Getting the audience’s attention by going viral

A case study on Sverige för UNHCR’s video messages on the refugee crisis

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Abstrakt

Denna studie argumenterar för att dagens mediesamhälle fungerar som en hybrid, där sociala medier och traditionella medier lever och verkar i symbios. Det som får tillräckligt stor spridning på sociala medier kan påverka nyhetsdagordningen och därmed vad allmänheten anser vara viktigt för tillfället. Detta är betydelsefullt för biståndsorganisationer som, för att kunna nå ut till många och öka chanserna till att samla in pengar, är i behov av att deras sak får plats på dagordningen. Studien baseras på en kvantitativ innehållsanalys av samtliga publicerade videoklipp av Sverige för UNHCR på Facebook under 2015. Variablerna baserades på teorier om viralitet, som ursprungligen har utvecklats inom marknadsföring. Där ingick teorier om social delning av känslor, social nätverksteori, self-determination theory samt marknadsföringsmodellen ”the Dragonfly effect”.

Studien visade hur teorierna kunde utnyttjas även i detta sammanhang, om de anpassades utifrån kontexten. Resultatet visade att the Dragonfly effect tycks vara en lämplig modell i denna kontext. Videon ”Search for Syria” utmärkte sig i detta urval, genom att ha högst antal visningar kombinerat med en förhållandevis hög andel användarrespons, som bidrar till spridningen. Alla fyra steg inom Dragonfly-modellen kunde identifieras i denna video, vilket indikerar att detta är en lämplig modell för att öka chansen till spridning i denna kontext. Studien fann också att urvalet av videoklipp generellt inte var konstruerade på ett sätt som uppmuntrar till spridning. Vidare noterades att starka känsломässiga inslag, så som provokativa och obehagliga scener, förekommer mer i videor som fått flest visningar. Samtidigt tycks videoklipp med en större andel positiva och hoppfulla inslag få större användarrespons i form av ”gillningar”, kommentarer och delningar.
Summary

This study argues that we live in a hybrid media system, where social media lives in symbiosis with traditional media and in which going viral on social media is a way of setting the news media. This is important for aid organizations in order to raise funds, as they are dependent on having their cause on the agenda, in order for people to know about their work. The aim of the study was to contribute with understanding on what components of a video message on social media that an aid organization in the Swedish context should use in order to get the audience’s attention. The study did a quantitative content analysis, examining all the video clips that were posted on Facebook during 2015 by Sverige för UNHCR. The variables was based on theories of virality, previously conducted in the field of marketing including social sharing of emotions theory, social network theory, self-determination theory and a marketing-model called the Dragonfly effect.

The study conclude that these theories are to a large extent applicable in this area, when adapted to the specific context. The study's findings indicated that the Dragonfly effect is a useful model in this context. By having elements of every step of this model the video called “Search for Syria” stood out in this sample in its amount of views. The study also found that the sample of videos was generally not constructed in a way that encourages forwarding behavior. Also, it was noted that strong emotional elements, such as provocative visuals, occurred more often in videos with the most views. More positive videos with larger amount of elements of hope on the other hand seem to increase user-responses in the form of “likes”, shares and comments.

Key words: agenda-setting, aid organizations, virality, hybrid media system, refugee crisis.
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1. Introduction chapter

1.1. Introduction

The year of 2015 saw a refugee crisis develop in Europe, with people escaping war and misery due to the current war in Syria, among other conflicts. It is said to be the worst refugee crisis since World War II (Refugees Daily, 2015). This means that more than 50 million people around the world have been driven away from their homes due to conflict and crisis. Sweden saw as many as 150 000 asylum-seekers in 2015, compared to around 50 000 only two years ago (Migrationsverket, 2015).

During this period the public have also noticed a steady stream of messages on social media from humanitarian aid organizations and public initiatives. They are looking to generate awareness about the situation and have people engaging or donating money to support refugee aid, carried out by such organizations. Fundraising initiatives that spread on social media using hashtags such as “#helasverigeskramlar” (All of Sweden collects) and “#vigörvadvikan” (We do what we can) are examples of both an organizational and a private example of such initiatives (Dagens Nyheter, 2015, Göteborgs-Posten, 2015).

In connection with the news reporting on the refugee crisis and the fundraisers for humanitarian relief that followed in the late summer of 2015, a certain photograph got huge attention. The photograph pictured the three-year-old boy Alan Kurdi’s drowned body that washed ashore on a Turkish beach. It spread on social media around the world before getting picked up by traditional news media. This seemingly increased awareness and engagement from the public on the situation of the refugees (Aftonbladet, 2015).

The photo went viral. This is a term describing how content of some sort is shared and spread among large numbers of individuals on social networking platforms. The term parallels to the spread of infectious diseases, like the spread of a virus (Dafonte-Gomez, 2014, Hinz et al, 2011). This example of the media-coverage on the refugee crisis supports a view of the relationship between the flow of information on social media and the stories on traditional news media as living in symbiosis, in a hybrid media system. In this equation, aid organizations that are looking to raise funds for their cause, in this case refugee aid, need to get their cause on the public agenda to receive attention. This study will argue that in this
digital age, the spread of content on social media and the process of virality therefore have an agenda-setting function, which can have an impact on what issues the public recognize as important. In this study we are interested in studying this aspect from the perspective of how aid organizations can use social media to spread their message and influence the news agenda. How should their messages be constructed in order to take advantage of the opportunities for agenda-setting that social media may provide in an increasingly hybridized media landscape?

1.2. Research problem

The impact that the photo of Alan Kurdi had may be an exceptional case. However, it demonstrates the potential that the viral spread of content may have in putting a topic on the agenda of the general public. But in order for something to go viral it must first be able to stand out and appeal to the audience. This must happen in the competition of attention in a digital age characterized by an information overload (Gomez-Rodriguez et al, 2014) and a marketplace of attention (Webster, 2015). This means that there is too much content available for the users to consume, while at the same time every messenger are competing for the limited attention that is out there.

According to the agenda-setting theory (McCombs and Shaw, 1972), mass media have a major influence on what issues the public currently is thinking about and what they deem most important. This also affects what issues they choose to engage themselves in (Berglez and Olausson, 2009). The extent of the coverage on the refugee crisis could therefore affect how much the audience is taking interest in the cause. However, in the current digital age with the progression of social media, the agenda-setting function of the traditional news media has become more complicated. While social media platforms are still influenced by traditional news media, it also works the other way around. Stories in social media affect the agenda of traditional news media (Sayre et al, 2010). The traditional mass media and social media are living in symbiosis, in what is called the hybrid media system (Chadwick, 2013). As exemplified with the case of Alan Kurdi, going viral with a message can be the way to achieve an agenda-setting effect in this hybrid media system. For an aid organization that is looking to raise funds, this is important in order to get their topic on the agenda. But how are messages constructed on social media in order to increase the potential spread? In order to understand the process of virality, one has to understand what characteristics viral messages possess. Such research has usually been carried out in the field of marketing, where several
studies and theories have been developed in order to explain what makes content spreadable (see the theory chapter). Based on this research, this study wants to examine the relationship between an aid organization’s (Sverige för UNHCR) video messages on social media and theories of virality, in order to understand how messages from this organization can be constructed to receive the attention of the audience. This is done in the context of the refugee crisis during the year of 2015 in the Swedish setting, where Sverige för UNHCR is used as a case of an aid organization trying to raise money in Sweden, in support of the refugee crisis. UNHCR is the refugee aid agency of the United Nations. The full name is United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Sverige för UNHCR is the name of their Swedish branch (UNHCR, 2015). Their mission is to raise funds and to generate awareness among the Swedish public (Sverige för UNHCR, 2015). Getting their cause on the agenda in order for the public to recognize it as important can naturally influence the possibilities to succeed with these targets. This is why the study examines what elements in their messages that make them spread to a large audience, as that can be a way of getting on the agenda.

1.3. Aim of the study

The primary aim of the study is to examine how an aid organization in the contemporary Swedish context should be constructing video messages on social media for a certain cause, such as the refugee crisis, to increase the potential for it to spread to a large audience. This is done by analyzing whether characteristics of successful viral marketing messages, based on theories of virality, can be found in the content posted by Sverige för UNHCR about the refugee crisis. This is also done by examining the characteristics of the “most viral” videos of Sverige för UNHCR in lights of these theories of virality (previously conducted in the field of marketing). In this way, the study aim to deepen the understanding and contribute with lessons learned for how aid organizations should construct their messages to increase the potential spread and generate more attention from the audience.

This study argues that aid organizations that seek to generate awareness and to raise money for a cause are dependent on having their cause on the public agenda in order for the general public to be aware of the issue and the need for contributions. Therefore, the secondary aim of the study is to discuss our findings in the context of agenda-setting in a hybrid media system, and the potential role of virality in social media as having an agenda-setting function in this digital age.
1.4. Research questions

The following research questions were formulated for this study. The reason for these questions was to be able to both examine and describe the general components of video messages from Sverige for UNHCR, and then discuss the findings in relation to theories of virality. But also to identify videos that stood out in terms of viewing and user responses (that in turn leads to the content being spread) in order to analyze whether certain characteristics signified those messages. So, both number of views and a measurement called 'virality' will be applied when identifying the most successful messages in the sample. The rationale behind this is explained further in the method chapter.

RQ1: How does Sverige för UNHCR construct their video messages on social media about the refugee crisis?

RQ2: How does the video messages of Sverige för UNHCR compare to theories of virality (mostly conducted in the field of marketing)?

RQ3: Which are the “most viral” video messages from Sverige för UNCHR and do they share any characteristics?

1.5. Choice of references

For the theoretical framework of this study on theories of virality and viral marketing the references used are academic research articles that were gathered using databases such as Communication and Mass Media Complete (EBSCOhost), Scopus and Google Scholar. The course literature from courses in media and communication studies (e.g. Jenkins et al.”Spreadable Media”) was also used, as well as the book “The Dragonfly Effect” that we came across. This book and most of the other literature and articles where identified using the list of references on the research articles that where initially found. In this way we knew that these examined similar or interdependent problem areas, which was practical in order to put together a framework on theories of virality. For the background section on agenda-setting research the literature that was discovered and available in Uppsala University Ekonomikum's library was used.

The method section foremost refers to course literature from the method course for this semester, but also complemented with method literature from the A- and B-courses of media
and communication at Uppsala University, as well as literature found in Ekonomikum's library. The study also refers to recently published news articles from Swedish and global news publications that were found using Google search. This was important in order to gather references on the events on the refugee crisis, which is a current news topic. Information on Sverige för UNHCR was also gathered using their official web pages.

1.6. Disposition
The thesis will now turn to the background chapter, which gives a brief background to the social media landscape and the hybrid media system, before moving on to agenda-setting and its implications in a digital media landscape.

We conclude that going viral is a way of setting the agenda in the digital age, for which we turn to the theory chapter. We then argue that in order to understand characteristics of viral content we need to turn to research in the field of marketing. The chapter presents a literature review on viral marketing, followed by a theoretical framework on theories of virality. In the end, a thematic analysis model based on these theories is presented.

The method chapter presents the rationale behind selecting Sverige för UNHCR as a case for this study, and argues for the selection of videos on Facebook as material. Then, the choice of a quantitative content analysis as method is presented, followed by descriptions to how the variables for the coding scheme for the method was developed out of the thematic model together with a semiotic pre-study of a random sample of the material.

The results and analysis chapter is divided into three sections, covering the three research questions, where the findings of the content analysis are presented together with our analysis.

This is followed up with the final chapter where we present a discussion of our findings, along with the conclusion and suggestions for further research.
2. Background chapter

2.1. Social media and the hybrid media system

In the last decade, a new media and communication landscape have developed. Since the launch of Facebook in 2004, followed by YouTube (2005) and Twitter (2006) the rise of social media, together with the process of digitalization manifests this change (Svensson, 2014). From a mass society originated from the mass media, we move towards a network society with the possibilities of multi-directional communication on social media. Today, the active users on social media are to a higher extent acting as individuals rather than as the audience of the mass media (Svensson, 2014). However, as Andrew Chadwick argues (2013), in an attempt to integrate the study of the new media landscape with older media he turns to the concept of hybridity (Chadwick, 2013). This is a way of highlighting the complexity and interdependence between new and old media and how these two should not be separated. Today’s media landscape is based on complex and evolving power relations between the new and the old media. This symbiotic relationship is referred to as the hybrid media system (Chadwick, 2013). The idea of hybridity in the media suggests that there is a balance between the old media logics of mass media and the digital media landscape of social media. Old media’s transmitting to the receptors, being the audience, has to work together with the new logics of the digital age and the circulation and negotiation with media content from the users on digital platforms (Chadwick, 2013).

Chadwick (2013) argues that the digital technologies have provided individuals or organizations with new ways of contributing with public information that was not possible until now. Also, that while in this case, social media continues to grow and provide these new conditions, the old media still exist and hold certain power as it also undergoes an evolution in the digital age. In this study, we argue that aid organizations depend on getting their causes on the public agenda in order to generate awareness and to receive donations. By going viral with a message, these organizations can take the route over traditional media. This is explained in more detail in the end of this chapter. But in reference to Chadwick’s hybrid media system (2013), where new and old media live in symbiosis, the influence on the news agenda is still bigger if the message on social media is also picked up by traditional news media. We will continue this chapter by addressing agenda-setting theory, in order to understand how the agenda is set in this hybrid media system.
2.2. Agenda-setting theory
As previously mentioned, the agenda-setting theory states that mass media have a major influence on what issues the public is currently thinking about and what issue they deem most important, which also affect what issues they choose to engage themselves in (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). The theory was initially developed by McCombs and Shaw in a study on political communication. They found that even if the media do not literally tell people what to think, they strongly influence what topics the public is thinking about (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). This happens as the selection of stories made by media news outlets prioritize the attention and influence the view of the public on what the most important issues are at the moment, since ordinary people by themselves cannot keep track of everything that is happening in the world. In this way, news media have the ability to influence the public agenda, which is what is referred to as the agenda-setting function of mass media (McCombs, 2014).

