

Neutrality, perspective and framing: a content analysis of television news in international broadcasting in Spanish

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Outline

1. Power and international broadcasting
2. Global information flows
3. Research questions
4. Methods and sampling
5. Results
6. Discussion

IBC | Definitions

«the elegant term for a complex combination of state-sponsored news, information, and entertainment directed at a population outside the sponsoring state's boundaries» (Price 2003, p. 53)

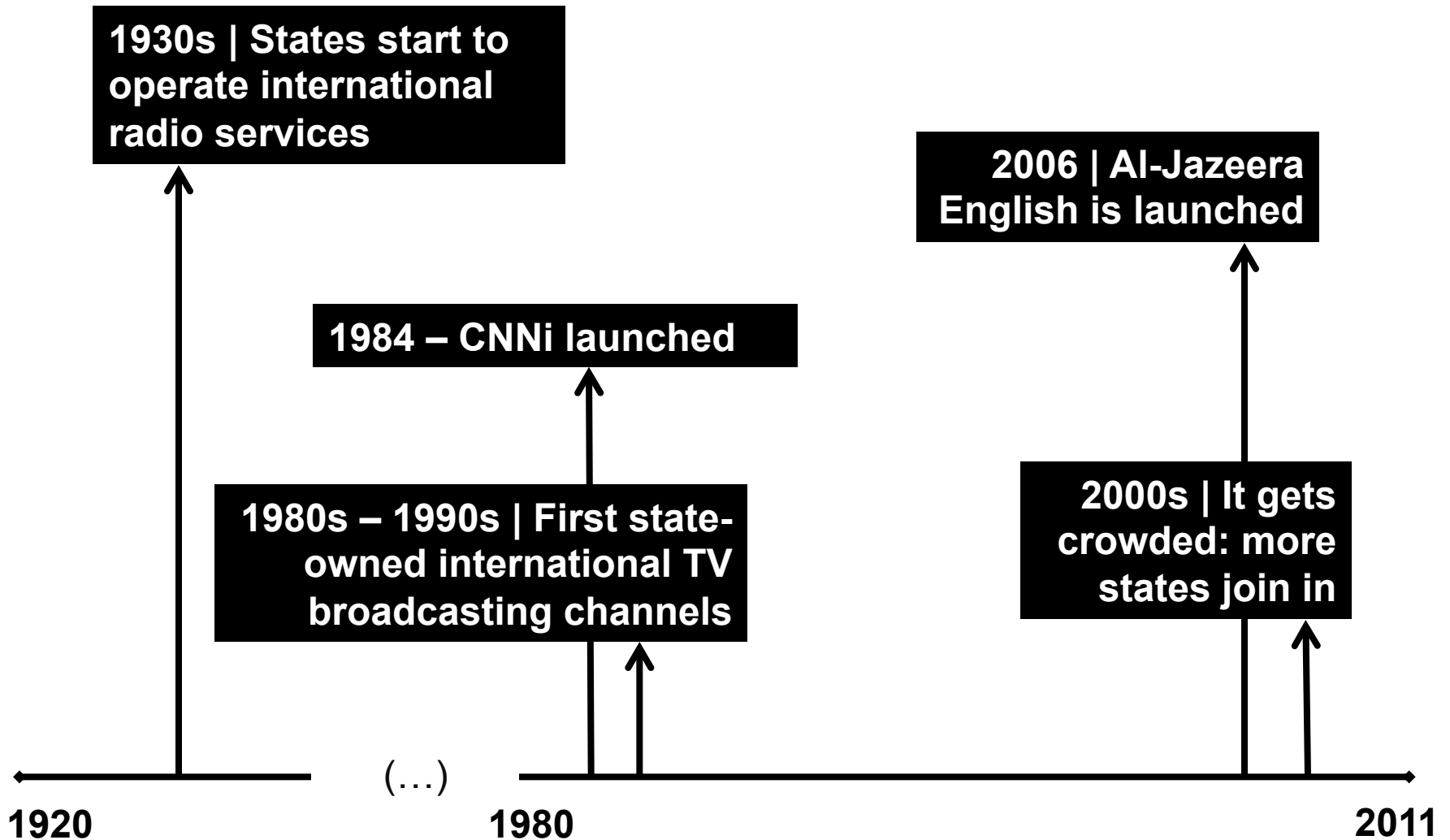
«an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by using the technologies of radio, television, and the Internet to engage with foreign publics» (Cull 2008, p. 34)

