Social Media Reactions

An empirical study about the shifting communication dynamics on Facebook

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Abstract

Facebook is in the forefront when it comes to technical development and allowing new and faster communication opportunities. In this study, one of the latest technical additions on Facebook is being researched; namely the reaction-button. The aim of this paper is to understand the usage of the reaction-button as well as its impact on interpersonal communications, immediacy and speed in society. The research focuses on six different themes; Culture of Speed, Social acceleration, Space and time, Media richness, Immediacy as well as Telemediation. Empirical material have been collected through qualitative Think-aloud interviews and quantitative content analysis. The research is, among other things, questioning the actual need of a reaction-button and whether it is used the way it is intended. Furthermore, it presents the problematics within a potential harm on social relationships, a loss in communicative value and an inactive behavior caused by the obsession about speeding up online social interactions.

Keywords: Social media, Facebook, Reaction-button, Interpersonal communications, Culture of speed, Social acceleration, Media richness, Immediacy, Intermediacy, Telemediation
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1. Introduction

Social media is a huge phenomenon under constant development. Among all of the existing social networking sites, Facebook is the most successful (Facebook Q4 Conference Call, 2016) and is therefore a highly suitable platform to examine in terms of social reactions. In the last couple of years, wireless internet usage has increased and nowadays almost everybody in the age group of 18-29 is using the internet on the go rather than stationary, for example on their mobile phone (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith and Zickuhr, 2010). One of the most common activities when using the internet on the go is visiting social media sites. Since 2006, the earlier phenomenon of blogging started to decrease among teens and young adults and the "micro blogging" started to take over the earlier "macro blogging" (Lenhart et al, 2010). Micro blogging mostly includes posts and status updates on social media platforms. Being the most used social media platform among young adults, Facebook with its 1,59 billion users (Facebook Q4 Conference Call, 2016) has more users than WhatsApp, Twitter and Instagram combined (Zephoria, 2016). Due to these statistics it is understandable that Facebook has a huge influence on changes in social interactions and interpersonal communications in society. As Zuckerberg himself explains; "...we’re improving the lives of people and communities around the world” (Facebook Q4 Conference Call, 2016). Because of this high level of impact, new functions and ways of communicating on the platform needs to be studied further in order to keep up with the shifting communication dynamics. It can also be discussed wether these changes are improvements, as Zuckerberg explains, or if Facebook's influence on society is resulting in something else. This study is conducted within the research field of social media and especially Facebook, with a focus on possible effects and problems on the ongoing interpersonal communication between users due to new technical addition. The study applies a hermeneutic approach and the method is based on qualitative Think-aloud interviews with eight different Facebook users in order to understand their usage and thoughts regarding the issue. The study is also based on a quantitative content analysis in order to compliment the research with a broader amount of data regarding the reaction usage.

1.1 Background

Ever since the beginning of time, people have invented new ways in how to communicate with each other. In addition to face-to-face communication, people started sending letters to each other, the telephone was invented, and later came the computer with the ability to send e-mails and nowadays also social networking and social media sites. With other words, communication is a phenomenon
that has been under development for a long period of time and even further development can be predicted. In the field of communications, sociologists have critically scrutinized an increasing need of making communications over a distance even quicker and easier (Tomlinsson, 2007). At the moment the terms *Culture of speed* and *Social acceleration* is highly researched and it focuses on the increased desire for things to work at a higher pace in society and communications is taking a huge part in this development (Tomlinson, 2007; Rosa, 2013). It is clear that social media and especially Facebook has as a huge part in the new and faster ways to communicate.

In Facebook’s fourth quarterly report of 2015, they presented the number of 1.59 billion users and out of these, 1.04 are using Facebook everyday (Quarterly Earnings, 2016). Their total revenue also grew by 52 percent which shows that although Facebook has celebrated its 12th birthday, the social networking platform keeps expanding at a high speed with the final goal of connecting the world (Facebook Q4 Conference Call, 2016). In December, 1.44 billion people accessed Facebook on their mobile phone. A lot of these people are on the go when using Facebook and to compose comments and responses on the mobile keypad takes to much time (Stinson, 2016). To satisfy this need of composing faster reactions on the go, the newest technical addition on Facebook is a reaction button that works with ready made expression-emojis that can be added by users when seeing a post. These feelings include *Like, Love, Haha, Wow, Sad* and *Angry*.

"We’ve been listening to people and know that there should be more ways to easily and quickly express how something you see in News Feed makes you feel. That’s why today we are launching Reactions, an extension of the Like button, to give you more ways to share your reaction to a post in a quick and easy way." (Sammi Krug, Product Manager)

The reaction-button was introduced in March 2016 and added to all of the posts on Facebook, new as well as previous posts. The reaction-button function as an extension of reactions to choose from, with the previous like-button being one of many options. The reaction-button is placed under the post and when the user touches, what looks like the old like button, the additional reaction alternatives will appear. When a user views a post, they have the possibility to see how other people have reacted to the specific post.

The reaction options that the users are given did not happen by chance; for over a year Facebook has conducted information through global research such as surveys and focus groups in order to see which reactions people want to use the most. Already existing comments were also
studied in order to determine which reactions to use (Krug, 2016). Facebook describes the newest addition as their way of making the platform more user-friendly, allowing the users to share their feelings and reactions more quickly. Mark Zuckerberg, the owner and founder of Facebook also saw the need of this type of nuanced way to interact because simply, not all posts are likable (Stinson, 2016). Facebook also has future plans with the addition. At the moment the reaction-button works in the same way as the like-button when it comes to finding out which posts the users want to see more of. When users like a post, Facebook can use this to customize the personal news feed. Facebook’s Product Manager explains that a further development of the system to customize the news feed, will probably be to have the different reactions mean different things for the personal news feed in order to improve the personal stories and give the users content that suits them the most (Stinson, 2016).

1.3 Problem Definition

As mentioned previously, the earlier comment application was the only way for users to express their feelings and reactions on Facebook, except for pressing the like-button. Today users have a series of reactions to choose from as a compliment to commenting and liking posts and it is fair to expect that this will have effects of different kinds. There are possible consequences with the reaction-button which are important to discuss.

Initially, it can be argued that the reaction-button will take over the comment-function. Therefore it can be seen as a contributing factor to the ever increasing high speed communication in society. In some cases when the user may feel that a chosen emoji-reaction is enough, the user may not leave a comment as well. This may result in less personal content on Facebook and less diversity which can result in users losing their ability to share personalized information at a deeper level. It can also influence how people think they feel about a post; the users have a series of categorized reactions to choose from and the ability to see how others have reacted may restrict the user to conform to the ideas of others. This is different from the old ways where the comment section played a bigger role and left more room for diversity.

Other than the fact that the categorized reactions leads to conform to how other people have used the reaction-button, the fact that the reactions are already chosen in advance limits the complexity of human emotions. Whereas Facebook has based the set of reactions on research it still shuts out a lot of human expressions and emotions. It reinforces the existing infrastructure in society on which emotions that are accepted to show in public. A lot of Facebook content is focused
on positive things. People are sharing happy pictures, funny videos and interesting stories. This is a result of a lot of users striving to show their life in the brightest colors which in turn has effected the selection of reactions; leaving it to be more positive than negative. Even though the reaction-button allows the user to show anger it is not the same as a dislike and it can be questioned why there is a "love" and not a "hate". All of this suggests the limitations of the reaction-button and how it contributes to accepted societal behavior.

