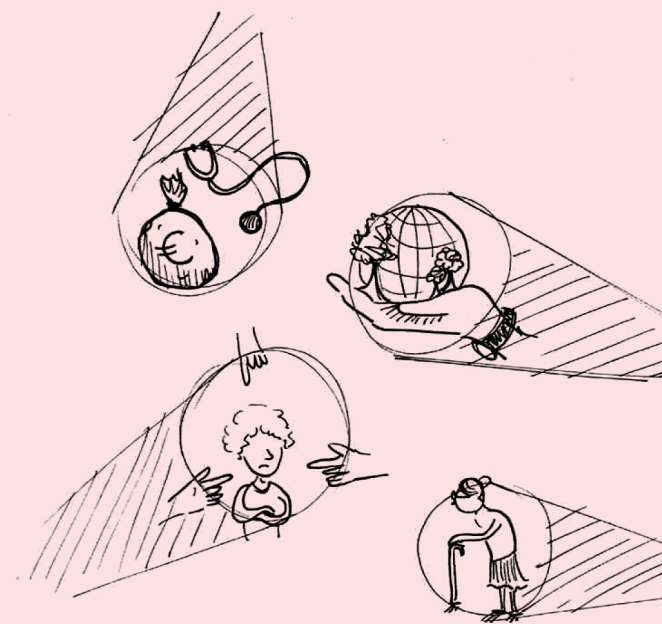
Online algorithms and recommender systems can create filter bubbles in which consistently one type of information is presented to an individual. Social media websites support clustering friends and acquaintances into homophilous circles.

3. Inevitable framing

In the production of news, choices have to be made regarding subject, sources, facts and figures and tone of voice. Framing, showing information from a certain point of view, is inevitable and influences one's perception of a situation and interpretation of a subject. Citizens continuously exposed to the same type of frame, lack a diverse image of reality and the variety of contexts that exist. When problems such as poverty, racial discrimination, and crime are presented separately and through one type of frame, citizens begin to fail to see the connections (Iyengar, 1991).

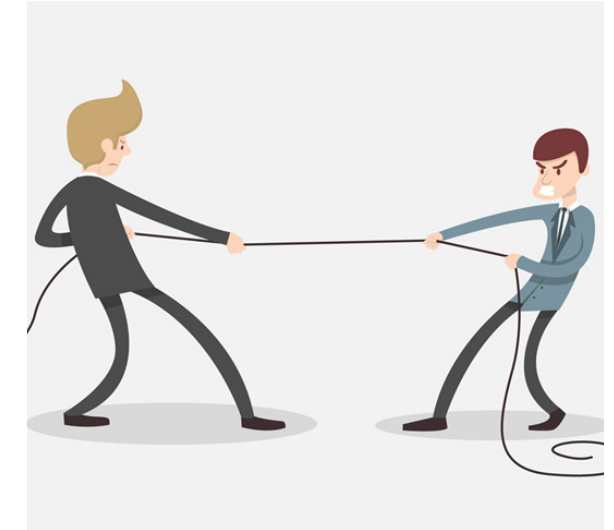
4. Particularism

People are particularists by nature: we feel more solidarity and connectedness towards our own social reference group. When we are presented information, we identify with those who look the most like us and are more eager to believe their standpoints. Together with motivated reasoning, related to our need to arrive at a certain desired conclusion and observing especially the things in agreement with this conclusion, this can turn into different interpretations of reality between different people.



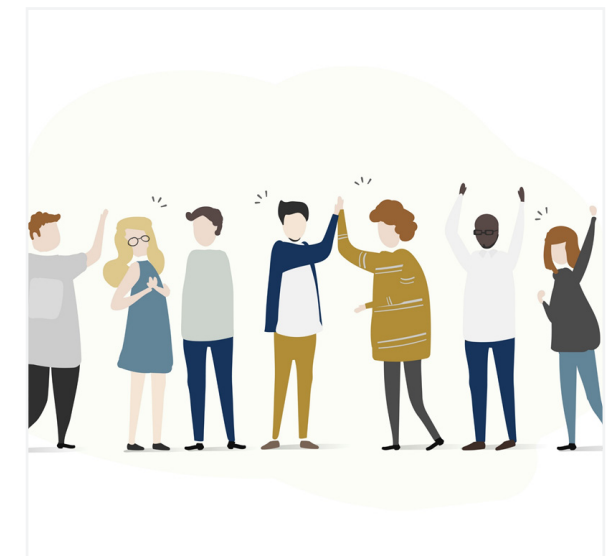
CURRENT SITUATION

Perception of a polarizing society dominates, influenced by framing, selective exposure and focus on the extremes



DESIRED CHANGE

Reducing the perception of polarization by news effect awareness, emotional awareness and a focus on the moderate majority



Reduce polarization
77% of Dutch citizens thinks disagreements in society increase, while polarization is in fact not strongly happening. However, if people think a situation is real, it can have real consequences. Therefore this perception must be reduced.

Contribute and explore
By contributing and exploring society's perspective, one can participate in a more realistic representation and improve the public debate.

DESIGN GOAL

Design to reduce the perception of polarization by enabling Dutch citizens to explore and contribute to the variety of society's perspectives on social themes, using emotional awareness.

The variety of society's perspectives
We now only see a fraction of society's perspectives. Increasing this number of perspectives can create the realization that 1. there are more then two opposing opinions and 2. most people actually have a moderate opinion.

Social themes
As polarization happens mostly around the subjects that affect us strongly and affect many people, the greatest effect can be reached around social themes.

Emotional awareness
Currently, there is little emotional awareness and knowledge about emotions, from both the sides of the citizen and the media organisation. Increasing the emotional awareness can serve to understand other people's concerns and enlarge the willingness to engage in conversation.

6.3

Design vision

The current situation

In the current situation, the perception of a polarizing society dominates. This is partly influenced by human psychology: among other things, our tendency to see our own group as superior, to see the 'outgroup' as homogeneous and to stay silent towards what we perceive as the dominant idea. Furthermore, media have a great deal in this perception, by the inevitable framing of news, selective exposure of subjects and a focus on the extremes and that wat deviates from the normal situation.

Desired change

The desired change is to reduce the perception of polarization by making people aware of the effect of news and of people's concerns, that are hidden behind emotions.

Layers of impact

The essential first step towards a less polarizing society is to show the unnoticed majority. At this point, the majority can hardly identify with the more extreme people they see in the news. Traditional and social media both contribute to the perception of polarization, which creates fear and a feeling of a country that is falling apart. Therefore, the design vision is to reduce the perception of polarization by showing we are not that divided into two camps as it might seem.

1) The first focus point is to create an understanding of the effect of news, how news evokes emotions and where emotions come from. An understanding of emotions, and underlying concerns such as people's needs, values, goals, and desires can encourage people to empathize with others, or at least know where visible opinions, statements, and comments come from.

1) To show the unnoticed majority, one must first *find* and capture the majority. The second design layer involves creating an incentive for the silent majority to reflect on social themes. In this step, the emotion measurement tool PrEmo will be used to capture individual perspectives, based on people's emotions.

3) The third step in design for depolarization is to invite and enable citizens to explore the perspectives as caught in step two. In an easy and accessible way, a news consumer must be able to discover those perspectives that are new and interesting to him or her personally and explore in-depth to the level of detail that is preferred.

LAYERS OF IMPACT

Create awareness

To create **emotional awareness** and **news effect awareness**, recognizing and identifying with 'the silent middle'

Capture perspectives

To invite and guide the silent *majority* in **reflecting** easily and structured on personal concerns regarding **social themes**

Represent perspectives

To **enable** and attract citizens to **explore society's** (moderate) perspectives, thereby engaging with **other people's concerns**

Figure 6.2 | Design goal deconstructed in layers of impact

Design framework

From conclusions out of literature, key problems, target group needs and with the design goal, a design framework is constructed. The framework includes the three different layers of impact: steps that are essential in the final design. Every step involves a focus, which describes what needs to be achieved through the intervention, and design guidelines, which serve as building blocks for the ideation phase.

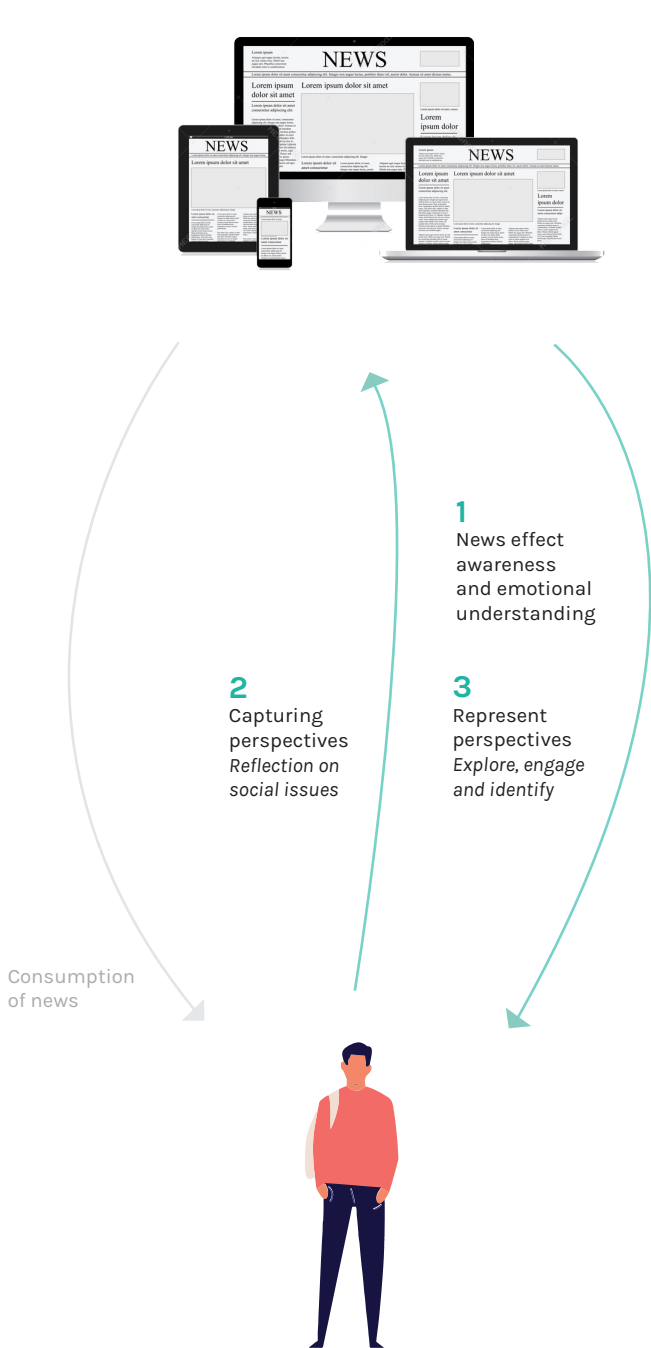


Figure 6.3 | Three steps visualised

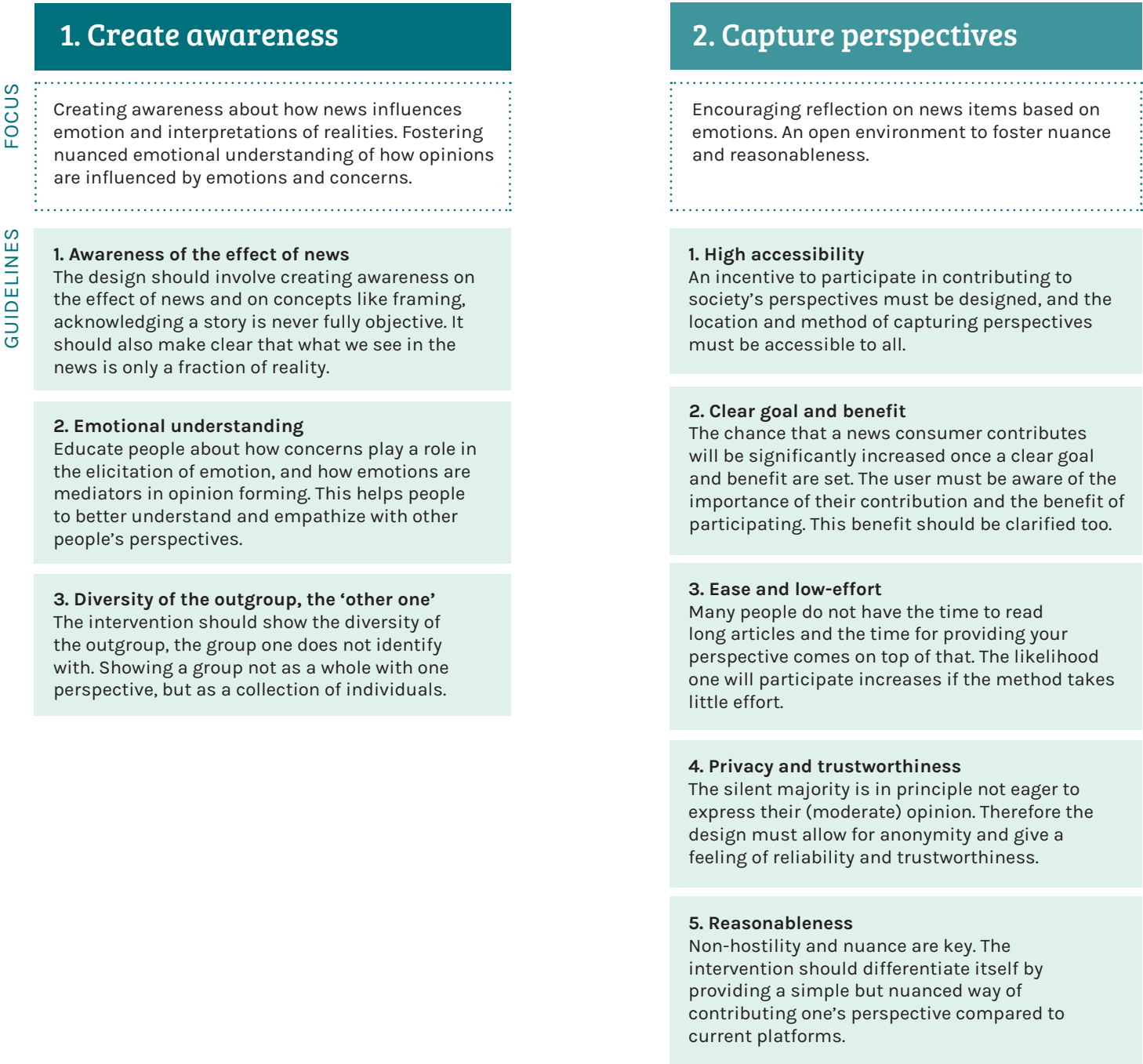


Figure 6.4 | Design framework



07

Design for depolarization

The first section describes the design approach, in which one solution space is selected and explored during the design phase (7.1). Current depolarization attempts, initiatives that in a way reduce polarization, are analysed (7.2). The most important insights from rapid prototyping and quick interventions are displayed and summarized (7.3 and 7.4).

7.1	Design approach
7.2	Current depolarization attempts
7.3	An emotion measurement survey
7.4	An online perspective platform

7.1

Design approach

7.1.1 Ideation approach

When considering the catch of as many perspectives in the public debate by using the digital tool PrEmo, it became clear soon the eventual intervention should be an online product or service. From several first ideation sessions and theories for depolarization the most potential solution space was selected (figure 7.1), an intervention consisting of:

- 1) an emotion measurement survey including PrEmo
- 2) a platform on which perspectives are given shape

The second layer of impact, described in the design brief, capturing perspectives, will be established in the survey. The first and third layer of the design brief, respectively creating awareness and presenting perspectives, would be enacted in the platform. This division in two parts of one intervention served as the starting point for the ideation and development process.

7.1.2 Design process

The design-for-depolarization process was iterative: a variety of prototypes of the survey, as well as the platform, were tested and improved alongside each other. The **build-measure-learn cycle** was utilized, iterating and improving one concept continuously through multiple design cycles, rather than in two distinctive diverging and converging ideation phases. In figure 7.2, the iterations of building (prototyping), measuring (testing) and learning (taking insights into new prototypes) are presented.

The paper-based PrEmo explorations are part of the design process but already executed in the research phase, serving as input for the design goal. These explorations, together with current depolarization attempts (p49), key insights from expert and media interviews (chapter 5), depolarization strategies (p90) and insights from the creative session with media and journalism students (p78), formed the ideation input.

7.1.3 Design choices

In subchapters 7.2 and 7.3 the **foundation for the survey design and the foundation for the platform** are explained including the most important insights from the development phase. In these chapters, design choices that lead to these foundations are addressed. The chapters promote an understanding and argumentation for the establishment of the final design.

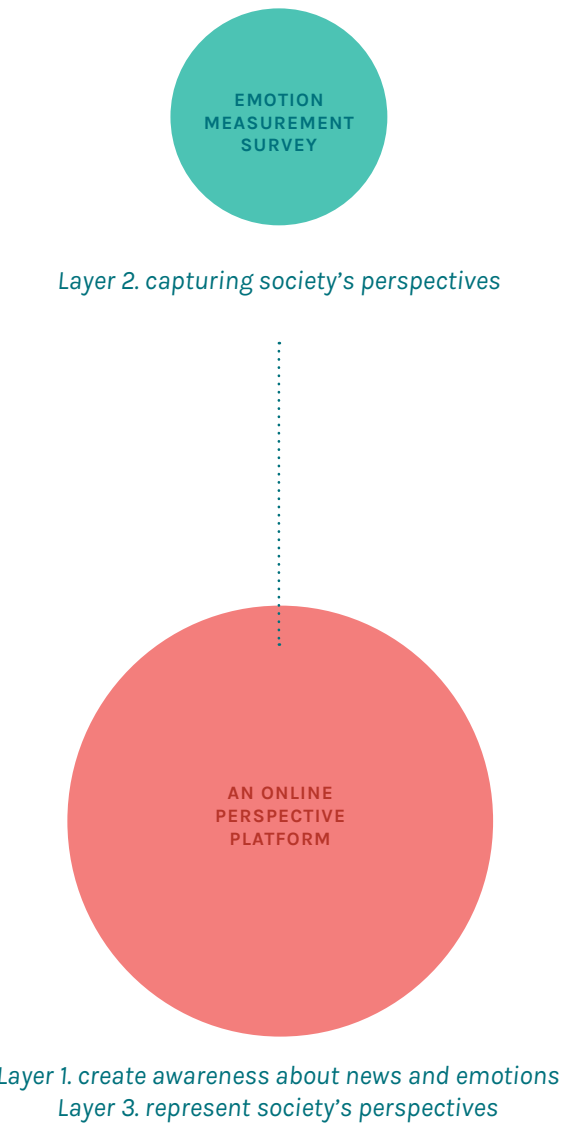


Figure 7.1 | Selected solution space for further ideation

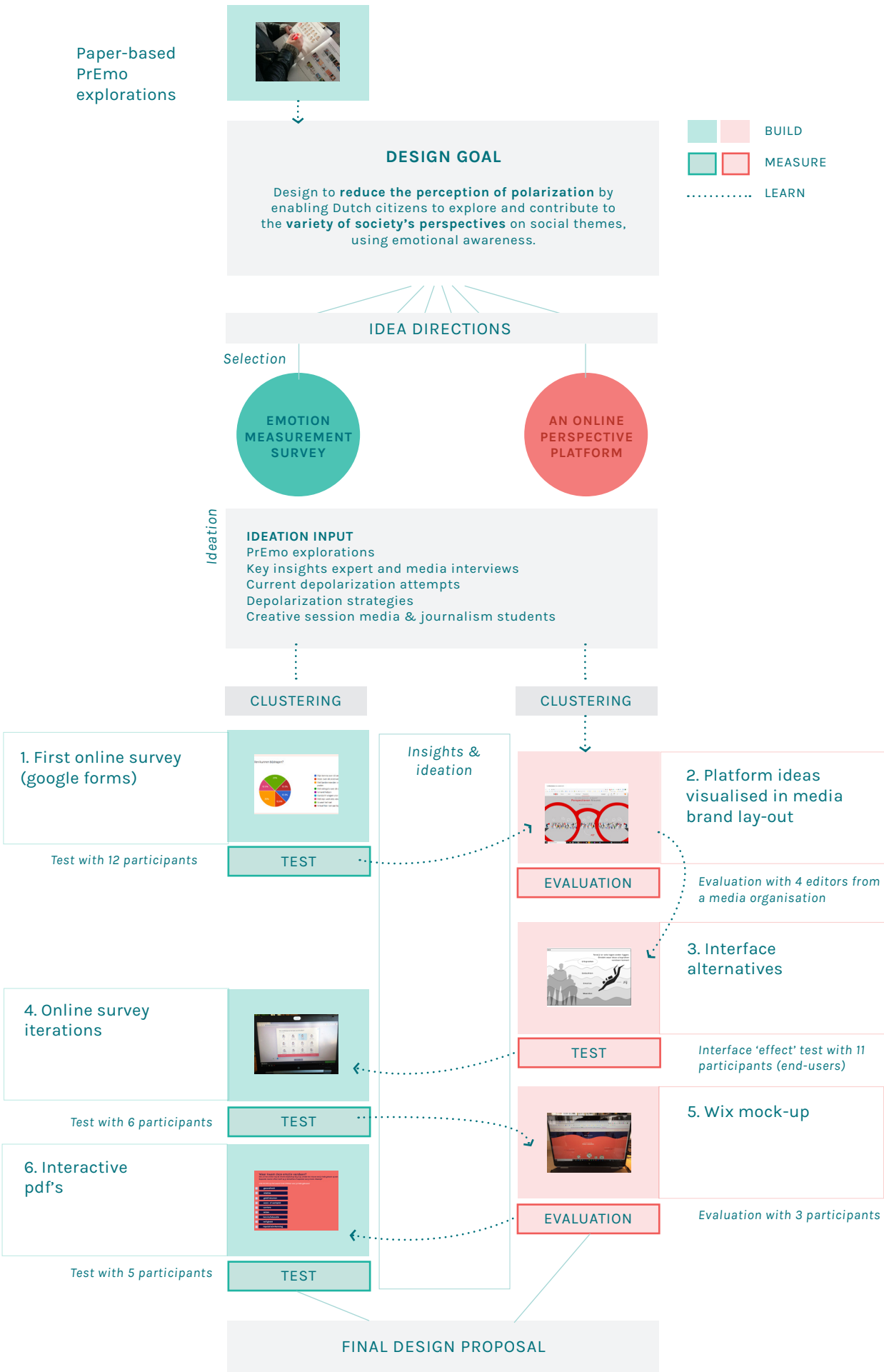


Figure 7.2 | The ideation process

The survey interventions were tested in various forms, each time adjusted based on results from the previous one. The interventions were paper prototypes or created by use of an online survey tool or interactive pdf. In total six interventions were tested among 53 participants.

Op welk aspect van jouw leven heeft dit onderwerp persoonlijke impact?

☐ Geld/inkomen

☐ Carrière/loopbaan

☐ Eigenwaarde

☐ Reputatie/erkenning

☐ Gezondheid

☐ Relaties

☐ Kennis/educatie


☐ Woon- en/of werkplek

☐ Geen van bovenstaande

☐ Other: _____

Zou je deze keuze kunnen toelichten?

Your answer _____



Welke stukje van de tekst veroorzaakte deze emotie?

☐ Boze boeren zijn op tal van plekken in Nederland op weg naar provinciehuizen voor protestacties met een lange stoet tractoren. Op het hoogtepunt leidde dat tot een file van tien kilometer.

☐ Volgens het RIVM blijkt dat de landbouw verantwoordelijk is voor 46 procent van de stikstofneerslag in Nederland.

☐ Farmers Defence Force betwist die uitkomst en noemt het RIVM: "de Rijksdienst die met schimmige methodes en uitkomsten, ons als grote vervuiler heeft aangewezen".

De boeren laten niet met zich sullen: we gaan net zo lang door met de strijd totdat die belachelijke eisen voor het terugdringen van stikstof van tafel zijn, er betere methodes zijn om stikstof te meten en niemand van ons wordt gedwongen zijn veestapel in te krimpen"

☐ In Friesland had vrijdag een eerdere actie al succes: de provincie Friesland trok per direct een stikstofmaatregel in waar boeren woedend over waren.

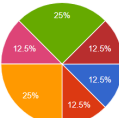
☐ Organisator Farmers Defence Force noemt de steun van boeren en burgers voor een actiedag "enorm en hartverwarmend".

Waarom voel je je gefascineerd na het lezen van dit artikel?

Your answer _____

Wat zou je zelf willen/kunnen bijdragen?

8 responses



- Mijn kennis over dit onderwerp delen
- Meer over dit onderwerp leren
- Met familie/vrienden over dit onderwerp praten
- Met collega's over dit onderwerp praten
- Iemand helpen
- Aandacht vragen voor dit onderwerp
- Met mijn werk iets veranderen of bete.
- Ik weet het niet
- Ik hoef hier niet aan bij te dragen

Meewerken aan representatief nieuws voor heel Nederland?

Wij horen graag wat jij vindt van het nieuws!

49 Questions

←

Hoe relevant is dit onderwerp voor jou?

Op een schaal van 1 tot 10

1

5

10

← PREVIOUS

VOLGENDE →

Hoe voelde jij je na het lezen van dit artikel?

Kies 2 of 3 emoties

☐

Blij

☐

Gefascineerd

☐

Hoopvol

☐

Minnachtend

☐

Ontevreden

☐

Tevreden

☐

Trots

☐

Verdrietig

☐

Verbaasd

☐

Verbaasd

☐

Verbaasd

☐

Verbaasd

← PREVIOUS

VOLGENDE →

2 of 7

Ik voel me gefascineerd omdat ik hierdoor wel of niet:*

Iets (op mijn eigen manier) kan doen met de juiste vaardigheden

Mij geld of spullen kan veroorloven

Persoonlijk kan ontwikkelen

Ergens bij kan horen

Impact kan maken

Betekenisvol of spiritueel kan leven

Motivatief van stimulans kan krijgen






Plezier of gemak ervaar






← PREVIOUS

VOLGENDE →

Dit veld is verplicht

Welke emoties voelde je na het lezen dit artikel?
Kies er tenminste 2

						
1. blij	2. hoopvol	3. trots	4. bewonderend	5. tevreden	6. gefascineerd	7. verlangend

						
8. verdrietig	9. bezorgd	10. beschaamd	11. minachtend	12. ontevreden	13. verveeld	14. walgend

Hoe sterk voelde je deze emoties?
Op schaal van 1 tot 5 (1 = helemaal niet sterk en 5 = zeer sterk)

nr. emotie:		Intensiteit					
nr. emotie:	<input type="text"/>	Intensiteit	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
nr. emotie (optioneel):	<input type="text"/>	Intensiteit	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
nr. motie (optioneel):	<input type="text"/>	Intensiteit	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Waar kwam deze emotie vandaan?
Iets uit het artikel riep de emotie blijdschap bij je op, omdat het nieuws wat je hebt gelezen op een bepaalde manier effect heeft op je behoeftes of aspecten van je leven. Waarop?

vink én klik op het woord (niet klikken voor je hebt gekozen!)













- ☐ gezondheid
- ☐ relaties
- ☐ geld/inkomen
- ☐ woon- of werkplek
- ☐ carrière
- ☐ reizen
- ☐ kennis/educatie
- ☐ veiligheid
- ☐ reputatie/erkenning

Want dit nieuws verandert (of kan in de toekomst veranderen):
Klik alleen op het rijtje van toepassing (afh antwoord vorige vraag)

Vaardigheden	Eigen keuzes	(Betekenisvol) doel
<input type="checkbox"/> Prestatie	<input type="checkbox"/> Beslissingsvrijheid	<input type="checkbox"/> Richting & ambitie
<input type="checkbox"/> Uitdaging & competentie	<input type="checkbox"/> Individualiteit	<input type="checkbox"/> Betekenisvolle activiteiten
<input type="checkbox"/> Controle over je omgeving	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruimte voor experimenteren	<input type="checkbox"/> Persoonlijke groei
<input type="checkbox"/> Vaardigheden verbeteren	<input type="checkbox"/> Creatieve uiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritualiteit

PICTURES FROM PARTICIPANTS

Hoe voel je je na het lezen van het artikel? Omcirkel jouw emotie(s).


















Waarom deze emotie(s)? Noteer hier je antwoord

Welke zin(nen) geven je deze emotie(s)? Markeer ze op het artikel.

Waarom deze zin(nen precies)? Welke woorden in het bij(zonder)hoofd? Noteer hier je antwoord

Met welke beelden kun je deze emoties te maken? Omcirkel jouw beeltdio(s).










Verdringen van iets te bereiken

Net op jouw manier kunnen doen

Betrouwvol zijn

Eigen bij komen





Geeft relaties

Impact hebben

Erkenning

Wijlheid & Zekerheid

Orde

Net goed kunnen doen

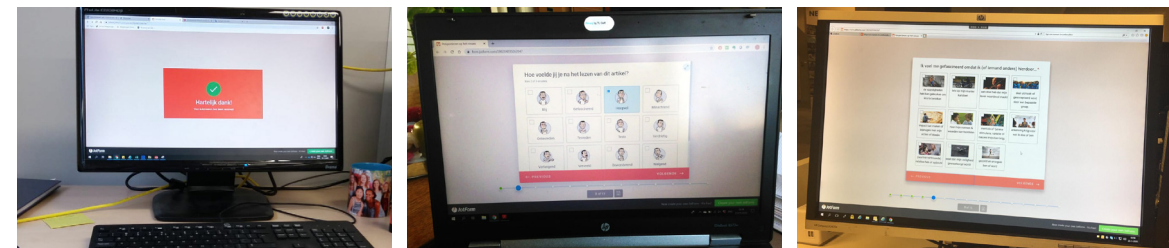
Fit en gezond

Energiek & niet overtuist

Gemakkelijk leven

Welke zorgen heb je over dit onderwerp? Waar ben je hoopvol over? Noteer hieronder.

Waarom deze beeltdio(s)? Noteer hier je antwoord.



An emotion measurement survey

To capture perspectives

The design of an emotion measurement survey is the starting point to capture the silent majority's perspectives. Although in the design process the tool to capture perspectives was designed alongside the design of an online environment iteratively, this chapter only presents the most important insights concerning the emotion measurement survey. The design question for the design of this part:

How to apply PrEmo in order to capture people's individual concerns on social themes in a digital way?

7.2.1 A digitalized interview

The essence of the survey is to digitalize an interview. An interviewer can change the structure of the interview during the conversation, adjust follow-up questions based on the interviewee's responses and probe to tell more. Often the laddering technique is used: asking 'why?' multiple times after an answer is given, aiming to derive at the interviewee's true concerns (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). In the emotion measurement survey, the aim is to digitalize the interviewer, but a digital interview is limited in adjustment possibilities and the social aspect of sensing whether someone would like to tell more is missing. However, asking the right questions using the right multiple-choice answers could lead to in-depth information without an interviewer present.

7.2.2 The starting point

Insights from the PrEmo explorations form the starting point for the design process of the online survey. A summary of these insights is shown below.

- 1. Emotion first** | Indicating emotions after reading an article is proven as being an adequate way to derive people's concerns, by asking what (concern) caused the emotion they have chosen.
- 2. Low-effort** | The survey must be clear, easy, and short to gather as many perspectives as possible for the most corresponding image of reality.
- 3. Clear incentive** | The goal and benefit for the user must be clear at the onset.
- 4. Minimal means, maximal result** | the number of questions must be kept low, but provide enough depth.
- 5. In-depth, but not too abstract** | questions should reveal deeper concerns, but be easy to answer.

From the interventions, it appeared that indicating one's emotion after reading a news item along with an explanation would provide enough in-depth information about how someone feels and why. Nonetheless, a range of only comments will not help people to engage with other people's perspectives on the platform. Therefore concerns need to be categorized and asked (partly) in a multiple-choice form.

7.2.3 Iteration insights

During the design process, different interventions are built and tested, as shown in figure 7.2. A translation from paper prototypes to digital prototype had to be made. A grasp of the interventions are displayed on page 114 and 115. During the development and testing of the interventions, three main insights emerged.

Insight 1 | trade-off detailed questions vs. low-effort

To get insight into people's concerns, many questions can be asked (see suggestions from media & journalism students at page 78). Questions can consider a topic's personal impact, people's personal experiences, and ideas about an ideal society. All these questions could lead to a very detailed picture of one's individual concerns. However, because of the effort required to fill in detailed questions, a person would probably not participate again. A trade-off must be made between essential questions and a low-effort survey. The questions can depend on the news item in particular. Suggestions are presented on the next page, based on the appraisal of emotions.

Insight 2 | conditional logic required

The different interventions aim to 'filter' the user through the questions to derive at the right answer, for instance from main clusters of needs to more detailed sub needs, hereby mimicking the 'why' laddering technique (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988).