IBC | Formula & Goals

- As a public diplomacy tool, IBC serves a double purpose:
 - Generate (national) appeal
 - Shape opinions and perceptions

$$\text{IBC} = \text{Resources} \times \text{Credibility} \times \text{Audience}$$

IBC | Evolution



Information flows

- There has been a monopoly of Anglo-American news narratives and discourses (BBC, CNN...). Alternatives are born often in opposition to them.

“RT tells the stories of anonymous heroes of our times to whom others do not listen”
- There is little evidence on how these (if so) counter-hegemonic (Painter, 2008) discourses are crafted.

IBC in Spanish

- Radio broadcasting was largely dominated by the United States, the United Kingdom and Spain.
- The TV sector is a mixture of:
 - Latin American stations (TeleSur, NTN24)
 - North American enterprises (CNN Español)
 - Global actors (CCTV-Español, RT, HispanTV)

The three broadcasters

	CCTV-E	HispanTV	RT Actualidad
First broadcast	2007	2011	2009
Home country	China	Iran	Russia
Channel content	News & entertainment	News & entertainment	News
% current affairs	25%	90%	100%
Availability	Europe, Latin America, Internet	Europe , Latin America, Internet	Europe, Latin America, Internet
Other languages	English, Arabic, French, Russian [Chinese]	English, Arabic	English, Arabic, [Russian]

Research questions

- RQ₁: What are the most often covered countries and topics, and what actors are most often featured on news shows?
- RQ₂: What reporting patterns and journalistic styles are prevalent in the three channels?
- RQ₃: How are the United States and Latin American countries portrayed?

Methods

- Content analysis (quantitative) of news content over a period of 6 months (from April to October 2014)
 - Two randomly constructed weeks
 - One daily news bulletin (30 minutes) from three international broadcasters from 'Global South'
 - CCTV-E
 - HispanTV
 - RT Actualidad
 - News stories as unit of analysis (n = 642)

Intercoder reliability

	Percentage Agreement	Krippendorff's Alpha
Format	94,55%	0,90
Headlines	100%	1,00
Video footage	98,18%	0,66
Soundbites	98,18%	0,96
Soundbite 1	94,55%	0,90
Soundbite 2	98,18%	0,95
Soundbite 3	96,36%	0,89
Stand-up	100%	1,00
Interview	96,36%	**
Who is interviewed?	96,36%	**
Live-cross	100%	1,00
Topic	91,40%	0,90

Intercoder reliability

	Percentage Agreement	Krippendorff's Alpha
1st country	92,73%	0,92
2nd country	80,00%	0,70
Own agenda	93,10%	0,86
Two sides	94,89%	0,90
Interpretation	100%	1,00
US	98,30%	0,94
U.S. Frames	94,80%	0,80
Home country	89,70%	0,81
Latin America	96,60%	0,82
Average	95,44%	0,89



- Three news blocks:
 1. Domestic news
 2. International news
 3. Cultural news



- Format was 'modernized' in early April 2014, but is rather limited in diversity of formats and genres.

- Employs Iranian, Latin American and Spanish journalists. It has a large network of **freelancers**.



- Has distinctively different content from its English and Arabic counterparts.



- Dynamic presentation
 - Camera movements
 - Heavy video-wall use



- Makes uses of web based content and tools and SNS often.
- Anchors are always female, but there are different anchors for different days.