In accordance with the human complexity the reaction-emojis can be interpreted in different ways which often leads to misunderstandings. For example, the wow-button can both been seen as positive and negative. Also, the angry-button can mean either that the user does not like the post itself or that the angry reaction is to the message in the post. The limitations in the reaction-button shuts out the ability to question the symbolic values behind the chosen reaction. This differs from the comment-function where the user can leave questions in order to gain full understanding of what the user means.

In summary, the reaction-button speeds up communications but maybe we need to be prepared for losses in the meaning of interpersonal communications. The desire of having things working at a high speed is maybe to intense and the obsession about always communicating immediately may lead to a lost value in communications. The high speed reactions may also result in that users do not leave much though to the real message and whereas they believe they are ever present and gaining information, the opposite may be the case. All of this leaves me questioning; Why do we need to react on so many things at the same time? and Why do we need to be co-present everywhere and show that we always care and exist?

1.4 Purpose and Research Questions
The aim of this thesis project is to, with qualitative research and a hermeneutic approach, examine the effect Facebook has on social interactions with a focus on speed and immediacy.

- How do Facebook users experience the reaction-button and how is it used?

- How will the reaction-button effect interpersonal communications both in physical and virtual spaces?

- How will the reaction-button effect the ongoing increasing speed of social interactions in society?
2. Literature Review

This section lays out the theoretical framework for the study by reviewing previous research and highlighting relevant theories. The new and evolving field of digital media is a highly discussed topic, both in the private and the corporate sector. Its impact on society can also be seen on many different levels. The literature review will mainly focus on social media, increased speed of communication in society, social acceleration, space and time compression for social interactions, immediacy and intermediacy.

2.1 Social Media Effects

It is natural to begin with an overview of what has led up to the current social media landscape. Van Dijck and Poell (2013) is researching the emergence of social media platforms such as Facebook. They are focusing on its constant development and shifting dynamics, both on the level of informal interactions as well as institutional structures. Van Dijck and Poell (2013) is discussing the term Social media logic that mainly focuses on the dynamic between social media platforms, mass media, users and social institutions. In the research they are identifying four different principles; programability, popularity, connectivity and datafication. Programability mainly stresses the ability of a social media platform to trigger and engage users to creatively or communicative contribute, while users in turn, trough the coded environments, influence the communication and information flow on the platform. Popularity is mainly focusing on different platforms’ strategies of advancing some topics and prioritizing particular users due to their popularity and "likeability" in society. Furthermore, Connectivity refers to “the socio-technical affordance of networked platforms to connect content to user activities and advertisers” (van Dijck and Poell, 2013 p. 8). Datafication focuses on networks ability to gather a range of different data on a level that has never been possible before, through online-surveys as well as meta data directly from smart phones. Despite their findings, van Dijck and Poell (2013) stresses the importance of continuous studies, especially in terms of media effects, both on the personal and societal level. This is of course due to the constant development that can be seen on already existing social media platforms as well as on new emerging platforms.

Another scholar that has been looking in to the effects of media is Deuze (2012) who is also talking about the accurate and growing phenomena of social media platforms. Deuze (2012) describes how the new media technology takes up a bigger and bigger part in peoples daily life all over the globe. He is also talking about the increasing invisibility of media and describes it as the
biggest challenge in the 21th century within the media research field. The increasing invisibility of media is being described as an effect of the fact that media is disappearing from peoples consciousness because of the high usage. Media is being used on such a intense basis that people take it for granted and does not reflect on its actual meanings and effects. Many people are not aware on the amount of time spent on social media and also how the behavior on social media is effecting interpersonal communications. Another concept discussed by Deuze is the mediation of everything. Like the concept suggests, it is about society is adapting itself to the frames of media. Weather we are thinking about it or not, the way we act, and the way decisions are made, is highly influenced by media. In terms of future research, Deuze (2012) is in agreement with van Dijck and Poell (2013) that the field is in the need of more research and studies.

In the article "Active audiences? The debate is progresses but is far from resolved”, Livingstone (2015) is also talking about the mediation of everything and the increased usage of social media platforms in peoples daily life. She discusses weather people actually are active participants when using social media platforms or rather passive. The status when signed in on Facebook says "online” but the research of Livingstone (2015) is questioning the users actual activeness as well as people’s collective and individual experiences in a digital age. She is arguing that each new phase of sociotechnological change must be reasserted and that the focus should be on reflexively rethinking "audiencing" and the actual means pf modernity and globalization. Whereas the earlier discussed scholars is pressing for further research in the field, Baym (2010) takes on the most critical approach to the new and developed media in what she, in accordance to Livingstone (2015) calls the Digital age. She discusses the new media in terms of personal connections and its impact on both interpersonal and social relationships. Baym (2010) presents her view on the increased use of internet especially in combination with mobile devices have disrupted and created a change in peoples lives. Among other things, the increased usage of these devices is bringing anxieties and hopes on a level that did not exist before. Her concern is mainly within the effect on relationships but also the long term effects that may occur on the societal level as well. A part of her argument is within the increased speed online that opens up for a whole new way to interact and the possibility of immediate communications. This may bring negative as well as positive outcomes. People can be reached by others whenever, but at the same time this availability creates a huge space for interpretation and in connection with this, misunderstandings and damaged relationships (Baym, 2010). A part of these outcomes can be attributed to the ever increasing need for speed in society, especially within the field of communications.
2.2 Speed in Society & Social Acceleration

Previous studies present an existing need of increased speed in society that, among other things, can be seen within the technical developments and especially the forthcoming of social media. Tomlinson (2007) is presenting the term *Culture of Speed* that implies a new cultural reality that includes speed and immediacy. He is connecting various topics in his research, beginning with the history of improved industrial production, which is leading to speed in culture. Tomlinson (2007) talks about speed in terms of *machine speed* and how it may lead to an *unruly speed culture*.

*Machine speed* mainly describes speed as progress. There has been technological progress allowing humans to produce at a higher speed for example within the work space. The progress can also be seen in the field of communications and lately in that social media allows you to always be present and respond without even using words. With the term *Unruly speed culture* Tomlinson (2007) questions the actual effects of this progress. Up until recently, machine speed was always associated with positive development and productivity. Tomlinson (2007) means that society may have reached a point where the development of machine speed is being contra productive instead. He discusses that the increased speed allows multitasking and shifting focus which may result in a loss of focus to the main task.

Other concepts that Tomlinson (2007) mention is immediacy and telemediation. When talking about immediacy, he is also presenting *Culture of instantaneity* and *Cultural proximity* that in many ways are connected to the emergence of media into modern culture. Tomlinson (2007) argues that media and the instant communication technologies have had a great impact on our lives in that it creates and shapes our expectations and beliefs of what our lives are and maybe should be instead. He is also adding the blurred lines between producers and consumers into the discussion. Nowadays, technology is among other things allowing people to take care of their shopping and booking online which results in that the consumer is taking more and more control over how and when they are spending time on things. In accordance to this, the role of the producers is getting smaller. As an addition to this, Tomlinson (2007) presents *Telemediation* as an increased usage of electronic communications and media systems in the everyday experience. We can nowadays communicate wherever we are and we can get information from a huge amount of sources in almost no time at all. In order to take part in this high speed communicating society we need to be consumers of different devices and if we are, we can take part in the telemediated life. In addition to the mainly negative discussion of *Culture of speed*, Tomlinson (2007) is also presenting some positive outcomes from the immediacy and telemediation, mainly the fact that it brings us closer to
each other and creates a type of togetherness. It also makes the gap between desire and fulfillment shorter by allowing people to freely roam the World Wide Web.