The agenda topic that is the most important could be measured in the amount of time and space that is being devoted to them, and if it is presented in a certain way to attract attention (Chandler and Munday, 2011). The extent of the coverage on the refugee crisis could therefore affect whether the audience recognize it as an important issue. This kind of agenda-setting determines the focus that the public debate has and can play a big part in what is the most interesting societal concern for that specific moment in time (Chandler and Munday, 2011). So, according to agenda-setting theory the attention of the public to certain issues is set by the media (Berglez and Olausson, 2009). And as the attention of the public is a condition for exercising economic, political or social influence (Webster, 2014, p6) this certainly concerns the aid organization’s ability to gather support for a cause. The news providers make the public aware of events and changes in “the larger environment beyond our immediate experience” (McCombs, 2014, p14).

2.2.1. Agenda-setting for aid organizations
The significance of the agenda-setting function of the media in relation to aid organizations and their ability to carry out their work successfully is demonstrated by Devereux (2003) who discusses a case study from the late 1990s in which aid organizations were seeking donations from the public in Ireland in order to aid starving people in Southern Sudan. For political reasons, due to an ongoing civil war, the delivery of aid was halted. When the aid did not reach its target there was a risk that the willingness of the public to donate would decrease.
But when news media started to report on the issue, it eventually pressured the local government to accept the delivery of aid into the country. The aid organizations also realized that the response from the public was dependent on the media coverage and that the conditions when appealing for donations are significantly improved if this is synchronized with the media agenda (Devereux, 2003). In the case of this study, we seek to examine how an aid organization can influence the agenda in a media and communication landscape characterized by digitalization and the rise of social media (Svensson, 2014). Therefore we will now turn to agenda-setting in the digital age.

### 2.2.2. Agenda-setting in the digital age

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, in a digital and social media landscape, or the hybrid media system, the conditions have changed. This also affect the agenda-setting function of mass media (Nabi and Oliver, 2009), because the way in which users consume media content is different from the time when only the traditional mass media existed. Shah et al. (Nabi and Oliver, 2009) discusses how studies in the field of agenda-setting research have questioned whether the public agenda-setting function still exists in the digital age. Modern day internet users can to a much higher extent select what specific media content to consume based on their own interests. Therefore the audience becomes fragmented. So, the argument is that because of this, traditional mass media no longer have the same power to set the public agenda.

On the other hand, research shows (Nabi and Oliver, 2009) that most users still turn to the web-pages of the traditional news providers on the Internet despite the range of other options. This suggests that the agenda-setting function of the media is still relevant in the Internet age (Nabi and Oliver, 2009). However, in a digital media landscape, the processes behind what will come up on the public agenda becomes more complicated (Bruhn Jensen, 2010, p136). Now there is also the possibility of a reversed agenda-setting process, where the public through the use of social media platforms can set the agenda for the mainstream media (Nabi and Oliver, 2009). Sayre et al. (2010) demonstrates how a social media platform such as YouTube give individuals the opportunity to influence and sometimes even lead the public discourse on social and political issues. This shows how social media provide platforms where attention to a certain cause can be generated despite a lack of coverage from traditional news media. What this exemplifies, we argue, is the symbiotic relationship between old and new media in the hybrid media system (Chadwick, 2013).
In the Swedish context, social media plays a major part in people’s media use, for example as almost 70% of the people are members of Facebook, which is the largest social networking site (IIS-bloggen, 2014). In the ages of 16-25, about 95% uses Facebook to some extent, but the usage also increases in the ages of 46-75 where, in 2014, 56% were Facebook users (IIS-bloggen, 2014). So, the influence that social media may have today would certainly become relevant in the Swedish context, since such a big part of the population uses these media platforms.

Another aspect is that in a digital media age that is characterized by an information overload user have to filter out most of it in order to “avoid losing their minds” (Aaker and Smith, 2010, p83). There simply are not enough people and not enough time to consume all content with what seems like an endless stream of media content available to the users (Webster, 2014). On top of this, there are the creators of all this content that all have the same goal - getting the audience’s attention. As a consequence of this, there is a tough competition for attention, which Webster refers to as “the marketplace of attention” (2015, p5). Through online social networking, people can customize their information feeds and specify what to promote and what content to consume (Aaker and Smith 2010, 83-84). And because of online social networking, people, to a large extent, choose to consume content that has been recommended by other users within their social networks (Nabi and Oliver, 2009).

In this marketplace of attention, there is obviously a big challenge for the messenger to get through the noise and receive the attention of the audience. In order to do so, the organization has to understand “the plight” of the audience and create a message “that speaks to them” (Aaker and Smith 2010, 83-84). Another aspect of the digital age, certainly relevant for aid organizations, is the notion that because users independently filter out and select what media content to consume and engage in, they may to a higher extent sympathize with certain causes and therefore be more motivated to act upon those causes (Nabi and Oliver, 2009). This suggests that digital and social media provide interesting opportunities for aid organizations to influence the public agenda and also in receiving deeper engagement for their cause.

As we argued in the previous chapter, social media, and more specifically the viral spread of content online, can influence what stories that are recognized as important on the current
news agenda. So, by going viral with a message, aid organizations can influence the agenda, which is important for them in order to generate awareness and to raise money. When reviewing the literature (see choice of references) we found that research on virality mostly have been conducted in the field of marketing. This study will be applying these theories to the case of an organization that is working with humanitarian aid and in the context of influencing the news agenda. This is where this study may fill a gap in the existing research on virality and social media. Therefore, it shall be noted that agenda-setting theory in this study is used as a background, which now have led us to the concept of virality. So, in order to examine how an aid organization should use social media to make the public recognize their cause as important and to be able to answer our research questions, we need to build a theoretical framework around theories of virality. This is done in the next chapter.
3. Theory chapter

3.1. Virality

The process of virality is the phenomenon that happens when large numbers of people are sharing information with each other over social networks (Nahon and Hemsley, 2013). The term viral parallels to the spread of infectious diseases like the spread of a virus (Hinz et al, 2011). Virality “has the power to challenge institutions precisely because it circumvents gatekeepers and captures public attention” (Nahon and Hemsley, 2013, p9). This means that when the user decides to forward content online within the networks, they are acting as gatekeepers, or bridges, that connects different networks, which keeps the content flowing, independent of traditional mass media (Nahon and Hemsley, 2013). Nahon and Hemsley (2013) use the example of how a man named Keith Urbahn, at the time a former U.S. Secretary of Defense, who was the first person to confirm on Twitter that Osama bin Laden had been killed by a U.S. operation. The White House had not yet decided to go public with this information, but as that tweet went viral and spread to millions the story was out, thus bypassing the usual gatekeepers being the traditional news outlets. As good an example is the already mentioned photo of Alan Kurdi that spread on social media such as Twitter and eventually featured on the news stories of the leading Western news companies, which would “completely reframe the refugee debate” (Buzzfeed, 2015-12-15).

But the most famous case is undoubtedly the campaign known as “Kony 2012”, which is referred to as the fastest spreading viral video of all time (Cavanaugh, 2012). The video is about making the world aware of the situation for children in Northern Uganda, focusing on a man named Joseph Kony and his use of child soldiers (Karlin and Matthew, 2012). In less than a week this video received over one hundred million views (Karlin and Matthew, 2012). This case demonstrated a new dimension in terms of reaching such a broad public audience with such speed through social media (Karlin and Matthew, 2012), providing new opportunities to engage people in humanitarian issues (Cavanaugh, 2012). Without going into too much detail, it should still be noted that the example of Kony 2012 also received criticism afterwards, foremost as their attempt to simplify a complex issue for a broader audience arguably resulted in some misrepresentation of the reality (Cavanaugh, 2012). Still, these examples demonstrate the potential impact of going viral on social media in terms of getting the audience’s attention. So, what content is it that goes viral? What are the factors that actually influence the viral spread? This study focuses on examining visual messages on
social media of an aid organization and how they should be constructed to increase a potential viral spread. The reviewed literature showed that, in order to build our theoretical framework on theories of virality, we found that such theories have foremost been developed in the field of marketing. This is why we now turn to the concept of viral marketing, when building our theoretical framework.

3.2. Literature review - viral marketing in social media

Viral marketing is a method that aims to design marketing content of some sort on the Internet, which is shared and spread among individuals to their contacts within their social networks, who may be interested in the content of the message (Dafonte-Gomez, 2014). The main idea of viral marketing is to achieve a significant spread of the content, with the help of the audience (Hinz et al, 2011). In regards to studies on content that goes viral, the literature review concluded that the principal questions that are being asked on this topic are primarily about two things: 1) What characteristics in the content of a message that effects the audience’s intention to forward it or interact with the message (Dafonte-Gomez 2014, Schacht and Hall 2013, Eckler and Bolls 2011, Dobele et al, 2007, Nahon and Hemsley, 2013) and 2) How to select and target the audience to increase the potential spread of the content (Liu-Thompkins 2012, Hinz et al, 2011, Paulin et al, 2014, De Bruyn and Lilien 2008). The main results of these studies are incorporated into the next section of this chapter (see theoretical framework).

Jenkins et al. proposes the term “spreadable media content” instead of viral content. Spreadable media refers to not just content that is heavily circulated, but also messages that generate deep engagement within certain groups (Jenkins et al, 2013, 22). All kinds of content creators, including civic groups such as aid organizations could design content that becomes spreadable by recognizing the mechanics behind the circulation (Jenkins et al, 2013). Spreadable media content from civic groups such as aid organizations can reach unexpected supporters and also plant seeds that in the long term can lead to deeper engagement from people. The difference from commercial producers looking to create buzz around a product when using viral marketing techniques and an aid organization is that they rather look to get their message out there to reach awareness about their cause. By creating media content that is easily circulated and understanding how to engage both active supporters and casual viewers to share the content they can lower costs while also building stronger relationships with an active audience (Jenkins et al, 2013). Nonprofits (including aid organizations) with limited
budgets could take advantage of social media to increase their fundraising opportunities (Quinton and Fennermore, 2012). By using social media in their marketing activities, they can build stronger bonds with different stakeholders. With the possibility of interactions through social media, they can also better assess the resonance from their promotional activities that take place online (Quinton and Fennermore, 2012). The advantage of viral marketing is that an organization with a limited budget could, if their message spreads, reach levels of awareness for their cause that would earlier only be possible through very frequent TV advertising (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011).

When reviewing the literature on viral marketing, three main theories along with a four-step-model called “The Dragonfly effect” were identified, that we argue covered the main arguments on what makes content go viral, based on the reviewed literature. These are: 1) The theory on social sharing of emotions, used to explain why viral content usually have emotional features (Dobele et al, 2007), 2) Self-determination theory, explaining what makes the audience motivated to spread a message or take action (Dobele et al, 2007), 3) Social network theory, based on how content is spread by targeting active nodes or using individuals with large social networks (Liu-Thompkins, 2012, Khan and Vong, 2013) and 4) The Dragonfly effect, a theoretical four-step model for how a message or campaign should be implemented to go viral (Aaker and Smith, 2010). The following pages will present in detail these theories of virality before demonstrating how they are incorporated in our thematic model.

3.3. Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework has been developed, based on how these theories, mentioned above, have been discussed in the reviewed literature in order to explain the characteristics of viral messages. This framework serves as theoretical support for constructing variables when examining the content of Sverige for UNHCR and later on as a model to be used when analyzing the results of this study.

3.3.1. Social sharing of emotions

Perhaps the most important characteristic of viral messages is how they connect emotionally with the audience (Dafonte-Gomez 2014, Dobele et al, 2007, Eckler and Bolls 2011). The connection between emotions and intentions to forward content can be explained by the theory of social sharing of emotions (Dobele et al, 2007). The term of social sharing of emotions is introduced and defined by Bernard Rimé (1992) who argues that when
experiencing an emotional event there is, according to this theory, a social need to express this experience and get the feeling that this experience is shared with someone else. In everyday life, people have a need to communicate and share their experienced emotions with others, which would also explain the drive to share viral content that triggers emotions (Dobele et al, 2007). Studies carried out by Rimé et al. (1992) have shown how social sharing processes occur shortly after an emotional experience. Eckler and Bolls (2011) states that the influence of emotions on sharing behavior more specifically concern positive emotional tone and a pleasant experience. Unpleasant tone in the content decreases the willingness to forward it (Eckler and Bolls, 2011). This challenge approaches to viral marketing that suggests that they rely more on feelings of shock or horror and extreme or provocative elements compared to traditional television ads, by saying that pleasant tone is the most effective in forwarding-intentions (Eckler and Bolls, 2011).

However, Tucker (2011) states that purposely provocatively designed video ads, by using content such as nudity, sexuality, horror or violence, are more likely to encourage virality and sharing. But the downside is that the persuasiveness to engage or to buy the actual product is reduced in such content when provocative, whereas more appealing and humorous ads can go viral as well as attract substantial user responses (Tucker, 2011). The negative impact on a viral marketing campaign from only provoking unpleasant emotions is also stressed by Dobele et al. (2007) using the example of a campaign seeking funds for helping children in less developed countries, which is relevant for the study of aid organizations, where such campaigns when only based on sadness are inefficient. Instead, such campaigns should evolve around images of hope and the feeling that the contributor can make a difference (Dobele et al, 2007). Berger and Milkman (2012) also stress how positive emotions drive intentions to share more than negative emotions. But even more significant is emotions of high arousal. Negative emotions such as sadness is a low arousal emotion, characterized by relaxation, while anger or anxiety are high arousal emotions that lead to activity which increases the intention to engage and forward the content, thus making it possible to go viral. This also includes positive high arousal emotions such as awe (Berger and Milkman, 2012). Another kind of emotion that attracts a wide audience is the element of surprise. Surprise is also an emotion according to Plutchik’s wheel of emotions (2011). In 76 % of the most viral videos elements of surprise are included (Dafonte-Gomez, 2014). There are four different ways to portray surprise. These are: real stunt, fictional stunt, surprise event and narrative surprise. The difference between them is that surprise connected to stunts includes dangerous
scenes, stunt actors or fictional stunt using special effects. Surprise event could be an action scene taking place in the street filmed by a hidden camera. Most relevant for the context of aid organizations is narrative surprise. This refers to a narrative turn that gives an unexpected ending, or using remarkable information of some sort to grab the attention of the viewer early on (Dafonte-Gomez 2014).