RQ₁ | Topics

Table 1. Main topic of the story by news channel

	CCTV-E	RT	HispanTV
Politics within a state	8.8%	8.7%	20.7%
Foreign affairs/diplomacy	25.4%	21.7%	15.6%
Military or political violence	18.4%	40.2%	23.7%
Economic matters	1.8%	4.3%	6.7%
Social issues	--	7.6%	7.4%
Crime, police, judicial	--	1.1%	1.5%
Culture, literature and similar	26.3%	2.2%	--
Scientific matters	0.9%	3.3%	1.5%
Ecology and the environment	2.6%	1.1%	--
Sports	5.3%	4.3%	16.3%
Human interest stories	0.9%	1.1%	--
Natural disasters and accidents	9.6%	4.3%	6.7%

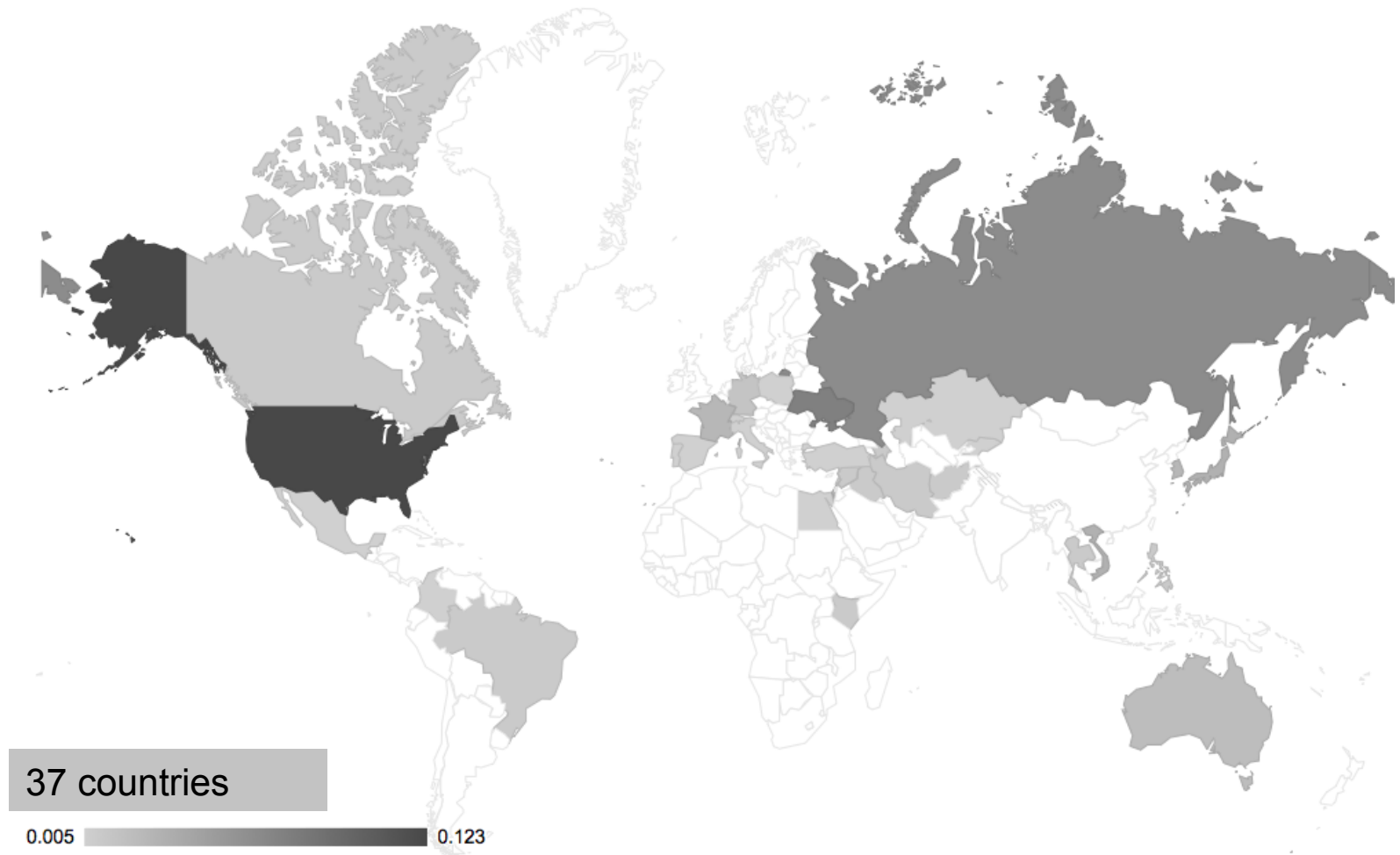
RQ₁ | Countries

Table 2. Frequency of news about selected countries

	CCTV-E	RT	HispanTV
China	31,0%	2,0%	2,5%
United States	12,3%	11,4%	10,5%
Ukraine	7,5%	15,4%	6,3%
Russia	6,4%	15,4%	6,7%
Iran	1,1%	1,3%	6,3%
Japan	3,2%	0,7%	2,1%
Vietnam	3,2%	--	1,3%
Syria	1,1%	4,7%	4,6%
Iraq	1,1%	3,4%	2,5%
Spain	0,5%	3,4%	6,3%
Brazil	1,1%	1,3%	3,8%
Venezuela	--	3,4%	0,4%