Rosa (2013) is also discussing speed in society, but in terms of Social Acceleration. His research addresses a wide range of topics including the social transformations from the industrial revolution and the reorganization of human social and political relationships. Rosa (2013) presents speed as a central role in the modern social research. He stresses the importance of social acceleration in order to understand modernity and the modernization process. His research takes a critical approach to the modern society and discusses the actual effects of a high speed society. In accordance with Tomlinson (2007) he has identified a few negative outcomes. Things are nowadays moving so fast that it may be a challenge for people to keep up with the speed that comes from being ever present. At the same time people need to learn how to use the latest technology and adjust to the changes that comes with it. In that respect, it is a multidimensional acceleration of social processes and events, and it expands beyond the field of communication. In the same way as Tomlinsson (2007) includes positive effects of modern high speed, Rosa (2013) does the same. He presents modernity as the beginning of people being able to shape their lives together in a common way and also people being able to control their social affairs in a new way, for example through social media platforms. According to Rosa (2013), the beginning of modernity brought hopes for a happy and free social and political world, although he presents the actual effects of the modernization process as something else.

2.3 Space and Time

The computer and the Internet has opened up for a lot of new possibilities and among these new ways to interact with others through social media. When it comes to communication in digital spaces Baym (2010) talks about how the new media gives people the possibility to feel social by creating interpersonal relationships and immediacy. It also allows people to show off their lives to each other. Furthermore, digital media allows people to express emotions online, as well as always being there when something happens since it allows the ability to be available at all times. Baym (2010) discusses the effects of these opportunities and its effects on social relationships. Digital media means that people can show that they care about each other, but at the same time it can create misunderstandings and a loss in the value of social relationships. A core reason for this is the previously discussed immediacy which is one of the major factors that distinguish online
interactions from "real life" interactions. Baym (2010) compares online interactions with writing instead of speaking. The difference in the written message is that it can almost always be edited, people who interact can be in different places as well as the message can be seen by an anonymous reader. This has further effects on how there is a difference in creating messages online compared to the physical reality. Due to these differences when communicating online, Baym (2010) means that the way communications are perceived during online interactions must be taken in consideration by users to make sure that the receiver is perceiving the message as intended. The speed of interactions can also be described as one factor that is effecting how users perceive one another, for example due to immediacy and hidden values behind online interactions that can have a huge effect on relationships (Baym, 2010). Social presence theory is also an important theory to have in mind when talking about social interactions and perceptions. Social presence theory focuses on how people perceive each other as real and present when being on the internet. The immediacy and liveliness in almost always being reachable through a social media platform must have an affect on the perception of one another. The social presence theory can also be discussed in terms of effectiveness and that online meetings are less effective and misleading than physical meetings (Baym, 2010).

In terms of the distinction between online meetings and physical meetings Kaun and Stjernstedt (2014) talks about the perceived space and time in digital media. Digital media can be described as a way of organizing and creating "a sense of time" (Kaun & Stiernstedt, 2014 p. 16) and digital media, especially social media, reproduces a type of immediacy and liveness that is in the need of high speed usage from a various of online users. Digital media takes up a large part of peoples daily life and exists like a flow that covers almost all of the globe. Nowadays, people are spending more and more time on social media and especially Facebook (Kaun & Stiernstedt, 2014). Five new Facebook profiles are created every second and every 60 seconds 293 000 statuses are updated and 136 000 photos are uploaded which means that 300 million pictures are uploaded on a daily basis (www.zephoria.com, 2016-05-03). Kaun and Stiernstedt (2014) have been researching user experiences and activity on Facebook. They describe Facebook, and especially the Facebook pages as a connective memory ecology where the user can post, comment, share and like content. This ecology includes immediacy and durability, liveness and storage in order to work and the memory is guided by "technical infrastructure" (Kaun & Stiernstedt, 2014). Furthermore, they discuss the Facebook ecology in terms of archive, flow and narrative. Facebook as an archive describes the activity that includes using Facebook to post content that presents historical events,
for example within a company. This type of use can be problematic since Facebook want users to constantly upload new and current material not sorting and structuring old material (Kaun & Stiernstedt, 2014). The term flow within the research field of Facebook is being described as the temporality and the personalized newsfeed that is changing at a constant flow. The flow creates a nowness of information and the information are chosen to suit the user and it is also refreshing at a high speed (Kaun & Stiernstedt, 2014). Facebook as a narrative is being described as the fact that Facebook opens up for users to tell their stories and show their memories as they want. In extension, the administrators pushes people to tell their stories in different ways, for example by encourage users to share old memories and to get in contact with old friends.

2.4 Immediacy and Intermediacy

One of the main characteristics of digital communication are its ability to create immediacy. When discussing media and immediacy the theory of Media richness becomes relevant. Media richness theory was introduced already in 1986 by Daft and Lengel who studied communications within organizations in order to find out where the communication often is defective. A lot of problems in communication exists due to the lack of clarity and not the lack of data. In order to improve the communication, the right medium need to be used. A medium that is rich and therefore reproduces the information in the right way, including visual senses as well as verbal (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Media richness theory can be described as a framework that describes the ability a communication medium has to reproduce the information that is being sent through it (Daft & Lengel, 1986). A phone call for example, can not produce social cues and because of this it is viewed as a less rich medium. To make the phone call richer, it should include a video function so that gestures and facial expressions can be seen as well. There are both positive and negative views on Media richness theory. Suh (1999) presents a research on Media richness theory and the results does not support the effects presented by Daft and Lengel (1986). Suh (1999) means that his study shows proof of that "richer media” such as visuals, does not necessarily mean more efficient communications. On the other hand, practitioners such as Kahai and Cooper (2014) supports Media richness theory and presents that the theory is good to use in order to describe different online interaction as more effective than others. Futhermore, they present that Media richness facilitates social perceptions and that it facilitates clarity within online communications. Richer media can have a great impact in how the message is perceived and understood by the reacher.
In extension to the slightly older theory of Media richness, the term *Media immediacy* has grown in pace with the evolving digital media. Phone calls are becoming less relevant and instant messaging is becoming more popular (Belk & Llamas, 2013). Mobile phones are nowadays used more often to go online on the internet, for example chatting on Facebook, than to make calls with. With the new digital medias, people can do things from home that they before needed to visit a store or maybe an office to do (Belk & Llamas, 2013). Although Media immediacy can be talked about in terms of faster and maybe in some cases also clearer communications, the immediacy and its high speed information flow may keep the user from reflecting over its actual means (Belk & Llamas, 2013). The society is under a constant modernity development with a clear focus on speed that Rosa (2013), as earlier mentioned, talks about in terms of Social acceleration. Earlier practitioners also discussed immediacy and in addition; *Transparent Immediacy* that is being described as media whose purpose is to disappear and make the user feel like they are in the visual world (Bolter & Grusin, 1999). To create a sense of immediacy and presence, the virtual reality should come as close to the users daily life as possible and the virtual experience should not be disrupted by any crashes, slow frames or blurr. In summary Bolter and Grusin (1999) are talking about a type of immediacy that is in the need of high speed in order to create a complete virtual reality where digital media is becoming a part of the ”real life”.