3.3.2. Social network theory

As mentioned earlier, studies in the field of viral marketing have also focused on strategies for how to target the audience for the message to spread. Because virality is connected to the process of how networks are emerging, changing and connecting with each other through hubs and nodes, that is studied in the discipline of social network theory (Samet, 2013). Several studies highlight the importance of directing the initial message towards the most active users within the target audience. Organizations have to choose their first user carefully, as this is a very important step in the beginning of a potentially viral message (Dobele et al, 2007, Liu-Thompkins 2012). By collecting information about their target audience and therefore choose the most vital first receiver, the organizations can use user-information gathered by Google, for example, through e-mails and search history (Hinz et al, 2011).

After targeting the most interested audience within the same field of information, the next step is to investigate their possibility to spread the message further within their networks (Paulin et al, 2014). Another way of targeting the right audience is the use of celebrities and well-known people in the message. By having a familiar person appearing, either as a narrator or in person, the interest could increase. Because then it is not only focusing on an active audience within a specific field of interest. It is instead directed to the general audience that might be a fan of this person or in other ways being affected by the presence of that individual, because they are “influential individuals whom people listen to” (Khan and Vong, 2014, p18). Well-known individuals such as celebrities that have large social networks with many followers can function as active nodes and have the ability to spread messages and information on social media platforms to large audiences (Yang and Leskovec, 2010). Another argument is that networks of friends are significantly more effective for viral marketing compared to, for example networks of professionals or colleagues due to the influence of interpersonal tie strength (De Bruyn and Lilien 2008). So the research on how viral content is spread connects to social network theory and the influence those active nodes, and also the power that individuals with high social capital such as celebrities have in how a message is spread (Van Dijk, 2012, Samet, 2013). Also, worth noting in relation to selecting
the right audience that can initialize the process of getting the message to go viral is that a large number of so called “seed individuals” may be preferable (Liu-Thompkins, 2012). The seed individuals are the users that are initially targeted with a campaign message and who hopefully pass on the message to a lot of people. This is the start of the viral process. But if the quality of the message is good enough, organizations with limited budgets can overcome the need for a large number of seeds according to Liu-Thompkins (2012). She also argues that viral marketing should not be seen as a “hit-or-a-miss exercise” (Liu-Thompkins, 2012, p70). This means that going viral with a message is basically about being lucky, and that you either succeed or fail. Instead, viral marketing should be treated as a strategic process that is about choosing and implementing the right seeding strategy in order for the content to spread (Liu-Thompkins, 2012). As this study is concentrated on the study of characteristics in the content, it will not be able to measure or examine the seeding strategies or targeting of the audience. However, being such a major part of the literature on virality and viral marketing as mentioned in the overview of the literature, it is still relevant to include social network theory, as it may serve as part of the discussion of the results in this thesis. Also, the use of celebrities as high social capital actors will be examined when analyzing the content.

### 3.3.3. Self-determination theory

As the messages posted by aid organizations besides reaching a large audience most likely are looking to gain support for the cause or raise donations, one has to motivate the audience to take part. This motivation can be connected to self-determination theory (Paulin et al, 2014). This theory was elaborated by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (2008) in the field of psychology. The theory deals with three basic psychological needs that people have. These are: 1) Competence, which is about the desire to control the outcome and know how things turn out, as a result of one’s actions. 2) Relatedness, refers to the need to feel connected and care for other people, and 3) Autonomy, which is having the sense of acting out of a sense of free will (Deci and Ryan, 2008). Paulin et al. (2014) introduced this theory to the field of viral marketing by studying people of the Millennial generation, and their motivation to engage in social media content, with focus on the third of the basic needs (autonomy). In accordance with their definition, self-determination theory means the motivation is stronger when the realization and decision to act is formed by the individual, instead of being told what to do. This kind of motivation is referred to as autonomous motivation (Paulin et al, 2014, p337). So, a high level of autonomous motivation then increases people’s supportive intentions for charitable causes. And if elements in the content results in that the audience by themselves
evaluate what is right for them it can also facilitate support that is maintained over time (Paulin et al, 2014).

The intention to support a cause is also linked to whether the audience can identify and experience empathy in relation to the cause. The stronger the empathetic identification with the cause, the more people tends to support and engage (Paulin et al, 2014). Paulin et al. also argues that the common view of the Millennial generation as a "Generation Me" is contested with a "Generation We" perspective, saying that this is an empathic generation having the “desire to make the world a better place” (Paulin et al, 2014, 336). In regards to this, the study concludes that social media messages should look to appeal to the benefits of others rather than the benefits of the self to receive support from this generation. This can be done by connecting with the audience through empathy and emotional closeness (Paulin et al, 2014). Phelps et al. (2004) in an earlier study, also stresses the role of social motivations for organizations with public service targets. The study suggests that desires to help others and to do good deeds may act as a motivating factor for, both what they refer to as “viral consumers” and “infrequent senders”. That is active and less active users in terms of circulating content, which shows how viral marketing is a promising opportunity for marketing social causes.

### 3.3.4. The Dragonfly effect

This study is also including a model called the “Dragonfly effect” in this theoretical framework (Aaker and Smith, 2010). It deals with similar characteristics as already mentioned, but also discusses the integrated effect of several stages in a viral message. It is this integrated effect based on four stages that can complement this theoretical framework on virality. The Dragonfly effect is a model for how to form a marketing campaign on social media. This model consists of the four wings of the dragonfly: 1) Focus - have a concrete and measurable goal, 2) Grab attention - break through the noise by being personal, unexpected and visual, 3) Engage - foster a personal connection and trigger deeper emotions and empathy so that the audience care enough to want to do something about it, 4) Take action - make it clear and simple for people to take action by providing the right tools (Aaker and Smith, 2010). A dragonfly can, when its four wings are working unisonally, propel itself with speed and force in a certain direction, thus the metaphor of the dragonfly. The argument is that if this dragonfly effect is reached in a social media campaign, it will connect with people and facilitate willingness to engage and participate, which may even drive social change due to the possibility of a ripple effect - meaning “that you never know when some small thing you
do today could have an impact many years from now” (Aaker and Smith, 2010, p75). An example in the book of this ripple effect is a social media campaign focused on saving a person diagnosed with leukemia by finding a bone marrow donor, resulting in thousands of people registering as blood donors that changed the future chances for people finding a matching donor (Aaker and Smith, 2010).

If the effect is achieved it may lead to striking results, argues Aaker and Smith (2010). This is illustrated with case studies on succeeding campaigns, such as the case of Samasource (Aaker and Smith, 2010). This is an organization using social media in their work with helping marginalized people, for instance refugees in Kenya, to earn a living. This is their concrete goal, which can be categorized as part of the first wing of the dragonfly (focus). For the second wing (grab attention) they stress how terrorism and other criminal activities can emerge if most people are left unemployed. The third wing (engage) is included in how they tell engaging stories about their work through social media. For the fourth wing (take action) they have three steps of different levels of action where the audience is encouraged to act on depending on time and money. These are 1) give jobs, 2) donate money or 3) spread the word. Aaker and Smith (2010) argue that having these four wings working together was the key to the success that this organization has had.

In reference to the social sharing of emotions earlier described the Dragonfly also stresses the influence of including the use of emotions triggered by, for example visuals. Also surprising story-telling and unexpected information in a message are examples of ways to stand out in the noise and grab attention. So, emotions are useful in engaging the audience, which is the third wing of the Dragonfly model. And surprising elements is a way of grabbing attention, which is what the second of the four wings of the model is about. Part of the ability to engage is also to trigger emotions of empathy, just as was mentioned under self-determination theory for motivating the audience and making them autonomously active (Aaker and Smith, 2010). We do not argue that this model replaces the other theories, but rather confirms their importance and relevance when analyzing characteristics in viral content. What the Dragonfly effect brings to the table is the integrated effect that is the four wings working together, which is something that this study will aim to take into account when analyzing the empirical data. Also, this theory extends this theoretical framework by pointing out the importance of a concrete goal and to provide ways to promote action from the audience. So, in order to account for this Dragonfly effect, the method will need to seek whether a concrete goal with the message can be identified in the content of Sverige för
UNHCR and also how the audience is provided with tools and suggestions in the message for how to take action. In order to measure these two categories the elements related to the presentation of the message can be analyzed, in support of how Nahon and Hemsley (2013) stress the benefits of a rich presentation in a message to facilitate for people to act. That could include hashtags, hyperlinks, mentions and also a degree of novelty in the message, which increase the chance of users spreading the content (Nahon and Hemsley, 2013, 65-66).

3.4. Thematic analysis model

Out of this theoretical framework the study adapts a model consisting of themes that include the characteristics based on these theories of virality. In this way, the study will be able to answer the research question of how Sverige för UNHCR constructs their messages and also discuss it to theories of virality. The three main themes of this model are: 1) Emotions - deals with emotional characteristics, emotional tone and also elements of surprise. This is based on how emotions influence intentions to share content according to the theory of social sharing of emotions and how it can grab attention and engage through empathy or feelings of emotional closeness, in reference to the Dragonfly effect and self-determination theory, 2) Identification - this theme deals with how motivation to forward a message or donate may increase due to characteristics in the content that can satisfy any of the three psychological needs according to self-determination theory - competence, relatedness and autonomy. With identification we refer to how elements in the content due to recognition and association can make the audience identify with the content in order to trigger feelings of empathy or responsibility, 3) Presentation - Part of the Dragonfly effect is the importance of having a clear goal with the message and also providing ways for the audience to take action. Based on this theme the method will therefore look to examine whether it’s clear to the audience what the goal with the message is and how they are expected to take action. This theme also deals with the overall richness and novelty of the message in terms of how it is presented. This may include the use of hashtags or hyperlinks or an overall element of uniqueness or novelty to the content. Also the appearance or mentioning of celebrities in the content, which can influence viral spread in connection to the part on social network theory. How all the characteristics of these themes will be measured is discussed in the next chapter (see operationalization of variables).
4. Method chapter

4.1. Research design

In this study, we argue that going viral with a message is a way of achieving an agenda-setting effect in the contemporary hybrid media system. Therefore, theories of virality can be viewed as a theory of agenda-setting in the digital age. This is why virality is studied, in order to deepen the understanding for how an aid organization can potentially receive the public's attention for their cause through social media. The study was designed as a single-case study of an aid organization that is raising funds in Sweden and therefore is dependent on having their cause on the public agenda. In the context of the refugee crisis, we aim to examine how an aid organization should be constructing their messages on social media in order for it to spread to a large audience and potentially influence the news agenda. The study is focused on Sverige för UNHCR as a case of such an organization (see 4.2).

The study was carried out as a theory-consuming study (Esaiasson et al, 2012), meaning that the study puts the case in the center. This means that the empirical data from the case of an aid organization raising money in Sweden, that uses social media to get attention (in the context of the refugee crisis) will be explained using existing theories of virality, mostly conducted in the field of marketing. In this sense, the results of the study will not be statistically generalizable, but instead attempt to generalize the results to theory (Esaiasson et al, 2012).

We adopt an abductive approach, meaning that we will answer the research questions through the empirical data, supported by a theoretical framework (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2008). A quantitative content analysis is carried out as the study's main method, in order to systematically analyze video clips posted by Sverige för UNHCR on their Facebook page. A complete sample of all clips posted during 2015 is analyzed. Prior to the content analysis, a thematic model based on the theoretical framework of theories of virality was constructed (see page 23). The model's three main themes (Emotion, Identification and Presentation) is based on the theory of social sharing of emotions, self-determination theory, social network theory and the Dragonfly effect (see page 15). The variables in the coding scheme for the content analysis were constructed in support of this model and the theoretical framework. But prior to constructing the coding scheme, a pre-study was done on a small sample of the material, in the form of a semiotic in-depth analysis. This was done in order to identify the
categories that would serve as variables, and to be able to define and operationalize them in a
way that would give the content analysis a high level of validity and reliability (see page 29). Then, the coding scheme was constructed using the thematic model, which includes
categories (variables) that were defined based on the pre-study. An inter-coder reliability test
(see page 37) was carried out to ensure the study's reliability, before coding the full sample
of the material to gather the empirical data.

In the results and analysis chapter (see page 40), we answer the first research question:
[How does Sverige för UNHCR construct their video messages on social media about the
refugee crisis?] - By examining the empirical data out of the three themes of the thematic
model. For the second research question: [How does the video messages of Sverige för
UNHCR compare to theories of virality (mostly conducted in the field of marketing)] - We
turn to the theoretical framework in order to analyze this data based on theories of virality.
For the third research question: [Which are the “most viral” video messages from Sverige för
UNCHR and do they share any characteristics?] - We identify the most successful videos in
the sample in terms of both views and user-responses (see page 50), before examining what
characteristics that signifies those videos.

In the final chapter we draw our main conclusions out of the findings and analysis. When
discussing these conclusions and the lessons learned from the study we also turn back to
starting point of this study, which discussed agenda-setting in a contemporary hybrid media
system and virality as agenda-setting in this age.