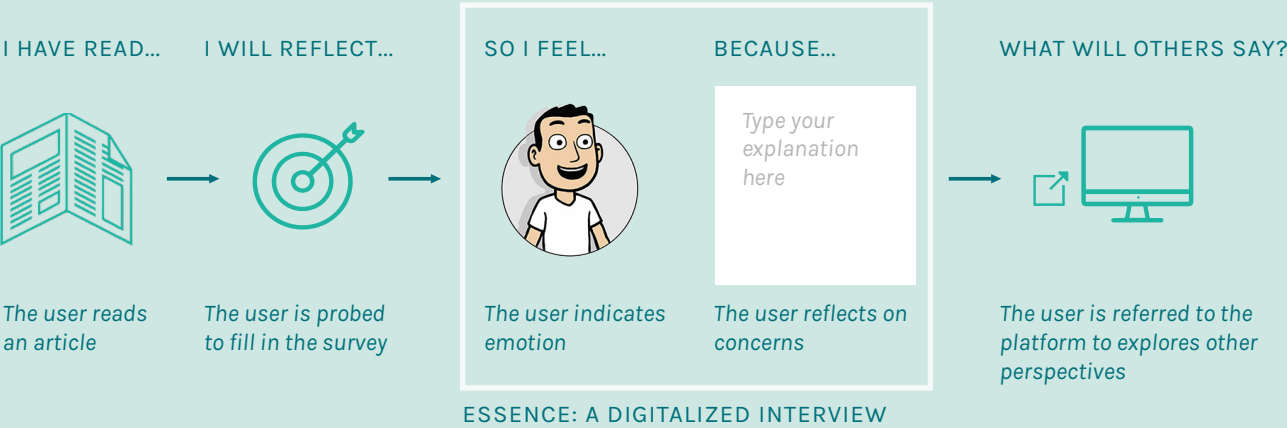
However, this requires a very complex conditional logic, e.g., creating a personal path through questions per individual through a variety of options. Many online survey tools do not offer this possibility, and interactive pdfs do not evoke the intended intuitive experience. This means it is challenging to create an intuitive as well as a personalised path of questions.

Insight 3 | difficulty to relate to personal needs

For many participants that tested the interventions, it was hard to indicate personal needs, as news is often about another person or group, or an event that does not have a concrete and short-term effect on the participant. For instance, someone noted 'I feel admiration because she has the competence to inspire people.' In here competence is a need of the person described in the article. However, an elicited emotion is always related to people's needs and values, but maybe in another manner, such as 'I feel admiration because I would like to have impact too'. To translate your emotion about a faraway subject to your personal needs is challenging. However, values are easier, even if a subject is not strongly related to your life, for example: 'I feel admiration because the value leadership is important to me.

The survey's essence

- Imitating a real interview
- to discover one's personal concerns regarding a social issue
- using emotion as the gateway to needs, goals and values.



Main challenge

- To guide people with the right questions and sufficient possible multiple-choice answers to their real concerns
- in an accessible, quick and low-effort survey

Subchallenges

- Finding the essential questions
- Proper jargon (not 'This need is important to me: ...' but 'I feel [emotion] because it has consequences on this [life aspect]' instead)
- Incorporating nuance (intensity of emotions, importance level for user)
- Less comments, more multiple-choice





NEWS =
STIMULUS



REFLECTION ON EMOTIONS AND CONCERNS

EMOTION INDICATION

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

How do you feel after reading about this subject, event or situation?

EMOTION EXPLANATION

RELEVANCE

How relevant is this news subject, event or situation for me or my social reference group?

IMPLEMENTATION

What are the consequences of this event or situation and how does it affect my well-being and goals?

COPING

How well can I adjust to the consequences of this event or situation?

NORMATIVE SIGNIFICANCE

What does this event or situation mean with respect to my self-concept and to my social norms and values?

PREDICTABILITY

NEEDS

RESPONSIBILITY

PERSONAL VALUES

NOVELTY

(LIFE) GOALS

SOLUTIONS

VALUES FOR SOCIETY

GOAL/NEED RELEVANCE

EXPECTATION CONFIRMATION

(POSSIBLE) PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION

URGENCY

CERTAINTY

CATEGORIES

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

Example questions concerning the appraisal components (such as predictability, needs etc.) can be found in the chapter of the implementation, p162).

Figure 7.3 | Appraisal component model as foundation for the emotion measurement survey

7.2.4 Foundation of the survey

As mentioned by insight 1, many questions can be asked. According to the appraisal component process model (chapter emotions and concerns, p57), in the appraisal process of emotion one evaluates the relevance, implementation, coping and normative significance of the event one encounters with.

This model forms the foundation for the emotion measurement survey (figure 7.3), starting with reading a news article as ‘the event’, the stimulus that elicits an emotion. The user can indicate emotion(s) felt after reading the article. Then, the survey can include different components from ‘relevance’, ‘implementation’, to ‘normative significance’. The sequence is not fixed and can be adjusted if necessary.

Eliminating coping questions

In the survey the component **coping will not be included**. The platform focuses on personal concerns, whereas coping focuses more on external wishes for the situation. Examples of questions that concern coping can be ‘what would be the best solution for this situation?’, ‘who is responsible?’, ‘who has the means to change the situation?’. These questions regarding news topics are difficult to answer as they will require much knowledge of systems and governmental policies. This category will lead often to ‘guessing’ or neutral or no answers based on little knowledge. It might only be interesting to ask about people’s willingness to make a personal contribution to (change) the situation.



Incentive, result and reference

The survey needs to be placed right after the end of an article. The invitation for contribution should include a clear benefit for the reader. It was found that people like to contribute to more representative news (‘do good’) and to compare their own perspective to others.

The survey should end with a short summary of the given answers, such as ‘you read..., you felt ... about it because ..., in which ... is especially important to you’. Next to this, the reader needs to be referred to the platform where the reader’s responses are saved to compare them to other people’s perspectives.

Conclusions

The main conclusion derived from design iterations on the emotion measurement survey is that the survey design has to be designed in two versions: a minimal viable intervention (the essence) and an elaborated, modular and adjustable version. Both need to include a **clear incentive, reflection on emotions and concerns, a conclusion and reference**. The concern part is flexible: the particular (sequence of) **questions should be adjustable to the issue** discussed in the news article. The main challenge for the survey is to capture in-depth perspectives with **little effort** from the user. The data must be **processable** (multiple-choice), users must be able to **nuance** their responses and care must be taken upon the **use of jargon**, whereas questions must be clear and concrete, though evoking in-depth responses.

An online perspective platform

To create awareness and represent perspectives

The online perspective platform should evoke a change in perspective on news, create awareness about emotions and reduce the perception of polarization. In other words: the platform is the most important part of the intervention in reaching the design goal. Still, the emotion measurement survey is essential in the total intervention to gather the perspectives presented on the platform and to explore what other purposes PrEmo could serve. In this chapter, the base for the final design of the platform is presented as a result of several design activities and iterations. The design question for this part:

How to reduce the perception of polarization by creating news effect awareness and represent society's perspectives in an online environment?

7.3.1 Richness of perspectives

The central aim of this thesis is to enable citizens to explore the richness in the variety of society's perspectives. By showing the variety and the nuance of the perspectives, people become aware of the fact that news can create a perception of polarization and there are more (nuances in) perspectives to be found than it sometimes seems. The core element is to amplify the presence of a silent majority and, eventually, encourage people to understand others they might not directly identify with.

7.3.2 UX Design strategy

The platform design process is based on the UX (user experience) design layers from the model of Jesse James Garret (figure 7.5). The user needs were identified in the research phase and presented on page 94. The user needs are translated to site objectives, the first layer of the design. The scope, e.g., the features the platform must include, are based on current depolarization attempts and derived from the site objectives. This is the second layer of design. A summary of features is listed below.

Features

- **Informing** | about the effect of news, emotions and concerns
- **Experience** | 'step out of your own bubble' and experience other perspectives
- **Presentation** | society's emotions and concerns in a structured way
- **A possibility to compare** | compare one's own perspective (when contributed to the survey) to others

The third and fourth layer of design, respectively structure (interaction design) and skeleton (information design) are iterated on during the design process and displayed in appendix F. For the visual design several lay-outs are used, sometimes adjusted to a media organisation's personal branding. An 'interface effect' test was conducted (figure 7.8-7.10), testing whether participants could understand several metaphors that would create awareness and to what extent they are interested in emotions and concerns, and what lay-out helps them to understand.

7.3.3 Iteration insights

Several platform prototypes were built, from separate interfaces to a website mock-up. Through evaluating and testing the prototypes, main insights were derived, which are presented below.

1. Clear core message

The presentation of perspectives should be structured and clear. Too many different visualisations and details distract people from the essence of the platform: the variety of perspectives. Users must be able to explore to a preferred depth, but the first screens should immediately convey the core message.

2. Prevent group-thinking

During the platform tests many participants noted they would like to see more personal information from people, such as place of residence and education level, which leads to more insight in which groups think in what way. However, it also lead to more group-thinking instead of seeing a group as a collection of individuals.

3. Perspective comparison

One of the main reason one would visit the platform is to compare one's own perspective to others. The way of comparing should be considered carefully, as presenting a single perspective opposite to yours could even strengthen your own position instead of encouraging you to identify with the other.

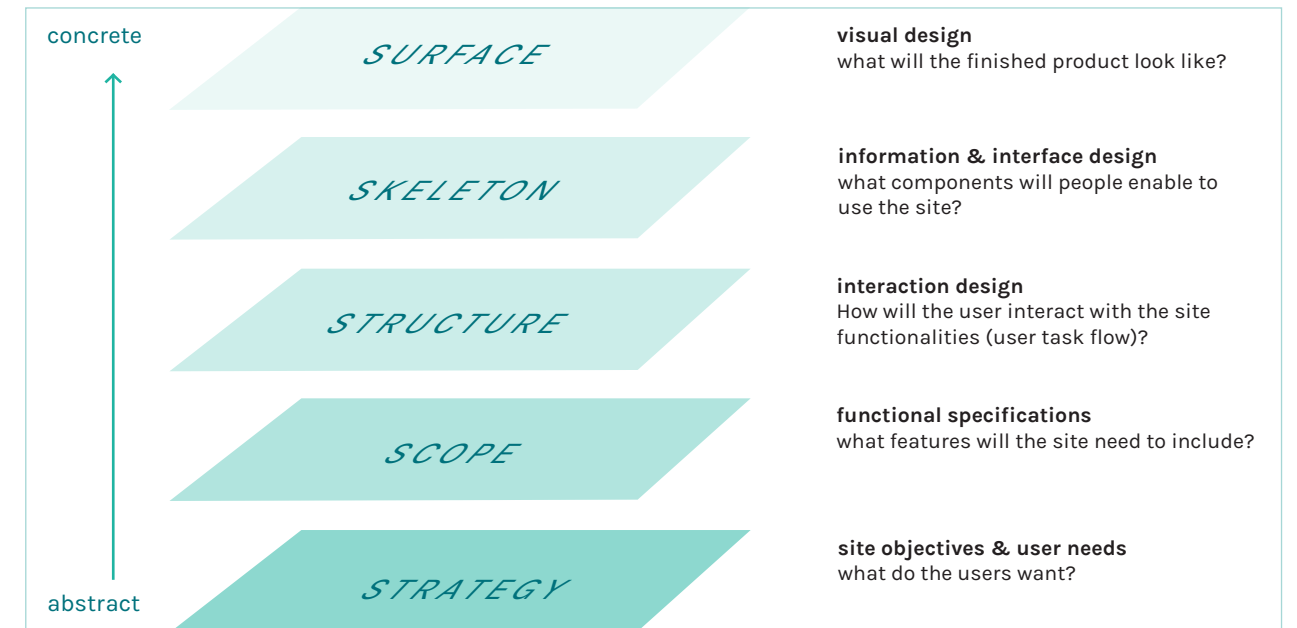
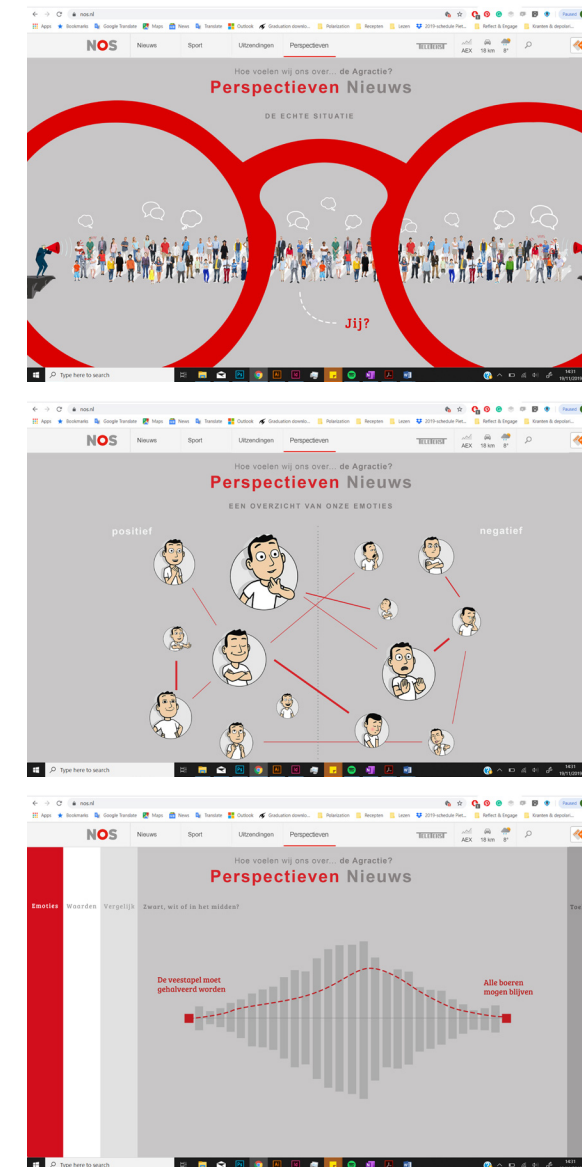


Figure 7.4 | Five layers of User Experience design from Jesse James Garrett

PLATFORM IDEAS



INTERFACE 'EFFECT' TEST

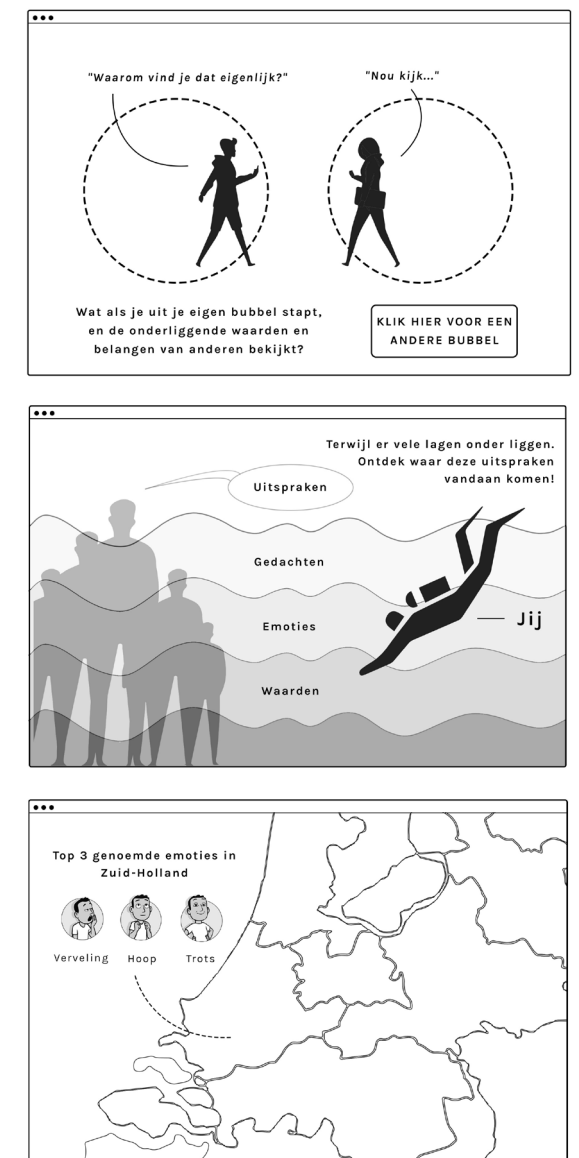


Figure 7.5 - 7.10 | Platform ideation. Left: first ideas for validation with a media organisation, right: interface effect test

7.2.4 Foundation of the platform

The platform will present the results of the emotion measurement survey, which means the structure of the platform is dependent on what information is asked for in the survey. Below the basic structure for the platform is presented. One can encounter the platform through a touchpoint. When referred to the platform, the user is exposed to an introduction and the information that supports understanding of the platform's goal (see category awareness).

If a user has already explored the platform before, the user can select a topic and explore emotions and concerns. In this, the user can explore different layers: the user could check out complete overviews of emotions and needs on one topic, but also select and explore one perspective alone, or select one typical concern (a value, or need) and read people's explanations that were given upon these concerns. The user can switch between these layers, compare his/her position to others and see changes per topic over time.

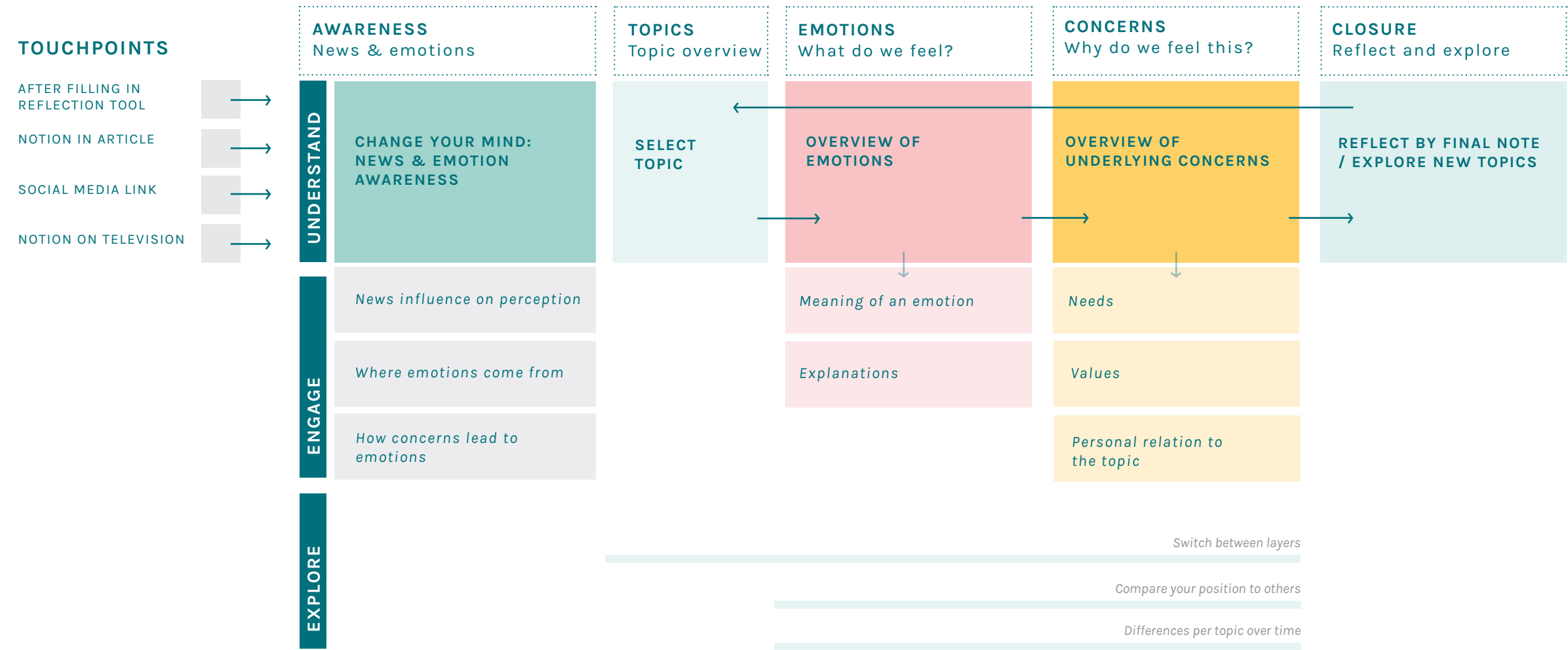


Figure 7.11 | Structure of the perspective platform

08

Final Design

This chapter introduces *Perspective News*, an online platform built-in on existing news media websites, enabling their readers to reflect on the news and explore other people's perspectives. *Perspective News* consists of both an emotion measurement survey to capture perspectives and a platform that presents the derived information.

- 8.1 Introduction of *Perspective News*
- 8.2 The Pursuit of Perspectives
- 8.3 *Perspective News* platform
- 8.4 Scenario
- 8.5 What does it realize?
- 8.6 Communication
- 8.7 Unique selling proposition
- 8.8 Indicators of succes



8.1

Perspective News

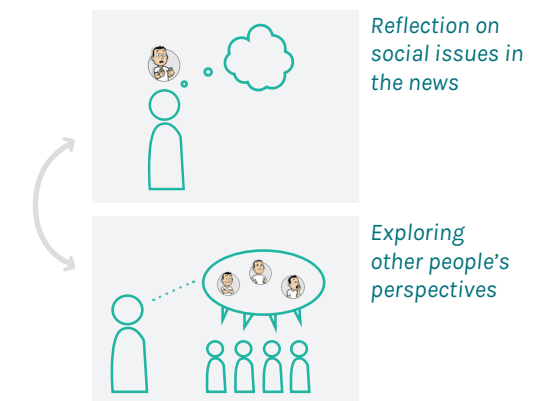
Explore the variety of society's perspectives in the public debate with emotional understanding

Perspective News is an online platform on which Dutch citizens will engage with news topics differently: by exploring society's perspectives.

The platform, integrated into existing news media websites, shows how people feel after reading about social issues in the news, and what concerns caused their emotions. The design reduces the chance of polarization, by enabling users to discover the presence of a silent majority and identify with the variety of nuanced perspectives our society possesses.

Design elements

- 1. An emotion measurement survey** that captures people's perspectives after reading a news article in a nuanced way.
- 2. A platform** that represents the captured perspectives, displaying people's emotions, needs and values.



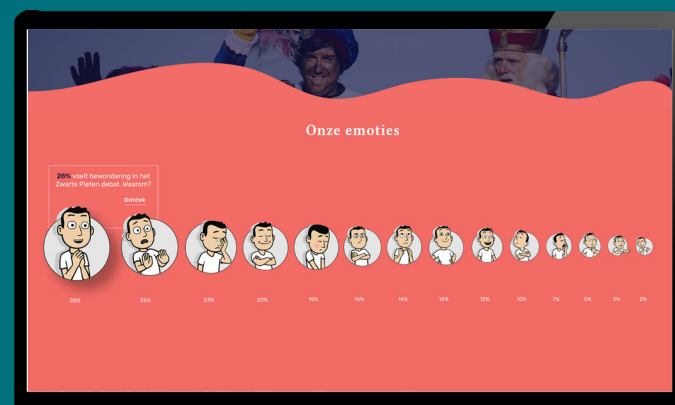
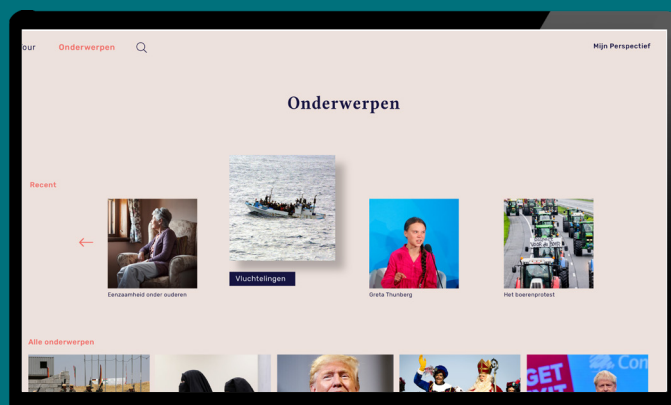
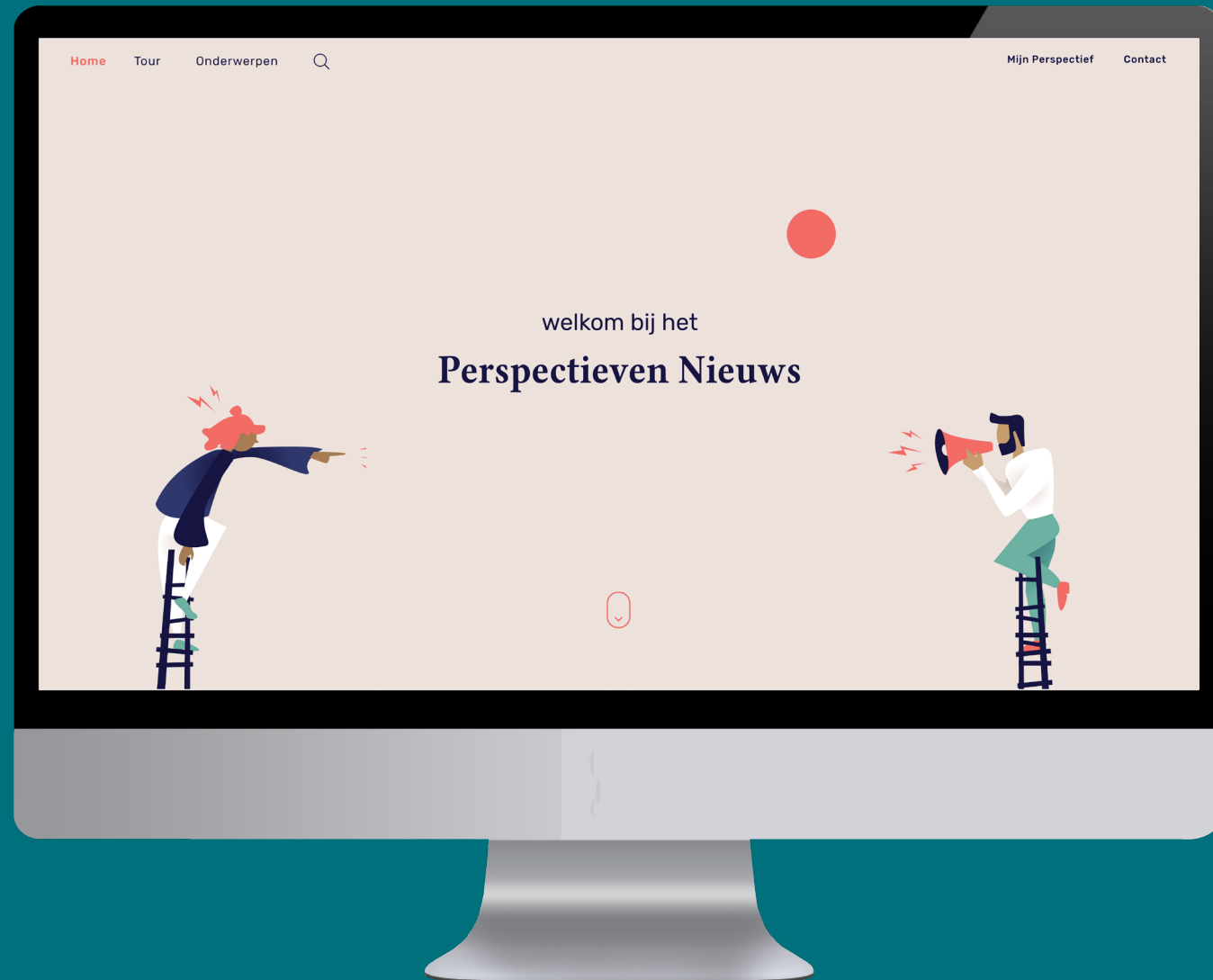
Sequence of use

First, the user can fill in the emotion measurement survey after reading a news item. Afterwards, the user will be referred to the platform to explore the perspectives. However, contribution to the survey is not required in order to use the platform. If preferred, a user can also fill in the survey after checking other people's perspectives or not use the survey at all.

The main objectives

Perspective News aims to represent the variety of society's perspectives on social issues.

1. Achieving this objective will reduce the perception of polarization, showing there are significantly more perspectives than two opposite positions.
2. It will increase our understanding of other people's concerns
3. Knowing why people feel a certain way will enlarge our willingness to engage in constructive conversation.
4. Emotional awareness will promote a more nuanced public debate with all perspectives involved



SELECT A NEWS TOPIC

EXPLORE SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVES

8.2

The pursuit of perspectives

The emotion measurement survey with PrEmo

In this chapter, a walk-through of the emotion measurement survey proposal is presented. The goal and effect of different steps are explained. The survey is based on the appraisal component model, as shown on page 57. Required elements derived from this model were reflection on relevance, consequences and values. On these pages, the most important steps are visualised, together shaping a minimal viable intervention of the survey. In chapter 9, an elaboration on the future development version, including recommendations, can be found.

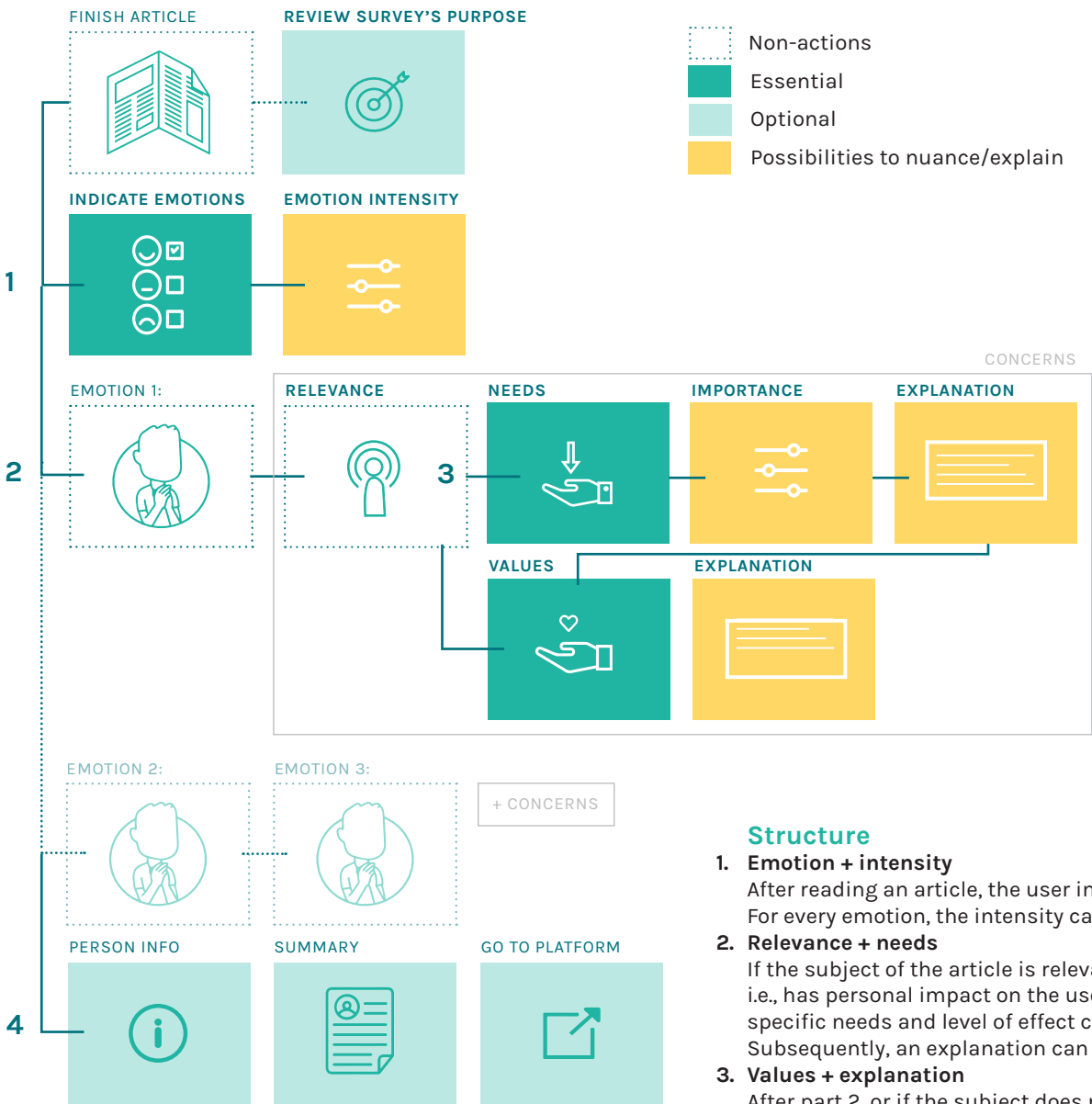
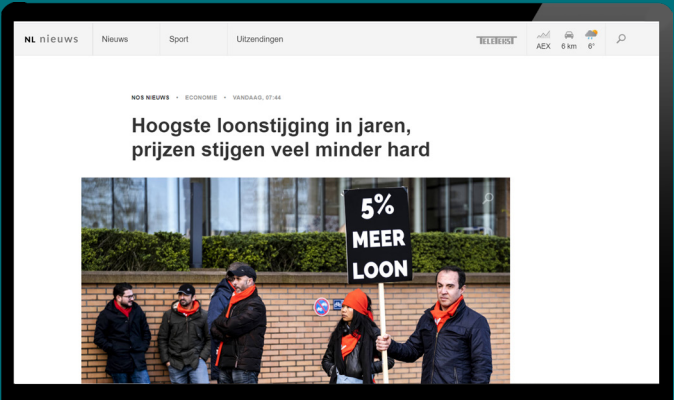


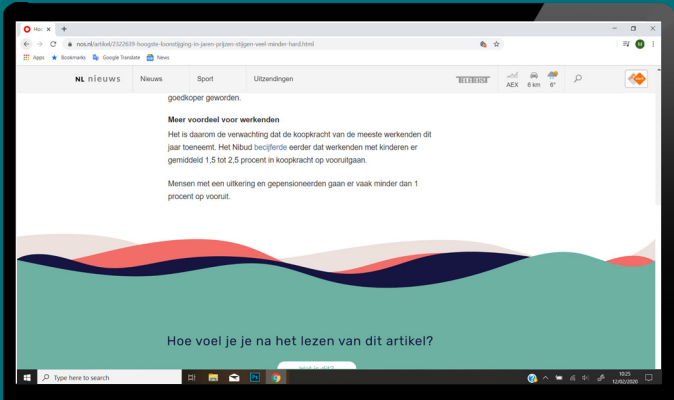
Figure 8.1 | Structure of the survey

Structure

- Emotion + intensity**
After reading an article, the user indicates emotion(s). For every emotion, the intensity can be set
- Relevance + needs**
If the subject of the article is relevant to the user, i.e., has personal impact on the user needs, the specific needs and level of effect can be defined. Subsequently, an explanation can be given.
- Values + explanation**
After part 2, or if the subject does not have a significant effect, the user is directed to the question about values. An explanation about the emotion can be given if part 2 was skipped.
- Final questions + summary + reference platform**
Finally, personal information is asked (age, gender) and a summary of answers is presented. Afterwards, the user is referred to the platform.