In addition to the discussion regarding immediacy and transparent immediacy the term *Intermediacy* grew. Intermediacy is defined as ”the act of being intermediate or of acting intermediately” (www.dictionary.com, 2016-05-11). The term that is created out of the coherence between immediacy and media describes the function and coherence that immediacy and media is creating when existing in alignment. Keightley (2013) explains the importance of studies regarding acceleration and speed within the research field of late modernity. She argues about how late modernity is collapsing due to the new experiences of time that comes from the new existing media culture. She is using the concept of indeterminacy and adds the mediation of time to create the concept of intermediacy. Furthermore, Keightley (2013) argues that ”it is only through an analysis of mediated time as produced through the users and perception of media that the multiple and various temporalities which are supported, shaped and performed through mediated cultural life, can be assessed” (p.1). She also mean that the focus must be on the imaginative and symbolic provisions of media and how it produces time and temporal experiences. Keightley (2013) expresses critique against earlier researchers ways of conceptualizing speed within communication research. For example, that the speed features contemporary social life and that the human, within
this process, is acting as a passive observer. Keightley (2013) means that technologies have a specific affect on the users, combining the sense of past, present and future. In addition to this, she also argues that different medias must be taken in consideration, since they construct and produce temporary in different ways.
4. Data and Methodology

In the following section, the implemented methods will be presented beginning with the academic approach. The chosen methods, implementation as well as a reliability and method reflection will also be covered.

4.1 Analytical Approach

The studied concept in this article is tackled with a qualitative critical approach by looking into the possible effects that follow the increased speed of communications in society with a focus on mediated reactions on Facebook. The study is of hermeneutic approach since the aim is to understand peoples’ thoughts and behaviors as well as seeking understanding in how the phenomenon is constructed (May, 2013). Hermeneutic research has existed for a long time and covers a lot of research fields in human science (Kinsella, 2006). “Hermeneutics reveals the mediated processes of all human understanding” (Kinsella, 2006 p.1) and is therefore suitable when it comes to understanding human behavior and thoughts. The aim of the hermeneutic approach is namely to seek understanding, and understanding may occur when the interpreter sees how the items that are being studied relates to each other. In order to gain this understanding, the chosen theories and collected empirical material have been developed and chosen interdependently throughout the whole research process. In order to analyze the empirical material, main categories with notes have been created initially, in order to get a structured overview to begin with. This strategy can be described as in vivo-coding, which presents an analytic process were the empirical material and its specific observations function as a starting point for the research (Eksell & Thelander, 2014). Further in the process, the quantitative method possesses the function of adding complemented data in order to study the chosen topic on a broader level.

4.2 Chosen Methods

In addition to the coherence between theory and empirical material, different sorts of data and methods have been used in the research. In social sciences this mix is called triangulation, which is defined as "the mixing of data or methods so that diverse viewpoints or standpoints cast light upon a topic" (Olsen, Holborn and Haralambos, 2004 p. 3). Also, the combining of qualitative and quantitative data methods is increasing within the field of social science, since it provides understandings on different levels (Punch, 2014). The mixing of methods within this research has been helpful in order to reach a good and credible result as well as a thorough analysis regarding the
chosen topic. The first method used in the research is qualitative Think-aloud interviews and the second one is a quantitative method based on a content analysis of collected data from Facebook.

4.2.1 Think-aloud Interviews
The research is mainly based on Think-aloud interviews since the research interest is regarding the users thoughts, behaviors and reactions when using the specific media. Seeing that much of what we think does not come out verbally, this method is preferable to use in order to make the inner thoughts external and understandable for another person. Think-aloud interviews provide good and valid data about the participants way of thinking about a specific concept (Charters, 2003), as in this case their thoughts and behaviors on Facebook.

Think-aloud interviews have been completed with eight different persons, four men and four women. The interview persons were chosen based on gender in order to get responses from 50% men and 50 % women. The selection was also based on age since statistics show that the younger generation (young adults), 18-29 year olds, are the most frequent Facebook users (Facebook Q4-15 Earnings Conference Call, 2016). Therefore, only this age group is represented in the study because they can be expected to have the knowledge to answer the questions in the interview. Also seeing that the sample size is kept small the answers from this group can be expected to represent the answers of most Facebook users. Another requirement in the selection of interview persons were that they should have used Facebook both before and after the reaction-button was introduced in order to know the possible differences and similarities before and after its introduction. However, there was no criteria that the interview persons should be using the button, just that they should be familiar with it.

Description of interview persons:

1. Woman, 22 y/o, Malmö/Sweden, working as a Service technician
2. Man, 24 y/o, Malmö/Sweden, studying to become a Engineer
3. Woman, 25 y/o, Malmö/Sweden, studying to become a Pharmacy technician
4. Man, 24 y/o, Malmö/Sweden, working at a Food market
5. Woman, 24 y/o, Växjö/Sweden, working as a Research assistant
6. Man, 27 y/o, Växjö/Sweden, working as an Athlete coach
7. Woman, 22 y/o, Sundsvall/Sweden, studying to become a nurse
8. Man, 24 y/o, Sundsvall/Sweden, studying to become a Engineer
4.2.2 Content Analysis

In addition to the Think-aloud interviews, content on Facebook have been collected for further analysis. The content consist of Facebook posts that has been collected from a famous news site with over 270 000 followers (Aftonbladet) in order to observe the usage of the reaction-button and to compare the user behaviors both before and after the new function was implemented. Six posts were selected from before the addition of the reaction-button and six posts were selected from after the reactions were introduced. The posts were selected due to its content and in order to get a trustworthy result the posts have the same main topic (politics) and a equivalent mood. The nature of this method is regarded as quantitative since the result consists of statistical distribution of the different reactions and comments.

4.4 Implementation

The Think-aloud interviews took place between the 27th of April to the 5th of May 2016. Each interview lasted 30 to 40 minutes and included both observations and structured interview questions. The interview started with about 15 minutes of observation, followed by 10 minutes of interview questions and finally another 10 minutes of observation. The interview questions were created in advance (see Appendix 1), but supplementary questions were also added in accordance with the outcome of the individual interviews. The observations were structured to allow the interview persons to use Facebook like they normally do and to talk loud and clear about their thoughts when using the social media platform. The interviewer observed the behavior and kept a dialogue by asking relevant questions and keeping a discussion with the goal to understand the interview persons usage and thoughts. The place for the interviews were chosen by the interview persons in order to suit their demands. The only requirement was that it had to be a calm and quiet place in order to conduct good observations and generate good interview data. The interview was recorded and narratively transcribed afterwards in order to get the most out of the interviews and to not miss any relevant empirical data.

After the eight interviews were conducted it was decided that more interviews were not needed in order to reach scientific saturation. This decision was made in accordance to Kvale and Brinkmann (2014) that means that within qualitative research the focus should instead be on analyzing the qualitative material as carefully as possible rather than focusing on having as many interviews as possible. The gathered data from the interviews and the fact that a content analysis also were made, strengthened this decision further.
When gathering the content from Facebook the number of comments and likes were at first noted in the pre-reaction posts. The numbers of comments and emoji-reactions were then noted from the posts after the reaction-button was introduced. The collected data was summed up in an Excel document with the title of the post presented, as well as the date of the post and the results of the reaction activities. The final result is presented in a table (section 5.2.1) diagram (section 5.2.2) as well as a table with percentage calculations (section 5.2.3) in order to see potential correlations as well as discrepancies from before and after the reaction-button was introduced.