4.2. Population and sample

4.2.1. Selecting Sverige för UNHCR as the case for this study

The study is using a case of an aid organization that is raising money in Sweden in the context
of the refugee crisis. In order to raise money, they are dependent on having their cause on the
agenda. This can be done by spreading messages on social media, which is why such an
organization’s social media messages and the characteristics that make them spread are
interesting to study.

In the background chapter we discussed agenda-setting in a hybrid media setting, where social
media and traditional news media live in symbiosis. In order to discuss this relationship in the
context of our findings for the secondary aim, we set out to identify an organization that
worked with a topic that was a current top-story on the news agenda. The refugee crisis was undoubtedly an example of such a topic, being very high on the news agenda this fall. Therefore we had to find an organization dealing with this issue. UNHCR was identified as a case of an aid organization working with humanitarian aid in relation to the refugee crisis. It is an internationally recognized organization working all over the globe with staff in more than 120 countries (UNHCR, 2015). As an aid organization active in every corner of the world and whose mission specifically concerns refugees, this was a relevant selection. However, it was also decided to narrow it down to the Swedish context for practical reasons and to have a manageable amount of material to analyze for this study.

The rationale behind using Sverige för UNHCR as a case of an aid organization in the Swedish context for the purposes of this study was also based on an overview of the web page of Svensk insamlingskontroll. They provide a list of the aid organizations in Sweden that have obtained a certain account - “90-konto” - for fundraising purposes. This is granted by Svensk insamlingskontroll in order to assure the public that donations are properly distributed to the cause that the donations were made for (Svensk insamlingskontroll, 2015). On this site we narrowed down the sample of organizations to those that are both active in Sweden and globally, as the refugee crisis is a global issue. We also filtered out all organizations that did not have refugees as their problem area. This gave us a few options, including e.g. Oxfam, and Humans Rights Bridge. But since Sverige för UNHCR was the only organization to exclusively have refugees as their problem area, meaning that their messages most likely would deal with refugees exclusively, they were an appropriate selection in the context of the refugee crisis since we would not have to filter out messages in the sample that was analyzed. Worth noting is that it is UNHCR that is carrying out humanitarian aid, while the sole mission for Sverige för UNHCR is to raise funds and to generate awareness to the Swedish public (Sverige för UNHCR, 2015). Getting attention through social media should therefore be an important part of their work which makes their online messages interesting to study for our purposes. Sverige för UNHCR also communicates through their web page, television advertisement, telemarketing and face-to-face, but in this study we focus on the social media-aspect of their work (Sverige för UNHCR, 2015). Hence, this is an organization that is dependent on that people donate money through a 90-konto and thus dependent on that these issues are on the agenda so that the public knows what issues they are working with.
4.2.2. Why study videos?

This study has chosen to focus solely on videos posted by Sverige för UNHCR rather than messages of text or images. Videos, or audiovisuals, are judged as the most relevant units of analysis for the research problem of this study. First of all, to return to what was mentioned in the introduction of this study, the information overload in this digital age presents a challenge for anyone who wants attention from a large audience. Video clips in comparison to other kinds of media content may present the best way of doing this through the possibility of presenting easily digestible content for the audience (The Guardian, 2014-01-14). Note that this study is not focused on the field of visual communication. The decision to study videos was based on how that format has the best potential to spread. We base this on how several studies point to how videos most effectively can trigger the different emotional responses that increases the chances of interaction and circulation of the message as mentioned in the theoretical framework of this study. Eckler and Bolls (2011) points to how people to a great extent engage in different types of online videos and that the majority of people using the Internet have watched videos on video-sharing sites. Aaker and Smith (2010) argue that visual images give the audience the ability to think about the message in a deeper manner and relate to it more strongly. Schill (2012) mentions that viewing videos leads to a significant increase of emotional arousal compared to viewing still images. Videos are also the most common medium in the context of viral marketing (Dafonte-Gomez, 2014).

4.2.3. Why Facebook and not YouTube?

When reviewing the website of Sverige för UNHCR, there were hyperlinks to the organization’s social media pages, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google + and YouTube (sverigeforunhcr.se, 2015-12-02). Overlooking those pages we first of all filtered out Instagram since that page was used by Sverige för UNHCR exclusively for uploading pictures and not videos. It was also discovered that the same videos was posted on for example Facebook and YouTube, so there would be no differences in what material that was going to be examined. Since the same content was posted on different platforms, it was motivated for the study to focus on one single platform. When reviewing the pages it was clear that the Facebook page had by far the largest audience, both in terms of following (liking) the page as well as in interacting with the video content. And while YouTube has been the predominant digital video platform for a long time, the current trend is that videos on Facebook are closing in on YouTube in terms of number of shares. Another aspect is that Facebook is superior in the amount of engagement in the form of
interactions around videos in comparison to YouTube, which also motivated the choice of Facebook (Business Insider, 2015, Forbes, 2014).

4.3. Method of choice

4.3.1. Quantitative content analysis

Through the content analysis one can systematically account for key features and patterns that occur in the material (Hansen and Machin, 2013). As mentioned, such key features were first identified using qualitative work (see page 29). The main focus is to point out the main characteristics in the videos that could make them go viral and reach out to a big audience. A quantitative content analysis is a good way to analyze videos that have been published throughout a period of time and through that be able to point out differences in the content and also in the reactions (Hansen and Machin, 2013). Trends that may have been identified during the analysis-process can be understood through a theoretical framework. A quantitative content analysis can show how frequent different content-related categories occur and how much space they get in in the published material. These different categories, or characteristics, is then divided in a coding scheme as variables and is then given a variable value (Esaiasson et al, 2012). The coding scheme includes definitions of the variables and variable values and instructions on how the coding process of the content should be done. A coding scheme is very important for making the research replicable. That means that any other researcher can follow the coding scheme and in the end come to the same, or very similar, conclusion. The research is considered highly reliable if this could be achieved. A crucial aspect when using this method is to in advance decide what categories or dimensions in the content that is going to analyzed, and also have a clear view on how to interpret the results. These aspects are to be answered within the theoretical framework made specifically for the study (Hansen and Machin, 2013).

4.3.2. Material

The thesis is based on material that has been published during 2015. This period was chosen for several reasons. First of all, the refugee crisis did escalate during the past summer and it was and still is a major topic in the Swedish society during this year, and many publications have been done in this period of time. There was also a practical aspect of narrowing down to a reasonable level of content for further analysis. That is another reason for our choice of just to focus on video-postings done during 2015. By having a restricted amount of videos, we felt that we would be able to implement our study and also get a full overview of the material. All
videos that were posted in 2015 were analyzed. That resulted in 39 unique videos from a total of 46. The remaining seven videos were re-posts of videos that already had been posted. So, the content analysis of the 39 unique units provides the study with the data of all 46 postings. However, the data on the amount of views and interactions on these seven duplicates was also included when identifying the most successful videos, in order to answer the third research question.

The time frame of the postings was between the 2nd of January to the 26th of November, and after that the focus was put on the writing and doing the analysis of the gathered material. After the data was collected, we saw that the majority of the videos had a length between one to three minutes. Only a few were shorter or longer than that, with a video of six minutes being the longest. The publication dates were relatively consistent, but some months were more productive than others. September was a month when many videos were published within a short space of time. They did not publish an overwhelming amount of material so it was possible to include 100% of their publications, giving the study a fully representative sample for the case of Sverige för UNHCR’s video messages during the year of 2015.

4.4. Implementation

4.4.1. Pre-study to identify message characteristics

Prior to undertaking the quantitative content analysis, a pre-study was carried out in the form of a semiotic in-depth analysis. The purpose of the pre-study was to identify and define the categories in relation to the theoretical framework prior to constructing a coding scheme for the main method. A semiotic analysis is a good method for identifying signs portrayed and received by people. The semiotic analysis can therefore help in the work of finding the most vital signs that affect the audience in the most effective way (Berger, 2008). The result of the pre-study served as the material from which variables were defined in the coding scheme of the content analysis. A major reason for this pre-study was to achieve a high level of validity in the operationalization of variables, as the in-depth transcription of a sample of videos provided rich data from where we could identify characteristics using our interpretation of signs and visuals in this semiotic analysis.

Six videos were selected from the Facebook-page of Sverige för UNHCR for the pre-study. The sample of videos was based on a random selection, where the six videos that were at the top on their video page were analyzed. As the sole purpose of the pre-study was to be able to
construct categories to base the different variables on, we felt that this sample was big enough, since we were able to connect the findings to our thematic model.

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, prior to the qualitative work a thematic model was constructed. As presented earlier in more detail (see thematic analysis model), the thematic framework consisted of three main themes: 1) Emotions, based on how emotions influence intentions to share content according to the theory of social sharing of emotions, 2) Identification, based on self-determination theory and its three psychological needs - competence, relatedness and autonomy, 3) Presentation, based on the importance of having a clear goal with the message and also providing ways for the audience to take action or interact (Dragonfly effect).

The semiotic analysis was then carried out by summarizing in detail what had happened in the videos to give a transcription of the material. To know what to look for we structured this stage of the analysis by using the checklists presented by Berger (2008) that focuses on the most important elements to look for when analyzing television, film or advertisements (see appendix 1). After the transcription of the video clips was done, the rest of the analysis was carried out. First, by a reduction of data, that was the process of identifying, for the study, relevant passages of text and patterns in the data. Such patterns focused on passages in the transcription that we, based on our interpretation of signs and visuals, interpreted as emotional elements of positive or negative tone, high or low arousal, elements of surprise and self-determination, which are highlighted in the theoretical framework. After such patterns were identified, they were summarized into codes. These codes, or categories, were then integrated into the thematic framework based on its different themes, which would then serve as the basis for the coding scheme of the content analysis (Hjerm et al, 2014) (see operationalization of variables for more information).

All the categories, later on to be defined as variables (see operationalization of variables) was based on the characteristics mentioned in the theoretical framework, where we could find examples of such characteristics in this context based on our semiotic analysis, with two exceptions. The exceptions were the categories dealing with sound (music and narrator) and also a category called “gifts”, referring to how the videos urged the audience to donate money as a gift for someone. They were not mentioned in the theoretical framework, but
identified during the pre-study. “Narrator” and “gifts” are placed in the theme on presentation, while “music” was placed in the theme on emotions, because the interpretation of the pre-study was that the music assisted in clarifying the emotional tone of the videos.

4.4.2. Methodological reflections

Hjerm et al. (2014) mentions how a qualitative analysis both can use a pre-constructed coding scheme of themes based on theory and earlier research, or base the coding on just the data itself, which makes it possible to identify unexpected patterns and interpret the data with a more open mind, and out of that divided the codes into key themes. Our choice of path was to start off with an open mind for the reason just mentioned, but also because it was not certain how a predefined thematic framework of existing literature would correspond with this material. The videos posted by Sverige för UNHCR might contain other aspects that would be relevant to include in the coding process.

As mentioned earlier, two examples that came up during the qualitative process were the two variables “music” and “gifts”. These were not originally included in the thematic framework. Also, another methodological problem would be how to assess emotions of happiness, humor or surprise in this material and the context of a refugee crisis. As mentioned in the theory chapter, successful viral videos often feature these characteristics, and especially an overall happy or positive tone. During the pre-study we found that humor and happiness was not really applicable on this material. Rather, positive and pleasant characteristics were about feelings of hope, for example by showing progress or at least relief after receiving aid. Also visuals that had signs of love, affection or emotional closeness were interpreted as the most positive features in this sample. Similar methodological considerations appeared when determining provocative content. In the theoretical framework we mention nudity, horror and violence. In the context of refugee aid, we rather identified graphical visuals of injuries, destruction and despair as provocative elements.

When reflecting on our role as researchers, we realize that our individual interpretations on emotional elements in the semiotic analysis are based on our subjective views, which is unavoidable in semiotic work, as it is our interpretation of the visuals that let us identify the emotional elements in the videos. We also realize that the way emotions are experienced is very personal and that our distinctions between for example emotions of high or low arousal do not mean that everyone will experience such emotions. In this sense, what we are measuring in the content analysis is not objectively the appearance certain emotions, but
rather this study’s definitions of such elements and visuals that we interpret as something that can trigger such reactions (see operationalization of variables). As the study is dealing with an organization posting video messages to a Swedish audience, we argue that our interpretation of the content is influenced by our perspectives and the process of socialization when growing up in the Swedish society. Therefore, we as researchers and the Swedish audience, coming from the same culture, will arguably have similar understandings when consuming the videos. Also, in our definition of the variables in the coding scheme and by testing the subjective grade in these definitions through an inter-coder reliability test we have made sure that these definitions will be measured with accuracy and objectivity in the quantitative content analysis.

When the coding process started we followed our constructed coding scheme strictly to avoid different interpretations of the variables. Emotions are very personal and can be different between individuals, therefore complicate the coding process. Thanks to our coding scheme, where these variables were defined, we could avoid this happening. This was proven by our inter-coder reliability test (see page 37). Through that test we saw that three different persons coded the material in a similar way which shows that our subjective grade is not an issue to our result.