1. THE USER READS AN ARTICLE

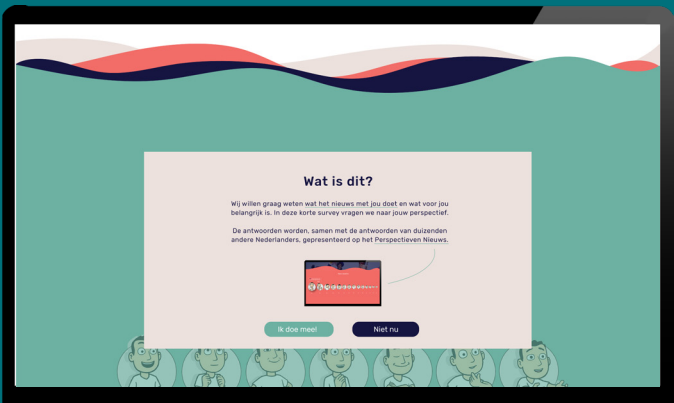


2. AT THE END OF THE ARTICLE, THE USER ENCOUNTERS THE SURVEY



3. THE USER IS DIRECTLY PROBED TO INDICATE THE EMOTION(S) THAT ARE ELICITED BY THE ARTICLE

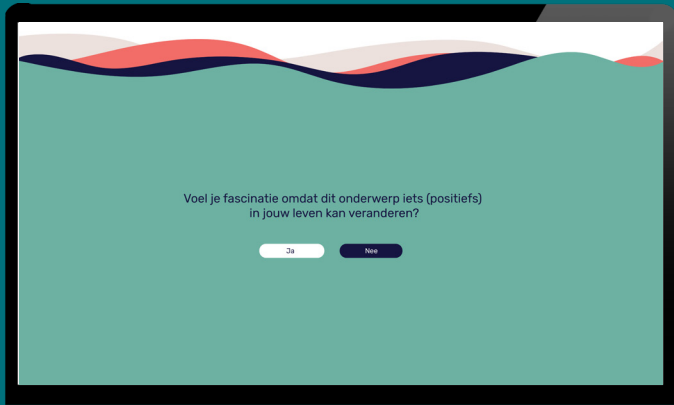
4. THE USER CAN START FILLING IN THE SURVEY, OR CLICK 'WHAT IS THIS?' ON WHICH A POP-UP SCREEN EXPLAINS THE PURPOSE





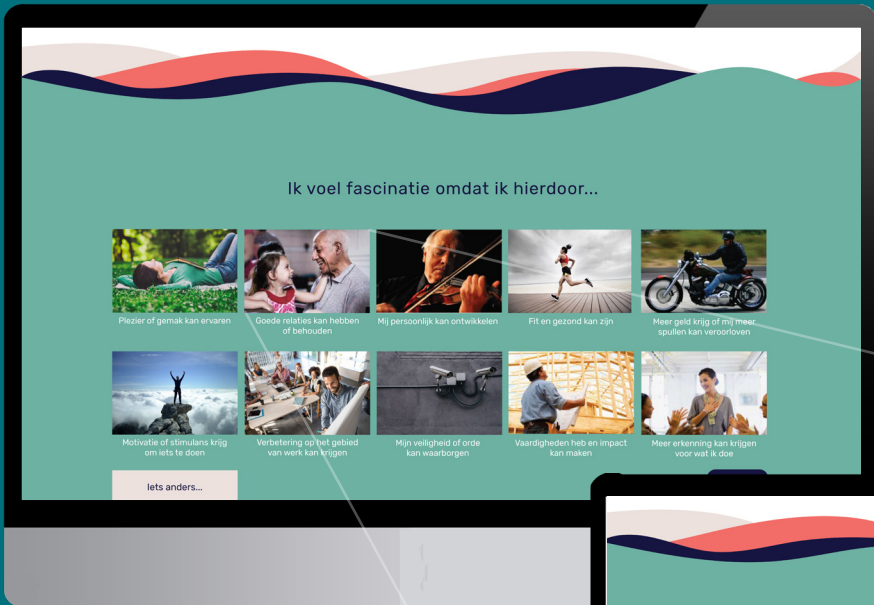
5. LEVEL OF INTENSITY

As concluded from the research phase, people do not find difficulty in indicating their emotions. To limit the effort required for the survey, one can pick up to 3 emotions. A significant amount of participants noted the word emotion feels 'heavy', they might feel something, but they do not feel very emotional about the news item. Therefore, the user can quickly set the level of intensity of the emotion felt on a scale from 1 to 5.



6. RELEVANCE QUESTION

Do you feel [emotion] because this has a positive/negative effect on an aspect of your personal life? If yes, continue. If no, go to part 10 and skip 7-9. When a topic does not have a significant effect on your personal life, it is hard to indicate your own needs, but most people do have an opinion of what values are important in the topic. In this case, some questions can be passed.



7. THE NEED THAT CAUSED THE EMOTION

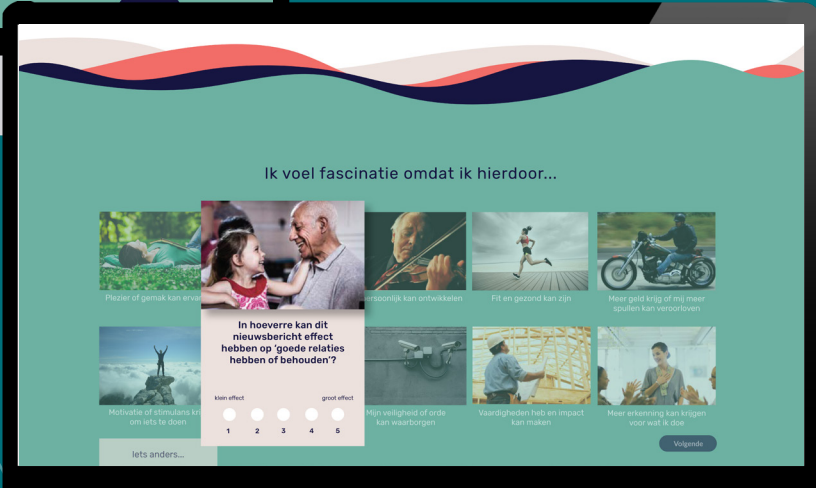
If the news report could have a positive or negative effect on the user's (daily) life, the user can indicate one or multiple needs that are affected here.

8. THE LEVEL OF EFFECT

After indication a need, a pop-up will appear. In this pop-up the user can set to what extent the need is affected or could be affected in the future.

9. (OPTIONAL) EXPLANATION

To conclude the need-questions, the user can explain why a certain emotion was felt. Thereby, the user can use the responses given on previous questions. In addition, an explanation of the emotion is shown here, to support the user to formulate concerns.

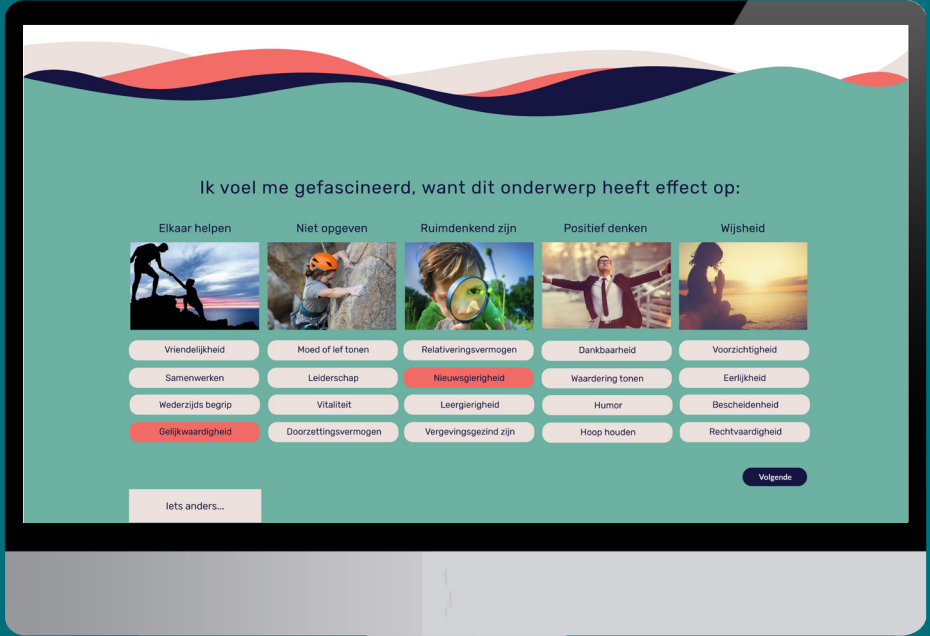


10. VALUES

Values are presented in clusters to support the user choose easily. Clusters are: to help each other, not giving up, open-mindedness, positive thinking and wisdom.

11. (OPTIONAL) EXPLANATION

If the user did not fill in the questions about the user's needs, an (optional) explanation will appear. This is the same screen as shown at part 9.



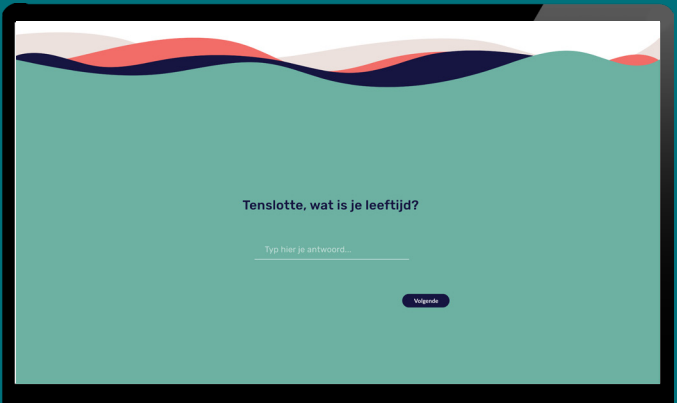
12. NUANCE THE CHOSEN VALUE

The chosen value can be nuance. For example equality: for who or why equality important to you?



14. A SUMMARY OF YOUR RESPONSES

An overview of all responses is presented in a short story, complemented with visualisations of chosen emotions, needs, and values.



13. PERSONAL INFORMATION

When all questions regarding one's perspectives are answered, the participants' age and gender is asked for.



15. REFERENCE TO PERSPECTIVE NEWS

Eventually, some previews of the platform of Perspective News are shown and a button that links to Perspective News.

8.3

Perspective News platform

Explore the richness of society’s perspectives

In this chapter, a walk-through of Perspective News is presented. The main goal of the platform is to introduce people to the variety of society’s perspectives and enable them to explore all emotions and concerns. Below, the key features and structure of the platform are presented, which form the essence of the platform. On the next pages screens of the platform are shown, including an explanation. A long-term development version of Perspective News can be found in the chapter implementation, page 9.

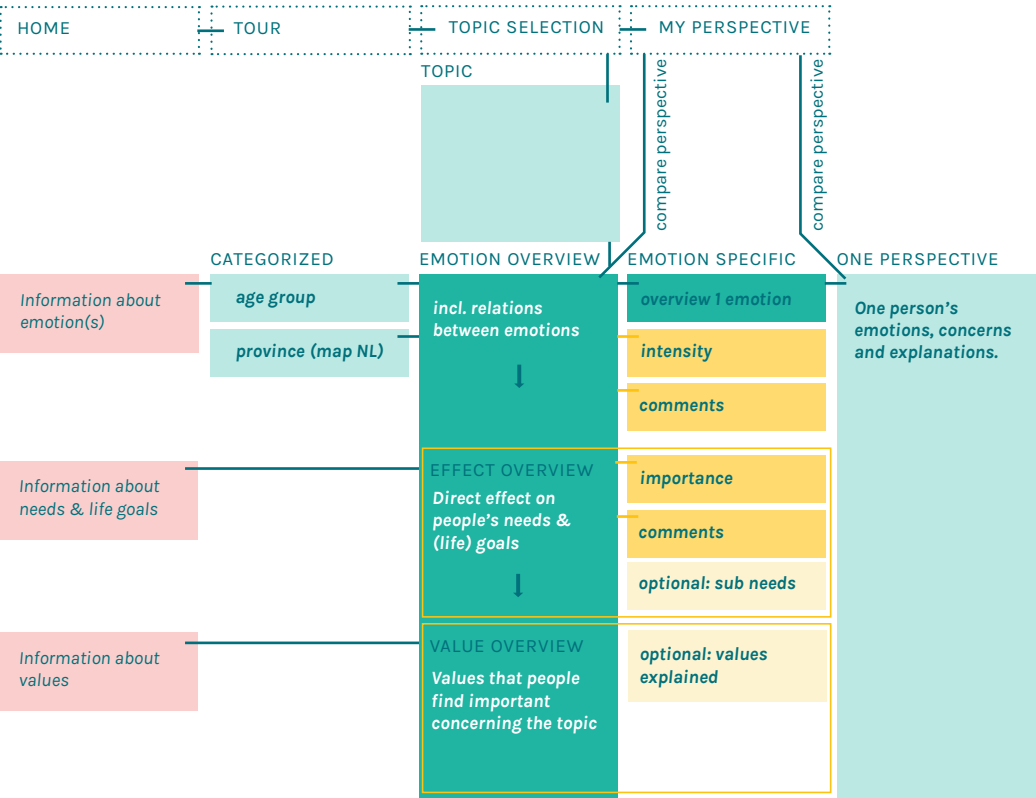


Figure 8.2 | Structure of the platform

Key features

Display participants and contributions

News consumers need reliability and trustworthiness (p87, p94). Like other depolarization platforms (p49), the homepage of Perspective News displays the number of contributions and the number of people who participated, of which the goal is to increase trustworthiness.

Information tour

Through a short series of animation, the user is made aware of the effect of the news on our perception of polarization and how emotions are gateways to our concerns. In this part, also the methodology of the survey is explained.

Topic overview and selection

The topic overview makes a distinction in recent topics and all topics. Here, the user can easily select a topic of interest. The user can also find links to original articles.

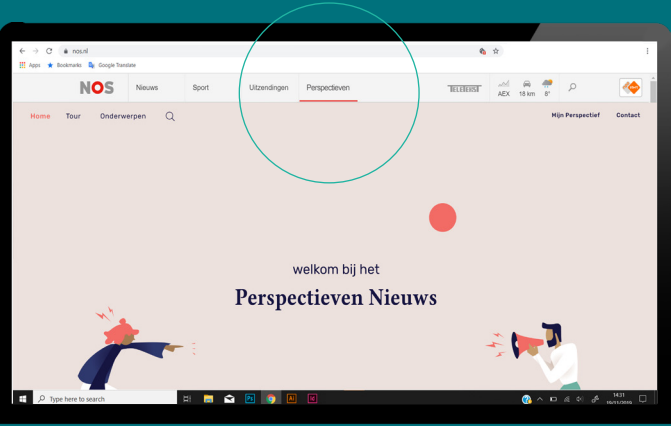
Topic's elicited emotions and concerns

When selecting a topic, the user is directed to the specific topic page where the user can explore layers of emotions and concerns. At every layer, the user ‘dives a little deeper’, from the direct effect the topic has on people’s lives to the values people find important. Within this page, the user can click on several subtabs that show only one emotion, or comments, or single person perspectives.

Individual perspectives & personal comparison

The user can ‘swipe’ through individual perspectives, which embody the emotions of concerns of a single person. If the user also contributed to the survey, one can compare personal responses to other people’s perspective: the individuals as well as to the complete overview of emotions and concerns.

The features are based on design choices and research insights. An explanation of the design choices can be found on page 122.



1. Homepage

The metaphor of two ‘pushers’ on a ladder instantly points to the fact that what we see and hear is often a fraction of reality. The homepage gives a short introduction. It links new users to the information page and people familiar with the platform to the topic overview. Furthermore, the homepage displays the amount of contributions made so far.



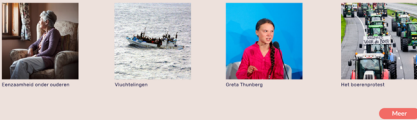
Introduction + reference to ‘tour’ page

Participants & contributions

Deelnemers

Inmiddels reflecteerden 143.895 mensen op het nieuws. Samen deden zij 548.022 bijdragen. Je kunt de perspectieven ontdekken over 35 onderwerpen.

Onderwerpen



Topic selection



2. Tour

Similar to platforms like Kialo (p50), the platform includes a ‘tour’ page. The goal of this tab is to introduce users to Perspective News. On this page, through visualisations, the goal of the platform is explained, including an explanation on how it works. Furthermore, awareness is created about the effect of news and the notion of a silent majority and emotional awareness are presented here too. The visualisations are supported with short explanations. In a future version, the visualisations can be replaced with short animations.

News effect awareness

Notion of a silent majority and the nuanced, moderate and reasonable nature of their viewpoints

Emotional awareness

How to use Perspective News

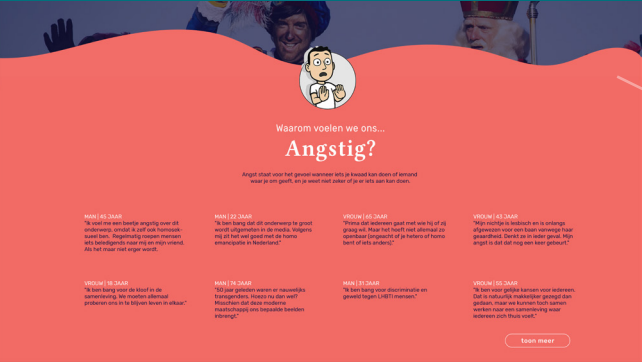
3. Topic perspectives

On the homepage or topic selection page a topic can be selected. The user is immediately referred to a one-pager with all perspectives on that topic. First, a short explanation on the topic is given, including the amount of participants, contributions and articles that are reflected upon. Then, several layers to ‘dive in’ are shown, presenting society’s perspectives on the topic, gathered by means of the emotion measurement survey.

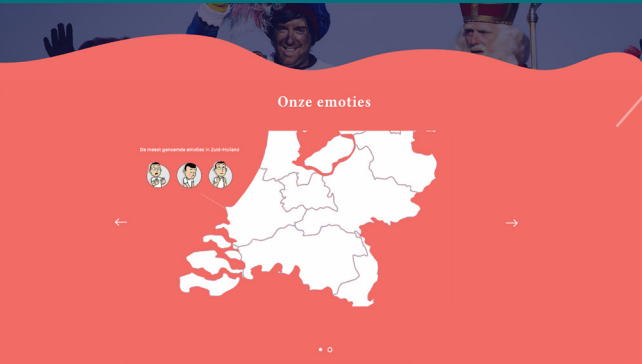
1. **Emotions:** all emotions that are felt by participants, arranged on percentage.
2. **Needs:** the effect of topic on our personal needs and (life) goals.
3. **Values:** values people find important

Finally, a link to the various articles is given, so that users can explore perspectives specifically on one article, or read the article

Subtab: comments per emotion



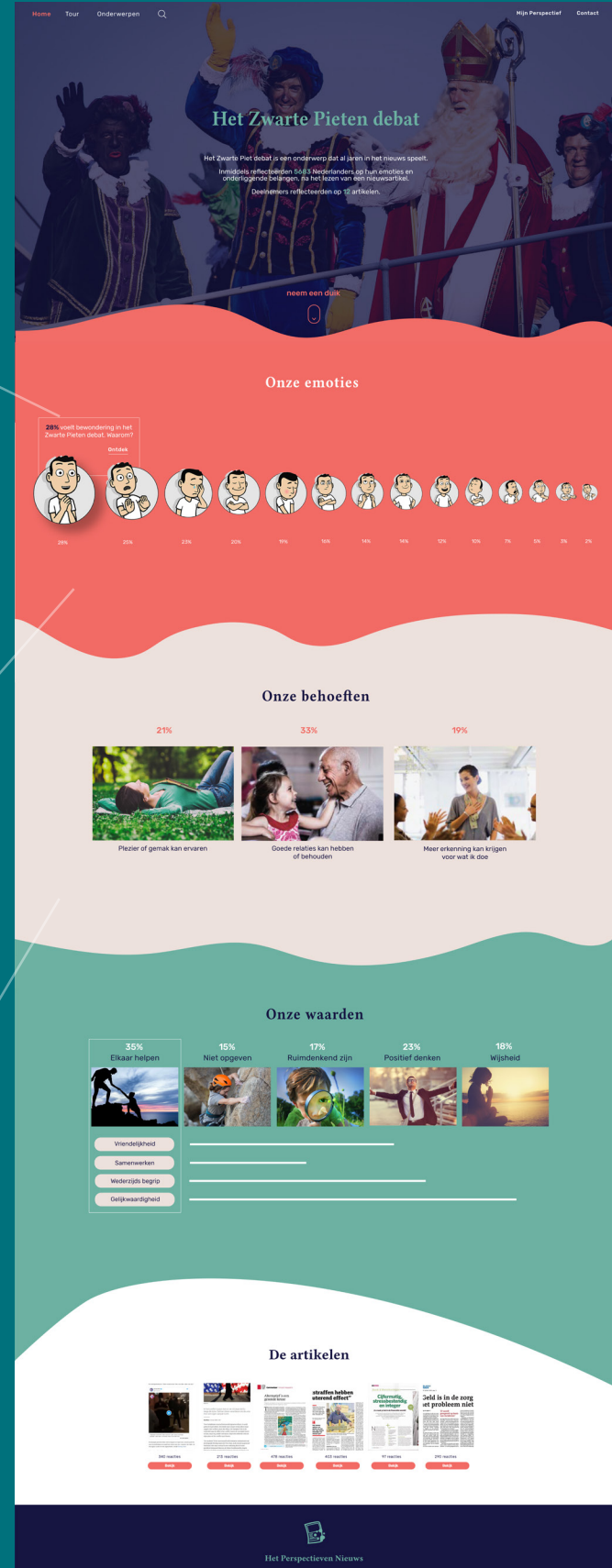
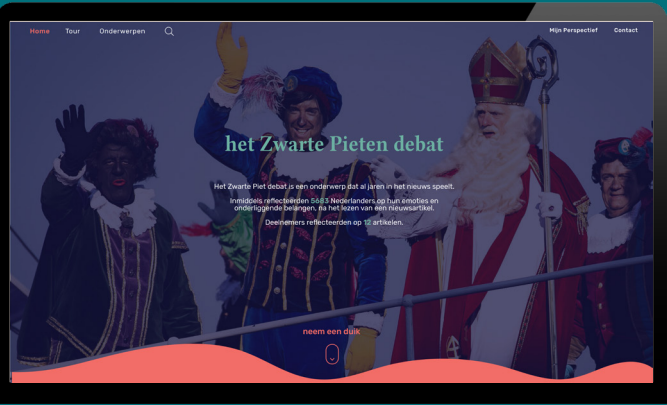
Subtab: main emotions per Dutch province

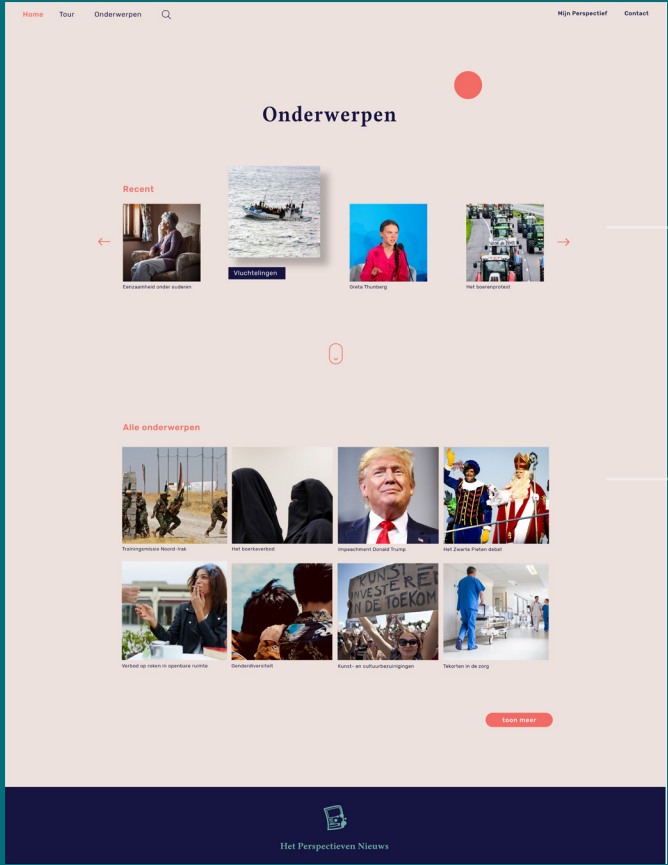


Subtab: all needs with percentages



Above: a selection of optional subtabs





4. Topic selection

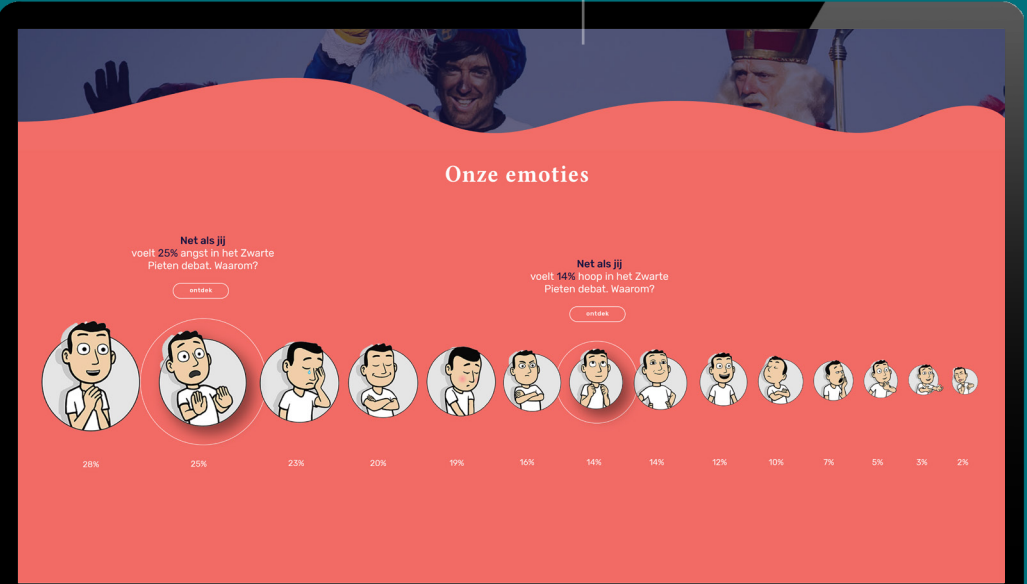
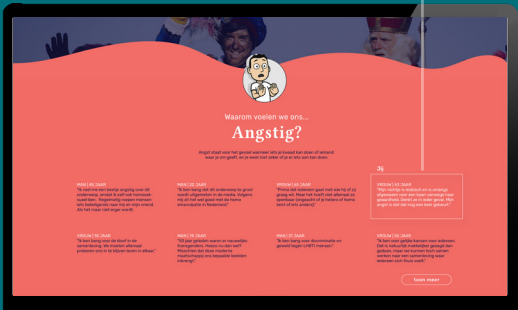
On the topic selection page, a selection of most recent news themes are presented. Thereunder, all articles that users reflected upon are listed.

Topics recent in news

All topics

Personal perspective positioning

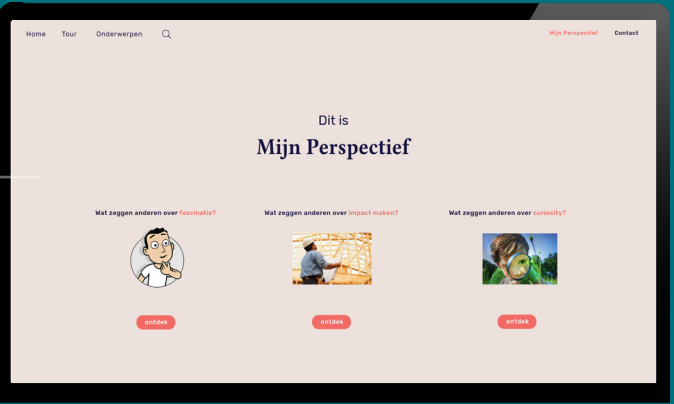
These screens show the user's personal position highlighted within all other perspectives. Left: own comment highlighted. Right: own indicated emotions highlighted.



5. My perspective

Without the creation of an account, a user can compare his/her perspective by transferring their survey answers to the platform (p138). However, if an account is created, the user can also save previous responses, compare their answers to others and explore individual perspectives through a perspective carousel.

A list of your previous perspectives on several topics



Individual perspective carousel



Social themes

Suggestions for suitable subjects are proposed in 'Implementation', p164.

8.4

Scenario

Survey and platform connections
This chapter shows how the different elements of Perspective News are linked. Through various touchpoints, such as the news website homepage, social media and newspapers, news consumers are directed to the survey and platform. After someone fills in the survey, the user is directed to the platform. However, answering the survey is not required to see the information on the platform.

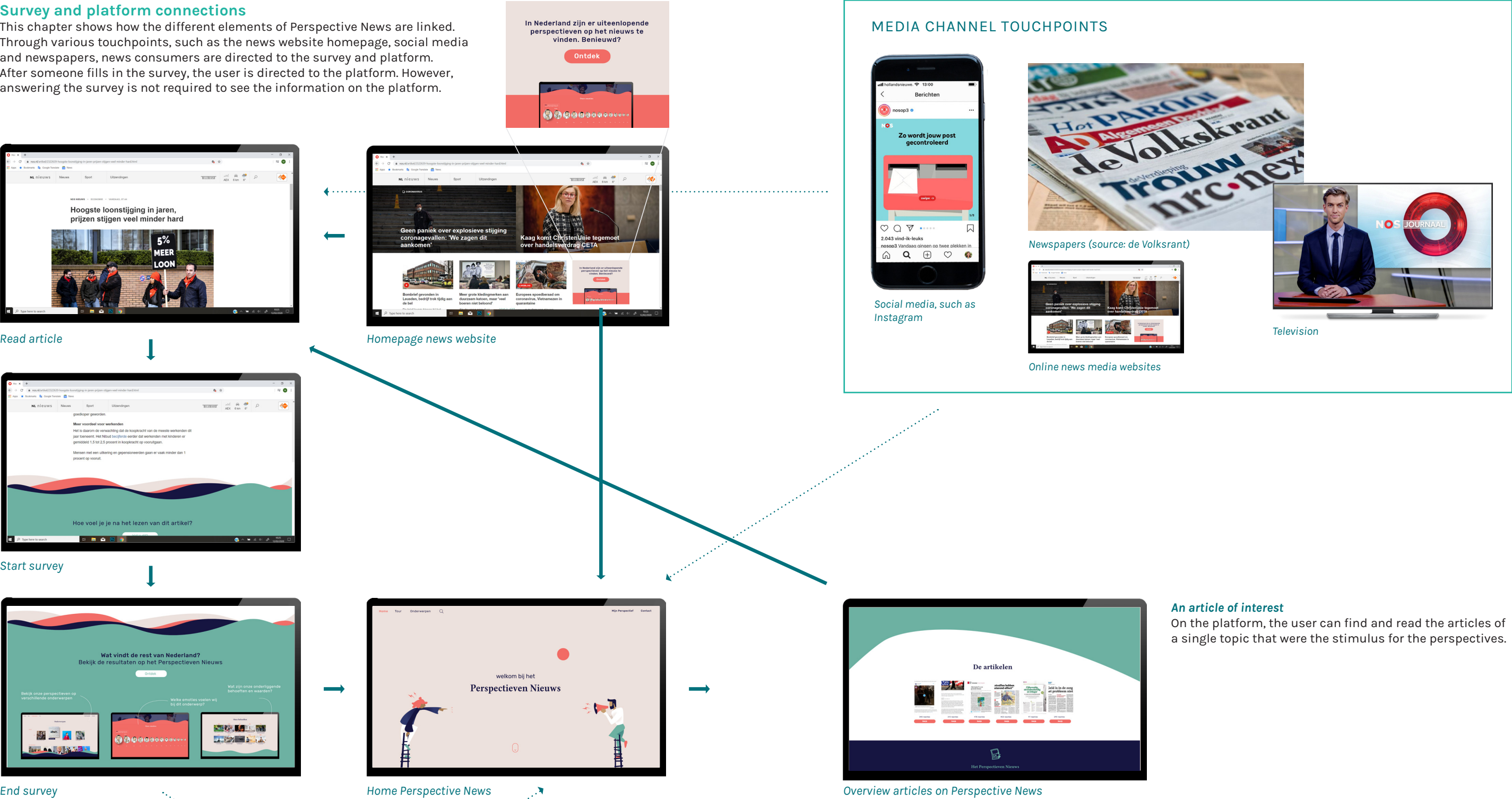


Figure 8.3 | Links between survey, platform and touchpoints

Transfer of answers
At the end of the survey, the user will be linked to the platform of Perspective News. Answers will be transferred to compare the user's perspective to the perspectives of other Dutch citizens directly (visualisation on p137). Users have the option to create an account to save their perspective on several topics.