### 4.5 Reliability and Reflection

When doing qualitative research and Think-aloud interviews, some advantages and disadvantages can be identified. It can be criticized that the researcher is the central instrument for measurement since it is the researcher that should see the world through other peoples eyes (Bryman, 2012). This human aspect may result in a subjectivity which is important to have in mind in order to stay objective throughout the whole research process. It is also important to have in mind that the whole research will be effected by the interview person’s way of looking at the world, their life philosophy and values (Merriam, 1994). The interpretation will again be influenced by the human aspect of the researcher and may again result in some kind of warp within the research. The interview persons might be presenting a beatified version of the reality or even the opposite, a much more negative view. These aspects are important to have in mind throughout the whole research process and also it is important to stay reflexive over the effect these outcomes may have on the empirical material and how it is presented (Bryman, 2012). Furthermore, the fact that the researcher knows the interview persons may reflect on the results, both in a positive and negative way. It can on one hand open up for a much deeper discussion since the person trust the researcher and therefore is more open with expressing their thoughts. On the other hand, it can also be negative if the interview person feels the need to shape their responses after what they believe that the researcher wants to hear. In order to prevent this potential outcome, it is important to be trustworthy and objective as a researcher and also clear in expressing the want to hear the interview persons real thoughts and experiences.

Advantages and disadvantages can also be seen in the usage of content analysis as a method. The number of analyzed posts may be considered as low and therefore it can be discussed whether the result is credible and if it should be talked about as the "truth". However, the fact that the study includes methods of both qualitative and quantitative approaches makes the case of 12 posts to be
sufficient, since the content analysis function as a supplement to the qualitative interviews. Furthermore, the research is not existing to present a conventional truth, instead it seeks to present experienced behavior and thoughts regarding a specific media. In this type of research, the human factor takes up a large part even though this part of the method is quantitative. It is therefore important to once again highlight the human aspects and take these in consideration throughout the quantitative research part as well. This because it is the researcher that is in charge of the selection of posts and that will of course have an effect on the final outcome. It can be partly prevented if the researcher stays objective throughout the whole research process and has clear restrictions in the choosing of posts, as in this research by including posts with the same main topic and a similar mood as well as restrictions within the publish date.
5. Results

In the following section, the empirical data is being presented in graphs in order to produce a quick overview of the collected material, both the interview results and content analysis.

5.1 Think-aloud Interviews

At first the results from the structured interviews have been collected in a table in order to present the data for further analysis. The data in the table is a selection of the most important questions (see all of the questions in Appendix 1). The interview persons is being presented above in the methodsection (4.2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>When did you start using Facebook?</th>
<th>What are your most common activities on Facebook?</th>
<th>How often do you post anything? And what are you posting?</th>
<th>Have you been using the new reaction button?</th>
<th>Which ones do you use and how do you choose?</th>
<th>Do you see any differences? Positive or negative consequences?</th>
<th>What impact do you think the reaction button will have on our communication with others?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Chat, like posts, tag people in funny stuff</td>
<td>Once a month, pictures.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mostly like and love</td>
<td>Sad that it is needed because people are in such hurry.</td>
<td>It will maybe harm relationships because it feels a bit superficial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Chat and scrolling through news feed</td>
<td>Once every third month, pictures and short stories</td>
<td>Yes, but not much</td>
<td>Only like</td>
<td>Positive to give a reaction so fast</td>
<td>Comments will decrease and reactions will increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Chat, scrolling through news feed, liking sites</td>
<td>One or two times a month, sharing sites, events and videos</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mostly, like, love, wow and haha</td>
<td>Maybe it can take time to choose reaction and maybe misunderstandings can occur</td>
<td>Maybe less personal comments because people choose a reaction instead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Chat and watching videos</td>
<td>Maybe twice a year, pictures</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Just like and love</td>
<td>No difference</td>
<td>Do not know, maybe because not many of my friends are using it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Chat, commenting and liking pictures</td>
<td>Every second month, pictures and if something interesting happens</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Like and love. Love is like a &quot;special&quot; like</td>
<td>Can maybe cause pressure if people compare the reactions</td>
<td>Maybe people will reflect less on what they are seeing and just moves on at a high speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Chat, scrolling through the news feed</td>
<td>1-2 times a year, thanking for birthday wishes or sport news</td>
<td>Yes, but not much</td>
<td>Like, I think the rest is unnecessary</td>
<td>It seems in personable and lazy. I like to talk in person instead</td>
<td>People will maybe be less willing to express their feelings in real life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Chat, videos, news feed</td>
<td>Once a month, pictures</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Only like and love</td>
<td>Good to have an option, mostly to &quot;unlike&quot; bad posts</td>
<td>Maybe no difference for us. In the beginning it is mostly fun to have options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Chat and scrolling through news feed</td>
<td>Once a year, thanking for birthday wishes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Only like</td>
<td>It does not make any difference to me because I do not use them</td>
<td>I do not think it will affect that much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2 Content Analysis

One diagram and two tables has been created in order to present the results from the content collection on Facebook. The first table presents the amount of likes/reactions and comments as well as the names of the articles and the publish date. The second diagram presents the amount of comments and likes/reactions in comparison to each other. The last table presents the percentage of comments compared to likes/reactions in order to see how people are using the different functions and also to identify possible differences before and after the new reaction-button was added. BR is short for ”before reactions” and AR stands for ”after reactions”. Two articles each month have been selected for the analysis in order to gather a sufficient amount of data and to look at the development over time.

5.2.1 Table of information regarding posts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEFORE REACTIONS</th>
<th>December-</th>
<th>December-</th>
<th>January-</th>
<th>January-</th>
<th>February-</th>
<th>February-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Foreign Minister confirms: We are ready</td>
<td>In a closed country is not where we want to live</td>
<td>She rejected Social democrats for SD</td>
<td>Can Löfven turn it around?</td>
<td>SD-leader: Eliasson must get fired</td>
<td>Everyone wants to think that it all goes to hell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haha</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wow</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFTER REACTIONS</th>
<th>March-</th>
<th>March-</th>
<th>April-</th>
<th>April-</th>
<th>May-</th>
<th>May-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S-minister wants to see a quota of VAB - days</td>
<td>Björklunds anger against AKB: &quot;It doesn't work&quot;</td>
<td>Löfven, how can you congratulate Kaplan?</td>
<td>Political scientist about MP: &quot;They are amateurs&quot;</td>
<td>SVT: Nomination Committee wants to dismiss Romson and Fridolin</td>
<td>NATO-agreement delayed for a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haha</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wow</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example of articles:

1. *Hon ratade Socialdemokraterna - för SD* ("She rejected Socialdemocrats - for SD")
2. *Löfven, hur kan du hylla Kaplan?* ("Löfven, how can you congratulate Kaplan?")
5.2.2 Table of comments and like/reactions

*The amount of comments and like/reactions have been combined for each month. The number of comments have then been divided by the combined likes/reactions in order to get an overall view of the usage of comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments/Likes or reactions*</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>17,5 %</td>
<td>14,5 %</td>
<td>59 %</td>
<td>18 %</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Analysis

The following section will present an analysis of the conducted empirical material in combination with previous studies and earlier discussed theories in order to answer the stated research questions. The section begins with a paragraph about Facebook trends, leading on to Reaction usage, Immediate reactions, Virtual social reality and Chosen reactions.