4.4.3. Operationalization of variables

During the first stages of the pre-study, several categories were identified that would later be operationalized into variables in the coding scheme of the quantitative content analysis. A major part was to categorize how different emotions were going to be coded. Emotions could be displayed in many different ways to get the audience to react and be engaged in the material. The emotions can also be divided in different stages of negative or positive emotions, based on how they are displayed in the video. Negative emotions can for example; give the audience feelings of anger or sadness, which are negative emotions of high or low arousal. In order to differentiate between the ways that emotional content occurred, the characteristics were divided based on the following traits: 1) Whether the emotion was expressed in visuals or in sound/text, 2) Whether it was emotions of high or low arousal and 3) Whether it was positive/pleasant or negative/unpleasant emotions. This resulted in the following definitions, beginning with variables related to the theme on emotions:
These two variables (one is dealing with visuals, one with spoken or written words and information) are used in order to measure positive or pleasant emotional tone which in this context is about visualizing and informing how the refugees are, or can be aided by UNHCR if they receive donations. The emotional tone based on these variables is more about the feeling of hope as a positive element, rather than e.g. happiness or humor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotional tone (low arousal)</td>
<td>Positive emotional tone - visual</td>
<td>Visuals/images of refugees getting assistance or aid</td>
<td>Assistance, aid, support or goods from UNHCR. Refugees receiving endurable houses or children getting an education and other signs of improved life conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotional tone (low arousal)</td>
<td>Positive emotional tone - spoken</td>
<td>Narrator, actors, text, interviewee or graphs</td>
<td>Presenting positive/constructive facts or information about the refugee situation such as what kind of aid they are getting, how the situation can be improved or informing what donations are used for.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the same way, negative emotions were defined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotional tone (low arousal)</td>
<td>Negative emotional tone - visuals</td>
<td>Visuals/images showing people in bad conditions</td>
<td>People cramped on small boats or masses of people moving in crowded spaces or walking long distances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotional tone (low arousal)</td>
<td>Negative emotional tone - sound</td>
<td>Narrator, text, actor, interviewee or graphs</td>
<td>Presenting negative/destructive and depressing facts or information about the refugee situation and the aid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These variables represent the opposite of the pleasant tone-variables. These are the visualization and expression describing the depressing, sad or negative aspects of the refugee situation that are dealt with in the videos. Negative visuals represents negative emotions of low arousal, meaning that it identifies situations that are not explicitly horrifying or upsetting with obvious elements portraying suffering or injury, but rather deals with situations as the
ones mentioned in the example that are interpreted as depressing in the context that they are portrayed.

For the emotional characteristics of high arousal we use the following definitions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong positive emotions (high arousal)</td>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>Visuals/images that triggers affection</td>
<td>Showing smiling children and adults looking into the camera or towards each other. People embracing/hugging each other, laughter, small children playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong negative emotions (high arousal)</td>
<td>Provoking visuals</td>
<td>Graphical visuals/images depicting uneasy situations</td>
<td>People that are clearly injured, crying, bleeding, screaming. Also fire/burning, explosions, violence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These two variables on visuals in the material deal with stronger emotional content, with ”affection” being about visuals that express love or affection that triggers feelings of emotional closeness or empathy, and ”provoking” which in comparison to ”negative visuals” measures the clearly upsetting and uneasy graphical visuals that may trigger emotions of high arousal.

One category that, at first, did not seem to fit entirely in this context was the element of surprise. The elements of surprise can be divided in different parts depending on what kind of surprise that is being displayed in the video. These could be real stunt, fictional stunt, surprise event and narrative surprise. The pre-study indicated that, in the context of Sverige för UNHCR and their videos, the first three elements of surprise that is mentioned were not really relevant to this study. The focus was put on the narrative surprise because of the structure of the videos. Stunts and action-filled videos was not a part of the material, but narrative structures occurred more often and therefore became more relevant to include in the coding process. Surprising elements in this context are identified in the form of surprising narrative techniques that may trigger a feeling of surprise that strengthens the interest from the audience. That resulted in two variables: 1) Striking facts - the video clip initially presents numbers/facts (spoken, written, visualized) that is interpreted as remarkable or surprising. The
point is to grab the attention of the audience early on, 2) Narrative twist - a positive or negative narrative twist - the video’s been overall negative, but ends with a rather positive or hopeful event or message (or the opposite).

As some units have music in them that strengthen the emotional tone of the video this variable was included. The type of music was narrowed down to be characterized as either joyful or melancholic music:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Joyful music</td>
<td>Music triggering positive emotions used in the background or as the only sound.</td>
<td>Major harmonization* - Distinct base drum with a light piano melody and a choir humming a melody that together creates a positive tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Melancholic music</td>
<td>Music triggering melancholic emotions in the background or as the only sound.</td>
<td>Minor harmonization* - Soft melody in the background that creates a melancholic tone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* "Major" and "minor" are two musical terms

For the second theme - identification - that is based on the theory of self-determination, we set for one variable. The identification variable identifies characteristics in the content that speaks directly to the audience through elements that the Swedish audience can identify or empathize with from the Swedish context and also ways in which the audience can feel a responsibility or the chance of making a contribution. So, the variable is coded when a connection to the Swedish/European audience is done through visuals, dialogue or text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification (Self-determination theory)</td>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>Characteristics in the content that speaks directly to the audience that they can identify or empathize with</td>
<td>Comparisons between Swedish living conditions and the refugees. Connections that speak to the viewer as part of the world, thus having a responsibility to help or make a difference. Also a &quot;thank you&quot; as an acknowledge that the individual is making a difference.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The third theme deals with the presentation of the message. A category dealing with the type of message in the video was included. It is used to examine whether it is clear what the goal of the message is, which is also connected to whether it is explicitly clear what is expected by the audience in order to take action. This is based on the first and fourth wing of the Dragonfly effect. As a result of the pre-study, the type of message-category was constructed so it would identify what kind of actions UNHCR asked of the audience through their published material, and how obvious this was presented throughout the video. In some cases, it would end up in a request for donations. In other cases, they wanted the audience to share the video on their social media platforms. When such a message was not clear to the viewer, it was counted as simply an informative message. The Dragonfly effect-theory also highlights how a degree of novelty in the message can assist in generating attention. To account for this, a variable called “unique” was included. These two are included in the table below to be further explained:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Type of message</td>
<td>Is it a clear goal with the message, explicitly clear what is expected by the audience?</td>
<td>The message is to receive donations, make the audience share the message or just an informative message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Unique</td>
<td>The video is framed or told in an unusual or unique way</td>
<td>The video stands out in the context because of whether the visual or narrative construction is interpreted as unique, unusual or especially interesting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The potential increases in the spread of the video due to the use of such tools in the presentation that may assist or inspire the audience to interact are also included in this theme. The variables “hashtag”, “mentions” and “hyperlinks” was based on Nahon and Hemsleys words on richness in the message (2013). The “gift” variable was inspired by the pre-study on how a couple of videos call for the audience to give a gift or present to someone instead of using the word donate. Also the use of a narrator was included as a variable since it was identified in the pre-study as a regular feature in this context. Finally, the use of cultural celebrities as part of or acting in the videos is included. The point is to measure the potential impact, which is based on how such individuals can attract the attention of the general public.
as mentioned in the theory chapter on social network theory. Identifying the celebrity is not based on personal knowledge, but instead on whether that is expressed in the video or the presentation.

4.4.4. Inter-coder reliability test

In order to assure reliability of the variables in the coding scheme and to make sure that the study would be replicable, a reliability test was carried out, to assess the inter-coder reliability. This is a test that is used in order to measure to what extent the coders are coding in a similar way. The higher this inter-coder reliability the more reliable and replicable is the study (Hansen and Machin, 2013). The reliability is measured in every variable through the percentage in how the coding between different coders corresponds. The higher the percentage of correspondence between the coders, the higher the reliability is. 75 to 80 % are generally agreed upon as acceptable numbers. The higher extent of judgement that is needed to code a variable, for example, deciding between positive, neutral or negative tone, the lower should the expected rate of inter-coder reliability be (Esaiasson et al, 2012, 208). When performing the test two or more coders are coding the same material individually and then the results of the coding are compared (Hansen and Machin, 2013). If the reliability appears to be low for any variables there are three options: recode the material concerning those variables; exclude those variables from the analysis or modify the coding scheme so that the errors are removed (Ekström and Larsson, 2008, 147).

A sample of 20 units of analysis, which is about 50 % of the total amount of units for this study, was coded for this purpose. The first test showed how the majority of the variables were operationalized and described in such a way that the coding was almost identical. However, some variables, including positive and negative information, identification, striking facts and uniqueness had notable differences between the coders (see appendix 3). It was discovered that the instructions for those variables were formulated in a way that was interpreted differently. This was adjusted by modifying the coding scheme for those variables to be more concrete and clear. Then the variables not reaching above 80 % correspondence were recoded. This recoding process gave a satisfying correspondence between the coders. After these variables were valid to be used in the coding process, the remaining 19 unique videos were coded so that 100% of the material was included in the analysis. By coding all the available video material, the representativeness of Sverige för UNHCR’s publications was high. The data from coder 1 was used on the first 20 clips in the
analysis as it corresponded with the data from the other coders. Then coder one and two coded the remaining 19 clips.

To further strengthen the level of reliability we also called in a third person to perform a coding test, which would give the input of a person not involved in the process of making this study at all. This person was able to code a selection of 10 clips. In reference to Esaiasson et al, who states that variables that when seriously and properly coded should be almost always coded 100 % correctly the variables that are about the presentation of the clips were not the focus. Instead the main purpose was to get more input in the variables that are measured on a ratio scale, as they were the more interpretative variables (Esaiasson et al, 2013, 208) This included the variables on emotions and identification. The result of the third coder compared to our coding gave a satisfying correspondence that gives these variables a high level of reliability. *(See appendix 3 for the tables presenting the complete results of the inter-coder reliability test)*

4.5. Measuring viral clips for research question three
In order to answer the third research question, the “most viral” video clips was identified out of the sample of videos. The reason for the quotation marks is because of the fact that any truly viral videos are not expected to be found in this study's sample, possibly with one exception *(see page 53)*. In this sense, the study does not examine viral videos. However, by comparing the success of the videos within this sample, we can still get a sense of what videos and video characteristics that have spread to a larger audience. So, a way of measuring the virality within this sample is needed.

The total number of views on every video is obtainable on the Facebook page of Sverige för UNHCR. However, Dafonte-Gomez (2014) argues that even if a video reach a large number of views, the point of a viral video is its sharing, not the number of views. To also account for sharing, the study, besides looking at the number of views, will also look at virality, defined by Treadaway and Smith (2012, p209) as “the percentage of people who have created a story from your page post out of the total number of unique people who have seen it”. A story from a post includes likes, shares and comments (Treadaway and Smith, 2012). It should be noted that we do not have access to data showing the number of unique views, as the number of views available publicly could include one individual viewing the content many times. However, we argue that for our purposes using this data for the virality equation is good
enough, as we will be able to compare the differences in views and user responses within this sample. So for the research question both number of views and percentage of virality will be assessed and compared to the content analysis of those units. As pointed out, virality is about how large numbers of people are sharing content, and not synonymous with the number of views. However, the result of the sharing of content in a viral video obviously results in a large number of people viewing it. Therefore we argue that, for our purposes, looking at the number of views will function as a way identifying what videos that have the potential of reaching a large audience.
5. Results and analysis chapter

5.1. RQ1: How does Sverige för UNHCR construct their video messages on social media about the refugee crisis?

5.1.1 Date

This histogram to the right is showing the frequencies of what date during the year of 2015 that video clips were posted. Notable on this chart is that after a drop in activity in the middle of the summer there is a sharp rise with 15 videos out of a total of 39 being posted during the period of late August until the beginning of October. So, a lot more videos were posted after the refugee crisis became the prime focus in news media during the late summer. This tells us that when the attention to this topic was high, and most likely the need for donations increased, the more videos are posted.

5.1.2 Theme 1: Emotion

We start off by assessing the results of the variables that deals with the emotional tone of the videos. The first two charts present the results of the spoken and written elements on positive or negative emotional tone in the videos, which is measured through positive and negative information (see operationalization of variables). We note that negative information is a bit more common overall, as it features at least once in 84,5 % of the videos, compared to the 79,5 % of positive information. Also worth noting is the large variance in the amount of negative information compared to positive. But most significant is the total sum of 211 negative information-occurrences compared to 121 of positive, telling us that even if both occur in most videos, the amount of negative information is a lot bigger. However, this result should not be surprising in regards to the context of humanitarian aid and refugees in crisis.
When describing the situation and the need to aid these people, a lot of negative information will most likely be expressed.

The variables of positive and negative visuals measure characteristics that can trigger positive and negative emotions of low emotional arousal. These two variables have a very similar, almost identical distribution. A total of 135 and 138 number of occurrences, with similar mean, variance and range was identified. So, in regards to the previous argument that the depressing context could set up for more content of a negative tone, these results are rather surprising. They tell us that the videos of Sverige för UNHCR have an equal distribution of positive and negative visuals. In returning to the earlier charts, we saw that even if there a lot more negative information, as many videos in general also had a certain amount of positive information in them. Overall, the videos of Sverige för UNHCR generally have both positive and negative emotional tone in them, despite the “negative” context that they depict.

Table 2. Positive emotional tone - sound

Table 3. Negative emotional tone – sound

Table 4. Positive emotional tone – visuals

Table 5. Negative emotional tone – visuals
Visuals of affection and provoking visuals deal with elements that may trigger stronger emotions, or of high arousal. The main conclusion here is that provoking visuals are an uncommon characteristic of these videos, not identified in 82% of the videos, with a single video having 11 occurrences, which stand out in the histogram. Affection, in contrast, is found in almost 75% of the videos.