Perspective News realizes:

1. ACCESSIBLE POSSIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

The first goal is to offer people, who do not have an extreme opinion but are more moderate or neutral in their viewpoint, a possibility to contribute to the representation of opinions of the Netherlands in an accessible way.



ACCESSIBLE AND EASY PARTICIPATION



NUANCE STIMULATION



PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Accessible and easy participation

Dutch citizens discover Perspective News after filling in a survey related to a news article, through the tab on a news website and by a variety of touchpoints on media channels such as social media, daily news on television or the newspapers. **Participation is easy and targeted at every news consumer.** Currently, the only way to share perspectives is by typing comments on social media or news websites. This results in limited responses, only by people who have a strong opinion about a subject or are really touched by it (Pliskin, p68). However, social participation is an important dimension for preventing social cleavages (Tiemeijer, 2017). In Perspective News, everyone can join, whether your perspective is nuanced, neutral, moderate or extreme.

The survey will take about 5 minutes, is low-effort and intuitive. To target at all media profiles (p47), the focus is to minimize the amount of text and to avoid domain jargon. Multiple-choice questions support users in understanding their own concerns (see ideation, p117). Users do have the possibility to add an explanation to their emotions and concerns, but this is not required. These additional explanations will help others to understand perspectives, but a few will be enough to get a sense of what different perspectives can be found in society.

3. Nuance stimulation

The silent majority is often moderate, neutral, nuanced or more reasonable about different topics than the pushers with extreme opinions. For this reason, **the emotion measurement survey stimulates nuance.** Emotions and needs can be scaled in terms of intensity and importance. Values can be concretized (p131), for example: 'curiosity is important because... A) we all should be interested in one another, B) we should know the basics of this subject, C) we should be eager to learn new things to make the world a bit better, etc.

4. Personal reflection

Participation encourages personal reflection, which **creates insight in own emotions and concerns.** The questions stimulate the user to reflect on feelings, needs, and values concerning the news topic. The provided multiple-choice answers (lists of needs and values) support the user in addressing their specific concerns. Finally, the survey provides a summarized overview, which combines all responses to a short story that forms the user's perspective. This overview can be compared to other perspectives.

2. AN INCLUSIVE IMAGE OF SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVES

The second goal is to create awareness of the variety of nuanced perspectives that exist in the Netherlands on social themes. This diminishes the perception of two sometimes seemingly opposed camps, an image that is created by, among other things, discussions on social media.



EXHIBITION OF THE VARIETY OF PERSPECTIVES



EMOTIONAL UNDERSTANDING



NEWS EFFECT AWARENESS

5. Exhibition of the variety of perspectives

The main aim of the final concept is to emphasize the variety of perspectives, **to show diversity rather than two opposing positions.** Perspective News amplifies the presence of the silent majority, which represents variety. Normally, the moderates do not have a voice in the news. This platform provides a stage to everyone, as every member of society should have a say in the current situation, developments, and events concerning all members. The platform of Perspective News provides **the opportunity to quickly get a sense of what a significant amount of society thinks and feels.**

6. Emotional understanding to support empathy and identification

According to Tiemeijer (2017), some inequality, such as material inequality or education differences, can be obviated by government policies. Yet, 'repairing' social cleavages incorporating mutual distrust and a lack of feelings of solidarity is much harder. Distrust and **fear for 'the other' can be prevented by understanding each other's concerns,** rather than rigid formulated opinions.

Therefore, Perspective News centralizes emotions, which act as gateways to concerns (Frijda, p57). **Concerns help users to relate to others and find what they have in common.** Opinions or desires, such as 'I want to drive fast to have dinner with my husband', and 'I want a safe environment for my children', can compete but knowing both value 'warm relationships' supports identification and empathy. Besides, by explaining perspectives by means of emotions, Perspective News provides clear and visualised information on how people's concerns lead to emotions and consequently lead to our opinions.

7. News effect awareness

Perspective News encourages news effect awareness, directly by providing information on the 'tour' page and indirectly by showing more perspectives than normally visible in the news. News often creates negative feelings, caused by negative or deviating nature of news and our tendency to engage with negativity more than positivity. However, **understanding how news influences our perception supports putting information into perspective.** The realization that extreme viewpoints are often just a fraction of reality, and this, knowing more diverse and nuanced viewpoints exist, helps to mitigate doom scenarios.

The value of Perspective News compared to existing practices and platforms can be found in 'Unique Selling Proposition', p148.

Communication

How will the message of Perspective News be spread towards the news consumer and the industry? This chapter elaborates the core message of the product, the identity and style aspects of communication and a launch plan.

8.6.1 Core message

The core message of Perspective News is to amplify the presence of the silent majority. The platform should show the diversity and variety in perspectives and, through emotional awareness, encourage mutual understanding by other people's perspectives.

To realize this, the importance of individual perspectives should be emphasized. **Everyone's opinion is taken seriously and every individual perspective is essential for a realistic representation of society.** The goal and message of Perspective News should be spread consistently through various media channels to reach a wide group.

8.6.2 Target to motives

According to Deborah Nas (expert interview, 2019), it is very important to clearly state the benefits for the citizen: the reader. Contributing to a representation of society's perspectives could have several purposes. It depends per person for what reason they would contribute, still, it is important to have a clear story about reasons to contribute. Several motives to contribute by filling in the survey are identified during the research phase:

- **Do good** | contribute to a better democracy
- **Improve news** | contribute to more representative news
- **Status** | receive a certain status or be invited for a focus group
- **Positioning** | compare your own perspective to others
- **Equality** | make sure every opinion is involved

Motives will differ per person, but among the people that participated in several interventions related to this thesis, **it is found that mostly positioning, do good and equality are the most common motives.** At the launch of Perspective News, the focus will be on positioning. The need to position oneself is universal among all humans as we derive self-esteem from our individual's or group's status (p42). Comparing perspectives related to this motive will likely have the highest potential and relates to both the survey and the platform.

8.6.3 Dynamic, explorative, surprising

The visual identity should involve the user's need for **ease and attraction**. To ensure Perspective News is appealing, the style should be dynamic, explorative, and surprising. To keep the threshold for participation low, the style should be structured, intuitive, and trustworthy as well (mood boards can be found in appendix G).

The created visual identity is based on the concept of layers: our statements and opinions hide our emotions, and our emotions hide our concerns (figure 8.4). The concept for this identity was already selected by several participants during design development (interface alternatives, p121). To emphasize the explorative nature of the platform, users can dive as deep as they prefer, regarding time, interest and effort. Additionally, the platform provides explanation on each layer per topic.

Language use

Text should be limited to a minimum: all messages should be compact and clear. The number of perspectives will be very large, so working as visual as possible is required. The use of language should be easy and understandable to all news consumers, from 'quick news scanners' to the 'deep divers'.

8.6.4 High potential news consumers

In chapter 3.3, four media profiles are described in which news consumers can be categorized: the minimalists (66%), the public news consumers (22%), popular news consumers (6.7%) and the omnivores (6%). As the latter uses all news types and consumes news regularly, the omnivores embody the highest potential to contribute to and explore Perspective News. People who are already interested in more nuance, reasonableness and background stories (like readers of the Correspondent) will probably be early adopters of the new design. Also, people who are higher educated use online media more than lower educated, which increases the chance of encountering and using the platform. Nonetheless, every news consumer uses online media sometimes.

Younger age groups (teenagers, adolescents) use online media every day. Through a variety of online channels, they are easy to target. Older people spend relatively much time on consuming news and could be an interesting target group. However, their digital abilities are less developed and therefore, it would be more difficult to fill in the survey. This requires attention when developing the concept.

The popular news consumers watch commercial channels the most. People who prefer entertainment over hard news are less likely to use the concept often: at least some level of social interest is required.

>> Still, to ensure a realistic representation, low-effort and simplicity is fundamental. The concept should target on the high potentials first, but be usable and appealing to all media profiles.



Figure 8.4 - 8.6 | Layer concept in details (left: explanation layers of emotions and concerns, right above: details visual style of survey and below: 'take a dive', invite user to dive in layers)

8.6.5 Touchpoints

Today's 24-hour programming allows people to consume media anytime. As all citizens do use news media, news media channels provide great potential to reach a large audience. Yet, different media consumers use different media channels: all media channels should point to Perspective News.

Social media & homepage news media website

News sites and apps are evenly distributed over the day and evening, mainly used for facts and background. Social media can direct users to surveys as well as the platform (figure 8.7 - 8.8)

Television

The evening is the most favourite time to watch television (Wennekers & de Haan, 2017). Also lower educated watch television more than higher educated. As 75% of media consumers watches the NOS Journaal at least one day a week. Therefore, the NOS Journaal would be a great advocate for Perspective News (figure 8.10).

Newspaper

Although the use of newspapers is decreasing, still 3,4 billion paid newspapers are spread and 1,2 billion free newspapers are handed out every day. The morning is the most popular moment for reading the newspaper. In newspapers, a notion can be included 'what do other Dutch citizens think about this? Discover Perspective News' (figure 8.11).

Radio

News radio is listened to during the day, and often the first place where people hear about the news (Olij, 2016). It is possibly valuable to integrate the information about one topic into one story and discuss about results.



Figure 8.9 | Bus shelter advertisement for Perspective News



Figure 8.10 | Discussion of Perspective News results on the NOS daily news

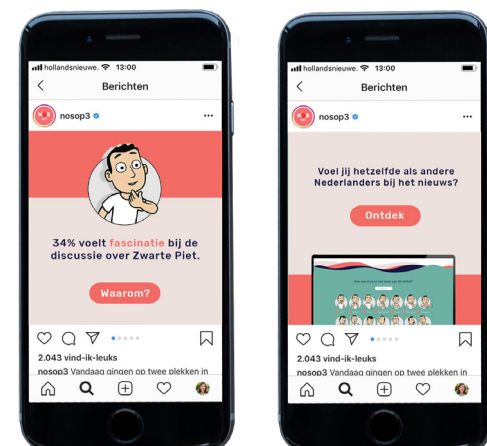
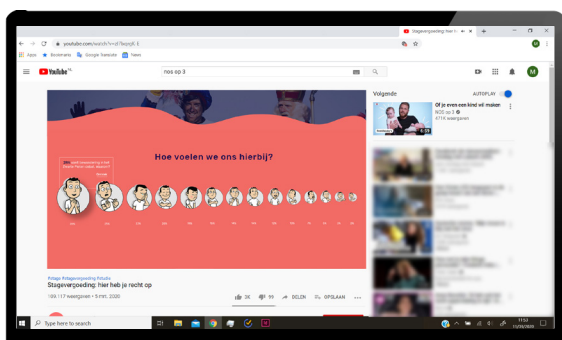


Figure 8.7 - 8.8 | Left: youtube displaying emotions, right: instagram linking to platform and survey

8.6.6 Communication launch plan

The visual style and touchpoints will continuously be complemented with content about Perspective News. Yet, a launch strategy is needed to kick-start the spread and brand image of Perspective News. It will be more challenging to attract the silent majority than the extremes. Public space touchpoints can be used, such as bus shelter advertising spaces (figure 8.9), trainstation advertisement and commercials. Similar to commercials from the KRO-NCRV with the literal message 'Let's look out for one another a little more', a Perspective News commercial can be created, e.g., 'Let's try to understand each other better', 'You are invited to explore your fellow citizens' perspectives' or 'We mostly feel fascination about [topic]. Interested? Let's dive into perspectives!'

Figure 8.11 | Notion of erspective News in the newspaper



8.6.7 Communication towards industry

To achieve the main goals of the design; 1. accessible possibility for participation and 2. an inclusive image of society's perspectives, recruiting users is the most important activity to focus on first. However, the concept can only exist when integrated into a current news media organisation's practice. For the survey, stimuli (news articles) are needed to reflect upon and a digital location (tab on a news website) is necessary to display the perspectives. Thus, collaboration with the news media industry must be initialized.

The main benefit for the news media industry is the possibility to get insight into what effect their specific news representation has on their clients. How do their clients (news consumers) perceive the news, how do they feel about it? This is especially interesting considering subject selection, sources, and frames of future news articles. Also, it supports the organisation to target their news offer to clients better. Besides, the concept could attract more clients in general, as the news media organisations offer a new concept that did not exist before. Lastly, from this project's perspective, it is important to strengthen news media's unique core role: to reinforce the foundation of democracy by providing a true representation of society.

Communication towards the news media industry should be based on 3 pillars:

- 1. Get to know the influence of their news reporting
- 2. Attract new clients
- 3. Enlarge the correspondence of news with reality

The project can only be realized if news media 'partners' are involved, so this will be the first step during the implementation. In convincing news media, the focus will be on analyzing the effect of their news and creating awareness about how to strengthen their core role. An elaboration on the implementation can be found in the next chapter.

8.6.8 Organisational differences

As Perspective News can be implemented in the practice of different (news) media organisations, a couple of communication guidelines for the media are set up.

1. Visual basis, adjust details | Perspective News is an explorative design, based on layers in which the user can 'dive'. This layout should be consistent. However, colours, fonts, and structure can be adjusted to a media organisation's visual style (figure 8.11-8.13).

2. Consistent core message | The core message should be clear and consistent across different organisations. It should emphasize the possibility for users to participate in a corresponding representation: 'we [news organisation] take your opinion very seriously' and respond to people's curiosity and need for positioning: '[X] people feel desire... What do you feel?'.

3. Structural guidelines | Per organisation, Perspective News can play a larger or smaller role. Organisations are free to fine-tune the design to their own preferences. However, some structural guidelines are needed to remain appealing and spread the right message. **The survey shouldn't be used for media's insights only:** this will demotivate people to participate and misses out on the social goal of the concept. Furthermore, the survey and platform should involve the elements as described on page 160 (design development). The three layers of impact: creating awareness, capturing and representing perspectives should always be involved.

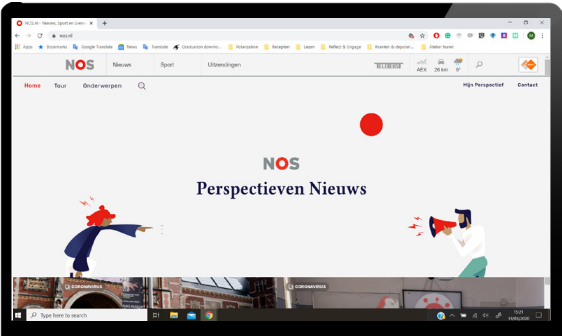
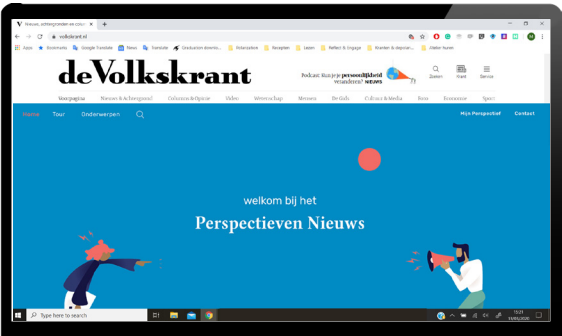


Figure 8.11 - 8.13 | Visual lay-out adjusted to the NRC, the Volkskrant and the NOS (top-down)



Figure 8.14 | Launch (source: Unsplash)

Unique value proposition

8.7.1 Differentiation from existing initiatives

Already in 2007, an action plan against polarization was established. Polarization is a well-known term and still increasingly mentioned. With the rise of fear for polarization, depolarization initiatives have risen too, pointing to a grey, silent middle (Dare to be Grey, 2020), showing nuances (Kialo), showing opinions (EenVandaag) and recording voting preferences (ISideWith). How is Perspective News different than existing depolarization attempts?

8.7.2 Unique benefits

A concept like Perspective News, aimed at the news, does not exist yet. Capturing and representing Dutch perspectives on news - on current situations, events, incidents, and developments - is new, especially at such a scale. Perspective News involves a higher societal goal (contributing to depolarization) as well as innovation possibilities for news media organisations. Below unique and competitive advantages are described.

1. Accessible to all

Unlike other initiatives, for instance, the Bias Barometer that requires installation, Perspective News is accessible to all citizens. It does not require an account, money or other efforts in order to explore it. This is essential to attract many (and a collection of representative) citizens. Current methods to find society's perspectives by media do not go beyond interviewing a couple of individuals. Through Perspective News, many people can be found at the same time. Some could even be selected for a follow up interview.

2. Continuous recording

Another USP is that through Perspective News, perspectives are continuously measured. Perspectives are currently being measured during political elections, for instance, Kieswijzer, Stemwijzer (both Dutch), Votecompass (Canadian), ISideWith (American), or by a one-off public research, but only during election time. Moreover, in Perspective News it becomes clear how citizens feel and think about emerging and urgent matters that concern society right at the moment.

3. Nuance made simple

Initiatives like Kialo and ISideWith, which aim for nuance, are very structured. However, these platforms require much time to read and browse through all statements and arguments. The incentive for exploring Kialo is not clear unless you are very involved in a topic, for instance through work. Last, these platforms do not exist in Dutch either. In these cases, nuance is mostly available for higher educated or highly interested people. On the other hand, the EenVandaag Opinion panel is quite accessible and clear as people can only agree or disagree with statements but doesn't allow nuance at all. Perspective News is a multi-layered platform and supports people to dive in as far as they prefer or are interested. Through the highly visual language, unravelling statements is easy.

4. Clear main benefit: positioning

None of the discussed initiatives state a clear benefit. In the development of the concept, it was found the 'what's in it for me?' must be appealing and clear. The unique proposition of Perspective News, to obtain a representative selection of perspectives, results in a clear benefit for the user: positioning. As explained in the communication strategy (p138), the focus will be on the opportunity to compare one's perspective directly to fellow citizens (as the survey answers can be transferred to the platform).

5. Many touchpoints, wide reach

As Perspective News is an integration into an existing news media organisation, the initiative can easily be spread through existing media channels. Besides, news already has a wide reach, the same target group will be addressed for the new concept.

Indicators of success

8.7.1 Success realization

The goal of Perspective News should be consistent, the message compact and clear. However, during the development and implementation, some aspects can be adjusted if necessary. If a specific media channel, specific message or motive works best, the communication of the concept can be adjusted to have the largest impact.

To maintain success, it is advised to the media organisations that will start with Perspective News to set goals for the first year, concerning:

- 1. the number of subjects that will be used in the first year, including the number of articles that should be reflected upon
- 2. the number of participants
- 3. the number of contributions

8.7.2 Short-term success indication

Participant number

A first of all short-term success indicator is the amount of individual users. It is not necessary and unrealistic to desire all Dutch citizens to participate, but a couple of thousand people will already provide a varying image of perspectives.

Representation

Besides, the background of people should be measured especially in the first phase of development, to ensure the participants indeed are a varying group. When relating the background of users to the media channel through which participants encountered the survey, insight can be gathered on what channel recruits what backgrounds. The communication strategy can be adjusted accordingly. Variety can be measured along with many factors, of which the following are the most important for Perspective News: age, education, political preference and province (location).

Participation repetition

The number of participants that contribute to the survey multiple times, is an indication for interest and commitment to the survey. It would be interesting to analyse how many times those participants also visit the platform of Perspective News, and how often they will be linked directly from the survey. This indicates if people are only motivated to contribute their own perspectives, or if they are especially interested in positioning their own perspective to others. Furthermore, it is advised to research the motives of repeated completion of the survey, so that adjusting communication based on these motives can support the attraction of other citizens.

Website visits

An indicator of success is definitely the amount of website visits - both the single visits as the repeated visits. There should be looked at what subjects are explored the most, and to what extent. The website visits without survey contribution indicate the interest of people to explore other people's perspectives without directly comparing one's own viewpoint.

Survey completion

Finally, the number of survey completions indicates if it is worth the effort to fill it in. If many drop out without completion, the survey is probably too long or too complicated.

8.7.3 Long-term success indication

The main concrete goals of Perspective News are to provide a possibility to contribute to a representation of society's perspectives and to explore them. These goals serve a higher goal: support Dutch citizens to understand and identify with fellow citizens better, ultimately to reduce polarization (introduction, p21). Understanding several concerns can help to find common needs and values and lead to less us-them thinking, but a more 'we'-way of thinking. Perspective News could be a small step in avoiding conflict and improve decision-making targeted at wide groups. But how do you measure depolarization? How are improved conversations, empathy, and identification measured?

An investigation of possible depolarization could start with a survey per period, that asks these - more abstract - questions about the amount of agreement in society, sense of division between groups, trust in other people, etc. At the same time, the Netherlands Institute for Social Research already researches citizen perspectives every quarter, in terms of (dis) agreement in society, distrust, and values of society. Their research could be complemented with more Perspective News-related questions to strengthen their research and improve Perspective News.

Furthermore, a success indication in the long-term could be the mentioning of Perspective News as (inspirational) source for understanding different citizen viewpoints, by representatives of society and bridge builders, such as politicians, mayors and others whose job is to make decisions involving many citizens.



09

Validation & implementation

This chapter evaluates the final design with end-users, media organisations and experts (9.1). Based on this validation, an implementation strategy is created (9.2) and suggestions for long-term development are proposed (9.3).

9.1	Validation
9.2	Implementation
9.3	Long-term development

9.1 Validation

To validate the potential of Perspective News, a pilot study was conducted. The pilot with end-users served to analyse if the intended effect was reached: a decrease in perception of polarization. Besides, the usability and related potential future use were analysed as well. Next to a pilot test with users, four editors from two media organisations were interviewed to explore the media’s perspective. Lastly, two experts in the field of media communication and polarization were interviewed.

PILOT STUDY WITH END-USERS

9.1.1 Test set-up

The test set-up involved two research questions:

- 1. To what extent is the perception of polarization decreased?
- 2. What is the potential that people will use Perspective News, concerning both the survey and the platform?

The first research question addresses the experience of the concept, focusing on the design goal of the project. The second questions addresses usability and potential future use. See appendix H for the full test set-up.

Participants and materials

In total eight people participated. The group consisted of both men and women, with an age in between 18 and 69 and different education levels. Required was that the participants consume news at least once a week and use a computer device regularly. For the pilot test, a website mock-up of Perspective News with all essential elements was built, including a complete perspective page based on one topic. Besides, a prototype of the survey was created as proposed in the final design (p124).

Procedure

First, a short introduction of the project was given and questions were asked concerning the participant’s news consumption. Then, participants were asked to browse through the platform of Perspective News on their own. In a real situation, people would probably fill in the survey first and then be referred to the platform. The choice was made to let people explore the platform first to investigate if the platform has the intended effect and is understandable on its own. While exploring the platform, the participants were probed to think aloud about what they (did not) understand and what made them curious to explore more (figure 9.1 - 9.4). If participants missed some parts, they were given instructions on where to click or what to read. Afterwards, participants were asked to (dis)agree with statements about the platform from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree).

Subsequently, the participants were asked to read an article about gender diversity, and then fill in the emotion measurement survey. Finally, a second questionnaire was filled in with four statements about the survey. The questionnaires were partly qualitatively used, by asking participants to think aloud while scoring the concept. During the procedure follow-up questions were asked, such as ‘why do you think this is (not) well designed?’ or ‘why is that important to you?’.

Among other suitable topics for the pilot test, an article about gender diversity was selected, as it is a widely known topic, it likely addresses at least someone in people’s social environment and it was a discussed topic in news during this project.

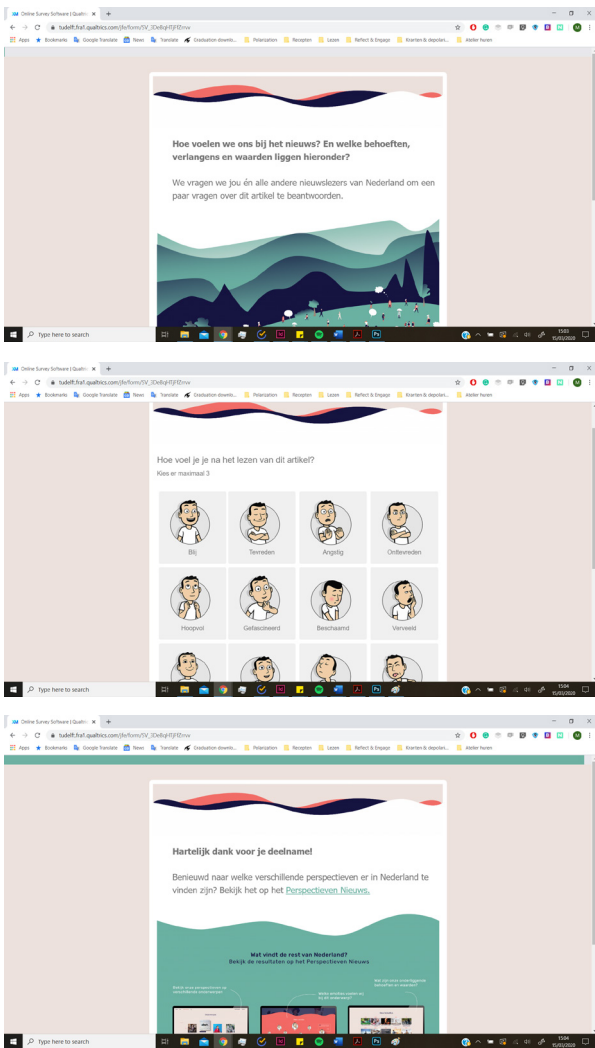


Figure 9.1 - 9.3 | Survey prototype using Qualtrics

“I am surprised this does not exist yet? Many people will want this!”

Woman, 25 years old

9.1.2 Key findings

In this paragraph, the key findings of the pilot test are discussed. Findings are categorized on general insights (news consumption, attraction and concept impression), the platform (perspective interest, usability, structure, guidance) and the survey. Potential of use, additional suggestions and conclusions are discussed last.

General insights

News consumption

All participants consume news regularly, but news sources differ much. NOS was mentioned often, besides also Parool, Nu.nl, NRC, Volkskrant, AD, Rijnmond. Many consume news through apps.

Ideas about the concept

It surprised a participant that a concept like this does not exist yet. She thought many would think ‘I want this!’. Many participants mentioned it is a strong concept, **well thought out and detailed**. The layer concept attracted; ‘it provides depth and gives a feeling something needs to be discovered’. It helps that people can draw their own conclusions and it supports **opinion-forming**. ‘It’s good people who usually are not integrated into news, are shown now through this design.’ One participant saw the added value especially for people tight in their bubble.

>> Perspective News is perceived as a strong concept, well thought through and supportive in opinion-forming

Attractiveness

Seven participants thought the visual style is very appealing and ‘cool’. They liked the illustrations and design. One participant, educated as a visual designer: ‘Beautiful design. I want to see everything immediately!’ The ‘discover’ buttons appeared to be fun: ‘they invite me to look around’. A participant noted it looks like a magazine, so **it feels informal and therefore fun and easy**. It feels casual, not like a complicated data report. The concept was considered inviting and explorative.

>> The visual style appeals, it looks informal and inviting

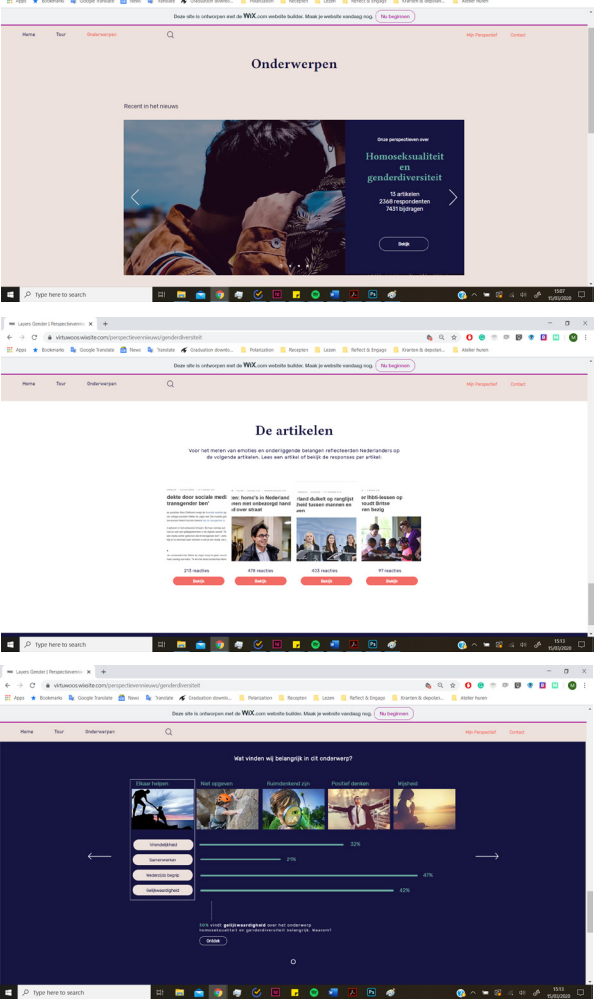
The platform

Interest in perspectives

Many thought the representation of perspectives is interesting and would like to ‘break out of their bubble’ and explore other people’s viewpoint’. People would preferably explore perspectives that evoke discussion, ‘the ones that are trending, that stand out’. One participant mentioned to **like to read responses, but only if they do not hurt people**. People mentioned being interested in what ‘normal’ people think of the news, as it is interesting to see the middle because you get influenced by the news yourself. It puts the extreme views into perspective.

>> Participants were interested in what ‘the normal people’ think and feel

Figure 9.4 - 9.6 | Website mock-up of Perspective News’ platform



“This fascinates me very much, but I wonder when I would use it. What would be the trigger to look it up?”

Man, 32 years old

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS | PLATFORM

Great chances I will check

Perspective News regularly

for new topics

Best scored statement (5,8 out of 7)
All results can be found in Appendix I.