6.1 Facebook Trends

The fact that Facebook is an eminent media for keeping in touch with friends and relatives is clearly shown in this study. All of the interview participants talked about using Facebook on a daily basis and everyone described that messaging is one of the activities that they are spending the most time on. In accordance with Belk & Llamas (2013), the interview persons describe this type of instant messaging through Facebook as highly popular and that it functions as an alternative to sms-conversations and phone calls. Although, all of the interview persons spends a lot of time on Facebook, posting content such as pictures and texts is not something they usually do. How often they post content is varying, but none of the interview persons is posting more often than once a month and one of the interview persons is just posting once a year. As earlier mentioned, the interview participants seem to look at Facebook as an alternative to sms-conversations and almost half of the participants highlights the chat function and especially the ”group-chat” as an advantage with Facebook. Almost all of the interview participants are also describing ”scrolling through the news feed” as one of their main activities on Facebook. They are also talking about their ”scrolling-activity” as a way of feeling that they are in the presence and that they are keeping up with the latest news. One of the interview persons also explains that she uses Facebook a lot to make the time go by. ”I am using Facebook when I am waiting for the bus or on my job when I have nothing to do. It is a good way to waste time. Sometimes I go through the same news feed over and over again, just to have something to do” (Interview person 1). It is interesting to think about what is behind this kind of usage, why the news feed creates such an interest and also a kind of obsession to always keep up with the latest news that has come up.

Within this discussion the Social presence theory is suitable. Both in the terms of looking into why people feel the need to always be updated with the latest information and always be available in the chat. The same discussion is relevant in understanding if the ”time wasting” on Facebook is harming the social presence in ”real” life and in addition to this, social relationships.

When doing the observations, a few of the interview persons was explaining some sort of concern
about Facebook's effects on social relationships. Mostly comments regarding that Facebook takes up a large part of the daily life and that this may distract attention from "real" life when trying to be present in both places at the same time. These statements are in accordance with Baym (2010) who focuses on the harm that digital media has on social relationships. Maybe this tendency to always be reachable and up to date with the latest happenings has to do with a fear of not being presence in the moment and because of this, miss out on social events online.

If there should be a distinction between digital and "real" life is something that can be discussed. As earlier mentioned, Deuze (2012) talks about the blurred lines between the online life and the real life. When talking to the interview persons, it is clear to say that they do not reflect on how much time they are spending in their news feed. They just know that they want to do it in order to feel satisfied. The fact that the interview participants does not pay much attention to the amount of time spent on Facebook can be compared with Deuzes (2012) arguments about the mediation of everything and that digital media is becoming more and more invisible and highly existing in peoples’ continuousness without them reflecting over it (Deuze, 2012). At the same time, the Facebook developers are working on making the media as close to the physical reality as possible with new functions to make the media more alive, immediate as well as much easier to use. Within this discussion Bolter and Grusins (1999) argument about transparent immediacy is highly accurate. They describe transparent media as the media frames disappearing and making the user feel like they are in the visual world. This in order to create the feeling of presence and immediacy just like Facebook wants to achieve by always striving towards making it an easier and quicker platform to use. Because of this, the media takes up a bigger and bigger part of the daily life without people having time to reflect on it, they just follow the high speed information flow.

By talking about the Facebook usage in the Think-aloud interviews it could be seen that some of the participants realized the meaning of Facebook in their life and how much time they actually spend there. Although, the interview participants did not really express any concern about their own usage and that it is harming their own social relationships. Instead they discussed their Facebook usage as a way of keeping up with friends and relatives in an easy way. It can also be questioned whether online interactions can function as real life interactions. As Baym (2010) discusses, there must be a distinction between real life interactions and online interactions. Many of the interview persons describe their Facebook use as an extension to the daily interactions with friends and relatives, for example by chatting, commenting and reacting to posts. I do not see any signs on that the interview persons view Facebook as an alternative to real life interactions although
some of the functions available on Facebook may give users the feelings of that they have reacted and that they do not need to do it in real life as well. "If I see a picture of my friend with a new haircut and I press the love-button, maybe I will not comment her hair when I meet her since I feel that I have already done that by "loveing" the picture" (Interview person 7). In this sense, the online interaction is effecting the real life interaction and the reaction-button, that will be discussed more further on, is one of the striving factors for this.

6.2 Reaction Usage

Both the interviews and observations showed a quite high usage of the reaction-button. Although, when looking at the interview material almost half of the respondents still only uses the like button and I got the impression that the interview participants do not use the rest of the emotions that much. However, one interview person explains that she is also using the "haha"-, "angry"- and "wow" button quiet often. This interview person (Interview person 3) is the only one that can be described as new on Facebook since she joined Facebook earlier this year. When doing the observations on her, I could identify a slightly different behavior than in the other observations. Firstly, because she used the reaction-button more than the other participants and she also seemed to give much more thought in matching the different posts with the right reactions. I want to argue that this new arrival on Facebook has an effect on her usage in comparison to the other interview persons. In addition to this, one of the other interview persons describes; "I don’t think it has really caught on yet. It seems like most people use the "like" and “love” emoji – maybe because it is the closest to the old like?" (Interview person 7). Maybe "older” users already have such a practiced habit of using the old like button. One of the participant also described that maybe it would have been enough with just a "like” and "dislike” button. She also argues further about how the different reactions have been selected; "… and why are there a "like” and "love" if there are no "angry” and "really angry”? Maybe it would have been enough with a "like” and "dislike”" (Interview person 5). When looking at the material from the observations it is clear to say that in addition to the high usage of the like-button, the love-button is also used rather much, just like the results from the interviews is presenting. The other reactions are almost never used among the interview participants and maybe this strengthens interview person 5’s argument about that maybe a "like” and "dislike” button would have been enough. It may also have a lot to do with the content in the posts, although this is hard to say without any further research. When analyzing the Facebook content (5.2) and
looking at the numbers of the different reactions that is being used in March, April and May it is clear to say that the like-button is used the most, but in this kind of context the "haha” and ”angry” button is also used rather much. This differs from the results conducted in the Think-aloud interviews. I will argue that this distinction has to do with the specific content (political news) and that it attracts the kind of people that shows a great interest in the topic and is willing to show it online.

In the discussion about whether the number of different reactions is too many, interview person 5 explains that she prefers to comment on the post if she wants to give a more detailed reaction. The addition of including more reactions than just a ”like” and ”dislike” button can be connected back to the earlier discussion about transparent immediacy and the medias way of trying to emerge in to the real life as well. It may also exist as an effect of the constant desire to modernize the communication process on Facebook and by doing this face the ongoing social acceleration in society. The social acceleration that Rosa (2013) describes is as development of a fast moving society. Rosa (2013) also explains that this acceleration is hard to keep up with. People need to be a part of all the technical developments in society in order to understand the modernity process and follow the constant acceleration that is going on. This development of rapid and instant communication has a great impact on peoples’ lives since it creates expectations and beliefs that needs to be fulfilled (Tomlinson, 2007). This Culture of speed, as Tomlinsson (2007) presents, is also being talked about by the interview persons even though they are not using the specific term. ”We have used abbreviations, smileys and emojis for a long time now to speed up the communication process and to compensate for the non-existing body language in online communications. The new reaction-button is an extension that allows reactions on things that people do not want to like” (Interview person 2). This interview person describes that the reaction-button is placed somewhere in the ongoing social acceleration and the development of speed in society. He explains it as a natural development although he earlier in his interview and observation talked about that he has no interest in using it even though he thinks that it is a positive thing that people have the possibility to share emotions at such a high speed. This also shows that people can be aware of the modernization and the communication developments in society even though they are making an active choice to not follow. They may simply have no interest in it.