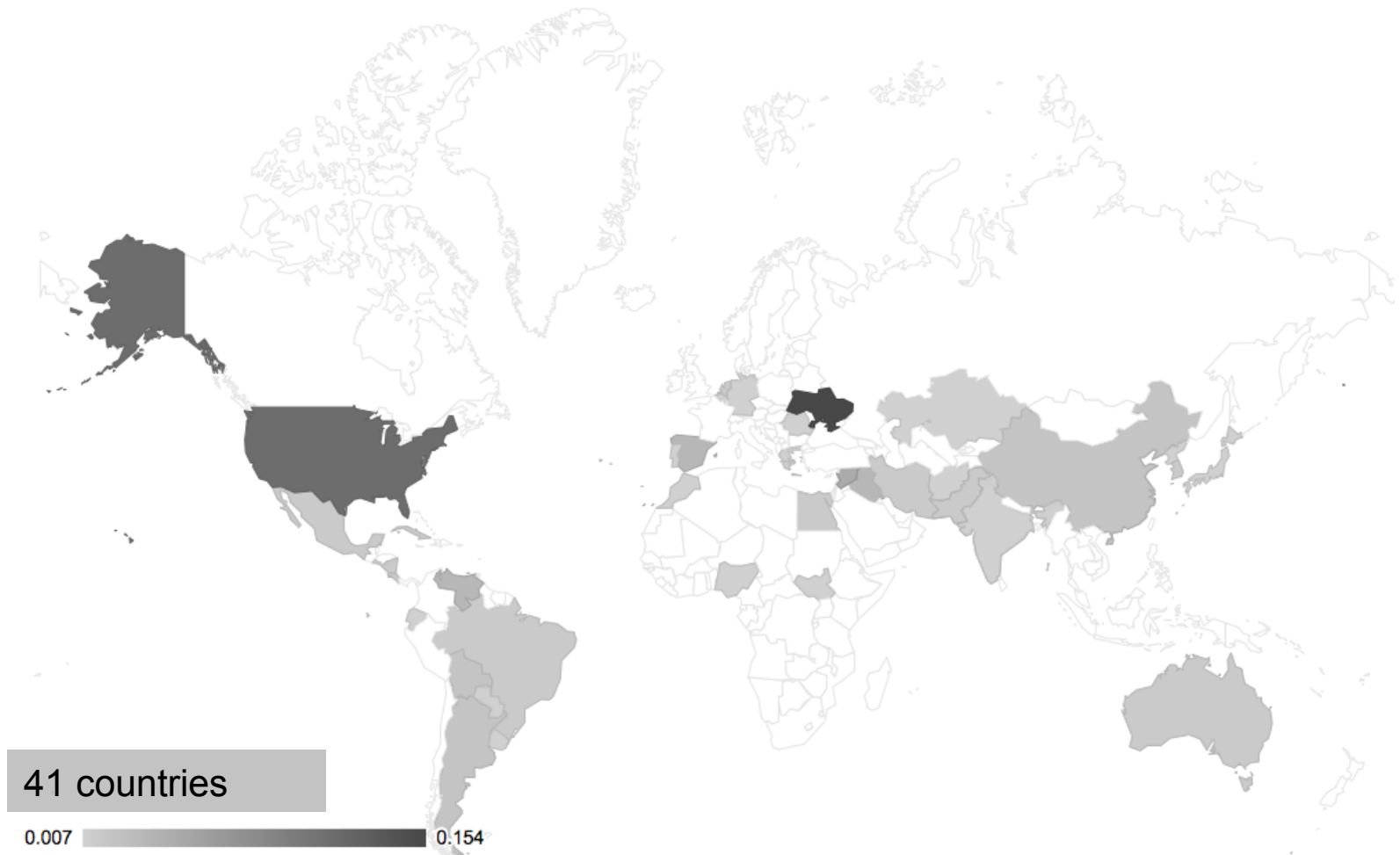
RQ₁ | Countries

Figure 1. Frequency of news about a country on CCTV-E (excluding China)