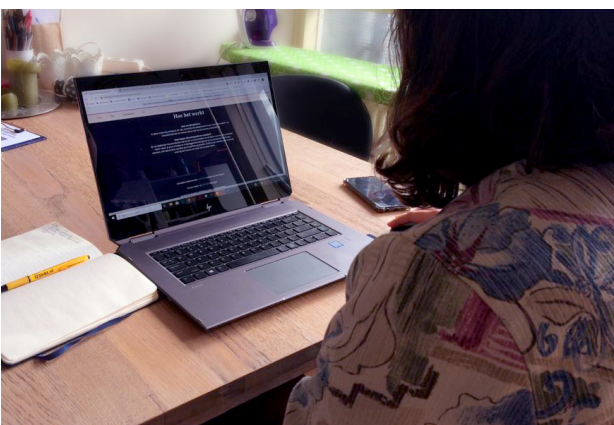
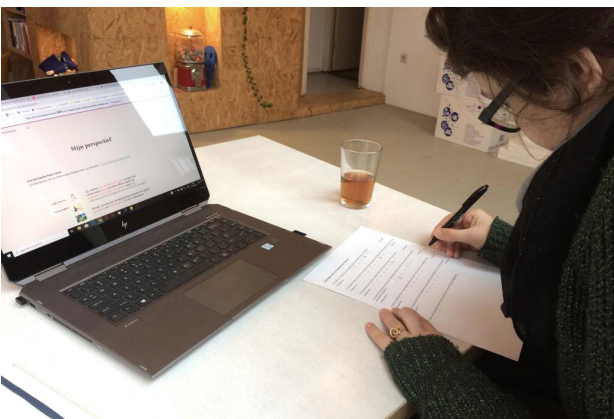
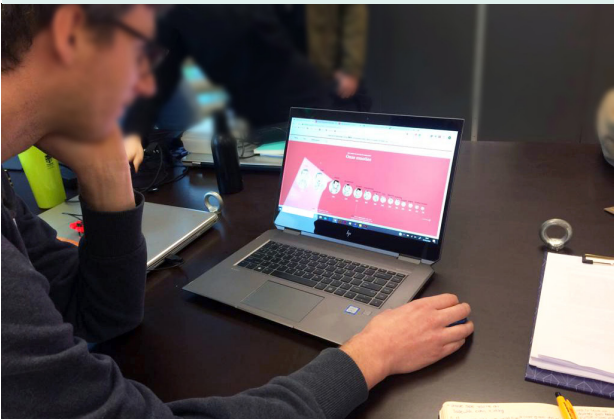
Subjects of interest

Corona virus (5), brexit (from Britisch perspective), climate discussion (3) and sustainability, Zwarte Piet, LHBTI community, feminism, immigrants and refugees (2), education, ICT & technology, senior participation. One participant: all subjects that are trending.

I would complete the survey
to contribute to equality: a
better representation of all
perspectives

Best scored statement (6 out of 7). However, most participants later responded they would rather fill in the survey if they want to compare their opinion to others. All results can be found in appendix I.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS | SURVEY



Emotions, comments, and concerns

The emotions make me think: who is ashamed? Only the gay people? Or others too? Most participants took the time to read comments. According to them, the short comments helped them to empathize with others and see things from multiple sides. One participant would have liked to see the comments categorized on, for example, the people who feel shame because of this, and the ones who feel shame because of that.

>> The comments are appealing and help empathizing

Usability

In general, instructions on where to click or to go were clear and also the use of colours is convenient, such as the different colours for different layers. **Text could be minimized more and sometimes clarified.** For example 'how this works' raised the question 'what works how?' - what is this about? At some points, the **visual style of buttons could be more consistent**, as it was sometimes not clear what can be clicked on and what not. Also, at some points, an explanation could be added or left out and more information can be hidden, only shown when a user clicks 'read more' or 'discover'. Not every participant discovered the concern layers beneath the emotion layer. Nonetheless, it was found useful that links to the articles that are reflected upon are involved so that other users can read them too.

>> Many use cues available, but more consistency needed

>> More information can be hidden, only the most essential part should be shown on first sight

Structure

Information on the 'tour' page was found clear and interesting. Some parts might be transferred to the homepage for clarity, such as the method of Perspective News, and the explanation of the layer concept.

>> Important concept information on the information (tour) page could be transferred to the homepage

'What am I looking at?' - a wish for guidance

It would help if the platform would guide the user a little more, by clear language use ('this is important to us' instead of 'our needs') and **interpretations of the information**, for instance, how is 'having warm and mutual relationships' related to gender diversity? Values were easier to understand than needs. Some participants asked: 'what does this website want to tell me? Who is it exactly meant for?'

>> Clear language use is essential. Some parts could be pre-interpreted for the user

Interested in more

Participants proposed some additions they would like to see, e.g., information about why things (seem to) polarize. 'It fascinates me: we don't see the silent majority. But why?' The two youngest participants both would like to see the option to react to comments or discuss with people, whilst avoiding harmful statements (rules concerning language use, tone of voice). Another suggestion proposed was to **have the outcome summarized** on radio or presented in addition to a news article or a new story, **like a depolarization side article**. This would make it easy to encounter the information via channels you would have used anyway.

>> More polarization information and an option to discuss with others can be considered. Participants would like to encounter summarized results via already used media channels

Correspondence with reality

The question arose **if future participants together will represent society**, as the silent majority is normally not eager to share their opinion but extremes are. Hurtful comments should be avoided.

The survey

Easy and short, but room for improvement

Most participants chose one emotion, which made the survey length short. The participant that chose three emotions got a little tired from answering the value question three times, with approximately the same answer. The number of multiple-choice answers on this question was too large. One participant would have liked to comment on the chosen values. **Only one participant confirmed the subject affects his personal life**, so only this participant reflected on which of his needs can be affected. When asked to explain why an emotion was felt, the description of the emotion is not always helpful: it forces a direction of thinking and just one word/image leaves room for own interpretation. One participant would have liked to 'release' her first thoughts in one sentence at the beginning. Besides, it was suggested to ask people's political preference, to determine if the survey's contributors represent the political spectrum.

>> The number of answer options can be decreased

>> Emotion description was not always helpful

>> Political position can be asked to ensure representation

Potential of use

All participants confirmed to be interested in using the survey but under certain conditions, such as 1) if the subject is important to me, 2) if I want to share my opinion, 3) if I have time, etc. An external factor is the frequency (links to) the survey or platform appear on media channels, apps or websites the participants already use. Some participants expect to use the platform more than the survey.

>> Future use depends will depend on internal (importance, time) and external factors (exposure to Perspective News)

9.1.3 Conclusions pilot study

Perspective News

From the user test, it appeared people are interested in the perspectives of others, but especially about subjects that are trending, have a tendency to polarize and are important to them personally. All participants took the time to read comments, as they were interested in 'what the normal people think'. The comments helped people to empathize with others and seeing things from multiple sides supports opinion-forming. The needs and values layers were sometimes more difficult to understand and to find the connection to emotions.

It appeared the visual language is not consistent everywhere and some text can be left out or clarified. The participants would like to be guided a little more: 'what does this website want to tell me?' Furthermore, some participants were interested in more information about polarization, an option to discuss with others and summaries of the results. Some doubted the effectiveness, questioning if the silent middle would join.

Survey use

Participants were willing to contribute to the survey. However, it depends on how important the specific news subject is to them, if they want to share their opinion and if they have time. Additionally, both the survey and the platform should appear frequently on media channels they already use, as they do not have a trigger to look it up themselves.

Visual style

The participants thought the visual style is appealing, informal and inviting, also the layer concept creates the feeling 'something is hidden' and triggers people to explore more.

Finally, the awareness of an interviewer present while exploring the platform and answering the survey created a little pressure sometimes and might have influenced the participants' answers, the way of using the platform and the time they took for reading.

"Length: just right. Not too long. It is quite easy, you can just click and do not have to type much."

Woman, 21 years old

This triggers people to think: "I have never seen it that way, but he is actually right, there are really two sides to it."

Man, 18 years old

Figure 9.7 - 9.10 | Four participants using Perspective News

VALIDATION WITH MEDIA ORGANISATIONS

9.1.4 Interview set-up

To validate and evaluate the concept from a media perspective, two interviews with four media editors were held. The editors belonged to the same regional and national news media organisation as the ones in the research phase of the project (here indicated as A and B again). However, three of the four interviewees were not interviewed before.

In the interviews, first, a short introduction of the project objectives and design goal was given. Then, the designed emotion measurement survey was shown in the form of a mock-up, made with invision, which gives the impression of a real application. Subsequently, the platform and all essential aspects were presented and discussed, including the design choices made, the idea behind and the message it should convey. After the concept presentation, the desirability, feasibility and viability of the Perspective News were discussed. These three aspects determine the possible realization of the concept, as they determine if the concept is actually desired, if it can be made with resources available, and if it will survive on the long-term (figure 9.11). The most important findings are presented below.

“It’s actually a strong diversity tool that shows your blind spot is. “Blind spot awareness of diverse perspectives.”

Quote | Editor, media A

9.1.5 Key findings

Professional visual impression

In general, all editors were very positive about the visual layout of the prototypes. It seems there is put much effort in detailing the design, which made it easy to imagine how it would be used and what the experience would be.

Concept idea

The concept idea is found to be very interesting, new and appealing. The editors could think of many spin-off possibilities with potential for realization.

Consider target group

According to the national news media organisation (A), the concept is especially interesting for platforms with a clear target group. NOS Stories or NOSop3 were mentioned, which focus on people who want and have time to dive in. The regional organisation confirmed this, they thought it seemed to be meant for a niche, people who already pay for media such as the NRC, the Volkskrant, the Correspondent, etc., who are more thoughtful and want to be well-informed. The Telegraaf and AD (known as less nuanced newspapers) would be less interested in this, as polarization is actually a success factor in their news reporting.

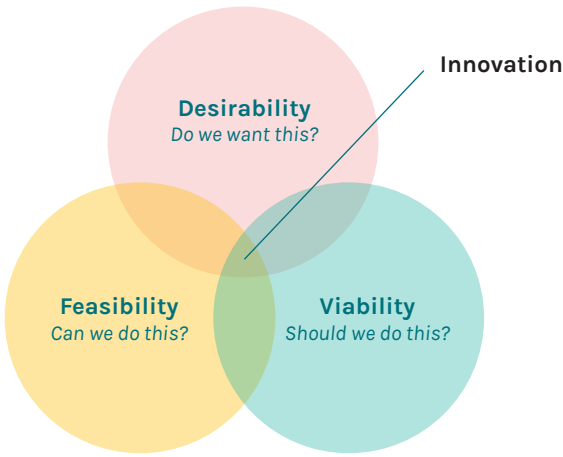


Figure 9.11 | The ideal innovation process, based on three pillars (IDEO)

Again: a very clear incentive for the reader

B: There are many reasons why someone could be motivated to join, but the result must always be clear. The survey could serve as a mirror by creating a self-image. People like that, just as comparing your viewpoint with political parties. The ‘Stemwijzer’ (vote advisor) helps to position yourself and supports opinion-forming because it provides statements and information to think about.

A: ‘What’s in it for me?’ is very important. An indication of one’s position and a confirmation of your position compared to others is essential. Maybe the title could be changed so it points even more to the goal of the concept. The tone of voice could be **more personal** too. Play with words: ‘what is important to us?’ is better than ‘our values’.

B: Besides, the survey serves as a means, a ‘handle’ to give people an opportunity to participate easily.

Provide feedback and result

B: Feedback on participation is very important. Like a pedometer: ‘you have participated [X] times, so many people read your comment, you felt these emotions, etc.’ Or conclude with an advice: ‘perhaps you should read this article’. A: The user should be rewarded in some way, such as providing feedback after every question (for example, what other people answered). It feels like some kind of a review system, providing information on news articles as ‘People rate this an X, and this an Y’.

Simplify

A: The information density of the platform is enormous: it is too complex to reach a wide target group. Information can be focused and hidden more, visible only when clicking ‘show more’ or ‘want to know about [X]?’ For the survey: show a selection of 5 instead of 10 needs to choose from. But **always start with emotions**. B: When the survey is too long, people will feel like they are working for the media organisation, while it should feel like a service for yourself. **Wouldn’t be indicating emotions just enough?** Look at Facebook, they also have a small selection of emotions as a response to a post. Few people want to make time for a long survey.

Desirability news media

From an organisational perspective, the benefit is clear. It is interesting to get insight in the effect of subjects and their news reporting on people’s feelings. Currently, media have limited sources (public research, media user’s council) to estimate what people think of the news, you never know the feelings from the greater audience. However, you can not proclaim ‘truths’ about society with the information of Perspective News yet.

Geo-locating

A: [when showing the screen with most mentioned emotions in South-Holland]: Location is super important: we work with locations often. Opinion differs a great deal per province.

Subjects suitable for launch

A: We update a ranking list with most read subjects. You could start with one of these. Corona would be an interesting test case, or Zwarte Piet, fireworks, immigrants, refugees. People are mostly concerned with the impact or threat of topics on their personal life. You see this concerning the coronavirus topic, people mostly read the Q&A.

More factual questions

The national organisations would like to ask more factual questions as ‘Want to know more? What exactly?’ and questions about relevance, personal experiences and personal stories.

Measures for success / long-term effects

A: It would be a success if people could see their position compared to others. Pragmatically, if we can anticipate why people think what they think. The platform has an indirect effect if we choose subjects according to the results. It can also be a base for a news story. Besides, it can serve as a strong diversity tool that shows your ‘blind spot’, which is consistent with our diversity policy: creating awareness about diversity in news.

B: The platform could help users in a real life conversation. For instance, when talking about immigrants with a neighbour.

“It could probably help in real life conversations. For instance, when talking with your neighbour about immigrants.”

Quote | Editor, media B

9.1.6 Conclusions media organisations

All editors seemed to be very enthusiastic about the concept and see many potential spin-offs. The editors provided contact information of several people that should be approached, people within and outside the organisations that will be eager to discuss the concept and will be open for a pilot testing. However, some barriers or challenges were found. Conclusions are drawn and categorized.

Desirability

The value of the concept was very clear for media: it would be a great new source to discover the effect of their news organisations. The information would be for intern use, for selecting new topics and creating new stories. The media think the desirability is less specific for the target group. They mention the following potential reader’s benefits:

- 1. Positioning & comparing
- 2. Creating a self-image
- 3. Support opinion-forming

Besides these three, the survey could give people the opportunity to participate, to have a voice in society. However, the benefit and results should be stated very clearly to be appealing to users, and worth the effort. Providing feedback during answering the survey would increase ease and thus desirability. Also, the tone of voice could be even more personal.

Feasibility

The high enthusiasm to start pilot testing the concept within the two media organisations indicated the feasibility of the concept. For example, the regional organisation immediately would like to start testing it, developing the concept within three months, but in a simplified version. Both organisations have the resources, research and data visualisation journalists and online media teams to realize a pilot, but when upscaling, external software development parties are possibly needed. However, time and effort will be needed, which are hard to estimate straightaway.

Viability

Viability of the concept partly depends on motivation and enthusiasm of the media organisation’s side, which appeared to be present, but with some conditions.

To become a success, the initial target group should be considered carefully and probably be narrowed, and the survey should be adjusted to the selected group. Besides, both the survey and the platform of Perspective News can be simplified to increase survival on the long-term.

VALIDATION WITH EXPERTS

9.1.7 Interview set-up

In addition to the user test and interviews with media organisations, an interview was held with researcher Jorrit Hoekstra who works on polarization in the refugee issue, and with Rens Vliegenthart, professor of media and society who focuses on media-content and effect. Vliegenthart had also been interviewed in the research phase of the project. The goal of these interviews was to evaluate the concept with experts with a relation to polarization or media and are neither end-user or involved in a media organisation. The procedure was similar to the interview set-up with media organisations, though with a slight focus on the desirability and the concept idea.

9.1.8 Key findings

The value of design

The first reaction of both researchers is, similar to the media editors, enthusiastic and surprised. Hoekstra and Vliegenthart are both academia, but in fields in which design is often not involved to this extent. Both see great value in the ability to translate insights from research into useful design for many users.

Confirmed: a clear incentive, feedback and simplify

As noted by the editors, Vliegenthart confirmed some evaluation aspects: state a clear incentive, provide feedback and simplify. Vliegenthart thought the pop-up in the survey when clicking 'what is this' is essential: there people need to be convinced to continue. The incentive will differ between subjects and per person. The survey should be prominently placed so that it would not be seen as an advertisement and involve a note on anonymity and privacy. The number of emotions and needs could be even smaller, selected by the editorial team. The question is if all questions are necessary: maybe for daily news updates only emotions need to be asked, and longer surveys for longer background articles. If people have time to read a long article, they are probably more willing to answer more questions. A feedback suggestion from Vliegenthart was to show results of what other people answered just after you answered a question, without losing flow.

“The design is interesting for many organisations, from news media, research institutes to the stakeholders of specific news issues.”

Quote | Vliegenthart

“Get what you can get”: people should not get distracted and be seduced to continue. They must be shown that their opinion/vision/idea is taken seriously. Hoekstra complemented this with the advice to explore some theories on how to persuade or influence people.

(Ideas about) future suggestions

1. Ask people's engagement with the topic on a scale and show this next to comments.

2. ‘Reverse’ news selection based on what emotions are elicited by certain news articles is very interesting (Vliegenthart). Also emotions over time, but only subject-specific. Emotional change in general (such as ‘2019 was about anger, 2020 is about joy’) is not very insightful.

3. From a researcher's perspective, it would be interesting to conduct content analyses, e.g., screening people's comments on certain words, word frequency, and words that are used together.

4. According to Hoekstra, it would be interesting to create polarization profiles after repeated survey participation (figure 9.12), i.e., ‘you are that extreme, to this side or this side’ and ‘how positive are you towards conflict?’

5. Hoekstra asked if the concept probes for discussions. For example, Die Zeit (Germany) opens conversations between different people. The contact theory would be interesting for this project too.

Consistent underlying model

Hoekstra was interested in the model on which the values and needs are based. It would be convenient to use one consistent underlying model for values, needs and other concerns for multiple interventions concerning polarization. Also to show funding organisations: these interventions reinforce each other.

Suitable subjects

Vliegenthart proposed subjects people feel personally attracted to: corona, health, retirement pensions, immigration, nitrogen.

Figure 9.12 | Creating polarization profiles: ‘How extreme are you? To what side?’



“You have to consider the business side: what do people invest in? What will media pay for? Transparency, or information about the audience?”

Quote | Hoekstra

“It would be interesting to create polarization profiles of people, like ‘You are this extreme, to this or that side.’”

Quote | Hoekstra

The realization of Perspective News

Hoekstra would advise starting with a regional pilot, for example at a regional news media organisation. Regional titles have a higher potential than national titles who are often more abstract about polarization. Another business student could be involved to work out a business model and ask the Yes!Delft incubator for advice about income, expenses, target group, partners and how to set up the organisational structure. It is recommended to start up an independent organisation in which Emotion Studio promotes, advises and finances next to other investors. What do they invest in? Employees, design, production? What service is exactly provided to the media organisation as client? Do they pay for insights or participant information? Could multiple organisations use Perspective News at the same time? It would help to **find organisations with similar interests, ideals or systems**. Finally, concessions that need to be made concerning the social objectives must be clarified: balance design vs. business.

Realization success

Vliegenthart wonders: when is the goal achieved? If news reporting is improved or if it involves more empathy? The first concrete measure of success would be the ‘n’: the number of respondents. Additionally, repeated participation, the number of accounts created and survey completes. It would be interesting to involve people from constructive journalism, such as the Correspondent or media researchers.

9.1.9 Conclusions experts

Stating a clear incentive, feedback and simplification of the survey is confirmed by the experts. Some future suggestions are proposed, such as content analysis, polarization profiles and conversation starters. Theories about persuasion could be explored to support the attractiveness of Perspective News.

The idea behind this design has the potential to be used in multiple interventions, in which it is advised to use one underlying model for values and needs consistently.

The realization of Perspective News depends on a well worked-out business model, in which the service that is provided towards media should be stated specifically. The advantage (outcome results) should be very clear. It could help to find organisations with similar interests, ideals or systems. Besides, measurable goals should be set.

9.2

Implementation

A communication strategy and communication launch plan were proposed in the final design proposal. However, before the intervention is ready to launch, an implementation strategy is needed. This chapter describes the necessary steps from the design proposal to launch, by means of a roadmap. This roadmap is created based on conclusions drawn from validation with end-users, media, and experts. On the next pages, an elaboration can be found on the future development of the survey and platform of Perspective News after the launch of the minimal viable intervention. Last, the activities and responsibilities of the involved stakeholders are addressed.

From proposal to launch

To progress from proposal to launch, a few steps need to be taken backwards. First, a minimal viable intervention needs to be created and iterated on, based on findings from validation and together with a first client, objectives can be set. In figure 9.13, the implementation phases are dismantled into concrete steps.

Minimal Viable Intervention

The minimal viable intervention would exist of a simplified version of the proposal, with at least the following essential elements:

Survey: emotions, comments and values

The users should be able to reflect on their emotions felt after reading an article and the values that are important to them in the subject. Emotions and values are found to be the most uncomplicated to indicate (p87). Furthermore, the user should be able to provide an explanation. These explanations help others to understand perspectives (p154).

Platform: tour, topic selection and first topic pages

Topic selection and at least one topic page are crucial in the platform. From the validation, it appeared the 'tour page' provides valuable and essential information about the platform and should be integrated in the minimal version too.

Objectives

The roadmap starts with involving and interviewing potential stakeholders, interested parties and researchers, after which the objectives of the concept can be sharpened. When a first client is selected, Emotion Studio can draw the first outline of a business model. Together ambitions can be set, determining measurable and realistic goals to reach, for example, the number of subjects or participants, without losing the eye on the main design goal of depolarization.

Iteration

When objectives are set, the idea can be iterated. According to the evaluation, points of focus are to simplify the survey, clarify and minimize text, create a consistent visual style and involve feedback and a clear result. To create a clear incentive here, persuasion theories can be explored (Hoekstra, p158). A pilot test plan should be developed together with the client and a specific target group should be defined.

Pilot

The first pilot test can be conducted with the defined target group, on a regional scale. The pilot test will be executed with one selected subject and preferably two articles. In the pilot test, the intended effect can be measured and it can be checked if the number of participants can represent enough differentiating perspectives. The quantitative effect (number of survey completes, participants, contributions, amount of time needed), as well as the qualitative effect (perception, usability, desirability), should be analysed. During the pilot test, a start can be made on creating awareness about the concept and all actions and responsibilities needed should be streamlined.

Launch

During the launch, all touchpoints addressed in the communication strategy should be involved. It is important that as many people as possible encounter Perspective News on their used media channels. Even commercials can be created to evoke the message (p145). One major success indicator is the number of participants, therefore awareness should be increased and discussion created.

Upscale

Once the minimal viable intervention is launched and the effects are measured, insights can be taken into the development of the full intervention, which incorporates a modular survey and tailoring options for different organisations. Perspective News can now be extended to other organisations (possibly even outside the media field) and news organisations can start complement and improve their current news reporting.

After a while, the (depolarization) effect of Perspective News can be analysed and evaluated. Perspective News can be adjusted according to objectives and design goal along the way. The concept behind, involving PrEmo and depolarization strategies can be integrated into multiple interventions that contribute to societal depolarization.

ROADMAP

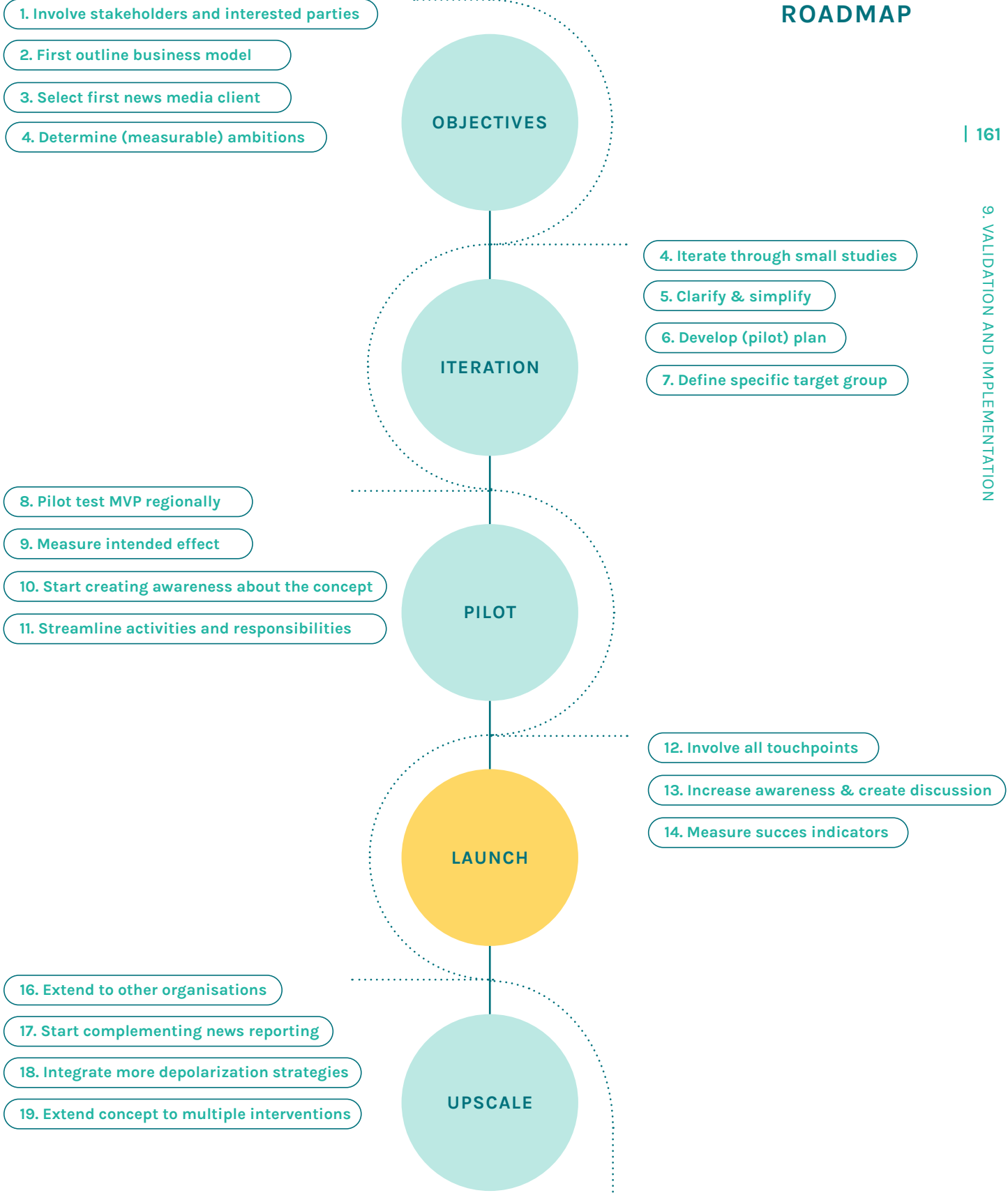


Figure 9.13 | Implementation strategy from design proposal to launch

A modular survey

For the upscale phase of the roadmap, a vision for future development is created. Here, suggestions for long-term development of the emotion measurement survey are presented.

1. Long-term development survey

As discussed in chapter 7 - Design for depolarization, many questions can be asked to users concerning the news. The trade-off: depth vs. low-effort. In the final design proposal, the survey asks people's needs (but only if the users confirms the issue affects their personal life) and values. Following the interviews with media organisations (p75) and the creative session with media & journalism (p78), many questions are suggested that could give an insight in how people feel about a topic or perceive it.

A modular survey

After the launch of the first version - a minimal viable intervention, the survey can gradually be adjusted with other sets of questions. In figure 9.14, suggestions are collected and categorized on relevance, consequences, coping and normative suggestions, based on the appraisal component process model (p57). **The indication of emotions with PrEmo after being exposed to a stimulus (news article) is a fixed element** at the start of the survey.

News media organisations, or even other human-centred organisations that would benefit from insights into concerns of a wide target group, can 'play around' with selecting questions that fit a topic. Journalists can consider: 'What questions would I ask if I would interview people real life?' However, the survey must always kept short and concise. **The rule: minimal questions, maximal depth (p155). The survey should not take more than 5-7 minutes, based on insights from iterations.**

Database of concerns

At the start of the launch, this table of proposed questions is available to start studying the effectiveness of different questions. Gradually, a database should be set-up with multiple-choice lists to choose from correlating with questions. Lists with needs, life goals and values are already available to select from (Appendix J). Journalist can pick, for example, 6-10 needs to choose from. Multiple lists will be created during the development process with other questions and possible answers. For example: 'what is your most important value for society?' could contain multiple-choice options like solidarity, tolerance, gratitude, optimism, realism, freedom, equality, patience, respect, loyalty etc.

Coping

In the foundation of the survey (chapter 118), coping was left out. This is still the case for the minimal viable intervention, but it might be valuable to investigate if questions from this category possibly create some depth or interesting insights from society. Therefore also suggestions for this category are presented in figure 9.14.

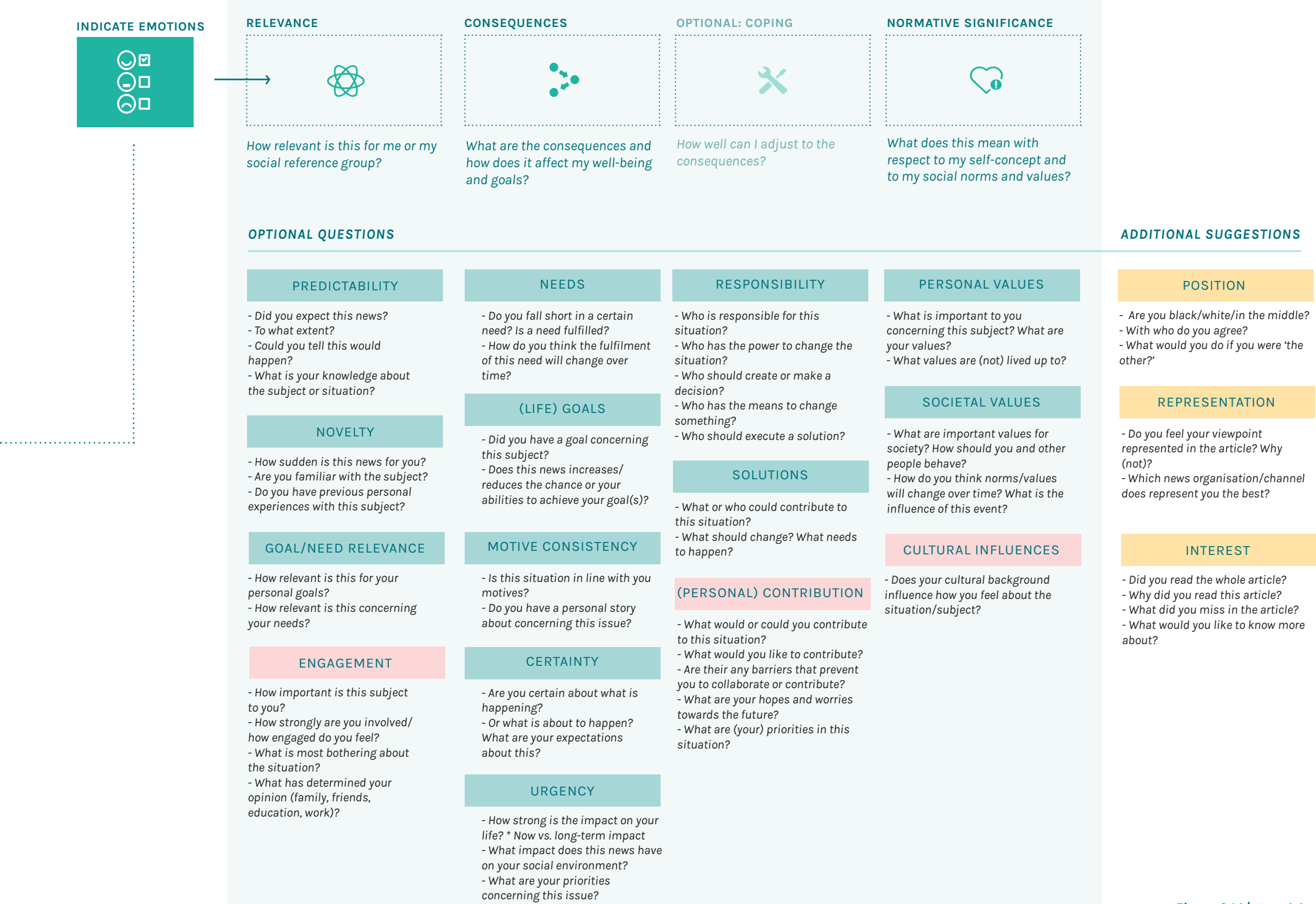


Figure 9.14 | A modular survey: suggested questions for development of the survey, categorized on emotion appraisal components and additional suggestions.

Platform development

2. Long-term development platform

The foundation of the Perspective News platform (p122) is suitable for short-term as well as long-term development, although information presented on the platform will depend on what questions are integrated into the emotion measurement survey. Besides, a couple of suggestions for long-term development can be made:

Suitable issues

As discussed before, Perspective News will only be suitable for social themes that tend to polarize. The subjects proposed from literature (among others, McCarty (2019), Tiemeijer (2017), experts and editors), can be summarized in two categories:

1. Social themes that concern **identity and moralized** issues: the Zwarte Pieten discussion, immigrants, migration and integration, refugees, gender diversity, farmer protest, issues related to religion, abortion
2. Issues with more concrete **personal impact**: safety, climate change, mobility, healthcare, housing, income inequality

>> It is advised to start with news issues that are urgent at the time of launch, that fit in one of these categories and seem to present two opponent positions, thus tend to polarize.

Desktop & app version

Perspective News should be launched in a desktop and mobile application version, as many people consume news via mobile phones (figure 9.15).

Reverse news selection

Once many articles are reflected upon, the elicited emotions can be analysed. Then a reverse news selection can be set up in which users choose articles to read based on what emotions the articles elicited by participants. This will work like a recommender system. Someone can choose articles that significantly elicited fear, joy, fascination or another emotion they are intrigued by. Another option is that if someone has indicated many negative emotions, an article that is received quite positive can be recommended and vice versa. Also, someone can choose subjects that affect people's ability to 'maintain warm and trusted relationships', or an article in which people find 'kindness' important. See figure 9.16 for a layout suggestion.