Even though this research does not focus on making a distinction between gender. A clear difference between men and women can be observed in this study: Almost all of the men that participated in the study do only use the like button and none of them are expressing any interest in
using the rest of the reactions. I get the impression that they think it is unnecessary and just takes up time. If they like something they will press the like button, if they do not like it they will keep on scrolling through their news feed. They are not describing any will of expressing negative feelings that is mediated through upsetting posts. It is unclear to me why this is the case and I believe that further research is needed in order to understand this behavior.

6.3 Immediate Reactions

The reaction-button on Facebook is a part of what Tomlinson (2007) presents as the telemediated life since it speeds up the digital communication and adds yet another function for people to use in order to express themselves online. The reaction-button can also be discussed about in terms of Intermediacy and that it in many ways function as an "digital extension to the real life". Like discussed earlier in terms of immediacy; the reaction-button is a quick way of showing emotions. However, it can be questioned if it is a clear way of communicating and also whether the reaction button is a way of making the media richer or not. In many ways, the reaction-button can be seen as an extension to just expressing if you liked a post. On the other hand, the reactions can leave people questioning the real meaning behind them since they do not include "real" human expression such as words. As earlier mentioned, Media richness theory describes a media that includes more senses as richer and therefore more clear (Daft & Lengel, 1986). In terms of this, the reaction-button should make the social media platform more clear and more communicative since it allows yet another way of expressing feelings. Although this might not be true if the addition of the reaction-button results in less posted comments. This critique is in accordance with Suh (1999) that means that a "richer media" such as for example added visuals, does not necessarily mean that the media allows for more efficient communication. A comment is still a clearer way than just pressing a button in order to express thoughts, since it includes written words chosen by the sender. At the same time the media can be described as richer if the user chooses to use a reaction instead of the like-button, provided that there will not be a decrease in comments. However, when looking at the purpose of the reaction-button that Facebook presents, it is clear to say that they are indirectly counting on that there will be less posted comments since the purpose of the reaction-button is to match today’s users who does not have much time to spend on commenting. Seeing this, the written interactions may be taken over by already constructed interactions such as the different reactions.

When analyzing the collected content on Facebook, this was however nothing that could be identified. In the table that shows a percentage between comments and reaction usage (5.2), the
numbers before and after the reaction-button was introduced presents a fairly even level. There is a peak in March showing a much higher percentage of using comments than the other months. This could have something to do with the fact that it is the initial month for the reaction-button, meaning that people were not familiar with how to use it. Also, it maybe have to do with that the update could not be reached from all smart phones in the beginning. The months following March are presenting a similar number of using the reaction-button to only the like-button the months before. It could be argued that since the reaction-button includes more feelings than just a "like" it should in theory attract more people to use it. The question why this is not the case can possibly be answered by the interview participants in this study who is not following the stream of immediate high speed communications, at least not yet.

As earlier discussed, the reaction button creates an immediacy of expressed reactions just like the developer on Facebook had in mind. Although, it can be questioned whether it fulfills its purpose to the fullest: One of the interview participants described that she in many cases reflects a lot on which reaction to use in order to express her reaction in the right way and to not create any misinterpretations. She describes the reaction button as time-consuming and that is takes up a lot of time for reflection. "I do not want people to misinterpret my reactions. Therefore I reflect a lot on which reaction to use. I think that other people do that as well” (Interview person 3). In terms of this, the immediacy within the reaction-button can be described as ambiguous. Immediacy, as a fast and high speed information flow (Belk & Llamas, 2013) where you can communicate at almost anytime, with almost anyone you want, might be the goal, but if the function has too many options it might lose its purpose. Belk & Llamas (2013) are also reflecting over if the high speed information flow is keeping the user from reflecting over its actual means since everything is happening at such a high pace. One of the interview persons (Interview person 5) is also expressing this type of concern. She says that the speed within this kind of interactions may be a negative thing; "I think too, with the high speed, people are going to reflect less on what they are taking in, and just move on to the next post in their news feed faster. If we transfer that to real life, we are so fast to react to comments and such. Interaction should not be about speed!” (Interview person 5). In other words, the interview person is questioning and criticizing the purpose of the reaction-button that Facebook presents and also its way of potentially harm social interactions. Also, she discusses a loss in the value of communications if it keeps on developing within the frames of social accelerations in society.
6.4 Virtual Social Reality

The earlier presented concern about harmed social relationships can be related back to the discussion regarding the distinction between online interactions and physical interactions. It can be argued that the reaction-button may have an effect on how people expresses feelings in real life. As mentioned before, Baym (2010) discusses whether online meetings are less effective and misleading than physical meetings. Applying the use of the high speed communicative reaction-button to this theory, it is clear that the effectiveness and the potential misleading signals should be taken in consideration. One of the interview persons is clear about that he would rather have a conversation than reacting on posts through emojis; "I am not interested. I like having a normal conversation instead" (Interview person 6). By using the term "normal" this interview person means using the chat-function or commenting the post. "I think it is going to make people less likely to be able to express the feeling in real life if they just use the fast buttons” (Interview person 6). The interview person describes a fear of that social "real-life” relationships will be effected by the reaction-button because people may stop posting personal comments Facebook, not feeling the urge of calling up the person or show expressions in real life. Maybe you have given the person a "love” reaction on their post and you feel that this emotion is enough in order to cherish your relationship for a short period of time. This can be described as one negative part of the increasing invisibility of media (Deuze, 2012) since the aim of emerging the physical life with the Facebook experience may cause damage on social relationships. The act of showing virtual reactions and then, as interview person 6 describes, thinking that it is the same thing as showing reactions physically, is a sign of that the digital frames are becoming more and more invisible for the user.

Almost all of the interview persons are expressing a concern about that the reaction-button may have negative effects on social relationships since it is a bit impersonal. The earlier presented purpose of the reaction-button that Facebook expresses includes a description of that they know that people often are in a hurry when using Facebook, and therefore they do not have that much time to spend on commenting posts. To match this behavior they introduced the reaction-button, which means that they want people to react fast without giving much thought into what they are reading and watching. If you consume these devices, allowing you to react at such a high speed, you are a part of the telemediated life where you can show your participation at all times just by a fast click. These arguments are in accordance with Livingstones (2015) research that questions users’ actual activeness online. Also, Livingstone (2015) discusses that the Digital age we are living in may create a type of collective experiences and behaviors by users. By choosing a reaction users may
feel like they are being active. Despite this, a common behavior could be identified in the observations within the Think-aloud interviews in this study which is in accordance with Livingstones (2015) theories and questions regarding the actual activity in digital spaces. The interview participants showed a common behavior when scrolling through their news feed and almost all of the participants, as earlier mentioned, used the "like" and occasionally the "love" button. The common behavior also included, that in almost all cases, the interview persons reacted on content being posted by close friends and family. It almost seems as if content being posted by other Facebook friends are not worth spending time on. It can be questioned whether it is this common behavior that wants to be accomplished by speeding up the digital communications and if so, are the social acceleration in digital spaces really something to strive for? By being present in many places at the same time, it can be argued that you are actually not present anywhere, but in your imagined virtual social reality where you think that you are an active user.