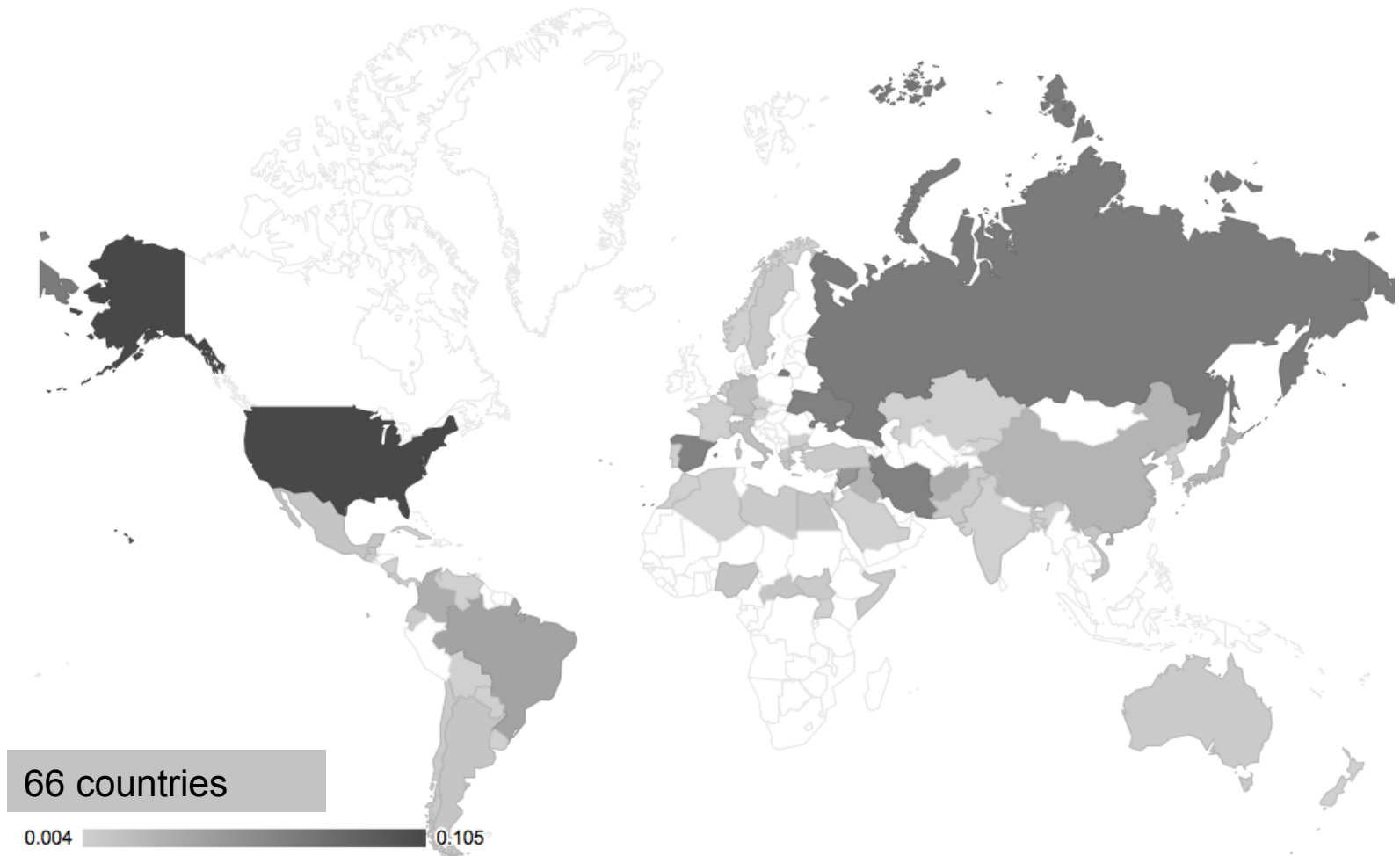
RQ₁ | Countries

Figure 2. Frequency of news about a country on RT (excluding Russia)