Emotions over time

Also, the change in emotions over time could be presented (figure 9.17). This will not make sense for all subjects together, but only for specific subjects (according to Vliegenthart, p158).



Figure 9.15 | Survey application for mobile phones, integrated in existing news apps

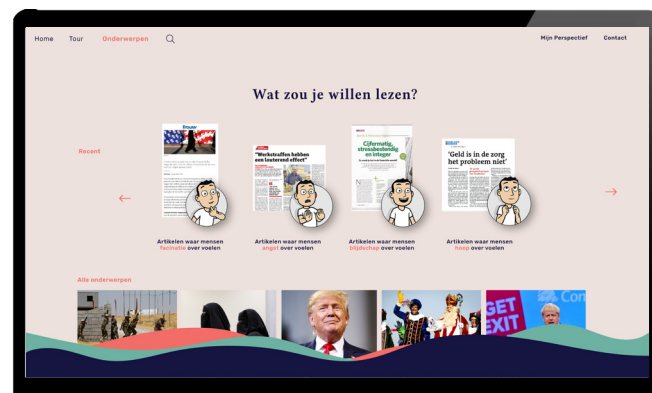


Figure 9.16 | Reverse news selection

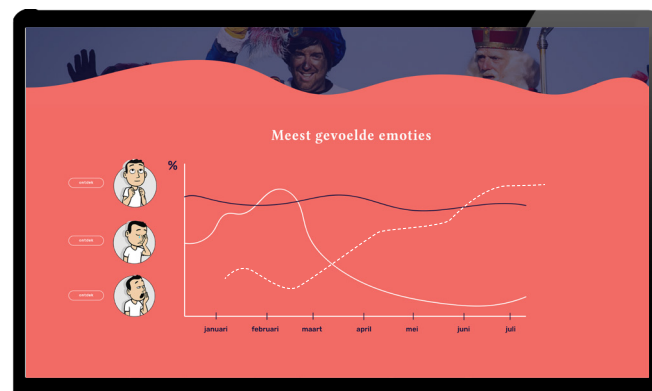


Figure 9.17 | Change over time of most indicated emotions

Effort & investment

EFFORT

Activities and responsibilities

Besides implementation efforts, maintaining Perspective News in the long-term will require some effort from both the news media organisation (client) and Emotion Studio (provider or owner).

Emotion Studio

Emotion Studio owns the product of Perspective News. In any case, Emotion Studio should be available to answer questions and update the product according to feedback from clients. Emotion Studio should keep track of the questions that are used in the survey and how PrEmo is used. In collaboration with clients, the product can be improved continuously. Besides, the studio should keep an eye on the visual style and overall concept. As media organisations might be seduced to focus on content analysis, they should be aware (or even reminded) the main objective is to contribute to depolarization in society. Emotion Studio can extend the product to several media organisations and explore the potential Perspective News has for human-centred organisations that might benefit from the concept, gathering in-depth insights on emotions and concerns of a wide target group.

The client

It is the media's responsibility to detail the concept to the organisation's own preferences. Emotion Studio will provide options for tailoring, on which the organisation can adjust it. Emotion Studio will provide touchpoint guidelines too, which the client can use for creating material for their channels.

The client can start selecting issues they think are most important to their readers. Then, as discussed in the future development of the survey, the media organisation can play around with questions to ask, relevant for the subject. They should keep a critical eye on the type of questions and the length of the survey accordingly. The language use of choice words might need to be adjusted a little to their specific target group. Emotion Studio will create a database with multiple-choice answers on several questions, such as sets of emotions, emotion descriptions, values, needs, life goals, etc., which the news media organisations can complement over time. The organisations can provide feedback to Emotion Studio on aspects such as which questions are most effective and how to approach consumers. This will be essential for Emotion Studio to improve the product.

INVESTMENT

Costs and benefits

A business model needs to be created to increase the product's viability. Effort and investment is needed from both the owner (Emotion Studio) and the client.

Emotion Studio

- Initial development costs | First, Emotion Studio will invest in iteration and development of the concept. Partners will be involved, awareness needs to be created, the objectives need to be specified with a first client. Then, a minimal viable intervention will be built, for which a software development party is needed.

- Structural investment | In the long-term, to maintain Perspective News' business, structural time investment (thus costs) is needed from Emotion Studio. Continuous activities involve contact with clients and the improvement of the concept.

Benefits

Regarding this project, Emotion Studio is mostly interested in exposure. If a new application of PrEmo on social issues becomes well-known, more people encounter Emotion Studio and might be interested in (a spin-off of) Perspective News or other services. The project might be a start for exploring other applications of PrEmo as well.

The client

- Implementation costs | The client's expenses will involve implementation, pilot test and launch costs first and time to tailor the concept.

- Structural investment | Perspective News involves continuous selection of news subjects and creating surveys accordingly. This will need structural investment on employees and possibly software.

Benefits

As shown in the research phase and validation, the benefit for the client is clear. The concept provides great in-depth insights into their target group on a deeper level. From a researcher's perspective, many content investigations can be thought of. Besides, the concept will attract more consumers to the organisation's media channels.

10

Project evaluation

The final chapter concludes this thesis with a project evaluation. First, conclusions are drawn by answering the research questions, evaluating the design goal, design guidelines and fit of the project with the proposed depolarization strategies (10.1). Also, the four key problems are addressed. Secondly, points of discussion and limitations are suggested (10.2). Thirdly, several recommendations for the final design are proposed (10.3). Lastly, a personal reflection on the project is presented (10.4).

10.1	Conclusions
10.2	Discussion and limitations
10.3	Recommendations
10.4	Personal reflection



10.1

Conclusions

This subchapter presents the conclusions of the project, by answering the research question(s), evaluating the design goal, the design guidelines and proposed depolarization strategies. Also, a short recap on the four key problems is given.

Subquestions

- 1.1 What is polarization and what are its causes and effects?
- 1.2 What is the current state of polarization?
- 2.1 What is the influence of media on one's perception of polarization and society's perspectives?
- 2.2 To what extent do news media currently contribute to depolarization strategies?
- 3. How can PrEmo and the scientific knowledge on emotions be used to capture emotions and unlock underlying concerns on a social topic?

RESEARCH QUESTION

“How can news media contribute to depolarization with the application of PrEmo on social themes?”

News media can contribute to depolarization by inviting (their) news consumers to explore the variety in society's perspectives and by showing nuance in perspectives, obtained by indicating emotions and concerns with PrEmo.

Answering the subquestions

The main research question does not have one simple answer. There are many ways in which news media can contribute to depolarization, of which Perspective News is one. In this thesis, the causes and effects of polarization are explored, including the current state of polarization. It appeared we can mostly speak of a perception of polarization, as agreement in society on many topics has not decreased.

This perception still contains a risk, because if we think something is real, it can have real consequences. The media have the largest influence on our perception of polarization, as our image of society and the public debate is mostly created by what we see on tv, internet, apps, newspapers etc. The influence is created by current methodologies of news media, by political and educational content and the fragmented media landscape, that allows citizens to choose their own preferred news sources and channels. Polarization itself is reinforced by our human nature, deriving self-esteem from positioning ourselves or our group to others. We often see our own social reference group as superior to others.

Some depolarization attempts exist to capture perspectives, provide discussions or to position oneself. Most of these initiatives lack a clear incentive, miss nuance, have a high threshold or take a lot of time. PrEmo, based on scientific knowledge on emotions, can be used to capture emotions in a nuanced way and unlock underlying concerns.

DESIGN GOAL

“Design to reduce polarization by enabling Dutch citizens to explore and contribute to the variety of society's perspectives on social themes, using emotional awareness.”

Perspective News aims to reduce polarization, by providing an accessible possibility for Dutch citizens to participate and share their opinion in the Dutch population representation, and by inviting people to explore other people's perspective. Perspective News has a high potential to do so but only if many participants with differentiating perspectives contribute. This depends on the attractiveness, the reach and usability of the concept.

Dutch citizens are **enabled** to participate by the integration of Perspective News into the current news media practice. This ensures people will encounter Perspective News through a variety of channels, that are focused on people from different ages and education levels.

People can **contribute** by filling in a survey after reading a news article, which does not ask about their opinion, but about their feelings and concerns, uncovering what is truly important to them.

People can **explore** a **variety of perspectives** on the platform of Perspective News. The platform is based on a multi-layer concept and stimulates the user to dive into it to a preferred extent. The platform is found informal and easy, which makes it attractive to explore bits of information.

Emotional awareness is created in two ways. First, information is provided on how our emotions are influenced by concerns, and statements and judgements influenced by emotions. Secondly, all emotions that are felt on different articles and subjects can be explored.

Creating awareness

- 1. News effect awareness
- 2. Emotional understanding
- 3. Diversity of the outgroup

Capturing perspectives

- 1. High accessibility
- 2. Clear goal and benefit
- 3. Ease and low effort
- 4. Privacy and trustworthiness
- 5. Reasonableness

Representing perspectives

- 1. Focus on silent majority
- 2. Connecting by a common identity
- 3. Inviting and accessible

DESIGN GUIDELINES

“The design guidelines are categorized in creating awareness, capturing perspectives and represent perspectives.”

Evaluation guidelines creating awareness

On the platform of Perspective News, room is reserved on the ‘tour’ page for explaining the effect of news. This is visualised as well, but through an animation, it could be further clarified, also the concept of framing. The same applies to emotional understanding, although the emotions elicited by the news are strongly addressed throughout the concept. The diversity of the outgroup is integrated indirectly by showing a variety of perspectives but could be emphasized more directly by showing that perspectives can differ within one group (i.e., the ‘farmers’, the ‘climate activists’).

Evaluation guidelines capturing perspectives

Perspective News will be integrated into all media channels of some existing news media brands, creating high accessibility for all citizens. Through iteration with several prototypes, the benefit for end-users is clarified but further exploration on how to approach people (what invitation specifically) is advised. The survey is minimized to around 5-7 minutes and is easy and understandable, but shorter and longer versions can be created according to the length of an article. Perspective News allows for privacy by anonymous participation. A notion of privacy and anonymity is not integrated yet, but can easily be added. Reliability is increased by showing the number of participants and contributions so far. Finally, hostility is reduced by focusing on concerns and limiting typed responses.

Evaluation guidelines representing perspectives

The design is able to show the variety of society's perspectives, but richness & diversity can be emphasized more. According to validation with end-users, Perspective News is inviting and informal.

>> Only the guideline ‘connect by a common identity’ is not addressed in Perspective News. This guideline will be discussed in subchapter 10.3.

Depolarization strategies

- low threshold for realistic representation
- social cohesion by social immersion
- show the outgroup diversity
- amplify the presence of the silent majority
- multiple (dominant) ideas
- maintain an overarching identity
- promote consensus of the facts

**DEPOLARIZATION STRATEGIES**

“Finding solutions to counteract the causes of polarization.”

Most of the proposed depolarization strategies, based on the research (p90), are incorporated in the final design to a certain extent: creating a low threshold for realistic representation, social cohesion by social immersion, show the outgroup diversity, amplify presence the silent majority and display multiple (dominant) ideas.

Strategies that are not addressed through Perspective News are 1. maintaining an overarching identity (similar to the guideline ‘connect by a common identity’) and 2. promote consensus of the facts. The first will be addressed in the recommendations. The second can be achieved within the existing news production, regardless of this project.

Also Bart Brandsma has proposed four general depolarization strategies. These are: 1. change target group (from pushers to the silent), 2. change the subject (focus on similarities rather than differences), 3. change position (immerse in the middle instead of above) and 4. change tone (show interest and acknowledgement).

According to these strategies, the first and third are incorporated through the intervention. According to the second, there is potential to search for similarities, but this is not incorporated yet. The fourth strategy is partly embodied in the core concept, by addressing concerns rather than opinions but could be addressed more in future development, for instance, by facilitating constructive conversations, emphasize similarities or showing examples of mutual acknowledgement.

Key problems

1. An unnoticed majority
2. Little emotional awareness
3. Clarity above nuance
4. Distorted realities

**KEY PROBLEMS**

“Are the four key problems tackled through Perspective News?”

From the literature review, news consumption explorations and expert and media interviews, four key problems were derived. Does Perspective News solve these problems through capturing and representing perspectives?

A key to the unnoticed majority

As the extremes are easy to find, a key to the moderate middle was missing. The survey of Perspective News provides exactly that key, by capturing and presenting their viewpoints.

From despondency to reassurance

As Van Wonderen (expert) and several editors noticed: in times of digitalisation and an increasing complex world, people need a feeling of control and certainty. Perspective News can reassure people by showing moderate, nuanced and reasonable perspectives can be found and common concerns are hidden behind rough statements and strong emotions.

Nuance clarified

News must be clear and appealing to be read and sold. Clarity is a priority above nuance. Perspective News visualises nuanced perspectives and presents them in layers. Pieces of information and insights can be explored bit by bit which makes it possible to show nuances in an understandable manner.

Converging interpretations of reality

Perspective News does not provide a solution to differentiating interpretations caused by a fragmented media landscape. However, it does contribute to the idea of one reality in which different perceptions exist side by side.

10.2

Discussion & limitations

This subchapter sets out points of discussion and limitations. The scope and directions taken in the project are discussed, as well as the limitations of the project and the final design.

Directions taken in this project

>> At the start of the project the media field was chosen as a case for the application of PrEmo on social themes. The news media were identified as stakeholders with a significant influence on polarization, thus providing the opportunity to counteract this. This has turned out to be a field with high potential, albeit, it could have been interesting to focus on other human-centred organisations as well, such as hospitals, housing cooperations, schools, etc.

>> When the design brief was created, based on the research, the solution space of an online survey (for reflection on news articles) and a platform (as integration on an existing news website) was selected and iterated on. This decision created time to explore the solution space, but limited other ideas that could have reduced polarization differently.

>> The number of participants in all user studies, from the PrEmo explorations, survey interventions to platform mock-ups was limited and their background was not verified sufficiently to ensure these participants represent Dutch society. Yet, it was verified the participants reflected a wide age range and different education levels in all tests.

Limitations of Perspective News

>> According to the evaluation of the concept, Perspective News is a strong concept and involves a high potential. However, Perspective News is only effective if a significant number of people participate so that a corresponding representation of perspectives with reality can be provided. A complete and accurate representation is nearly possible. Still, if for example, a couple of thousand contribute, it will probably provide a variety of perspectives to reach the design goal. However, care must be taken with statements such as ‘many Dutch citizens feel...’ or ‘what do other Dutch citizens think about this?’ Suggestions are proposed to attract many people but a guarantee of effectiveness can not yet be given.

Media use capabilities

>> Not all Dutch citizens have high digital capabilities: 6% of the Dutch population indicates to be (very) poor skilled in using the internet. Among this 6% elderly and lower educated are overrepresented. Therefore, this group that is less skilled in using digital applications and devices might miss out on Perspective News. This group should also be represented in the design, so attention must be paid to ensure they are involved.

>> In general, the target group is wide, which makes it challenging to tailor the concept to individual preferences, background and abilities.

Hostility reduction

>> The question arose multiple times if Perspective News indeed will capture the silent majority, or if it will still be the extreme part that would share their opinion. ‘Then we would still see the extreme views we ‘always’ see in the news’. In principle, the survey only allows for extremity at the point where the user explain (type) the selected emotions and concerns (one time). Hostile reactions are undesirable, as participants were quite curious about these different explanations on the platform in the end-user test.

>> However, a typed reaction on social media is currently the only possibility to respond to the news. Perspective News stimulates participants to first reflect on emotions and concerns before typing. The assumption is made that this supports more reasonable and moderate responses. Besides, Perspective News would create a more easy and reliable way of participation for the silent majority, being part of an existing organisation. This can only be investigated once the intervention is launched.

Your ideal self

The chance exists that people fill in the survey as their ‘ideal self’. For example, by giving socially-accepted answers instead of a ‘true’ opinion. This would affect a realistic image of perspectives.

The interviewer bias

In the first PrEmo explorations, it appeared it feels more natural to add comments orally in a face-to-face conversation. In these paper prototype explorations, but also in the final validation people are influenced by the interviewer who gives instructions. Some will probably behave and respond (slightly) different than in real life.

Depolarization?

>> A first step towards reducing the perception of polarization is taken by amplifying the presence of a silent majority. A shift towards a non-polarizing society would involve many more steps, for example letting people experience nuance and moderateness in real life. For example, debates, discussions and politics (on television) should appear less polarized and differences within groups on the news need to be emphasized. Perspective News would thrive best together with other depolarization initiatives that can reinforce each other, always being aware that the media and politics can never be fully inclusive and nuanced, as this undermines clarity. Besides, polarization also has its benefits (p34), for example, increasing motivation for social progress and reform.

>> Depolarization can hardly be measured. The ‘public debate’ is already a quite abstract term. What is the public debate and who is involved? How can a reduced (perception of) polarization be analysed? To eventually conclude the state of polarization, new measures should be investigated, such as conflict (resolution) rates, measures of cooperation, perceived solidarity etc.

Recommendations

In this subchapter, recommendations are proposed for further development of Perspective News, to increase its attractiveness towards future clients (news media organisations), for successful implementation and recommendations for the exploration of other ideas that arose during this project. In any case, Perspective News should be evaluated in real life to fully estimate the effect and realization possibilities.

CONCEPT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for Perspective News are based on insights derived from the research and development phase and the validation with end-users.

Direct feedback & guidance

>> Users desire some guidance when exploring the platform: 'What am I looking at?' 'What is this website trying to tell me?' and 'How should I interpret this?' The interpretation of results, especially of needs and values, can be improved.

>> Furthermore, the suggestion was made to provide immediate feedback during the survey. For instance, show results of what other people answered right after every question. This could motivate participants to complete the survey.

>> It is advised to iterate on the specific text, choice of words and tone of voice. Especially at first sight of the design, on touchpoints on social media and pop-ups that explain the concept (e.g., the pop-up when clicking 'What is this?' at the beginning of the survey). The text should invite people to contribute and spark curiosity.

Representativeness of contributions

>> When a new news theme is selected to start gathering perspectives on, the first people who explore that topic on the platform should be notified they see results of a small group of first participants. The notions could be, for example, 'Come back later for more reactions!' or 'Want a reminder? Click here'.

>> It is recommended to investigate if and how the platform could measure 'representativeness' of the participants so far, and give small warnings accordingly such as 'Note here, most of these perspectives are from people between 20 and 30 years old.' or 'These reactions are all from people who think the topic is very important to them.'

The application of PrEmo

>> In the final design, all PrEmo emotions are used. However, it might benefit usability to decrease the amount of emotions or show specific ones that are most relevant for the topic, or even explore more types of emotions that are perhaps more relevant for social themes and news than for product experience.

>> Sometimes PrEmo is associated with 'a white man' by users as well as editors. It is advised to show a female/male version adjusted to the participant, after asking gender and age at the beginning of the survey, and consider a coloured version.

Length survey adjusted to length article

In the evaluation of the concept, a suggestion was made to adapt the length of the survey to the length of the article. If people take the time to read a longer article, it is assumed they will have the time for a (little) longer survey too. Besides, they have read more about the subject which makes reflection easier and relevant. This should be investigated because people might be a little tired from the long article, thus less motivated to contribute.

Experiment with selections of concerns

It was already proposed to experiment with questions and selections of concerns. Aspects as the type, formulations and number can be explored. A suggestion is to set up a pilot team that creates different types of surveys for one subject, in which these aspects are slightly different so that the most understandable and usable selections of questions can be selected.

Design for emotion

This thesis centralized designing with emotion. It would be interesting to also consider the Perspective News from the 'design for emotion' angle, by researching what emotion Perspective News elicits in itself. What emotion does it evoke now (relief, fascination, desire, hope, confusion?) and what emotion should be evoked? From this thesis, it can be suggested that a feeling of *certainty and control*, *fascination* and *relief* are most desirable.

Personal information asked in the survey

Some participants who tested several prototypes would be interested in more personal information of the perspectives they are exploring, which would support the interpretation and meaning of the information. For instance, knowing people's age, residence or education level. However, more information can trigger prejudices about groups and thus polarization. Also, privacy should be taken into account here. It is advised to explore if a balance in information can be found.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEDIA

Attract new clients

Pliskin (expert) noted that changing emotions is sometimes perceived as manipulation. In addition, in a fragmented media landscape it is hard to convince it is better to show a balance in perspectives. She suggested to create awareness among media about their influence on emotions and emphasize the importance of a representative image. *'Like you, I have the goal of making sure people get the most balanced view. And I have something on how to do that.'*

(International) collaboration

>> In general, it is advised to find organisations with similar interests as the design goal of this thesis (Hoekstra, p158). Organisations that practise constructive journalism are potential clients, like the Correspondent and the regional broadcaster that was interviewed. Constructive journalism focuses on providing inspiring perspectives, 'what are others doing for a better world? What steps could you take?', which could be a great fit with Perspective News. Also, the start-up Blendle which also aims for a content-diverse news selection could be an interesting client.

>> Moreover, this design might be of great benefit for countries with a strong polarizing society, such as the United States but also inside Europe. For example, the NOS is a member of the European World Casting Union. It is worth to consider different possible target groups and collaborations.

Support a critical mindset

In the early stage of this thesis, it became clear a critical mindset is essential for a journalist. It is recommended to explore what value Perspective News can add to the awareness of framing (factors), improving news reporting, news topic selection and agenda-setting, interpreting the survey data and the recognition of people's most urgent worries and important hopes for the future. It could also support the search for finding new and surprising stories/perspectives, which is also an important need for journalists. It is advised to create some guidelines to support journalists to make the most out of the concept. A note must be made here that this is not the main objective of Perspective News but exploring these benefits for media will probably benefit the reader too, indirectly.

Content analysis & a common ground

>> Vliegthart proposed some forms of content analysis in explanations people give on their emotions and concerns, such as screening for words, word frequency and words used together (p158). This can support understanding the distribution of people's viewpoints.

>> One depolarization strategy and design guideline is not addressed in this project, namely to search or create a common identity. This is an important and effective strategy, but rather challenging in a society with diverse backgrounds. Perspective News could support finding common dilemma's or similarities by analyzing the data derived from the survey. Some needs and value combinations have a greater tendency to form a dilemma, such as the need for 'ease' and 'stimulation' or the need 'autonomy' and value 'teamwork'. These risk-of-polarizing concern combinations could be identified and checked if they indeed create a common dilemma in the topic.

>> The same applies on similarities or how Brandsma calls it 'the binding question'. In the perspectives, similarities within diversity can be searched for. A common ground can support the acknowledgement, sharing and respecting of worries (van Wonderen).

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Pay attention to people's digital skills

During investigation of the Dutch news consumption, it appeared it can not be verified to what extend Dutch citizens could avoid filter bubbles, recognize fake news, can adequately protect their privacy and reject or ignore advertisements. For policy-making, it is important citizens are well-informed about news, and it is increasingly important they can defend themselves. Attention should be paid to these specific digital skills. The resilience of the news consumer must increase: people will individually need to have more control over their media use.

Achieve the ultimate goal

The goal of this project was design for depolarization. A step towards depolarization opens the way towards the ultimate goal: to support mutual understanding and empathy. It is advised to keep this desired long-term goal in mind while developing Perspective News. A solidary society benefits from well-informed constructive conversations and social participation. Perspective News and other interventions could act as small steps in achieving and *maintaining* solidarity: a solidary society is not an end, but an ongoing process.



“Knowing a graduation project could be stressful, and knowing my optimism often prevails realism, created the expectation of ending up with numerous unrealistic goals.

However, it turned out to be a productive but relaxed project, and a great final of my time as a student!”

10.4

Personal reflection

When reflecting upon the last couple of months, I can only look back with surprise about my project management and calmness. Knowing a graduation project could be stressful and demanding, and knowing in my case, optimism often prevails realism, created the expectation of ending up with numerous unrealistic goals. However, it turned out to be a productive but relaxed project, and a great final of my time as a student!

This project started with the initial assignment, provided by Emotion Studio, to explore emotions in the public debate. I was happy with the freedom my supervisory team gave me to decide on the project directions and to set the scope boundaries. Setting boundaries was necessary and challenging, as the meaning of polarization, society and the public debate can turn a little abstract sometimes. My habit to think everything is possible did not help that much and forced me to revise my choices more than once. However, holding on to a concrete existing tool (PrEmo), a concrete target group and main project stakeholder, and testing various prototypes helped to deliver a detailed final design proposal.

One of my main objectives was to find out what an individual designer can do - in a couple of months - for a problem addressing a wide scope: the Dutch society. In design for many, it is important not to determine the outcome beforehand, but define ways along the process that could benefit society. I have tried to do this by continuously exploring many possible depolarization strategies and I have been thinking about the opportunities and limitations of the project from beginning to end. The scope was wider than in any other study project I did before, but I am pleased to see a lot can be achieved in less than half a year and what energy and inspiration such a challenge can give.

My greatest concern was that eventually, this project would be just a fictive proposal, ending up on the pile of ‘nice thoughts - could have been interesting’. Besides meeting the learning objectives of the graduation project, I really wanted to ensure I designed something valuable. Luckily, this project provided time to think and discuss about the realistic potential of the concept.

The number of realization possibilities appeared to be quite extensive, although I am aware many boundaries and challenges will inevitably arise during development. The project made me realize that small ideas could have big and real effects and that many people are willing to help, improve and realize ideas, as long as you put effort in meeting people and broadening the network of interested parties.

A second personal objective was to learn about emotions, human psychology and the social sciences. I learned much about what people feel and why, diving deep into emotion elicitation and appraisal processes. I have explored what influences people’s perception of other groups and how much that has to do with our human nature. I have learned overarching agreement will never happen, as in every subject, always conflicting concerns and dilemma’s can be found. It is even found desirable sometimes, as discussing conflict supports conflict resolution and policies for situation improvement. All these insights will definitely be of benefit in future projects.

The final and third goal was to integrate and improve my functional visualization skills. In the bachelor and the master I have experienced the importance of visualization for constructive communication and how it can be the tipping point for a product to be used, bought and appreciated. Visualization turned out to be essential in this graduation project to showcase insights in an understandable and appealing way.

Lastly, I was surprised by the surprise of experts that a thesis can involve academic research but also deliver something practical and usable for a real situation, based on the research. I think the value of design lies in this translation from research insights to design and all these iterations that lie in between.

I enjoyed the project from the start, but seeing more puzzle pieces fitting together over time was very rewarding. I hope I triggered some enthusiasm of others to dive into the field of polarization and design for society. I am thankful for the insights, new knowledge and improved skills this project gave me. I am already looking forward to future design projects!

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Appendices

A	Results PrEmo explorations
B	Interface iterations
C	Interface effect test
D	Set-up creative session
E	Hierarchical task analysis
F	Design goal deconstruction
G	Mood boards visual layout
H	Set-up validation
I	Questionnaire results
J	Database of concerns
K	Set-up media and expert interviews

A. Results PrEmo explorations




1. Emotion(s)

Amount of different emotions marked per article. [X:X] indicates [amount test 1 : amount test2]

			
	Boeren trekken naar provinciehuizen, overlast op wegen	Gehaat, geliefd en klimaatstaker van eerste uur: Greta Thunberg	Alleen roetveegpieten bij landelijke intocht sinterklaas
 Pride	2 [0:2]	1 [1:0]	
 Fascination	5 [2:3]		1 [0:1]
 Dissatisfaction	4 [2:2]	1 [0:1]	
 Hope	1 [0:1]	4 [1:3]	3 [1:2]
 Sadness	3 [2:1]	5 [1:4]	1 [1:0]
 Satisfaction	1 [0:1]	1 [1:0]	1 [0:1]
 Desire		1 [0:1]	
 Boredom		1 [0:1]	4 [1:3]
 Contempt		1 [0:1]	
 Admiration		2 [1:1]	
 Worried			2 [0:2]
 Joy	2 [2:0]		1 [1:0]
 Disgust			1 [1:0]













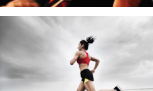


2. Sentences

Sentences that were marked per article. If in a sentence [...(X)] is used, this indicates that some (amount = X) marked only that part.

			
	Boeren trekken naar provinciehuizen, overlast op wegen	Gehaat, geliefd en klimaatstaker van eerste uur: Greta Thunberg	Alleen roetveegpieten bij landelijke intocht sinterklaas
3	"Op het hoogtepunt leidde dat tot [een file van tien kilometer (2)]"	2	1
1	"...net zo lang door met de strijd"		"Jerry Afriyie, voorman van de actiegroep Kick Out Zwarte Piet..."
2	"Volgens het RIVM blijkt dat de landbouw verantwoordelijk is voor 46 procent van de stikstofneerslag"	3	1
3	"We gaan net zo lang door met de strijd totdat [die belachelijke eisen voor het terugdringen van stikstof van tafel zijn (1)], er betere methodes zijn om stikstof te meten en niemand van ons wordt gedwongen zijn veestapel te krimpen."	6	3
1	"...provincie Friesland trok per direct een stikstofmaatregel in waar boeren woedend over waren"	2	"...meldt de NTR. De pieten zullen [dit jaar niet meer volledig zwart worden geschminkt. (1)] Ook in het Sinterklaasjournaal zijn geen volledig zwarte pieten meer te zien."
1	"hartverwarmend"	2	4
2	"De boeren laten niet met zich sollen"	1	"[Dit is een grote overwinning (2)] voor alle mensen die snakken naar een sinterklaasfeest dat alle kinderen blij maakt"
2	"Farmes Defence Force [betwist die uitkomst en noemt het RIVM: de rijkdienst die met schimmige methodes en uitkomsten, ons als grote vervuiler heeft aangewezen (2)]."	1	3
5	"[...]er betere methodes zijn om stikstof te meten (1)] en niemand van ons gedwongen wordt zijn veestapel in te krimpen"	1	"[...geleidelijke ontwikkeling (1) geweest, die een paar jaar nodig heeft gehad"
		1	1
		1	"Bij intochten die nog steeds gepaard gaan met zwarte pieten zal mijn actiegroep blijven proberen onze stem te laten horen."

3. Needs

Amount of different needs marked per article. [X:X] indicates [amount test 1 : amount test2]

			
	Boeren trekken naar provinciehuizen, overlast op wegen	Gehaat, geliefd en klimaatstaker van eerste uur: Greta Thunberg	Alleen roetveegpieten bij landelijke intocht sinterklaas
 Vaardigheden om iets te bereiken	2	3	
 Impact hebben	2	1	2
 Het 'goede' kunnen doen	2	3	3
 Gemakkelijk leven	1	2	1
 Het op jouw manier kunnen doen	2	2	3
 Goede relaties	1	2	1
 Erkenning	1	1	1
 Veiligheid & zekerheid	2	2	3
 Betekenisvol doel		1	
 Fit en gezond		1	1
 Orde			1
 Ergens bijhoren			1

*Limitations:
- Some reflected on needs of others (individual or groups from article)
- Some reflected on needs in general
- Not marked: stimulation (energiek & niet verveeld)

4. Future perspectives

Sentences that were marked per article. If in a sentence [...(X)] is used, this indicates that some (amount = X) marked only that part.


