Content Analysis

#IrelandVotesYes

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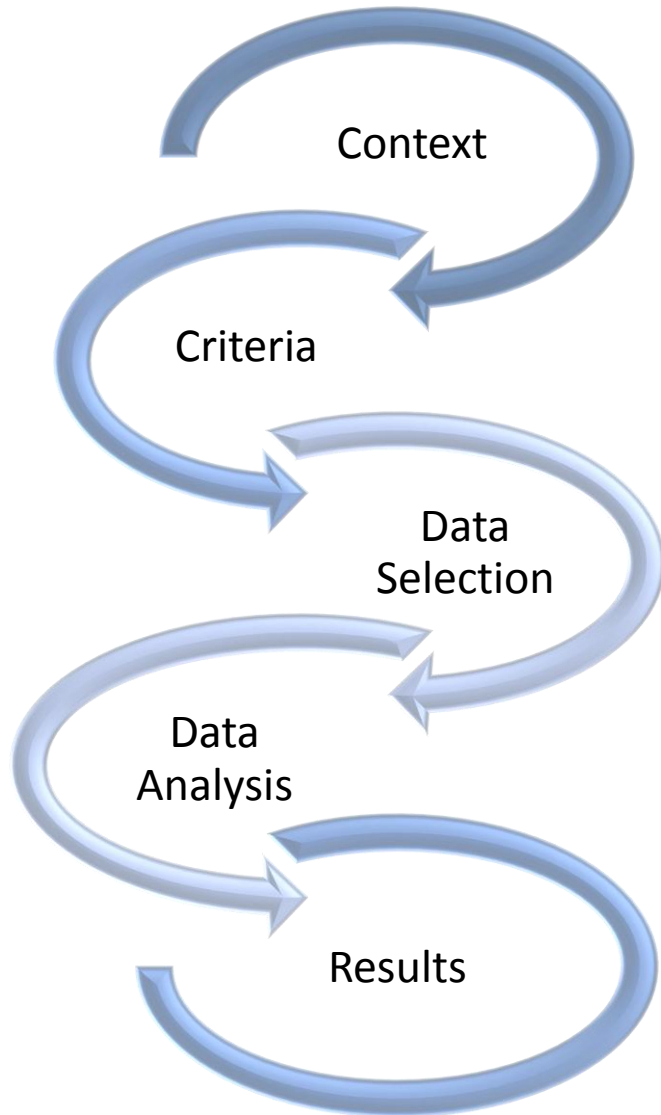
What is Content Analysis

Content analysis is the study of text documents.

It can be qualitative, quantitative or both.

Its purpose is to analyze data within a specific context referring to the meaning someone attributes to them.

The Process of Content Analysis

Context

Criteria

Data Selection

Data Analysis

Results

Context

Same-sex Marriage Referendum

in Ireland on 22nd May

Research Objectives:

- Content comparison among online newspapers of different countries

- Impact on/of social networks

Criteria of the Analysis

- ✓ **Selected Online Newspapers:** The Irish Times, The New York Times, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Corriere della Sera

- ✓ **Selected Social Networks:** Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube

- ✓ **Monitored Time Period:** May 21st – May 26th

- ✓ **Focus** on differences and analogies among selected sources

- ✓ **Key Words:** same-sex marriage, Ireland referendum, #YesEquality, #MarRef

Newspapers

THE IRISH TIMES

Before the Referendum	After the Referendum
Informative articles on voting instructions	Focus on Ireland being pioneer in legalizing same-sex marriage by popular vote
Forecasts on voters' turnout and results	Precise data about total turnout and percentage of yes votes
Gay couples interviews and life experiences examples	Opinions about present and future social impact
Opponents' point of view	Church's reaction to the issue and consideration of its role
Politicians' opinions	Marriage proposals following the results
Emigrants returning to Ireland to vote	Focus on the historical developments on Irish gay rights
	What world's media say about Ireland
References to the important role of social networks	

The New York Times

Before the Referendum	After the Referendum
Gay couples interviews and life experiences examples	Data about total turnout, percentage and distribution of votes
Focus on the historical development on Irish gay rights	Promoting Constitutional change
Critiques to Catholic Church (e.g. children abuse)	Church's reaction to the issue and consideration of its role
Comparison with other countries that had already legalized same-sex marriages	
Politicians' opinions	Politicians' opinions
References to the important role of social networks	