RQ₁ | Countries

Figure 3. Frequency of news about a country on HispanTV (including Iran)



RQ₁ | Sources

Table 3. Category of actors for the first three sound bites in a story

	CCTV-E	RT	HispanTV
Institutional sources	47.0%	26.7%	26.3%
Non-governmental actors	2.4%	8.1%	32.9%
Private economic actors	2.4%	--	2.6%
Experts & Analysts	--	18.6%	2.6%
Scholars	--	7.0%	9.2%
Ordinary people	16.9%	30.2%	17.1%
Craftsmen (sportsmen, cooks...)	31.3%	7.0%	2.6%
Journalists	--	2.3%	1.3%
Other	--	--	5.3%

RQ₂ | Visuals and format

Table 4. Variables related to the presentation style

	CCTV-E	RT	HispanTV
What is the format of the story?			
Brief News	26.3%	54.3%	76.3%
Package	84%	15.2%	12.6%
Analysis	--	26.1%	5.2%
Other	--	4.3%	5.9%
Is there a stand-up in the story?			
Yes (in-studio)	--	13.0%	8.1%
Yes (on the ground)	--	20.7%	8.9%
Is there a live-cross in the story?			
Yes	--	1.1%	--

RQ₂ | Reporting style

Table 5. Variables measuring opinion, balance and interpretation

	CCTV-E	RT	HispanTV
Does the story promote an agenda?			
Yes	53.5%	79.3%	48.9%
Are the two sides of the story cited?			
Yes	2.6%	1.1%	1.5%
No	16.7%	39.1%	18.5%
Not applicable	80.7%	59.8%	80.0%
Do journalists interpret the story?			
Yes	10.5%	68.5%	14.8%
No	89.5%	31.5%	85.2%

RQ₃ | United States

Table 6. Coverage of the US: tone of news and framing (selection)

	CCTV-E	RT	HispanTV
How is the U.S. presented in the story?			
Positive light	1.8%	2.2%	0.7%
Neutral light	13.2%	8.7%	11.9%
Negative light	1.8%	23.9%	3.7%
Not mentioned	83.3%	65.2%	83.7%
How is the U.S. framed in the story?			
Police of the world	4.4%	7.6%	--
Political imperialism	0.9%	12.0%	3.7%
Double-standards	--	4.3%	2.2%
Multicultural society	1.8%	--	0.7%
Others	8.8%	9.8%	9.6%

Framing the US

Political imperialism

- US imposes economic sanctions to Russia. Obama has accused Russia of not taking a peaceful route regarding Ukraine (CCTV, 28/04/14).
- Obama: “Our objective [in signing an agreement with the Philippines to promote regional peace] is not to control or contain China. Our objective is to guarantee that international laws and rules are respected, and that includes maritime disputes” (CCTV, 28/04/14).

Double standards

- ‘An expert’: “US criticizes Syria’s decision to go forward with their elections, but they do recognize the coup and spurious government in Ukraine. The West always tries to legitimize their puppet friends, while criticizing those who do not suit them” (RT, 28/04/14)
- “The US punishes the use of bombs in their country, but encourages them in Ukraine”(…) “The US are responsible for the *coup d’état* in Ukraine and want to control the country” (RT 15/05/14)

RQ₃ | Latin America

- Although the 3 channels use Spanish and are said to be targeting Spanish-speaking communities, coverage of Latin America is scarce. Spain features slightly more often.

Table 7. Coverage of Latin America

	CCTV-E	RT	HispanTV
How are LA countries presented in the story?			
Positive light	1.8%	7.6%	3.0%
Neutral light	2.6%	4.3%	11.1%
Negative light	0.9%	4.3%	3.7%
Not mentioned	94.7%	83.7%	82.2%

Final ideas

- IBC comes in different shapes and it would be misleading to assume that it is possible to reduce it all to one single label.
 - Reporting patterns vary and, thus, discourses are crafted differently.
 - All stations are overtly opinionated and feature straight forward agendas.
 - There is considerable difference within channels (inter-program diversity)

Thank you.

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