			
	Boeren trekken naar provinciehuizen, overlast op wegen	Gehaat, geliefd en klimaatstaker van eerste uur: Greta Thunberg	Alleen roetveegpieten bij landelijke intocht sinterklaas
Worries	<p>A. Dat het een beetje overtrokken wordt. Nederland loopt voorop. Dit gaat een hoop geld kosten, is dat allemaal wel nodig? Is het wel nodig hier zo extreem wat aan te doen en mensen op kosten te jagen. Ik snap wel dat de boeren demonstreren, zij lijken vaak wel de boosdoener.</p> <p>B. Dat de regels helemaal worden afgeschaft</p> <p>B. De veiligheid van mensen</p> <p>B. Voor hetzelfde geld hoeven de boeren niets meer te doen, maar alle takken moeten iets doen.</p> <p>C. Goed debat met boeren, politiek, milieubeleidsmakers</p> <p>C. Mindervleesconsumptie, betere dieromstandigheden, terugdringen antibiotica</p> <p>D. Is de landbouw in de toekomst nog mogelijk</p> <p>E. Dat ze nog vaker gaan protesteren als het niet wordt opgelost</p> <p>F. Mensen / groepen die zich niet begrepen voelen</p> <p>F. Groepen die zich afzonderen van de rest door 'in hokjes denken'</p>	<p>Worries</p> <p>A. Dat dit besef niet goed doordringt bij de grote groep</p> <p>A. Mensen ná ons geen zoiï bieden</p> <p>B. Dat veel banen moeilijk worden door alle regels</p> <p>B. Dat de maatregelen weinig zullen doen ten opzichte van de rest van de wereld</p> <p>C. Alles wordt elektrisch</p> <p>Ik hou heel erg van auto's en motoren, ik ben bang dat dat allemaal elektrisch wordt. Dat ze proberen de leuke dingen in het leven weg te halen.</p> <p>D. Zorgen over klimaatproblemen an sich</p> <p>D. De ongelijkheid die dat oproept</p> <p>D. Verdeling in twee kampen</p> <p>E. Dat de wereld niet mee werkt. Ik maak me alleen maar zorgen over het klimaat. Er is geen redden meer aan. Nederland wil wel, maar de rest werkt niet mee.</p> <p>E. Machtsmisbruik, dus niet de macht voor het juiste doel gebruiken</p> <p>F. Zeespiegel stijgt</p> <p>F. Dieren</p> <p>F. Toekomst</p>	<p>Worries</p> <p>A. Geen stress</p> <p>C. Ik maak mij zorgen dat mensen aggressiever of radicaler worden met hun protest en daarmee het verpesten voor zowel de voor- als tegenpartij.</p> <p>C. Dat het soms ook voor de kinderen te snel gaat. De ene dag is het dit, andere dag is het dat. Misschien raken ze het feest kwijt, dat ze het helemaal niet leuk meer vinden.</p> <p>D. Nederlandse tradities moeten wel voortbestaan</p> <p>De manier waarop Nederlandse tradities worden beïnvloed. We hebben met meerdere culturen te maken maar dit hoeft niet ten koste te gaan met onze eigen tradities.</p> <p>E. Tradities verdwijnen langzamerhand</p> <p>E. Tweedelingen in de samenleving ipv harmonie</p> <p>F. Dat de discussie blijft</p> <p>F. Dat het feest verpest wordt</p> <p>F. Dat groepen steeds meer tegenover komen te staan</p>
Hope	<p>A. Dat het een mix wordt, dat iedereen hierin aan mee doet. Boeren moeten ook mee helpen, maar worden wel een beetje in het verdomhoekje worden gedouwd. Het zijn wel vervuilers, maar we moeten toch eten. Dan moeten ze producten maken die minder vervuilen.</p> <p>B. Dat er op een goede manier een tussenweg wordt gevonden</p> <p>C. Zorgen voor boeren en tuinders, zij zijn belangrijk voor onze economie</p> <p>D. Protest: je stem laten horen</p> <p>E. Dat het probleem wordt opgelost en iedereen tevreden is met de oplossing</p> <p>F. Een nieuw system/nieuwe manier van werken ontwikkelen</p>	<p>Hope</p> <p>A. Toch ondanks alles dat het nog goed kán komen. Er kunnen zeker nog wel dingen veranderen, beter worden.</p> <p>B. Op zich ook hoopvol. Ik denk dat het altijd belangrijk blijft dat je van de natuur kan blijven genieten.</p> <p>C. Dat er toch een meerderheid is die tegen is</p> <p>En de hoop is, voor die boeren bijvoorbeeld. Dat het toch allemaal wel goed komt.</p> <p>D. Hoopvol over globale protestbeweging</p> <p>D. Duurzame uitvindingen van de wetenschap</p> <p>E. Dat de ogen nog open gaan voor veel mensen.</p> <p>F. Mensen die er voor opkomen</p> <p>F. Dat er iets aan gedaan moet worden</p>	<p>Hope</p> <p>B. Hopen dat er iets veranderd in al deze ellende om zwarte piet. Dat het gezeur eromheen stopt. Van mij hoeft het niet, sinterklaas is voor mij niet belangrijk zoals vroeger toen de kinderen klein waren enzo. Maar wel heel jammer voor de kinderen van nu. Ik wil dat het feest gewoon kan blijven zonder al die problemen en die ongelukken die daarbij gebeuren omdat ze allemaal hun zin willen hebben.</p> <p>C. Steeds meer mensen een leuke feest voor iedereen willen</p> <p>C. Dat de overheid & omroepen ook durven te veranderen</p> <p>C. Dat iedereen uiteindelijk een leuk sinterfeest heeft</p> <p>D. Dat mensen bereid zijn om te schuiven/ veranderen</p> <p>Om te zien dat vertegenwoordigers ook bereid zijn zich dusdanig aan te passen om tevredenheid te wekken bij mensen die hierover geklaagd hebben. Dat ze wel bereid zijn om de nodige verandering te maken.</p>

14.


Girl - 17 years old

Gehaat, geliefd en klimaatstaker van het eerste uur: Greta Thunberg

Emotion



pride



satisfaction

Sentences

"De inmiddels 16-jarige activist beschuldigt volwassenen met 'hoe durven jullie?' "

"Haar overtuiging is dat er **nú** iets moet gebeuren om een catastrofe te voorkomen.


I think it is **really good** she has started this and that the **world is participating** as well. Students, for who the future is meant. I can't join myself. But people shouldn't go too far. Also, the attention on the topic is attenuating, **media should show it more.**

3.

Woman - 64 years old

Alleen roetveegpieten bij landelijke intocht Sinterklaas

Emotion



joy

Sentences

"Volgens de omroep NTR is het afschaffen van de volledig zwarte piet een geleidelijke ontwikkeling geweest, die een paar jaar nodig heeft gehad"

I think it's **fine** that Zwarte Piet is not complete black anymore. I think it is important **you do not hurt anyone**. And if a lot of people feel hurt, than you need to change something about it.

9.

Woman - 63 years old

Boeren trekken naar provinciehuizen, overlast op wegen

1. Emotion(s)



Hope



Fascination



Dissatisfaction

Ik hoop dat ze met een goed overleg eruit kunnen komen. En ik vind dat we allemaal een stapje terug kunnen doen. Met welvaart. Consumptie.

Nederland moet altijd het voortouw nemen met dit soort maatregelen, het braafste jongetje van de klas moeten zijn. Qua regels die we nastreven staan wij bovenaan vergeleken met andere landen. Dat vind ik naar: ik kan me ook voorstellen dat de boeren daar boos om zijn.

Andermans vrijheid belemmeren. Door files en hekken. Dat is de kwalijke kant van die protesten.

2. Sentences

"...file van tien kilometer"

"...die belachelijke eisen voor het terugdringen van stikstof van tafel zijn"

"...provincie Friesland trok per direct een stikstofmaatregel in waar boeren woedend over waren"

"hartverwarmend"

3. Needs



Het op jouw manier kunnen doen



Goede relaties



Impact hebben



Het 'goede' kunnen doen

Iedereen moet kunnen doen wat hij wilt maar ze moeten dat ook mij laten doen.

Een goed gezin, goede relaties zijn belangrijk.

Niet zo zinloos geld aan iets besteden.

Mensen die teveel lopen te wauwelen, het gaat erom dat je een goed debat kan volgen. Gezondheid ligt ook in verlengde van veiligheid.

4. Future perspective

Zorgen

- Goed debat met boeren, politiek, milieubeleidsmakers

- Mindervleesconsumptie, betere diersoortstandigheden, terugdringen antibiotica

Hoop

- Zorgen voor boeren en tuinders, zij zijn belangrijk voor onze economie

Additional comments

Belachelijk: dat er dingen stoppen als kalfjes uit Roemenië hiernaartoe halen die allerlei ziektes met zich mee brengen, terwijl wij nauwelijks kalfsvlees eten in Nederland. En ik draag de wetenschap een warm hart toe. Ik vind het vervelend als mensen denken dat ze het zelf beter weten. Net als met vaccinaties, dat mensen het niet vertrouwen. Ik vind wel dat men in gesprek moet gaan en dit op een redelijke manier. Als boeren naar het RIVM gaan en wetenschappelijk onderbouwde rapporten aanvallen, dan denk ik: waar zijn we mee bezig.

B. Interface iterations

First ideation on interfaces of the platform

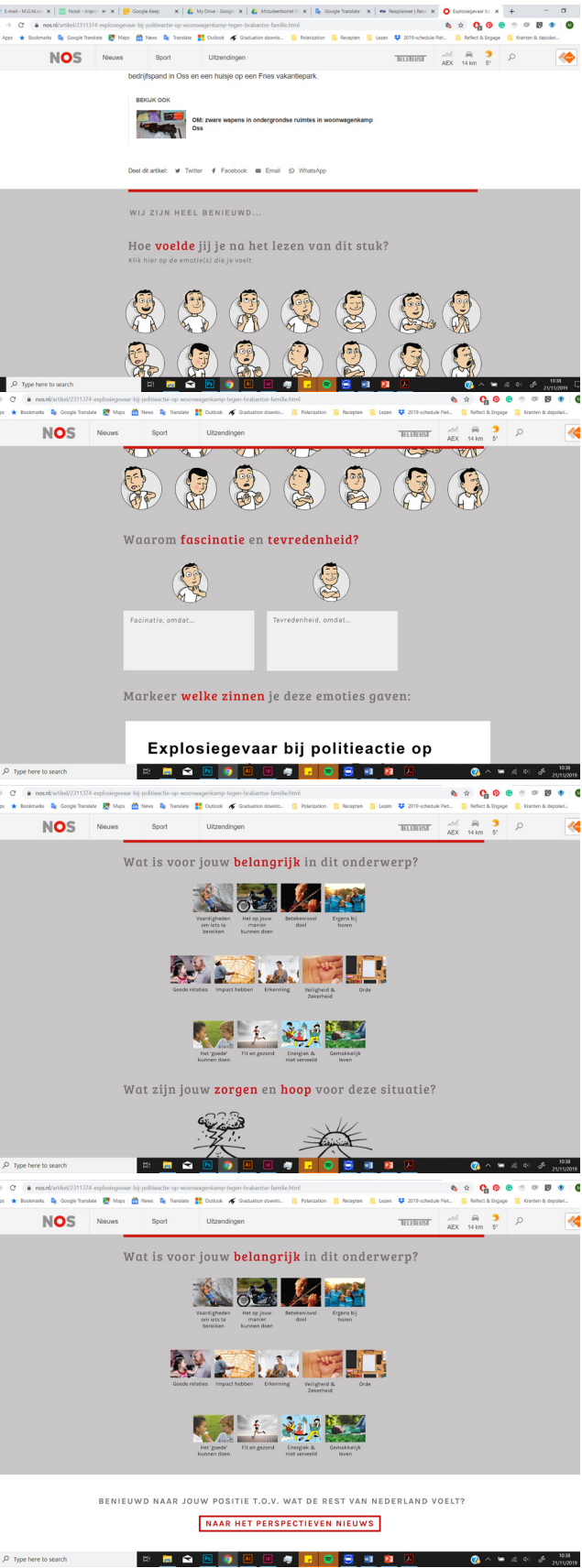


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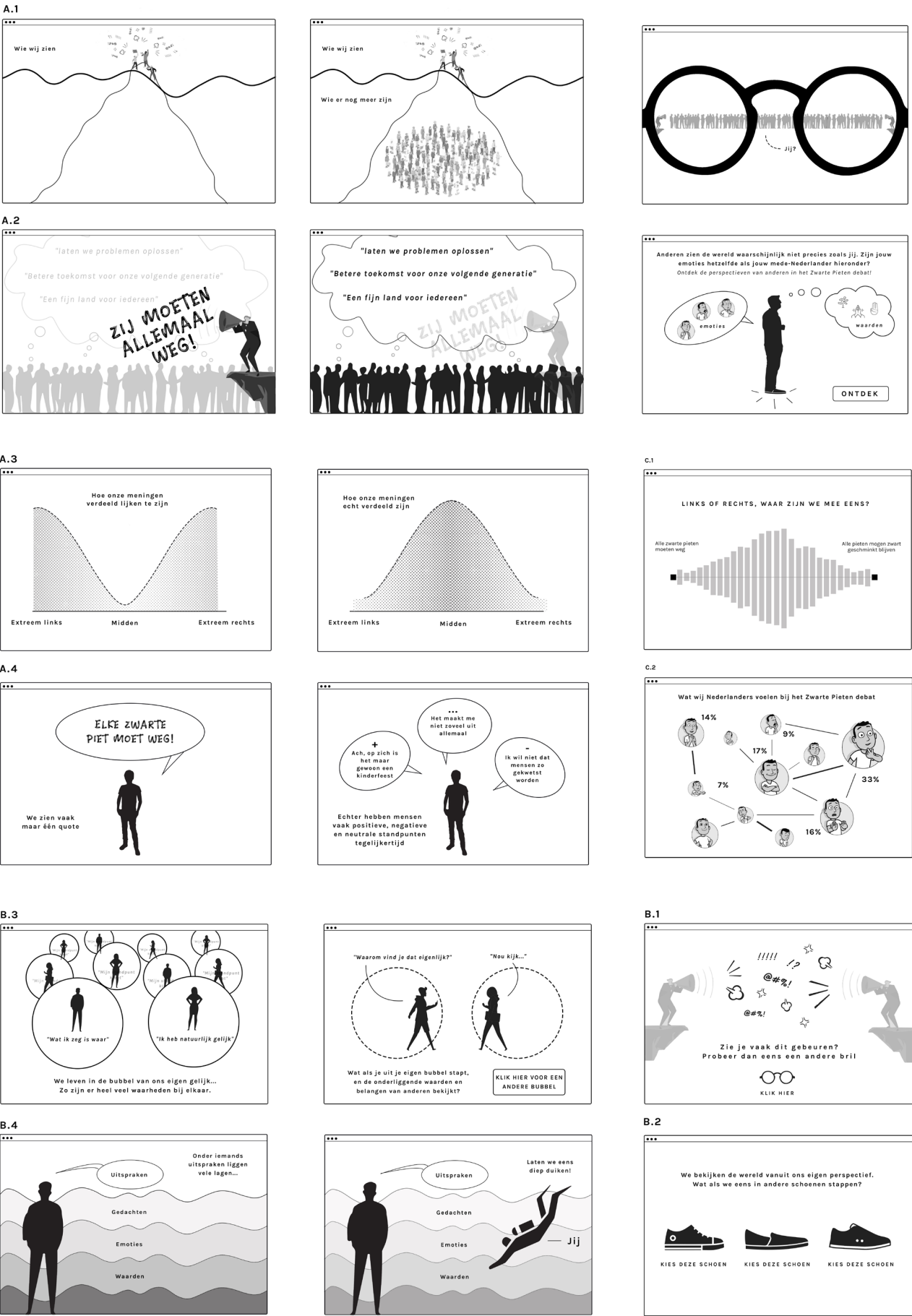
2020 | Marieke van Dijk

First survey interfaces



C. Interface effect test

Selection of the interfaces involved in the interface effect test



D. Set-up creative session

Session with masterstudents media & journalism, Erasmus University (Rotterdam)

Introductie (5 min): achtergrond project

- Student industrieel ontwerpen, project over perceptie van polarisatie : jullie nodig
- Project: uit verschillende bronnen blijkt dat Nederlanders denken dat tegenstellingen in de samenleving toenemen, maar er is weinig bewijs dat polarisatie daadwerkelijk speelt. Daar speelt de media een rol in: voor hen is het makkelijker om bij de ‘fik’ te blijven kijken en de extremen, hardstroependen zijn makkelijk te vinden. Samen met framing van het nieuws, bijvoorbeeld door de focussen op het conflict, creëert dit een perceptie van polarisatie.
- In mijn project ga ik iets ontwerpen die nieuwsmedia helpt de genuanceerde perspectieven uit de samenleving te tonen. Deel 1 = reflectietool en deel 2 = presentatie van perspectieven. Doel van dit uur: nadenken over de rol van media, een goed verhaal en hoe je polarisatie kan verminderen die we in drie opdrachten zullen doen. > weet zelf het antwoord niet

1. Icebreaker: rol van de media (10 min) | individueel

Teken de rol van nieuwsmedia als een dier (hoeft niet mooi getekend), en schrijf daaronder op welk dier en waarom deze de rol van nieuwsmedia representeert.

2. Elementen van een goed verhaal (10 min) | individueel

De studenten nemen zelf een nieuwsartikel mee dat ze goed vinden.

- Gele post-it: goed (inhoud: invalshoek, frame, informatie)
- Blauwe post-it goed (structuur: vorm, toegankelijkheid, volgorde)
- Oranje: (wat mist er nog, wat zou je artikel beter maken)

3. Perceptie van polarisatie verminderen (20 min) | groepjes van 3

Uitleg datasheet (wat gelezen, wat ingevuld en wat staat er op de sheet) Wat als journalisten bij elk artikel deze data in handen zouden krijgen?

- In groepjes van 3 bedenken studenten ideeën hoe deze data journalisten zou kunnen helpen/hoe journalisten deze data kunnen gebruiken in journaal (video) vs. (online) krant (artikel). 3 x 3 minuten.
- Daarna noteren ze wat de journalist nog meer zou willen weten, als je de hele samenleving iets zou kunnen vragen over een onderwerp. 3 x 3 minuten.
- Omcirkel samen beste idee.

4. Welke frames verkleinen het idee van grote tegenstelling in de samenleving?

Frames worden beschreven als ‘interpretatieve pakketjes’ die betekenis geven aan een onderwerp. Of als ‘making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue.’ Ik ben benieuwd welk frame, of welke elementen van een frame het idee dat tegenstelling groter worden verminderd kan worden. Hoe zorg je ervoor dat mensen het idee hebben dat we niet zo verdeeld zijn, maar er meer nuance is?

5. Afsluiting: recap gevonden ideeën (5 min)

Zelf: recap rol media, elementen goed verhaal + presentatie beste idee.

Reflectie ‘Boeren trekken naar provinciehuizen, overlast op wegen’

aantal respondenten: 4788 47% man 53% vrouw

emoties
*overige 27% verdeeld over andere emoties

23%



Fascinatie

27%



Ontevredenheid

16%



Verdrietig

7%



Trots

Gemarkeerde zinnen
Welke zinnen veroorzaakten jou emoties?

"Volgens het RIVM blijkt dat de landbouw verantwoordelijk is voor 46 procent van de stikstofneerslag"

"...die belachelijke eisen voor het terugdringen van stikstof van tafel zijn"

"...provincie Friesland trok per direct een stikstofmaatregel in waar boeren woedend over waren"

"Op het hoogtepunt leidde dat tot een file van tien kilometer"

"We gaan net zo lang door met de strijd totdat die belachelijke eisen voor het terugdringen van stikstof van tafel zijn, er betere methodes zijn om stikstof te meten en niemand van ons wordt gedwongen zijn veestapel te krimpen."

Quotes uit toelichting

Er worden verschillende standpunten belicht, wat speelt er allemaal? Waar komen de standpunten en ook die 46 procent vandaan.

Nederland moet altijd het voortouw nemen met dit soort maatregelen, het braafste jongetje van de klas moeten zijn. Qua regels die we nastreven staan wij bovenaan vergeleken met andere landen.

Omdat ik het niet per se nodig vinden om zoveel mensen te benadelen met hun actie. Normale burgers die er niks mee te maken hebben en urenlang in de file stonden.

Het zegt wel iets over hoe hoog de boeren zitten. Dat ze zoiets hebben: we laten wat van ons horen, dat vind ik wel goed. Ik denk dat wij in Nederland, in brede zin, wat meer van ons kunnen laten horen.

Behoeften



Impact hebben



Het ‘goede’ kunnen doen



Goede relaties



Impact hebben



Gemakkelijk leven



Veiligheid & zekerheid



Het op jouw manier kunnen doen



Vaardigheden om iets te bereiken

Quotes zorgen voor de toekomst

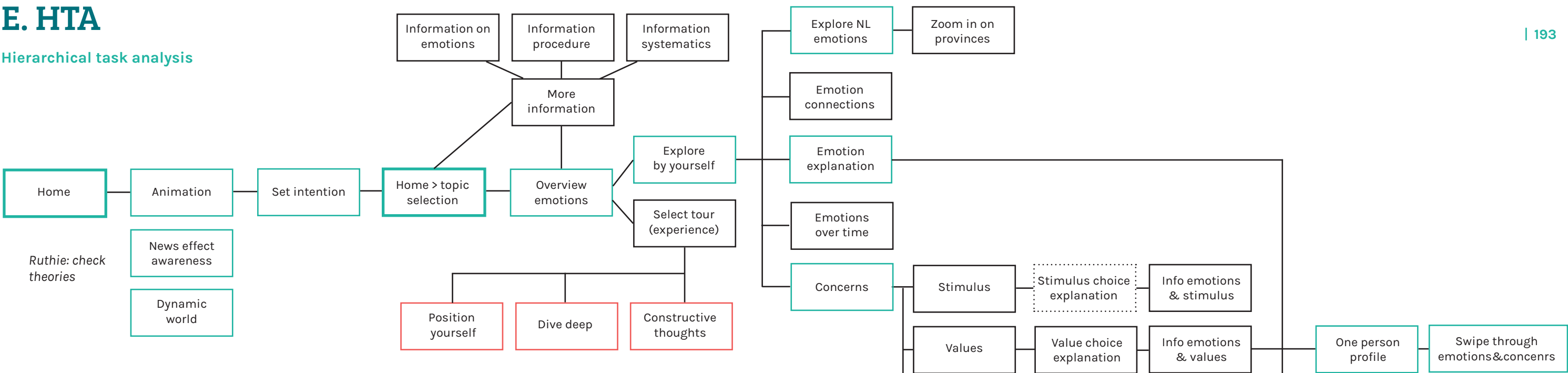
- A. Dat het een beetje overtrokken wordt. Nederland loopt voorop. Dit gaat een hoop geld kosten, is dat allemaal wel nodig? Is het wel nodig hier zo extreem wat aan te doen en mensen op kosten te jagen.
- B. Dat de regels helemaal worden afgeschaft
- B. De veiligheid van mensen
- B. Voor hetzelfde geld hoeven de boeren niets meer te doen, maar alle takken moeten iets doen.
- C. Goed debat met boeren, politiek, milieubeleidsmakers
- D. Is de landbouw in de toekomst nog mogelijk
- E. Dat ze nog vaker gaan protesteren als het niet wordt opgelost
- F. Mensen / groepen die zich niet begrepen voelen
- F. Groepen die zich afzonderen van de rest door ‘in hokjes denken’

Quotes hoop voor de toekomst

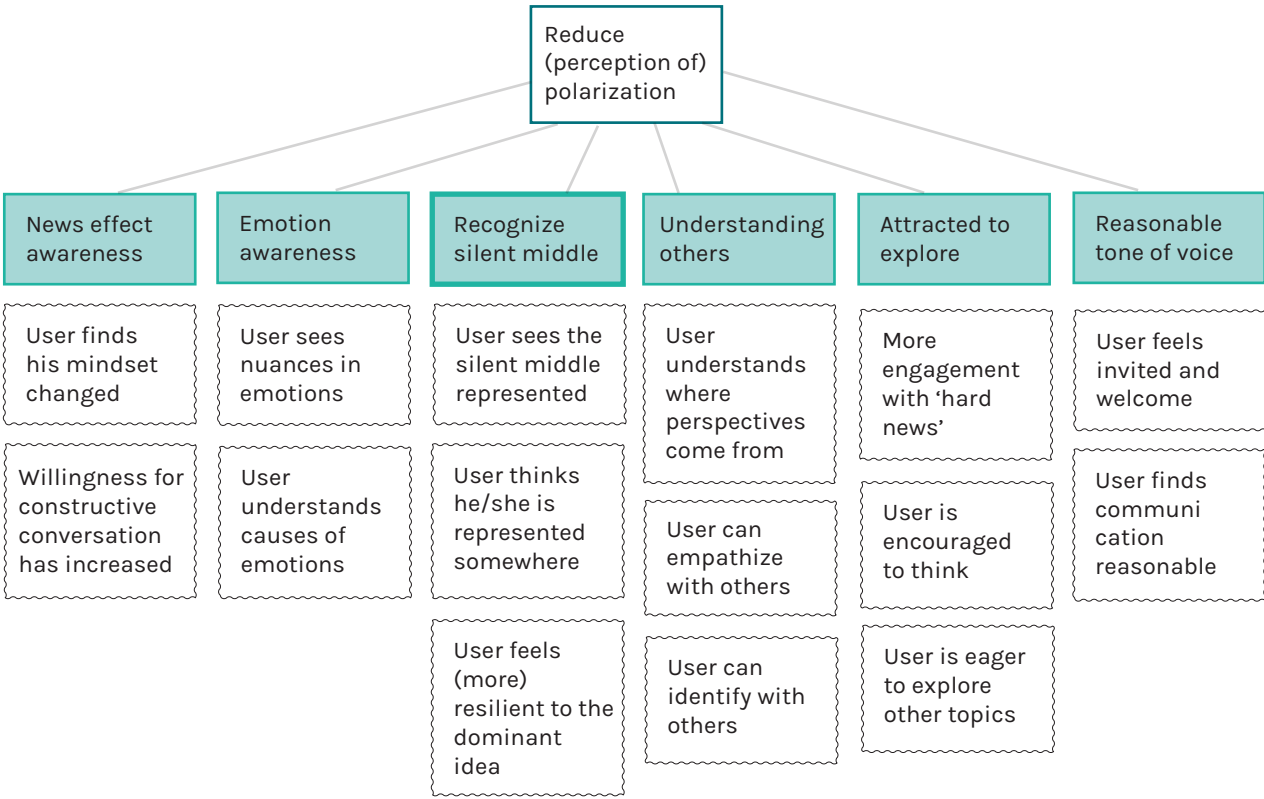
- A. Dat het een mix wordt, dat iedereen hierin aan mee doet. Boeren moeten ook mee helpen, maar worden wel een beetje in het verdomhoekje worden gedouwd. Het zijn wel vervuilers, maar we moeten toch eten. Dan moeten ze producten maken die minder vervuilen.
- B. Dat er op een goede manier een tussenweg wordt gevonden
- C. Zorgen voor boeren en tuinders, zij zijn belangrijk voor onze economie
- C. Mindervleesconsumptie, betere dieromstandigheden, terugdringen antibiotica
- D. Protest: dat mensen hun stem laten horen
- E. Dat het probleem wordt opgelost en iedereen tevreden is met de oplossing
- F. Een nieuw systeem/nieuwe manier van werken ontwikkelen

E. HTA

Hierarchical task analysis



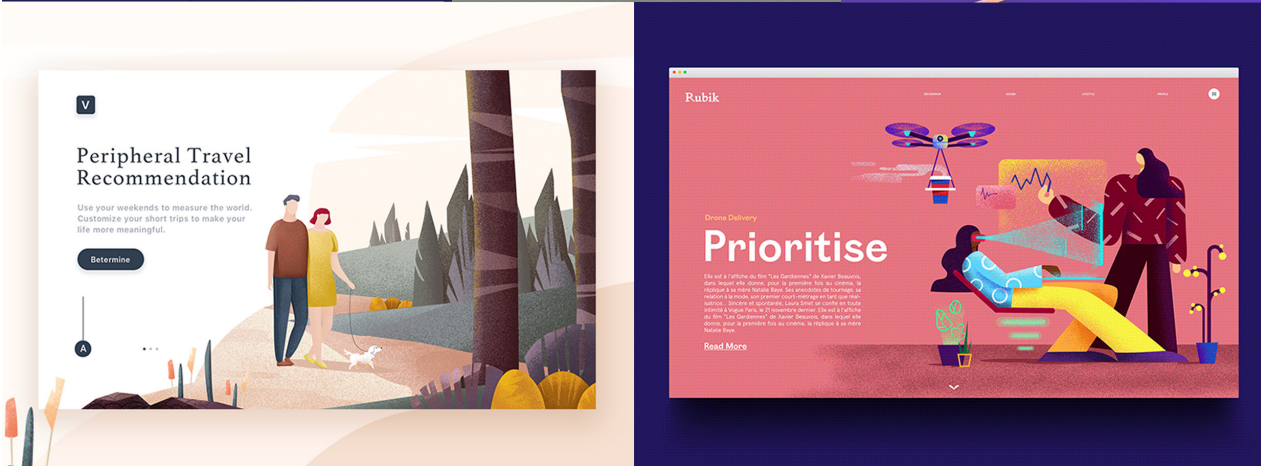
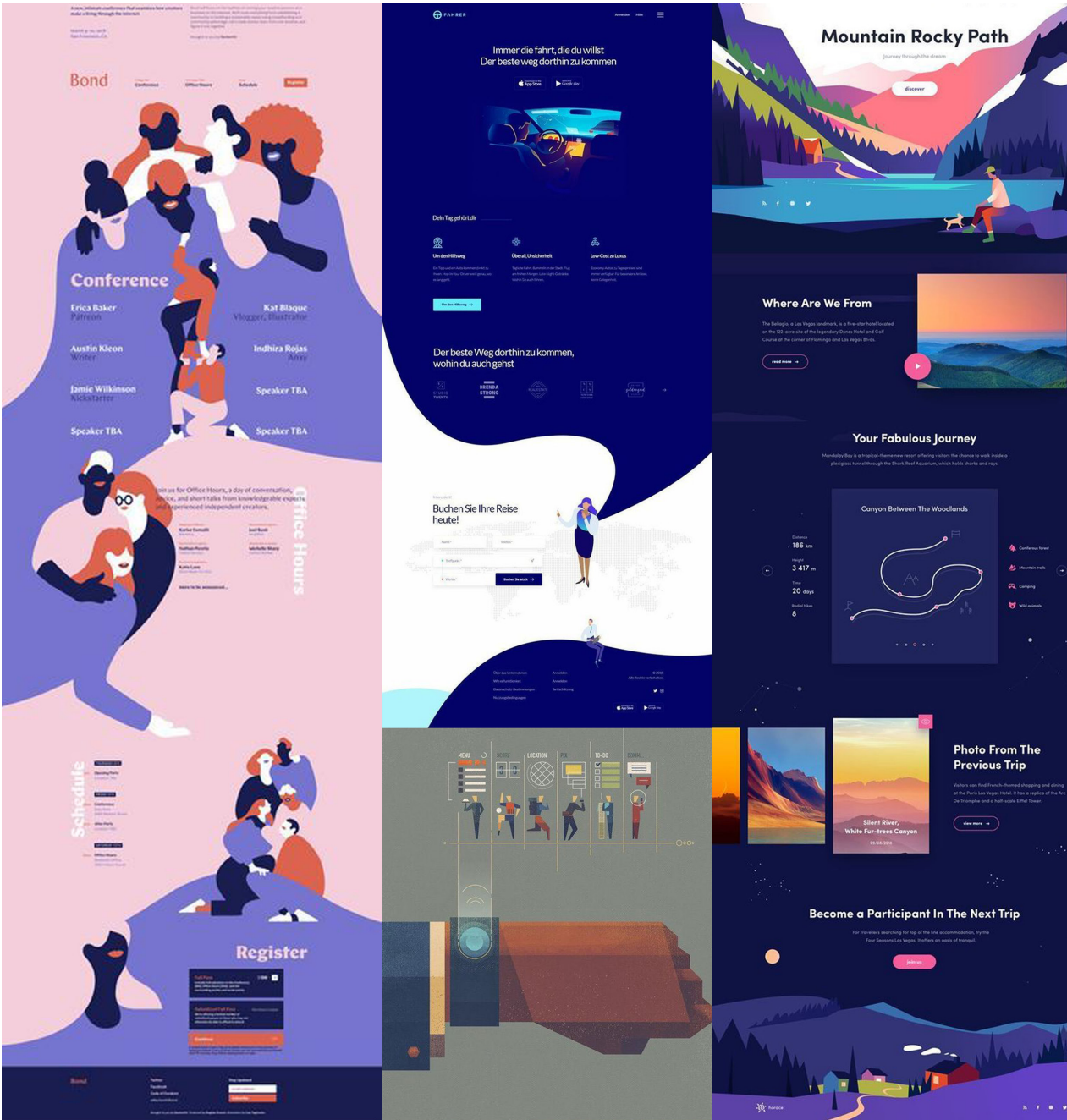
F. Design goal deconstruction