However, a majority (66.7%) only has two or less occurrences of visuals of affection. So, the general use of provoking, or extreme visuals is low in this sample of videos. Based on the context of people in crisis, escaping war and conflicts, we imagine that the reality would have a lot of what we refer to as provoking visuals (see operationalization of variables). However, the few occurrences of such visuals in the videos may be of ethical reasons. There is of course ethical issues to how graphical you can be when showing people’s misery as in this case, especially when children are involved. The depressing context could also give a hint to the fairly uncommon occurrence of affection, which we have based mostly on smiles and laughter. But they still occur to some degree in a majority of the videos. Perhaps as a way of displaying gratitude to the work of UNHCR, or to make the audience more emotionally attached to the people in the videos.
The final emotional characteristic concerns elements of surprise in the narrative. This is measured by looking at the narrative structure through “narrative twist” and the use of “striking facts”. Perhaps, these variables do not deal with a strong and obvious feeling of surprise, but rather a way of catching the interest of the audience. We can conclude that about one in three of the videos start off by a “striking fact”. So, this is arguably a fairly common way of how these videos begin. We think that this is a way of catching the interest early on by presenting information that is more remarkable than perhaps most people would have guessed. In this way it could motivate the audience to stay focused for the whole video clip. About 23% of the videos have a positive or a negative twist to its narrative structure, with 7 occurrences of positive twist and 2 of negative twist. We interpret this as a way in which UNHCR after displaying a depressing story at first can present the result of the aid that they are providing. By giving a positive twist to the narrative, it could perhaps motivate the audience to take part as the contribution is making a difference.

In terms of music during the clips about 54% of the videos contain some kind of music during major parts of the clips. What we refer to as melancholic music is more common, featuring in about 38.5% of the videos compared to 15.4% of joyful music. This is shown in the table below. The music could help reinforce a mood in a video. We measured the music as either joyful or melancholic. We did this division to simplify the coding process. Most notable here is perhaps that six videos uses so called joyful music in this serious context. But also how almost 50% of the videos do not take advantage of how music can help strengthen the emotional experience of watching the video.
Table 10. Music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid percent</th>
<th>Cumulative percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No music</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>46,2</td>
<td>46,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyful music</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15,4</td>
<td>61,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melancholic music</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38,5</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.3 Theme 2: Identification

The identification variable identifies characteristics in the content that speaks directly to the audience through elements that the Swedish audience can identify or empathize with from the Swedish context and also ways in which the audience can feel a responsibility or the chance of making a contribution. This characteristic was not found very common in terms of numbers of occurrences, but 70% of the videos had some element of this variable in it, ranging from 1 to 5 occurrences. The fact that this variable is present to some extent in a majority of videos tells us that this is a regular characteristic in this sample as a way of connecting with the audience and hopefully motivates them to take action.
5.1.4 Theme 3: Presentation

This chart represents the distribution of the variables under the presentation-theme. We can conclude that only a narrator and/or hyperlinks are featured in 50% or more of the videos. About 13% of the videos feature a celebrity. The regular use of a narrator that can present the audience with information, and the use of hyperlinks to direct the audience to, usually, pages where they can donate make sense. The little use of hashtags is perhaps a bit strange. It is a very simple and common tool in the social media landscape for making it easier for users to follow and discuss content around a specific topic. Also interesting that 13 videos (33,3 %) are identified as being unique in its framing in this context. This indicates that to some extent the videos are constructed in a way that make them stand out, which perhaps demands a bit of creativity, but can be important in being able to grab attention.

One variable examines what type of message that was identified in every video, which was a way of examining whether a clear goal with the publishing of the video could be perceived by the audience. We note that only three videos clearly urged the audience to share the video, while nine (23 %) called for donations and two videos had both these elements. The remaining 64% were counted as informative videos without a clear message of action. This is notable, as it indicates that the majority of the videos don’t seem to make it crystal clear to the audience what is needed of them to assist the work of UNHCR.

5.1.5 Length
A majority (71,8 %) of the video clips that Sverige för UNHCR publishes on their Facebook page are of medium length, which are identified as clips in the range of one up to three minutes. We also note that there is a fairly even share between clips that are shorter (15,4 %) or longer (12,8 %) than 1-3 minutes. But the videos are usually between 1-3 minutes.
This makes sense, since it is enough time to communicate a short narrative or information, but not too long, so that the restless audience will draw their attention elsewhere.

5.2. RQ2: How does the video messages of Sverige för UNHCR compare to theories of virality (mostly conducted in the field of marketing)?

If returning to our findings on emotional content, taken altogether the videos are generally constructed in a way with a bit more depressing, or negative tone, because of the larger amount of the variable “negative information”. Using the theory of social sharing of emotions in the theoretical framework, it states that such negative tone or unpleasant content actually decreases the willingness to forward the content (Eckler and Bolls, 2011), which could imply that the general construction of content from Sverige för UNHCR is not encouraging the spread of the content.

However, such a conclusion may be to simplify things. In the context of refugees and humanitarian aid, having characteristics of sad or depressing nature may be inevitable. But what is important for the social sharing in this context (an organization seeking funds for humanitarian aid) is that the audience have a feeling of hope and that they can make a difference with a contribution (Dobele et al, 2007). And as mentioned, the distribution of showing negative visuals compared to showing progress and how the situation for refugees can improve is equal. In this sense a fair amount of characteristics in this context, which increases the sharing potential of content is included by Sverige för UNHCR in their videos.

Table 13. Distribution of positive and negative emotions

We also grouped together the positive and the negative emotional characteristics in order to view the overall distribution and compare them. What this demonstrates is a fairly equal share of positive and negative characteristics, as shown in the chart. So, overall the videos have an equally positive and negative emotional tone.
However, another aspect is that it is not necessarily about pure amount of negative or positive content, but instead of what sequence in time they are placed. This is because surprise is another significant emotion for social sharing (Dafonte-Gomez, 2014). This study identified surprise as a narrative turn with an unexpected ending (narrative twist) or grabbing the early attention using remarkable information (striking facts). The model of the Dragonfly effect also stresses elements of surprise as a way of getting attention (Aaker and Smith, 2010). And as we saw, about one third of the videos had striking facts in them and about 25% some kind of narrative twist. Although not statistically generalizable, the fact that among the five most viewed clips, four of them had surprising elements in them may hint that these emotions have a stronger significance than the overall amount of positive or negative tone (see table 14). This indicates that the argument from Eckler and Bolls (2011) on an overall positive tone perhaps is not fully applicable in our context of humanitarian aid. Rather, it is more important that there are elements that triggers feelings of hope (Dobele et al, 2007) and that the usage of narrative techniques to surprise the audience is more important to get the audience’s attention.

We also distinguish between emotions of high or low arousal, because of the notion that emotions of high arousal (e.g. anger) tend to increase the intention to share, compared to emotions of low arousal (e.g. sadness) (Berger and Milkman, 2012). Emotions of high arousal are foremost identified using the variable of provoking visuals. But the variable affection also stands for stronger (positive) emotional content. However, as we have seen, the occurrence of these two variables is fairly low in general. Especially provoking visuals were an unusual characteristic. But once more (see table 14), comparing the general distribution of the most viewed videos, we noticed that among the only four videos exceeding 30 000 views, three of them (video called “Search for Syria” x2) had provoking visuals (see graph below). We also noted that the top-10 had more visuals of affection than almost 70% of the total amount of videos. It may be difficult to generalize out of this sample and the few occurrences of these two variables. But what our findings indicate is that influence of emotions of high arousal on social sharing is highly relevant in this context, and that strong emotional elements in this type of videos seem to increase its spread to a larger audience. However, it should naturally be done sensibly due to the ethical issues attached to displaying people that are suffering.
The variable of identification was another case of a, generally, fairly uncommon variable, but that often occurred in the top 10 most viewed videos compared to the total amount of videos. This variable is connected to the self-determination theory within the theoretical framework. It states that connecting with the audience through any of the three psychological needs (competence, relatedness and autonomy, see theory chapter) can motivate the audience, which can influence the tendency to spread the content, or donate money (Deci and Ryan, 2008). It could be argued that with some sort of identification present, where the audience feels a stronger connection to the content than in other cases, increases the chances for more views. However, the motivation to act connected to self-determination theory should arguably also be studied in relation to an actual increase in donations, which could be interesting for future research.

Two of the wings included in the Dragonfly effect is about having a clear goal and also provide the audience the possibility to act in distinct ways. When having a clear message with the video, the effect is often bigger and more effective. If the audience knows how to act and what to do with the information the video just gave them, they are more likely to act (Aaker
and Smith. 2010). As our findings show, a majority (64 %) does not have a clear message and are counted as “informative”. We argue that this is an area where Sverige för UNHCR could to a higher extent make it clear to the audience what is needed from them to further the cause.

Tools that can assist in facilitating some kind of action from the user were based on Nahon and Hemsleys (2013) thoughts regarding a rich presentation, which is translated into the usage of hashtags, mentions and hyperlinks and also the variable “gift”. We saw that hyperlinks and the gift-variable occurred regularly. The hyperlinks are usually for the purpose of directing the user to a page for donating. So for this purpose of raising funds, Sverige för UNHCR often facilitates action from the user.

The amount of novelty as a way to stand out in the noise to grab attention was measured through the variable “uniqueness”. Grab attention is one of the four wings that is part of the Dragonfly effect and is important in increasing the chances of the message to spread. Uniqueness occurred in 13 of the analyzed videos, which is about 25 % of the videos. However, it was also identified more often in the most viewed videos. In this sample and context, the most common video was made in the format of a news story with a narrator and interviewees. Our findings indicate that by moving away from this typical framing and use a more creative way of displaying and framing the message, more attention to the video can be generated. Five of the videos had a celebrity featuring. Based on the theoretical framework, the assumption was that when a celebrity and famous people are a part of the video it can attract people that is not initially interested in the subject, but are a fan of that person, and as celebrities have large networks with many nodes connecting, based on social network theory, this would attract a large audience. But what we saw among the few examples was that they did not seem to attract a larger audience than the other. Rather, those videos had low amounts of viewers. This indicates that including a celebrity in this context is not enough for the video to be viewed.

5.2.1 Summary of main findings on research questions one and two

In order to summarize the findings on the first and second research questions, we can first of all conclude that these theories developed in the field of viral marketing can to a certain extent also be applied in this context of aid organizations on the refugee crisis, if they are defined in a way that corresponds with the context. Notions on how humor, happiness, surprising stunts or provocative elements influence the spread cannot be directly applied on this context. But
based on the way in which positive, negative or provocative emotions were defined for this study we could identify contextual characteristics that fits in with the theories from viral marketing. And as we saw, the videos with the most views seem to a much higher extent include such characteristics, such as emotions of high arousal, but also a narrative surprise to turn a depressing video into a feeling of hope.

One interesting thing that came up during the analysis process was that including celebrities did not seem to contribute to the success of the video in the context of aid organizations. As stated in the theoretical framework, the celebrities can help to spread the content when acting as active nodes, or their presence could attract viewers. However, none of the most seen or most viral videos had celebrities in them. This suggests that this is not fully applicable in this context.

5.3. RQ3: Which are the “most viral” video messages from Sverige för UNCHR and do they share any characteristics?

We have touched upon the ten most viewed videos in the analysis on the previous research question. We will continue to focus on this sample of videos when singling out the most viral messages. As mentioned earlier, a measurement of virality was also applied in order to see how those results compare to the amount of views (see page 38). The number of views on the videos ranges from a minimum of 502 views to the maximum of 51268 views. The mean on number of views is 8847. However, as shown on the histogram, only four videos have received more than 20 000 views. Therefore the median of 5037 gives a more accurate answer to how well the videos are generally doing. It shall be noted that these are the unique videos posted. The clip called “Search for Syria” which is the one that received the highest number of views (51268) has been published at six separate occasions. Such duplicates were not included in the charts describing content characteristics as that would give a false number of the frequencies of different characteristics. By looking at the second graph (below) we can notice that the three
well-performing posts of “Search for Syria” were published during the winter months, when the videos in general did not seem to do so well, which makes this video stand out even more. But the fact that the “Search for Syria” video was posted on several occasions is arguably also problematic for the results, as that potentially may have an influence also on why several of the postings of this video got such good response. However, the most viewed post of all, and therefore the most important one, was the first version of this video, so the others did not have much influence on that clip. Also, the “Search for Syria” videos were posted with different titles and front-images, meaning that one had to click to view the clip before knowing it was a copy. There is also such a significant difference in the two most viewed “Search for Syria” videos compared to how the average videos in this sample was doing, so one could argue that despite a potential influence of some kind due to the repeated posts of this video, it still clearly stands out in this specific context. Worth noting on this graph below is also the steady rise in the overall performance that takes place from August and onwards.

Table 16. The distribution of the number of views during 2015

As we saw on our findings on “date” on research question 1, videos were posted more frequently during this period. Interestingly, they also generally did much better in terms of the amount of views. The average for the regular, “low-performing” videos rose from around 500-1000 views on average up to around 5000 or more on average during the fall. This is interesting, because as established in the introduction, a lot more attention on the refugee crisis was generated after the spread of the photo of three-year-old Alan Kurdi. The photo was posted on September 2nd. So the significant average increase in the number of views happened after this viral event made the refugee crisis the top news story on the agenda of
traditional mass media and the public. Therefore, our interpretation is that the average performance of the videos increased, not due to anything different in the content of UNHCR’s video, but simply when the refugee crisis become the main news story in all media.

5.3.1 Virality percentage (likes, comments and shares)

On page 38, we established that not only views should be taken into account when identifying the “most viral” videos. User-responses that influence the circulation of the video on social networking sites should also be included, since that is what really can create a process of virality. Interestingly as seen in this table, the videos getting the highest percentage of virality (number of likes/share/comments out of amount of views) differs from the videos with most views. Not a single post is among the clips with highest viewing and the highest virality at the same time. However, note that yet again a post of “Search for Syria” is on top. However, this version only received about 700 views. And the original version with over 50 000 views got a virality-rate of only 3,04 %. Overall the videos with the highest virality rate are clearly below average in terms of views. This raises a question whether this is a good measurement to judge the performance of the videos, as the high percentage clearly has not led to a lot of people consuming the content. Perhaps not by itself, but in the context of a video with many views, we argue that it could add to the bigger picture. If combining the virality percentage with the amount of views, this could give a more accurate picture of what is a successful viral video and what’s not.