CORRIERE DELLA SERA

Before the Referendum	After the Referendum
Debate between gay rights and the Church	Focus on Ireland being pioneer in legalizing same-sex marriage by popular vote
Italian politicians opinions from different parties	Italian politicians opinions from different parties
Scission between Church and State	Critiques to actual Italian situation compared to Ireland
	Church reaction to the issue and consideration of its role
	Data about total turnout and percentage of results
	Comparison with other Countries that had already legalized same-sex marriages
	References to the important role of social networks

Frankfurter Allgemeine
ZEITUNG FÜR DEUTSCHLAND

Before the Referendum	After the Referendum
Forecasts on turnout and results	Debate of the situation in Germany when talking about gay rights
Catholic Church as the main opponent while most Irish political parties support it	Debates about gay discrimination and the role of the Church
Focus on Ireland as the first country voting for same-sex marriage through a referendum	Opinions of German politicians from different parties
Focus on the historical development on Irish gay rights	History of the civil and political rights situation in Ireland
	Traditional wedding vision compared to the modern one

Overall Newspapers Comparison

The Irish Times	The New York Times
- Higher number of articles - More detailed information - More interviews on personal experiences - Presence of both hard and soft news	- Lower number of articles - Focus on personal experiences - General view on gay rights around the world - Presence of both hard and soft news with predominance of soft news
Corriere della Sera	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
- Few articles - Major focus on Church reactions and role - Comparison between actual Italian and Irish situation - Hard news	- Many articles on comparison with the situation in Germany - Major focus on Church reactions and role - Hard news - No reference to social networks' role

Social Networks

Twitter

A number of different hashtags became very popular when referring to the referendum, such as **#HomeToVote**, **#MarRef**, **#YesEquality**, **#VoteYes** especially before May 22, while a popular hashtag after the results has been **#HungoverForEquality**.

#HomeToVote Graph

#MarRef peaked garnering 10,600 tweets on the topic.
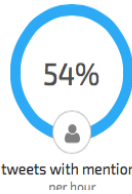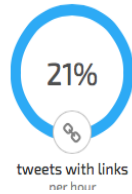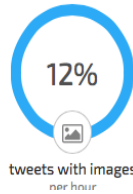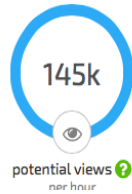#MarRef Interactive Map

Major active countries tweeting:

Ireland	71.22%	
United Kingdom	14.15%	
United States	4.39%	
Australia	3.41%	
Netherlands	0.49%	

#MarRef Tweets

100	145k	229	12%	21%	54%
unique tweets ❓	potential views ❓	retweets ❓	tweets with images	tweets with links	tweets with mentions
per hour	per hour	per hour	per hour	per hour	per hour

History

Volume

05-23
232800
62700

04-26 04-27 04-28 04-29 04-30 05-01 05-02 05-03 05-04 05-05 05-06 05-07 05-08 05-09 05-10 05-11 05-12 05-13 05-14 05-15 05-16 05-17 05-18 05-19 05-20 05-21 05-22 05-23 05-24 05-25

-------- Retweets
-------- Unique tweets

Reach

05-23: 2489130

04-26 04-27 04-28 04-29 04-30 05-01 05-02 05-03 05-04 05-05 05-06 05-07 05-08 05-09 05-10 05-11 05-12 05-13 05-14 05-15 05-16 05-17 05-18 05-19 05-20 05-21 05-22 05-23 05-24 05-25