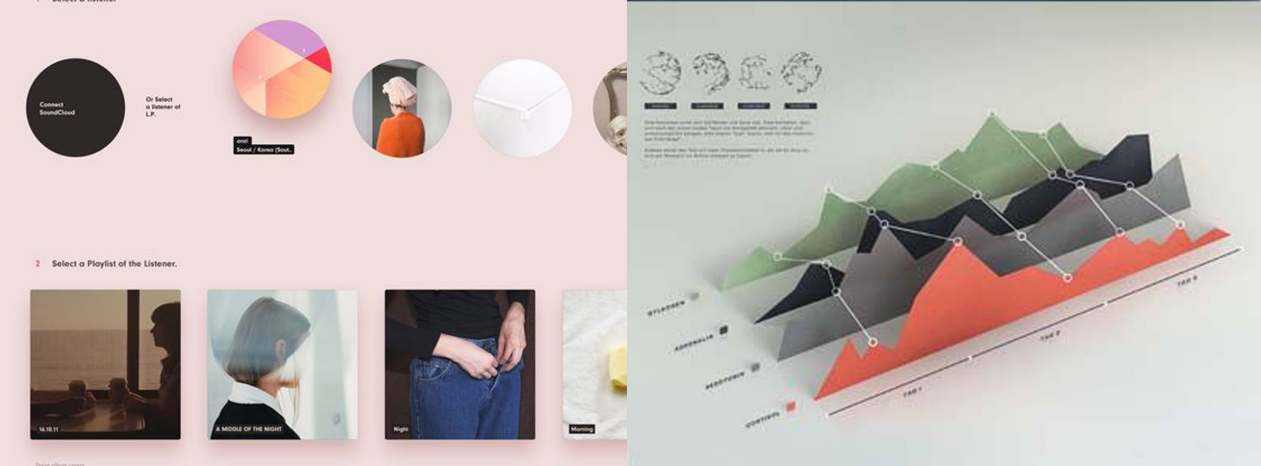
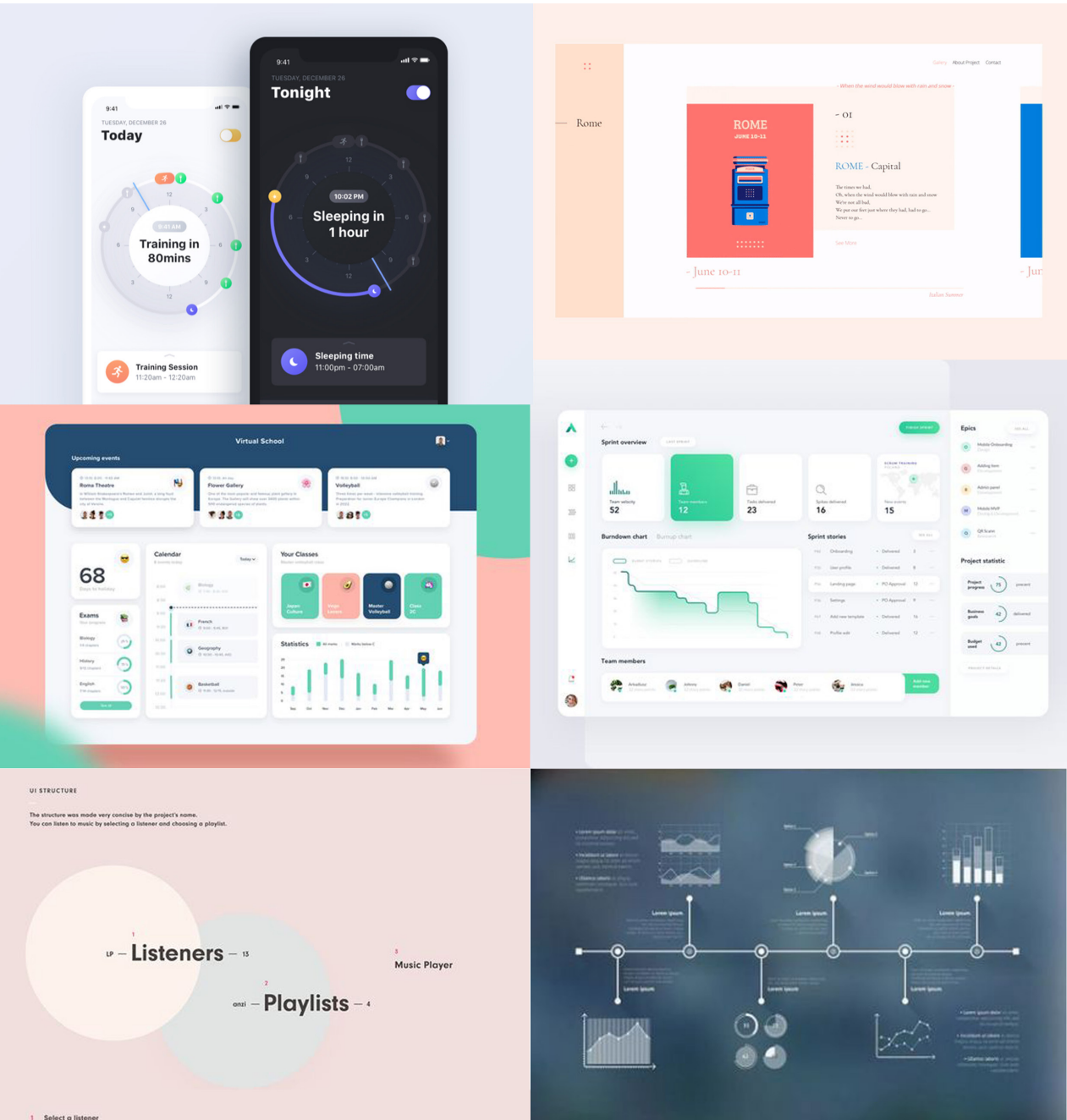
- Features**
- *Menu & navigation balk
 - *Navigation buttons (back, forth, select)
 - *Single person profile
 - *Benchmark ideas
 - *Save comments
 - *Article sources
 - *Emotions over time
 - *Disclaimer methology

G. Mood boards visual layout

DYNAMIC | EXPLORATIVE | SURPRISING



STRUCTURED | TRUSTWORTHY | INTUITIVE | EASY



H. Set-up validation

Evaluatie gebruikers

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Benodigheden: Laptop + internet; survey & platform open, artikel op papier + evaluatie formulier platform

Concept onderzoeksvraag 1: vermindering perceptie polarisatie?

- Verscheidenheid & nuance van perspectieven
- Begrip voor belangen van anderen

Usability onderzoeksvraag 2: wat is de potentie dat mensen de survey en platform zullen gebruiken?

- Vraag: 'onder welke voorwaarde zou je dit gebruiken?' (user)
- Als dit volgende maand geïmplementeerd wordt, ga je dit dan bekijken en gebruiken? (user)

Benaderen: ik ben student ontwerpen aan de TU Delft, en bijna klaar met mijn afstudeerproject. De laatste stap is mijn eindontwerp te testen met mogelijke gebruikers. Heeft u 20-30 minuten?

Introductie: het project gaat erover dat we op het nieuws vooral de meest extreme meningen zien, waardoor het soms lijkt alsof we over elk onderwerp in twee kampen verdeeld zijn. Terwijl het 'stille midden', de meerderheid van Nederland, niet te zien is. Ik heb iets ontworpen dat juist vele verschillende meningen laat zien.

*ik ga delen fotograferen of filmen, ben je daarmee akkoord?

*elk antwoord dat je geeft is goed

Deel 1: korte vragen: Lees/bekijk je weleens nieuws? Wanneer, hoe vaak, hoe en welke organisatie?

Deel 2. Perspectieven Nieuws bekijken

Ik heb een platform ontworpen, waarop je door onze emoties en onderliggende belangen kan kijken. Deze wil ik graag met je doornemen. Zou je, terwijl je het bekijkt, kunnen noemen wat je nieuwsgierig maakt of misschien niet begrijpt? Daarna aansturen op: tour - onderwerpen - specifiek onderwerp - mijn perspectief. Daarna: evaluatieformulier (questionnaire)

Deel 3. Artikel lezen: invullen survey.

Ik wil je nu vragen om dit artikel te lezen en de survey in te vullen. Daarna: questionnaire deel 2.

*Tijd bijhouden + filmen

Expert and media interviews

Onderzoeksvraag media:

Hoe zouden en kunnen media dit willen gebruiken, en onder welke voorwaarden?

Onderzoeksvraag experts:

Wat is de potentie van dit ontwerp om de perceptie van polarisatie te verminderen?

Focuspunten

Wenselijkheid

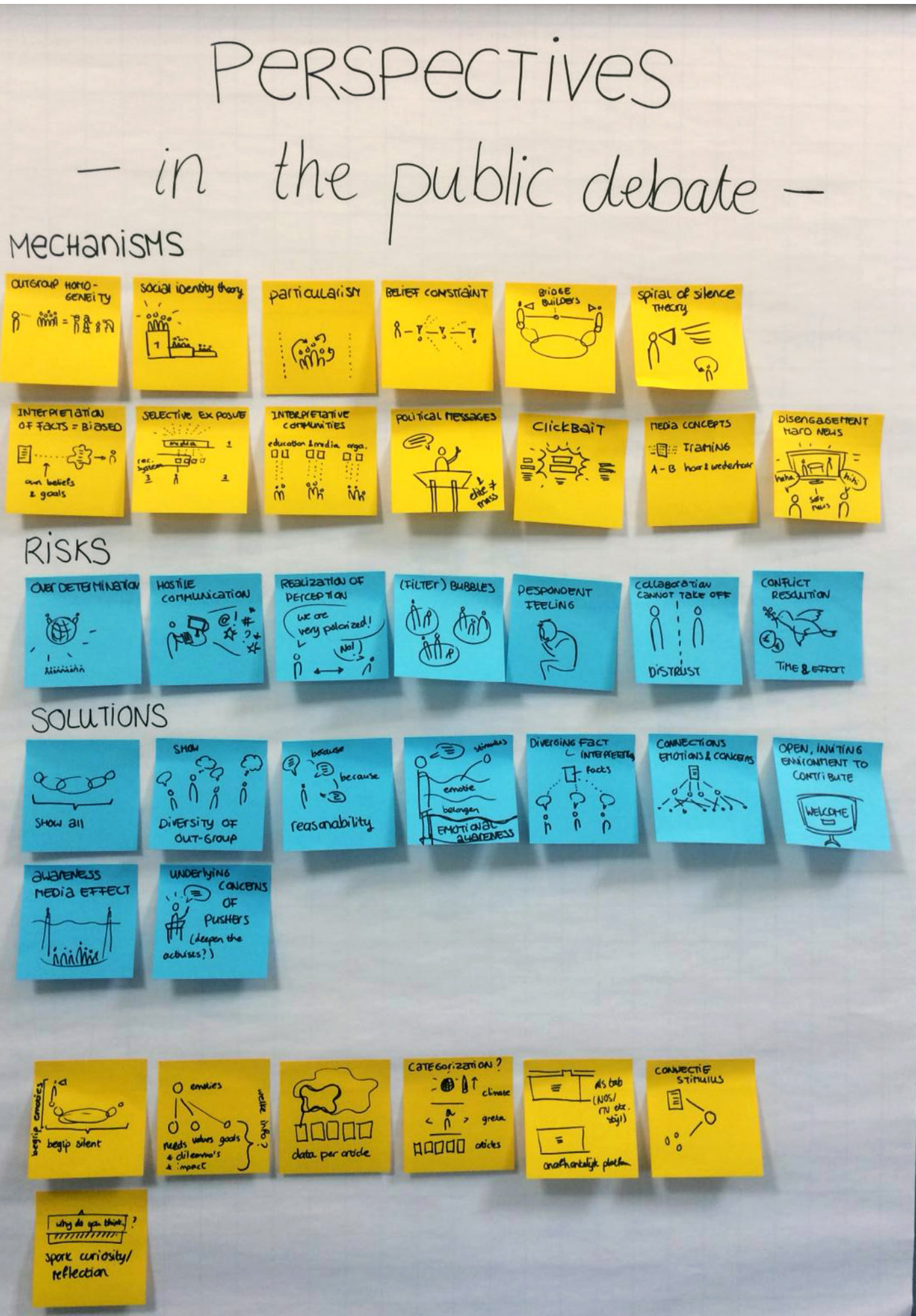
- Onder welke voorwaarden zouden jullie/zou dit gebruikt kunnen worden?
 - > voor waarden specifiek voor survey en specifiek voor platform
- Wat kan er aangepast of verbeterd worden om deze kans te vergroten?
- Op welke manier is het concept van toegevoegde waarde? Wat zou er veranderd of verbeterd kunnen worden voor maximale waarde?
- Waarvoor zou het concept ingezet kunnen worden? Wat zou je zelf met de data willen doen? Denk je dat het lezers kan helpen, hoe?

Haalbaarheid

- Financieel, maakbaarheid > hoe realistisch is dit? Kan dit bij jullie gemaakt worden?
- Communicatie naar gebruikers
- Mogelijkheid 'tab op website' en integratie social media
- Toegevoegde waarde media industrie
- Lange termijn mogelijkheden

Levensvatbaarheid

- Welke onderwerpen precies; stel dat je hem nu in zou zetten.
- Wat zouden de eerste stappen zijn? Kans dat je dit in een paar maanden/jaar/jaren zou gebruiken?
- Hoe zou je dit willen pilot testen?
- Andere mogelijkheden/spin-offs?
- Het uitnodigen/benaderen van mensen. In hoeverre lezen mensen stukken? Link in de krant?
- Meetbaarheid van succes



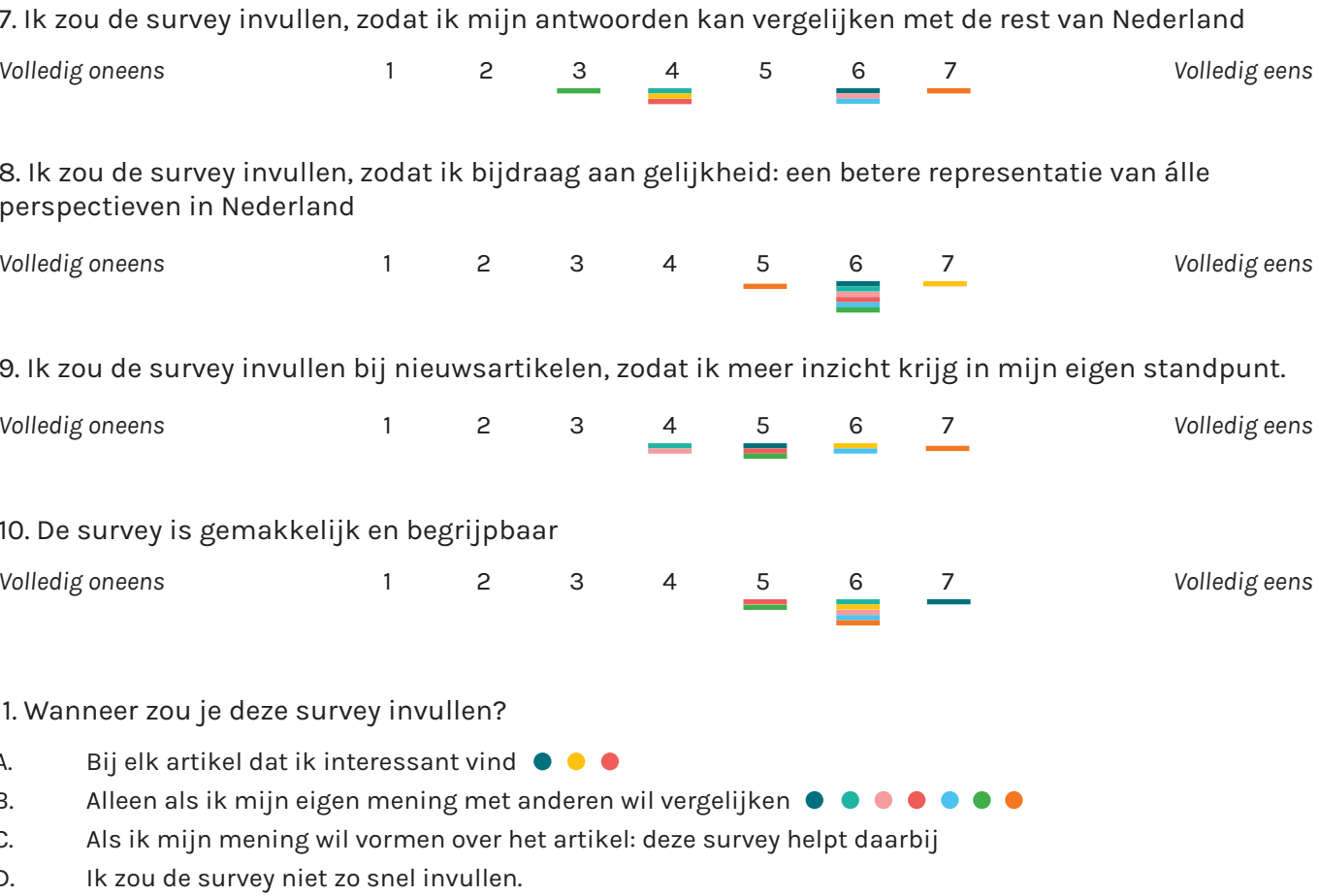
I. Questionnaire results

Statements about the platform



- Participants:**
- 1. Woman | WO | 26
 - 2. Man | WO | 69
 - 3. Man | MBO | 18
 - 4. Woman | HBO | 21
 - 5. Woman | WO | 38
 - 6. Woman | MBO | 50
 - 7. Man | WO | 32
 - 8. Woman | HBO | 25

Statements about the survey



Ik ben vooral benieuwd naar de perspectieven van mensen bij deze onderwerpen:

- 1. coronavirus, brexit (vanuit Engels perspectief)
- 2. klimaatdiscussie, duurzaamheid
- 3. Alle onderwerpen die trending zijn
- 4. Zwarte Piet, LHBTI community, coronavirus, feminisme, immigranten/vluchtelingen, klimaat
- 5. waarom polariseert het zo, wat vormt perspectief als iets als corona
- 6. coronavirus
- 7. klimaat, educatie, ict & technologie, seniorenparticipatie
- 8. Vluchtelingen, Zwarte Piet, corona (eigenlijk alle onderwerpen)

J. Database of concerns

Emotion description in Dutch:

Verdriet betekent: het gevoel wanneer je iets bent verloren dat belangrijk voor je was, en je gelooft dat dit niet meer terugkomt.	Bewondering betekent: het gevoel wanneer je opkijkt tegen iemand met excellente vaardigheden of indrukwekkende prestaties	Verlangen betekent: het gevoel dat je je voorbereid op dat iets voordelig voor je zal uitpakken zodra je het gekregen of geconsumeerd hebt.	Trots betekent: het gevoel wanneer je iets bezit (of hebt bereikt) dat je verwachtingen overtreft of dat anderen bewonderen.
Tevredenheid betekent: het gevoel wanneer iets voldoet aan je verwachtingen of deze overtreft.	Minachting betekent: het gevoel wanneer iemand in jouw ogen minderwaardig is, je gelooft dat de ander een negatieve karaktereigenschap heeft of iets hebben gedaan dat afkeurenswaardig is	Hoop betekent: het gevoel dat je gelooft (maar niet zeker bent) dat iets goeds of wenselijks zal gebeuren in de toekomst	Fascinatie betekent: het gevoel wanneer je iets nieuws en interessants tegen het lijf loopt dat je nog niet direct begrijpt
Schaamte betekent: het gevoel wanneer iemand iets negatiefs over je weet. Je gelooft dat dit waar is waardoor je je ook slecht over jezelf voelt.	Angst betekent: het gevoel wanneer iets je kwaad kan doen of iemand waar je om geeft, en je weet niet zeker of je er iets aan kan doen.	Blijdschap betekent: het gevoel wanneer je iets goed overkomt. Je vervult een behoefte, bereikt iets of boekt vooruitgang om een doel te bereiken.	Ontevreden betekent: het gevoel wanneer iets niet naar jouw verwachtingen is. Je gelooft dat de uitkomst/situatie nog niet vast staat en dat deze veranderd moet worden zodat hij aan je verwachtingen voldoet.
Walging betekent: het gevoel wanneer je iets weerzinwekkend vind en contact wilt vermijden	Verveling betekent: het gevoel dat je krijgt wanneer er niets interessants is om je mee bezig te houden en je geen motivatie hebt om daar iets aan te doen.		

Mix needs & life goals gebruikt in survey voor validatie:

- 1. Plezier of gemak kan ervaren
- 2. Ergens bij kan horen
- 3. Warme/vertrouwde relaties kan hebben of behouden
- 4. Fit en gezond kan zijn
- 5. persoonlijk kan ontwikkelen
- 6. Zich geld of spullen kan veroorloven
- 7. Impact kan maken
- 8. Verbetering op het gebied van werk kan ervaren
- 9. Veiligheid en orde kan ervaren
- 10. Motivatie of stimulans kan krijgen
- 11. iets (op eigen manier) kan doen met de juiste vaardigheden
- 12. Erkenning kan krijgen
- 13. Betekenisvol of spiritueel kan leven

Waarden gebruikt in survey voor validatie:
(Gebaseerd op character strengths, Desmet & Fokkinga, 2018)

- Creativiteit
- Nieuwsgierigheid
- Ruimdenkend zijn (open-minded)
- Leergierig
- Perspectief hebben (relativeren?)
- Lef
- Doorzettingsvermogen
- Eerlijkheid
- Vitaliteit
- Vriendelijkheid
- Empathie en begrip
- Teamwork
- Gelijkheid
- Leiderschap
- Waardering schoonheid
- Dankbaarheid
- Hoop
- Humor
- Spiritualiteit
- Vergevingsgezind zijn
- Bescheidenheid
- Discipline
- Voorzichtigheid

Human fundamental needs translated to Dutch
(Desmet & Fokkinga, 2018)

Behoeften los		Subbehoeften
Competence	Competentie Vaardigheden	Prestatie Uitdaging & competitie Controle over je omgeving Vaardigheden verbeteren
Autonomy	Autonomie Zelf kunnen kiezen/ lets op jouw manier doen	Beslissingsvrijheid Individualiteit Ruimte voor experimenteren Creatieve uiting
Purpose	(Betekenisvol) doel	Richting & ambitie Betekenisvolle activiteiten Persoonlijke groei Spiritualiteit
Belonging	Ergens bij horen	Sociale steun Verbondenheid met een groep Relatie met traditie en cultuur Overeenstemming
Relations	Relaties	Aan iemand hechten Zorgen voor elkaar Intimiteit en vertrouwen Emotionele steun
Impact	Impact	Invloed hebben Kunnen bijdragen iets opbouwen Nalatenschap
Acknowledgement	Erkenning	Waardering Aandacht Respect Status
Security	Veiligheid	Fysieke veiligheid Financiële veiligheid Stabiliteit Vertrouwde omgeving/middelen
Order	Orde / structuur	Structuur en overzicht Efficiëntie iets bewaren of behouden iets af kunnen ronden
Morality	Het goede kunnen doen	Moreel bewustzijn Vervullen van verantwoordelijkheden Waarde zien in de wereld Doorgeven van waarden
Fitness	Fit en gezond zijn	Voeding Fysieke comfort Energie Persoonlijke hygiene
Stimulation	Stimulans/motivatatie	Lichamelijke sensaties Schoonheid Variatie en nieuwe dingen Plezier
Ease	Gemak	Kalmte Handig & gemakkelijk Mentaal comfort Eenvoud

K. Set-up expert and media interviews

Baldwin van Gorp

- U bent coördinator van het instituut voor de media opleidingen en professor journalistiek. Met welke onderwerpen in uw vakgebied verdiept u zich met name?
- Zie bijv. spreken op event over polarisatie, spreken over framing van nieuws.
- Even een kleine achtergrond: hoe wordt journalistiek eigenlijk geproduceerd? Wie bepaalt de onderwerpen, waar ligt de focus, is er contact tussen media organisaties?
- U onderzoekt frames in journalistiek. Hoe kun je deze ontdekken, en hoe kun je ze zelf vormen?
- Wat is counterframing precies?

- Uit onderzoek blijkt dat men denkt dat tegenstellingen in de maatschappij toenemen. Welke invloed heeft media op polarisatie? Verschil media/traditioneel?
- Waarom wordt er juist nu veel gesproken over polarisatie: het is toch altijd zo geweest dat er nooit maar één werkelijkheid zal bestaand door persoonlijke interpretatie?
- Denkt u ook dat het gaat om perceptie van polarisatie?

- De taak van journalisten is volgens u zoveel mogelijk verschillende frames aan te bieden: Verkoopt dit wel? En in welke vorm (verschillende frames in één artikel of een nieuwsbron)?
- In een artikel zegt u: journalisten checken vaak meningen en veronderstellingen bij één bron of expert, bijv. door beperkte tijd voor onderzoek.
- Is er een verschil in frames van experts, en frames van burgers? Wat is het belang van deze twee?

- Wat is de rol van nieuwsmedia in het algemeen? Welke realiteit moeten zij bieden? Zo neutraal of feitelijk mogelijk, of mag er emotie in gemoeid zijn?
- Wat doen media nu om mensen te helpen zich in te leven in anderen?
- Wat voor soort framing van nieuws kan mensen helpen in meer empathie hebben voor elkaar? En hoe zorg je dat mensen zich gerepresenteerd voelen? Is dat belangrijk?

- Mijn aanname is dat media ook een rol speelt in democratie: het feit dat iedereen zich gepresenteerd, gehoord en gelijkwaardig voelt. Kunt u zich daarin vinden?
- Ik lees in een artikel: journalisten checken vaak meningen en veronderstellingen bij één betrouwbare bron, waarbij journalisten vaak tevreden zijn met de visie van één expert: hoe denkt u dat dit verander of opgelost kan worden

Media 1

1. Speel het thema polarisatie?
2. Hoe gaan jullie om met tegenstellingen, hoe worden deze gerepresenteerd?
 - a. Wanneer/in hoeverre tonen jullie ‘extreme’ standpunten?
 - b. Bewust op zoek naar gematigde standpunten? Hoe vinden jullie ‘het midden’, wat doet RTV Rijnmond om burgers zoveel mogelijk te representeren? Kanalen reacties?
 - c. Oppikken reacties (twitter?) en verhalen (persbureau’s? alarmeringen?)
 3. Balans in onderwerpen: wie maakt de keuzes? Kiezen jullie invalshoeken?
 4. Welke recente onderwerpen gaan mensen echt aan? Wat speelt er nu?
 5. Regels tbv. emotionaleiteit in stukken?
 6. Omgang met negativiteit nieuws, zorgen van mensen
 7. Uitdagingen van redactie in:
 - a. Nieuwskeuze. Wanneer komt iets in het nieuws?
 - b. Uitdagingen in balans vinden in stukken?
 - c. Uitdagingen in mensen representeren?
 - d. ‘Journalistiek gevoel’; wanneer weet je of het juist gepresenteerd wordt?
 8. Waar heeft RTV Rijnmond baat bij, met het oog op polarisatie en nuance?

Rens Vliegenthart

- Gevonden factoren media op polarisatie: selective exposure (selectieve blootstelling), persuasion (verleiding) en disengagement (losmaken van onderwerpen) door meer tv en soft news and afwijzen van hard news. Meerdere factoren vanuit media die (publieke) opinie beïnvloeden?
- Wat ik nu zie: polarisatie, of verschillen in meningen zijn niet erg sterk, maar de perceptie van de tegenstelling zijn er wel. Door het tonen van extremen. In hoeverre denk je dat dat inderdaad gebeurd door media? Hoe zit dat met nieuws media?

- Ik heb een aantal artikelen van je gescand of gelezen over het effect van nieuws frames. Zijn nieuwsorganisaties zich bewust van deze frames? Zouden ze er baat bij hebben of is het nodig dat media bewust is van frames? Hoeveel frames heb je eigenlijk?
 - o Elk frame blijkt verschillende emotionele patronen te bewerkstelligen: door frame valence en frame type. Zijn er nog meer factoren dan deze? Invloed van individu zelf, zijn er ook andere invloeden?
 - o Stel men ziet veel meer perspectieven bij verhalen, zal dat mensen hun emoties ook beïnvloeden? Wat zorgt voor nuance of voor constructieve gedachten? Bijdrage emotie regulatie. Hebben mensen daar behoefte aan (waarde voor mensen om hun emoties te kunnen uiten)? Zou het kennen van andermans emoties ook jouw eigen emoties kunnen beïnvloeden? Zou je polarisatie kunnen beïnvloeden door in te spelen op emoties of emotie regulatie?

- Wat denkt u dat voor media vooral interessant is m.b.t. emoties: willen zij hun berichtgeving daarop aanpassen of juist laten zien welke emoties er zijn?
- Welke onderwerpen of gebeurtenissen hebben een hoog emotioneel level in zichzelf? Zorgen voor vurige debatten?
- Valkuilen van de media m.b.t. berichtgeving? Hoe denk je dat het nieuws geframed zou moeten worden? Waar heeft de media baat bij voor verminderen van hun invloed op polarisatie? Waar heeft de lezer/kijker baat bij om zich te kunnen inleven en perceptie tegenstellingen verminderen
- Meeste emotionele reactie door emancipation & multicultural frames > wordt gebruikt o.a. door anti-immigrant partijen.
- Wat als er een tool is die emoties en behoeften meet?
- o Wat moeten journalisten weten voor een interessant/ kwalitatief verhaal?

Ruthie pliskin

- Your research is about emotions and emotion regulation. What are factors causing emotions by conflict or polarization? What are stimuli, what are common concerns? What are the strongest? When do these emotions come to expression? At what situations?
 - o Psychical and psychological consequences of certain perceived realities shape emotional experiences of individuals living within them. Do these perceived reality affect people's ability to engage with an other group?
 - o Could media play a role in converging people's interpretation of reality a bit more?
 - o Intractable intergroup conflict: resistant to peaceful resolution: why?

- How are emotions changeable? Are there strategies to depolarize? Change perception of conflict.
- Expertise in how group members assert and rationalize a sense of supiority: how to decrease this? How to could we create a common ground? How to overcome barriers in conflict resolution?
- A rigidity in opinions, caused by belief constraint, ideological consistency, attitude polarization, motivated reasoning. How does this influence emotions? Always same type of emotions?

- From literature we can find polarization is not that strong, but the perception is there. Do you know what the current state of polarization or conflict is in the Netherlands? What are the factors that cause us-them thinking?
- I was looking into peace-making strategies, for example how to unfreeze people. Do you think showing perspectives of society could help in unfreezing people and how? What would they need to know or see from others?
- Are people in need of emotion regulation (reflective tool) or by empathizing with others better? Do we need to acknowledge people's worries and hope?

Ron van Wonderen

- a. Wat verstaat u onder polarisatie?
- b. Is er daadwerkelijk polarisatie in de samenleving, of voornamelijk de ervaring van polarisatie?
- c. Oorzaken en triggerfactoren.
- d. Hoe ziet u de invloed van media op polarisatie? Verschil sociale/traditionele media? De rol van journalistiek hierin.

- e.Waarom is polarisatie een probleem? Voor wie? Of: waar liggen de grootste problemen?
- f. U kijkt voornamelijk naar polarisatie op buurtniveau en radicalisering. In hoeverre denkt u dat media invloed hebben op polarisatie op buurtniveau?
- g. Heeft u een idee hoe mensen hun mening over sociale onderwerpen vormen?
- h. In het rapport ‘instrument – van polarisatie naar verbinding’ beschrijft u drie verschijningsvormen, denken, voelen en gedrag. Rol van emoties of invloed van emoties in polarisatie?

Media 2

1. Framework polarisatie
 - a. Kijk op polarisatie vanuit een media perspectief? Bekijk illustratie - invloed van media op polarisatie
 - b. Omgang met tegenstellingen (wij-zij) en perspectieven (meningen, standpunten opinies) in de samenleving, hoe deze meegenomen en weergegeven worden.
 - c. Hoe wordt er in de werkwijze van journalisten of de keuzes van de eindredactie rekening mee gehouden? Wanneer wordt er over polarisatie, framing of invalshoek gesproken?
 - d. Verschil items krant/journaal/website/app m.b.t. werkwijze
 - e. Grootste uitdagingen in omgang (perceptie op) polarisatie

2. Besluitproces media
 - a. Bespreken visual
 - i. Hoe werkt het eindredactie team? Welke teams heb je? Meer stappen in dit proces? Welke?
 - ii. Keuze onderwerpen (actief/passief), keuze headlines
 - iii. Is er altijd een bepaalde insteek/perspectief van een artikel?
 - iv. Hoe wordt een artikel gecheckt, aangepast?
 - v. Waar liggen de moeilijkheden, valkuilen voor het team en de journalist?

3. PrEmo
 - a. PrEmo + eerste ideeën: inzicht emoties > verlangens, belangen > tonen gemeenschappelijke grond
 - b. Kans media
 - i. Sneller tot diepere laag & nuance journalistiek
 - ii. Ingang tot ‘gematigde midden’
 - iii. Voor lezers: betere representatie & inlevingsvermogen
 - iv. Sneller inzicht in maatschappelijke verschillen en tegenstellingen en onderliggende belangen, relevant voor besluitvorming

- a. Als oplossing voor het tegengaan van polarisatie schrijft u ‘de weerbaarheid vergroten van het ‘veelstemmige midden’. Hoe ziet u dat voor zich?
- b. Handreiking ‘omgaan met maatschappelijke spanningen’: verschijningsvormen, risicofactoren, signalen en gestructureerde aanpak. Waarin sleutel: publieke familiariteit; op kleine schaal aanpakken. Hoe zit dat met de media?
- c. Narratieven van burgers over (toenemende) culturele en etnische diversiteit in de samenleving: zorgen die leven.
- i. Zouden deze narratieven ook gebruikt kunnen worden, of interessant zijn in het ontwerp voor de media waarin perspectieven worden weergegeven?
- d. In hoeverre denkt u dat de media meer empathie tussen mensen zou kunnen creëren? Of het ‘stille midden’ een stem kan geven.
3. Invloed van politiek op polarisatie & de kwaliteit van democratie
4. Moeten interventies gericht worden op specifieke doelgroepen.



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March 2020

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