Table 17+18. Virality in the ten most viewed clips vs the ten clips with highest virality %.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top ten most viewed</th>
<th>Viewers</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Virality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search for Syria</td>
<td>51268</td>
<td>2015-01-19</td>
<td>3,04 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 miljoner på flykt</td>
<td>39666</td>
<td>2015-06-18</td>
<td>1,10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Syria 2</td>
<td>36319</td>
<td>2015-02-02</td>
<td>4,02 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast i Ungern</td>
<td>31645</td>
<td>2015-09-04</td>
<td>2,95 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varmt välkomande</td>
<td>20822</td>
<td>2015-09-07</td>
<td>6,83 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Syria 3</td>
<td>17185</td>
<td>2015-03-15</td>
<td>0,72 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vill du hjälpa?</td>
<td>15978</td>
<td>2015-08-29</td>
<td>4,14 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fyra är på flykt</td>
<td>15400</td>
<td>2015-01-02</td>
<td>3,77 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stängda gränser</td>
<td>13644</td>
<td>2015-09-03</td>
<td>5,89 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flyktingkris i Europa</td>
<td>12717</td>
<td>2015-08-28</td>
<td>4,56 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top ten most virality</th>
<th>Virality %</th>
<th>Viewers</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search for Syria 4</td>
<td>13,9 %</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>2015-04-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tusentals i Kroatien</td>
<td>9,42 %</td>
<td>4162</td>
<td>2015-09-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skola och skratt 2</td>
<td>9,39 %</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>2015-03-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordskred i Nepal</td>
<td>9,36 %</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>2015-05-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tack!</td>
<td>9,34 %</td>
<td>1809</td>
<td>2015-03-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for Syria 5</td>
<td>8,89 %</td>
<td>7218</td>
<td>2015-09-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saxofon-pappan</td>
<td>8,09 %</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>2015-06-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelina Jolie</td>
<td>8,05 %</td>
<td>1044</td>
<td>2015-07-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cate Blanchett</td>
<td>7,89 %</td>
<td>5522</td>
<td>2015-09-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skola och skratt 3</td>
<td>7,88 %</td>
<td>1117</td>
<td>2015-08-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If returning to the most viewed videos, the table shows the ten most viewed videos posted by Sverige för UNHCR during 2015. First of all we notice that the most viewed video - “Search for Syria” with 51 268 at the time when the data was collected (2015-11-27), have been posted on different occasions, and that the video features three times among the six most viewed videos. This tells us that this video is a unique case in this sample. Then we look at their virality percentage, we noted that among the five videos having more than 20 000 views, the video “Search for Syria” did better than the second and fourth video. This indicated that it did not only receive many views, but also made the audience engage more by commenting, sharing or liking.

One video that stands out is “Varmt välkomnande” (Warm welcome). It has a high virality percentage combined with good amount of views, as it is the fifth most seen Sverige för UNHCR video of all. “Varmt välkomnande” displays how refugees are getting a warm welcome by the citizens in an Austrian city when arriving on the train station. It contains a lot of positive features and a high amount of affection. Tucker (2011) says that provocative content can result in virality, but also states that more positive content can become viral as well as get the audience to be engaged through different user responses (Tucker, 2011). “Varmt välkomnande” is an example of a more positive video that has resulted in both many views and a lot of user responses. Video number nine and ten, that are second and third in terms of virality, also have a greater amount of positive visuals, which can indicate that this is a preferable way of getting more responses, or interactions from the audience, which could indicate a deeper engagement. The indication that the videos 5, 9 and 10 with a higher percentage of user-responses (virality) compared to the other videos in the ten most viewed have more positive emotional tone is demonstrated in table 14 that was presented earlier.

5.3.2 Singling out “Search for Syria”

As the results show, there is one specific video that stands out in this sample. The video referred to as “Search for Syria” have been posted several times by Sverige för UNHCR on their Facebook page, and among the six most viewed videos this unit appears three times. The other two postings of it have not generated many views, but instead seem to attract a high amount of interactions in relation to the number of views (virality %). Therefore we conclude that this video is a special case in this sample and that certain attention should be paid to what characteristics that are identified in this video, in order to deepen the understanding on what makes videos in this context spread to a large audience. “Search for Syria” is about how the Google search page is displayed to the audience, using search terms to demonstrate the
differences between Swedish and Syrian living conditions. It displays typical Swedish families and homes, whereas the same search with “Syria” instead of “Sweden” shows a totally different situation. The contrast is very striking.

First of all, there are mainly “negative” or “unpleasant” emotional content in this video, suggesting that a pleasant emotional tone is not needed for the spread of the video in this context, in contrast to Eckler and Bolls (2011) on the sharing of emotions. Although, we know that there are positive features because the video is identified as having a positive narrative twist. As previously mentioned, this is one of the videos that stand out from the general sample in its high levels of affective and provoking visuals that give emotions of high arousal, which have a positive influence on the spread (Berger and Milkman, 2012). Also, the amount of the variable of identification, which in combination with the inclusion of affection give the audience the possibility of feeling empathy, identification and the motivation to get engaged in accordance with self-determination theory are clearly above average in this sample. Worth noting is also that the video is identified as “unique” meaning that is has a degree of novelty that increase the chance of getting attention – the second wing of the Dragonfly. So the video has emotional, surprising and empathic features and a degree of novelty that increase the potential to grab attention and to engage, two of four wings of the Dragonfly effect model (Aaker and Smith, 2010).

This video was also identified as having the message “to share” (type of message-variable). This means that having the audience share the video was obviously the goal with the video. The call on the audience “to share” is also a concrete way for them to act. By connecting this to the Dragonfly effect, we can conclude that the first wing (focus, having a clear goal) and fourth wing (making it possible to take action) are also included in this video. With all four wings included in the video, this would possibly trigger the integrated effect of the four wings called the Dragonfly effect and therefore potentially explain why the performance of this video stands out so much in this sample. As we noted, the average number of views increased when the cause was on top of the news agenda of the mass media, indicating how an aid organization foremost is dependent on the current news agenda to grab attention. However, the example of Search for Syria suggests that it is possible for an aid organization like Sverige för UNHCR to construct videos that generate attention and awareness independent of the news agenda at the time – if that video adopts the Dragonfly model.
6. Final chapter

6.1. Conclusion

The start-off point of the study was that aid organizations, seeking the attention of the audience in order to raise money, are dependent on having their cause on the public agenda. We argued that we live in a hybrid media system, in which going viral on social media have an agenda-setting effect, but where the influence of traditional news media still holds certain power in setting the public agenda. The primary aim of the study was to examine how an aid organization in the contemporary Swedish context should be constructing video messages on social media to generate awareness for a certain cause, in this case, the refugee crisis. As mentioned, the argument is that a content on social media that spreads to a large audience can influence the news agenda, which is important for an aid organization that is looking to raise money as the general public becomes aware of their work. The study was carried out as a quantitative content analysis, in order to systematically examine all the videos posted on Facebook during 2015. The variables were defined based on theories of virality that in prior research mostly have been conducted in the field of marketing.

The main conclusion of our findings is that they indicate that theories of virality, mostly conducted in the field of marketing, can to a large extent be applied in this area, when adapted to the specific context. This does not mean that we can say with certainty that these theories will always predict the spread of content for organizations in the area of humanitarian aid, but in this case of Sverige för UNHCR's videos, the theories proved to have a predictive power. By adapting, foremost, emotional characteristics to this specific context we saw that they influence the potential to grab the attention of the audience. With emotional characteristics we refer to stronger emotional elements and not the more subtle positive or negative emotional tone which was also measured. Visuals with strong emotional tone, an element of surprise, elements that may trigger feelings of empathy or identification and a degree of novelty in the framing of the video were significantly more common among the videos that had received large numbers of views.

Another important conclusion when analyzing the data using theories of virality is that the general construction of video message from Sverige för UNHCR is not encouraging the spread of content in the way described in the preceding paragraph, as most of the videos in this sample have lack such emotional, surprising or unique elements. Most of the videos also had a fairly low amount of views and user-responses.
The study also concludes that the findings indicate that not all parts of the theoretical framework are entirely applicable in this context. Already in the pre-study we concluded that elements common in viral videos, such as humor, happiness or action stunts are not really relevant to increase the spread in this context, and in the content analysis we noted that using high status people such as celebrities in the videos did not seem to increase the success of the video posted.

The study found that a useful model in this context is the Dragonfly Effect (Aaker and Smith, 2010). By having elements of every step of this four-step-model the video called “Search for Syria” stood out as a unique and successful example in this sample in terms of the amount of views. On the other hand, the findings also indicated that the amount of user responses that actually facilitates virality (likes, comments, shares) may be bigger when the content has an overall positive emotional tone, which is also supported by the theoretical framework (Eckler and Bolls, 2011).

6.2. Discussion
The refugee crisis was undoubtedly on the news agenda all over media during 2015 and foremost in the late summer and early winter months. In the first parts of this study we argue that having a certain topic on the agenda is very important for aid organizations in the strive for donations and to generate awareness for their cause. Part of the aim of this study was to discuss the study's findings in relation to the agenda-setting function in the digital age, in what can be referred to as the hybrid media system (Chadwick, 2013). In this system, viral content on social media can set the news agenda and influence what the public is recognizing as important and urgent. The most important conclusion of the results and analysis that followed was that the theories of virality that have been conducted in the field of marketing, usually focusing on the most successful and often happy and humorous video clips, are applicable also in this context of an humanitarian aid organization's (Sverige för UNHCR) messages about the issues and needs of refugees escaping war and conflicts. Variables that measured characteristics in accordance with theory of social sharing of emotions and self-determination theory could explain the success of the videos compared to the rest in this sample that lack such elements. The clearly most successful video in the sample also had a clear goal with the message (to share) which made it easier for the audience to respond. This, together with the emotional characteristics suggested that the integrated effect of these steps (The Dragonfly effect) which could explain why it worked so well, which is an indication that is model may be a useful tool in this context when constructing video messages.
But as was also concluded, in general, the videos in the sample were not doing very well, and they were not constructed in a way that facilitated a large spread. Despite this, the cause that UNHCR is working with was the top-story on the news agenda for large parts of 2015. Perhaps this is an indication that using social media to set the agenda is not essential for an aid organization in this context. Because as the results showed, there was a significant average increase during the late summer (after Alan Kurdi) which could not be explained by the theoretical framework. Instead, this is an example that may support the idea of how traditional news media and social media live in symbiosis, as more focus on a story in traditional news media resulted in more attention on that story also on social media, in this case, Sverige för UNHCR’s Facebook videos.

However, although the general amount of attention increased after the refugee crisis became the top-story on the agenda of traditional news media after Alan Kurdi, the two most viewed videos, in this fairly small sample of 46 videos, tells us something else. They were not posted during the period in the fall of 2015 when all media attention focused on this topic. Instead, they were posted in January and June. This study cannot speak to the exact media attention on the topic during these two months, but what we do know is that the average performance of Sverige för UNHCR’s videos during this time was not as good. So, was it perhaps rather the emotional characteristics based on theories of virality in these videos that generated in attention rather than the media news agenda? That could indicate that by having such elements in the content can generate in a lot of attention even when the topic is not as much in focus in traditional news media. As the unique case of “Search for Syria” indicated; applying the Dragonfly effect model can be a useful way of doing so.

As the study also concluded, the variable of celebrities does not increase the views when being used in the context of aid organizations. And it is not just celebrities that are less useful in this context. Having stunts and action would not be suitable for Sverige för UNHCR in their communication on this matter, but it could be a great move in other contexts. A commercial from Volvo trucks went viral a few years ago that had actor Jean-Claude Van Damme doing “the epic split” between two moving trucks. This had huge success (News.volvogroup.com, 2015-12-30), and it had both a celebrity and action stunts. This shows that different variables can have different effects depending on the context. Perhaps there are ways in which such elements could be used by aid organizations or nonprofits on a different matter than the refugee crisis.
6.3. Ideas for future research

One thing could be to study the relationship between videos and donations. What kind of videos generates the most in terms of received donations? By examine how many donations different kinds of videos generate, one could see what type of characteristics that is the most effective in terms of donations. Is it the more provocative characteristics, or is it the more positive? Since the findings indicated that provocative elements generates more views, while more positive emotional tone gives better user responses. This was not examined in this study. We did not have access to these kinds of statistics and was therefore excluded from this thesis. Another interesting aspect is to see if they contain any of the theories of virality, for example the Dragonfly effect? As we concluded, the Dragonfly effect was identified as a relevant model for this context. This could perhaps be used in other studies, by constructing a message strictly based on its steps and study its effect. So, further research could build on the Dragonfly effect, and see if it works in other cases apart from Sverige för UNHCR’s content.

Also, further research could be focusing on the hybrid media system, which refers to the symbiosis between traditional and social media. Because both types of media are in some way dependent on each other, they should be studied together. By examining a large sample of stories, perhaps from the perspective of the audience, deeper understanding behind how stories are created in this media landscape could be generated. The agenda set by traditional news is often reflected on social media and the society, and vice versa.

An interesting aspect to look at further is the social network aspect of the viral spread in the context of aid organizations. What is a good active node in spreading a message, and how should they be identified? The most effective seeds and active nodes could be big media companies down to very active private users. Such research could look to identify how the users that are not actively seeking the content are usually exposed to the content by examining the sharing activities that leads them to the content. An interesting aspect is to see how the active nodes receive the message in first place. Are they interested in the work that Sverige för UNHCR are doing, and a result of that they “like” the Facebook page, or do they receive the information from secondary sources or links from other paged.