-------- Potential views
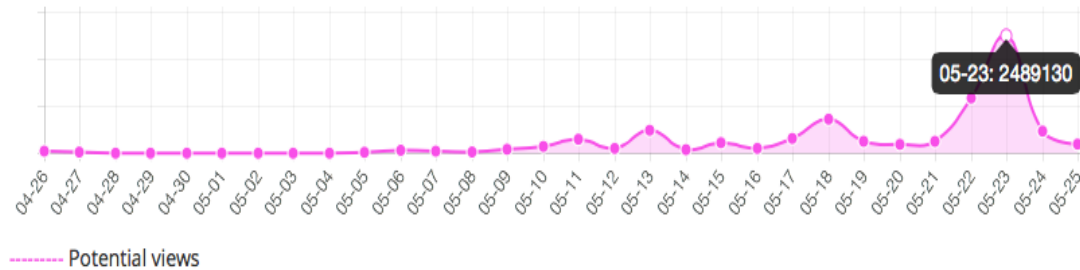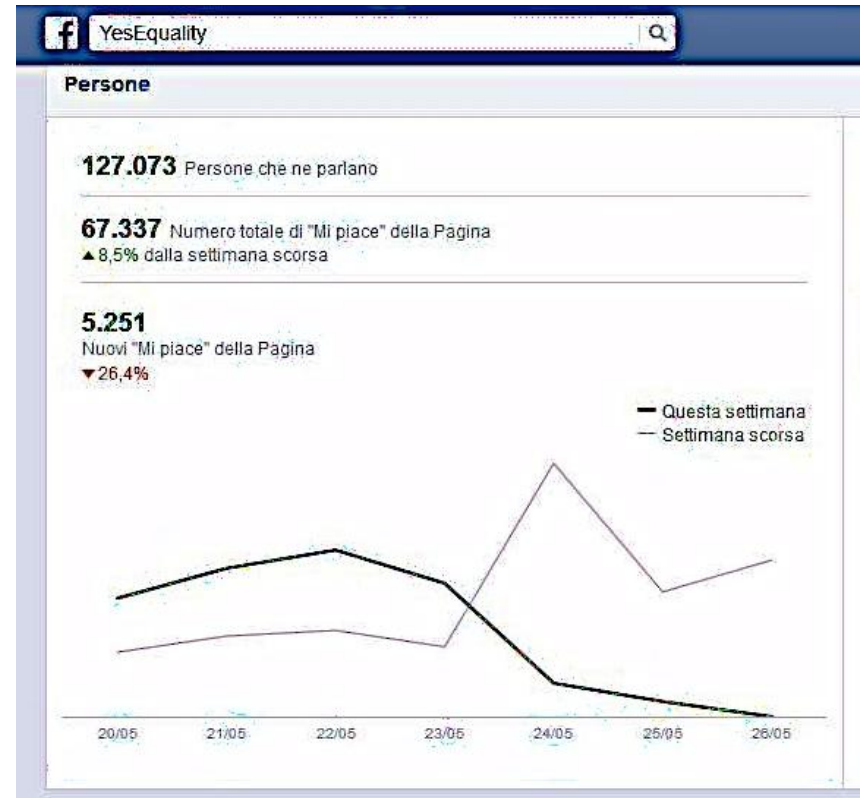
f Facebook

The Facebook page YesEquality has been active in order to promote same-sex marriages in Ireland.
[Official YesEquality Facebook Page](#)

- Daily updates
- Countdown til May 22
- Pictures and Multimedial contents
- Latest Update celebrating positive results, shared by almost 13000 users

Facebook button 'I'm a Voter' to encourage people to vote

Instagram & Youtube

Instagram content:
Before May 23, pictures with celebrities promoting to vote yes.
Popular hashtags have been
- #marref (20.410),
- #yesequality (20.088),
- #marriageequality (288.421),
- #voteyes (86.272),
- #makegrathelaw (3.141).
From May 23 til May 26, posts to celebrate results and to thank those voting yes.

YouTube: videos promoting to vote yes through Irish influencers and citizens words. Latest Video reports Former President Mary McAleese speaking at the Yes Equality Campaign results party in Ballsbridge Hotel, thanking those voting yes and celebrating a great day for Ireland.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Choice of a hot and controversial topic	Complex monitoring of data
The opportunity to study a real-time event	Limited period of time for a deeper and broader analysis
Availability of many different sources with rather easy access	Difficulty in defining the borders of our analysis
Heterogeneous sources	

Conclusions

- The national context influences the content of news
- Importance of acknowledging not only traditional media but also new emerging ones
- Social networks are able to shape public opinion and to lead to higher engagement and to give anybody the possibility to express a personal opinion
- This type of controversial event involves different social, religious and political groups

#ThankYou