6.4. Lessons learned

When reflecting on our work with the content constructed by Sverige för UNHCR, we came across some important lessons that we learned during the process. One major thing that we realized was important and useful for the study’s result was the in-depth semiotic analysis in
the pre-study of the analytical work. This laid the foundation for the whole quantitative analysis of 39 unique videos, and was therefore a crucial part of the process. The semiotic in-depth analysis helped us define and contextualize most of the emotional characteristics based on the theories of viral marketing in the context of refugee aid. When we had defined the characteristics, we could more easily single out these when viewing and coding the content. So this part of the process was one of the most important, and we think that our analysis had not been as good if this was not done in the pre-study.

Another notion was that the different emotional characteristics have different effects on the audience. The more provocative or depressing emotional content gain more views, based on our findings in this particular case. However, just including more provoking characteristics to increase the spread may not be preferable, since there are ethical issues in portraying human suffering in this context. Ethical considerations most likely have to be made to what is motivated to display in every separate case. The more positive emotional tone on the other hand results in more engagement from the audience, but do not receive the same amount of views. We therefore argue, and learned, that these two characteristics should be combined in a good and effective way to receive both high amount of views and engagement. An effective strategy could be to have more depressing and provocative content in the beginning of the video to attract the audience attention (based on that these kinds of images receive more views than others), and then finish the video by having a positive narrative twist. The positive narrative twist helps to send out a message of hope to the audience, and that they can make a difference. However, regardless of the messages on social media from an organization, the current news agenda still impacts the general possibilities of getting the audience’s attention, unless the content actually does go viral.

6.5. Author contributions

The thesis work started off with the literature review. During the working progress on the review we wrote all parts together. The work was divided 50/50 and was mostly done together. A small amount was done separately. When starting with the thesis, the responsibility was divided between us two a bit more. Niklas had more responsibility for the background and the theory chapters. Tom had more responsibility for the method chapter. All the results, analysis and discussion were done together to have the most accurate text, reflecting both thoughts and observations. The thesis was also read through and finely tuned by both in the last stages of the working process.
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8. Appendix

8.1. Appendix 1: Checklist for analyzing television commercials and movies

The narrative structure
1. What happens in the video? What is the narrative line?
2. What dramatic techniques are used? Is there humor? Surrealism?
3. Is there a narrator? If so, what is the narrator’s function?
4. Is there action? What is the significance of the action?
5. Is there conflict? If so, what kind? and how is it resolved?

The dialogue
1. What kind of language is used?
2. Does the clip use rhetorical devices such as metaphors, associations, or alliteration? What about exaggeration, comparison and contrast, jingles, or humor?

The setting
1. Where does the action of the commercial take place?
2. What significance does the setting have? How is the setting used to give viewers certain impressions?
3. Are there any props of importance used?

The visual images and sound
1. What kinds of shots are used? How many different scenes are there?
2. How is the video edited? Are there numerous quick cuts? Lingering dissolves? Zooms? How are close-ups used?
3. Are there any intertextual elements in the commercial, such as reference to well-known films, works of literature, and the like?
4. How is sound used? Is there music? If so, what kind, and what effect might it have?

The viewers
1. How does the video relate to popularly held beliefs, myths, ideas, attitudes, values, and archetypes?

Theme:
What themes are dealt with? Some typical themes are the redeeming power of love, the destructive nature of jealousy, the nature of evil, and the value of freedom

Plot:
What is the plot of the text – that is, what are the main events that take place in it? Does the plot interest you? If so, why?

Tone:
What is the tone of the text? What “attitudes” toward life and people are reflected in it? Is the tone appropriate to the story?
Descriptive variables
This first set of variables are used in order to later on divide and analyze the material based on the date it was published, the number of views, and the number of stories which are used to calculate virality percentage. Included is also video length to get an overview of the time frame that is used for these videos.

V1: Date - Date when the clip was first uploaded on Facebook
V2: Number of views - Current number of views as presented when clicking on the clip
V3: Number of stories - sum of total number of shares, likes and comments on the clip.
V4: Video length
1. Short (<1 min)
2. Medium (1-3 min)
3. Long (3< min)

Video characteristics
The variables are grouped into themes based on the thematic model developed out of theories on virality and categorized and defined based on the pre-study (semiotic in-depth analysis).

Note: A single scene/image can contain several variables.
Note: A single scene/image that do not fit in with any variables is not counted as anything.

THEME 1: EMOTIONS

POSITIVE/PLEASANT EMOTIONAL TONE
These two variables (one dealing with visuals, one with spoken or written words and information) are used in order to measure positive or pleasant emotional tone which in this context is about visualizing and informing how the refugees are, or can be aided by UNHCR if they receive donations. The emotional tones based on these variables are more about the feeling of hope as a positive element, rather than e.g. happiness or humor.

V6: Positive visuals (Relief, aid) - visuals/images showing how refugees are getting assistance, aid, support or goods from UNHCR-workers and visuals showing how they receive endurable houses, children getting education etc.
(Coding: number of separate occurrences)

V7: Positive information - narrator, actors, text, interviewee or graphs presenting positive/constructive facts or information about the refugee situation such as what kind of aid they are getting, how the situation can be improved or informing what donations are used for.
(Coding: number of separate occurrences)

NEGATIVE/UNPLEASANT EMOTIONAL TONE
These variables represent the opposite of the pleasant tone-variables. These are the visualization and information describing the depressing, sad or negative aspects of the refugee situation that are dealt with in the videos. Depressing visuals represents negative emotions of low arousal, meaning that it identifies situations that are not explicitly horrifying or upsetting due to obvious elements portraying suffering or injury, but rather deals with situations as the ones mentioned in the example that are interpreted as depressing in the context they are portrayed.

V8: Negative visuals - Visuals/images showing people in bad conditions. Example: Showing people cramped on small boats on the sea or masses of people moving in crowded spaces or walking big distances. Showing camps in poor conditions. Showing destroyed buildings, belongings, towns
(Coding: number of separate occurrences)

V9: Negative information - narrator, text, actor/interviewee or graphs presenting negative/destructive and sad facts or information about the refugee situation and the aid.
(Coding: number of separate occurrences)

STRONG EMOTIONS (High arousal)
These two variables on visuals in the material deal with stronger emotional content, with “affection” being about visuals that express love or affection that triggers feelings of emotional closeness or empathy, and “provoking” which in opposite to “negative visuals” measures the clearly upsetting and uneasy graphical visuals that may trigger emotions of high arousal.
V10: Strong positive visuals - Affection -
Visuals/images that triggers affection. For example by: showing smiling children and adults looking into the camera or towards each other. People embracing/hugging. Laughter. Small children playing.
(Coding: number of separate occurrences)

V11: Strong negative visuals - Provoking -
Graphical visuals/images depicting uneasy situations. Example: People that are clearly injured, crying, bleeding, screaming. Also fire/burning, explosions, violence.
(Coding: number of separate occurrences)

SURPRISE
Surprising elements in this context are identified in the form of surprising narrative techniques that may trigger a feeling of surprise that strengthens the interest from the audience.

V12: Striking facts -
the video clip initially presents numbers/facts (spoken, written, visualized) that is interpreted as remarkable, appalling or surprising.
(Coding: Yes 1 or no 0).

V13: Narrative twist
1. Positive narrative twist - the video's been overall negative but ends with a rather positive or hopeful event or message.
2. Negative narrative twist - the video's been overall positive but ends with a rather negative or depressing event or message.
0. No narrative twist

THEME 2: IDENTIFICATION
The identification variable identifies characteristics in the content that speaks directly to the audience through elements that the Swedish audience can identify or empathize with from the Swedish context and also ways in which the audience can feel a responsibility or the chance of making a contribution.

V14: Identification -
When a connection to the Swedish/European audience is done through visuals, dialogue or text. For example: Comparisons between Swedish living conditions and the refugees. Connections that speak to the viewer as part the world, part of Europe, thus having a responsibility or possibility to help or make a difference. Also messages directed towards the viewer as if for example thanking them in different ways.
(Coding: number of separate occurrences).

THEME 3: PRESENTATION
What type of message is used to examine whether it is clear what the goal of the message is, which is also connected to whether it is explicitly clear what is expected by the audience in order to take action.

V15: Type of message
1. Sharing - narrator, actor, text or signs telling the viewer to share the clip
2. Donation - narrator, actor, text or signs telling the viewer to donate/support/contribute
3. Both sharing and donation
4. Informative - no clear call for sharing or donation rather a story or just information being told

SOUND
V16: MUSIC
As some units uses music in the construction of the videos this variable was included to examine possible differences between videos that have or did not have music. The type of music was narrowed than to be split into either joyful or melancholic music.
0. No music
1. Joyful music - Music triggering positive emotions used in the background or as the only sound.
   Example: Major harmonization. distinct base drum with a light piano melody and a choir humming
2. a melody together makes a positive tone
   Melancholic music - Music triggering melancholic emotions in the background or as the only sound.
   Example: Minor harmonization. Soft synth melody in the background makes a melancholic tone.

V17: Narrator - a narrator voice talking throughout the clip. Included if an interviewee is speaking throughout the clip even when they are not in picture.
0. No
1. Yes

NOVELTY
To account for the potential influence in the video being framed or told in an unusual or unique way, or with a degree of novelty, this variable is included.

V18: Interesting/unique
The visual or narrative construction is interpreted as unique, unusual or interesting. A clip that stands out in the context. Coding: (Yes 1 or no 0).

**CELEBRITIES**
The use of cultural celebrities as part of or acting in the videos is included in order to measure its potential impact. Identifying the celebrity is not based on personal knowledge, but instead on whether that is expressed in the video or the presentation.

**V19: Use of celebrities** - Use of Swedish or international cultural celebrities.
   0. No
   1. As a narrator
   2. Acting in person in the video

**RICH PRESENTATION**
The potential increase in the spread of the video due to the use of such "tools" that may assist or inspire the audience to interact are presented here. The "Gift" category was inspired by the pre-study on how a couple of videos call for the audience to give a gift or present to someone instead of using the word donate etc. (Coded as Yes 1 or No 0)

**V20: Hashtag** - a hashtag connected to the content presented in the headline or in the video
**V21: Mentioning celebrities** - cultural celebrities
**V22: Hyperlinks** - hyperlinks provided in the headline or in the video
**V23: Gifts** - In different ways urging the viewer to donate by giving a gift for someone (in the headline or in the video).

### 8.3. Appendix 3: Inter-coder reliability test

#### Inter-coder reliability test of the coding scheme between coder 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Coder 1</th>
<th>Coder 2</th>
<th>Correspondence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V5. Type of message</td>
<td>13x4, 1x1, 6x2</td>
<td>14x4, 1x1, 5x2</td>
<td>93 % / 100 % / 83 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V6. Positive visuals</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>97 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V7. Affection</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>98 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V8. Positive info</td>
<td>6 (pre recording-57)</td>
<td>75 (127)</td>
<td>88 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V9. Music</td>
<td>6x2, 1x2 (6x2)</td>
<td>1x2, 2x2, 1x3</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V10. Negative info.</td>
<td>128 (103)</td>
<td>115 (69)</td>
<td>88 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V11. Provoking visuals.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>95 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V12. Identification</td>
<td>28 (17)</td>
<td>28 (5)</td>
<td>92 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V14. Striking facts</td>
<td>5 (2)</td>
<td>6 (5)</td>
<td>83 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V15. Narrative twist</td>
<td>9x1, 2x2</td>
<td>8x1, 2x2</td>
<td>89 % / 100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V16. Uniqueness</td>
<td>7 (3)</td>
<td>8 (6)</td>
<td>98 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V17. Use of celeb.</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V18. Narrator</td>
<td>14x1</td>
<td>14x1</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V19. Hashtag</td>
<td>3x1</td>
<td>2x1</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V20. Celebs mentioned</td>
<td>3x1</td>
<td>2x1</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V21. Hyperlinks</td>
<td>3x1</td>
<td>3x1</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V22. Gifts</td>
<td>5x1</td>
<td>5x1</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Inter-coder reliability test between coder 1 and 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Coder 1</th>
<th>Coder 3</th>
<th>Correspondence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive visuals</td>
<td>22 %</td>
<td>21 %</td>
<td>95 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>24 %</td>
<td>27 %</td>
<td>89 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive info.</td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>11 %</td>
<td>85 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative info.</td>
<td>12 %</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td>86 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provocative visuals</td>
<td>8 %</td>
<td>8 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative visuals</td>
<td>22 %</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>91 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>4 %</td>
<td>83 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Press release

Sverige för UNHCR:s budskap i sociala medier om flyktingkrisen uppmuntrar inte till viral spridning

När bilden på den treåriga pojken Alan Kurdi fick viral spridning under hösten 2015 fick den rådande flyktingkrisen ökat fokus i nyhetsmedia och allmänhetens dagordning. I ett mediesamhälle där sociala medier verkar i symbios med traditionell massmedia kan det som sprids på sociala medie-plattformar på så sätt bidra till att sätta nyhetsdagordningen.


För att kunna förstå vad som får videor att få stor spridning användes teorier inom marknadsföring. Genom att anpassa sådana marknadsföringstekniker bakom viral spridning fann studien att biståndsorganisationer i högre grad kan få publikens uppmärksamhet och i förlängningen påverka dagordningen.

Studien fann även att UNHCR:s videor sågs av många fler efter Alan Kurdi, vilket visar hur nyhetsbevakningen alltjämt är avgörande för att denna organisation ska få allmänhetens uppmärksamhet. Detta eftersom att videorna i sig generellt inte var konstruerade på ett sådant sätt som maximerar möjligheterna för viral spridning.

Samtidigt visade exemplet “Search for Syria” hur ett videoklipp som på samma gång provokrerar, överraskar såväl som att inge hopp, kan nå en stor publikskara oberoende av rådande dagordning, då detta klipp publicerades långt före flyktingkrisen var som allra mest aktuell under 2015.

Niklas Adamsson och Tom Axner
Getting the audience’s attention by going viral: A case study on Sverige för UNHCR’s video messages on the refugee crisis.
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