6.5 Chosen Reactions
In addition to the reaction-button being described as impersonal and thereby potentially harming social relationships, it can also, as earlier mentioned, be a misleading type of communication. One of the interview persons explicitly describes this concern- "Maybe people think too much about which reaction to use and there might be misconceptions as well" (Interview person 3). This interview person further expresses concern about the interpretation of the different reactions. In the observation she for example wanted to react with a "haha" to a post in order to joke with the person behind the post. Although, she did not do this because she explained that she felt a concern about if the person would take it the wrong way. In addition to this, I want to argue that especially the "haha" and "wow" button can be a bit hard to interpret. In some contexts, it can be hard to know if the haha-button is chosen because the user is laughing in a positive or negative way. In the same way, the wow-button can be seen as both something positive and negative. The expression of "wow" is really just an expression of that one is shocked. This may leave a lot of questions to the receiver regarding the actual meaning behind the reaction. Looking at the example article 2 ("Löfven, how can you congratulate Kaplan?") from the content analysis done in this study, it is fair to say that the different reactions chosen by users leaves these types of questions. The article is expressing critique against choices that a politician has made. A lot of users have reacted with the like-button but the angry-button is also highly used and some people are even using the haha-
This leaves me questioning if firstly, the "like" represents that the users behind this reaction likes the act that the politician has made or that they like the negative critique expressed in the post. Secondly, the "haha" reaction makes me questioning if the users are laughing at the post itself or at the politician that is being discussed in the article. In the similar way, the "angry" reaction makes me confused about whether the reaction is against the critique that is being expressed in the article or that the "angry" reaction is about an agreement with the author. These stated confusions questions whether the reaction-button is suitable for all kind of posts and maybe is really a slow kind of interaction if it forces the user to pay much attention in order to avoid misconceptions.

As explained earlier, one of the interview persons also expresses critique against the selection of reactions. In her arguments she discussed the love-button as an extension to the like-button and that there are no extension of stronger feelings to the angry-button. In the same way all of the chosen reactions can be criticized. As explained in the beginning, the reaction-button is constructed based on research done by Facebook and it should represent reactions that people want to use. The reaction-button is, in other words, socially constructed and once again, Deuzes (2012) argumentation about the mediation of everything can be brought into the discussion. The creation of the reaction-button is a result of trying to compress human thoughts, feelings and expression into just one small button. Although, people are so much more complex than this, which has to result in some kind of problems. Whether the main problems are within the harm on social relationships, a loss in communicative value or within the inactive behavior caused by the obsession about increasing speed, can be left for the reader to decide. However, it is important to take all of the potential consequences into consideration in order to understand and hopefully also prevent the potential negative outcomes caused by our generations "need for speed".
7. Discussion

Why do we need to react on so many things at the same time? Why do we need to be co-present everywhere and show that we always care and exist? These were two questions that was asked in the beginning of this study and functioned as a kind of starting point for the research. During the research process new questions have come up as well as purposes for further research within the field.

Throughout the whole study, the discussion regarding a potential harm on social relationships is highly existing. The discussion is much in accordance with Bayms (2010) critique against the digital age and its way of harming social relationships. In these terms, this study can be presented as an addition to her research by going deeper into one part of her research about the digital age. In addition to the discussion about harmed social relationships, the study also presents critique against the obsession about the ongoing increase of speed within social interactions and that it might result in a loss in communicative value as well as an inactive behavior among users. The development leaves me wondering where we are headed in the future. If the social acceleration, as Rosa (2013) presents, will keep on in the same direction and if the speed within interactions will continue to increase. If so, it is interesting to think about what Facebook’s next technical update will be.

It is also interesting to think about the future usage and effects of the reaction-button. Maybe a higher usage will be seen in the future or maybe there will be a decrease in usage. Furthermore, this research presents a discussion regarding if it maybe should be enough with a like and dislike button. This leaves me questioning what would happen if this kind of button would have been introduced instead of the reaction-button. Would the fact that it is called ”dislike” maybe create an negative environment on Facebook and also a higher existence of online-hate? However, it can be argued, seeing some of the aspects within this study, that this maybe would be a clearer form of communication.

I am pleased with how the study ended up. Although, I have identified research gaps along the way that invites to further research. It would be interesting to take the research further by studying the usage of the reaction-button within different age groups as well as focusing on different genders, in order to see similarities and differences between the different groups. It would also be suitable to focus on an additional quantitative research by focusing on a bigger pool of samples and taking different topics of the posts in consideration as well as trying to present a potential connection between different topics and the reaction usage.
8. Conclusion

In this research, the increased speed within social interactions have been studied with a focus on Facebook and its reaction-button. The aim has been to examine the effect that Facebook has on social interactions with a main focus on speed and immediacy. How do Facebook users experience the reaction-button and how is it used? How will the reaction-button effect interpersonal communications both in physical and virtual spaces? How will the reaction-button effect the ongoing increasing speed of social interactions in society?. In order to answer these questions, the research focuses on six different themes; Culture of Speed, Social acceleration, Space and time, Media richness and Immediacy as well as the phenomenon of Telemediation. Empirical material have been collected through qualitative Think-aloud interviews as well as a quantitative content analysis.

The result in the research is presenting a rather critical view on the ongoing increasing speed within communications in society. Initially, the study presents an overview of how Facebook users experiences the reaction-button and how they use it. This is done by a analyze of Facebook trends and the Reaction usage. By doing this it is clear to say that Facebook is used a lot, mainly to chat and scroll trough the news feed. The Facebook use can be described as an extension of the physical reality and users do not reflect that often over how much time they are actually spending on Facebook. This behavior can be described as a mediation of everything which creates blurred lines between online interactions and physical interactions since the virtual and physical spaces in some matter are merging together. The feeling of this presence and immediacy is what Facebook wants to achieve by always striving after making it an easier and quicker platform to use. In this discussion, the reaction-button is being brought into the picture. The study presents that users are not that willing to use the reaction-button and most users are still just interested in using the ”like” and ”love” button. A distinction between gender in the usage can also be seen since the women in the study presents a much higher usage and interest of the reaction-button than the men. Overall, the fact that the study is showing a quite low usage of the reactions leaves me questioning the actual need of a reaction-button since maybe it is not used in the way it was intended. Although, when looking at other posts in the quantitative part of the research the other reactions are used on a more widespread basis. Furthermore, the reaction-button can be described as a natural development in the acceleration of communications in society although, the user is making an active choice in wanting to participate in this modernization process or not.
The effect that the reaction-button has on interpersonal communications both in physical and virtual spaces as well as its effects on the increasing speed in society, is being discussed further in the study: By presenting the reactions in terms of immediacy, describing the virtual social world the reactions are being a part of and also by discussing the actual effects of the reactions as a socially constructed phenomenon. Initially, the media richness theory is being brought into the discussion by questioning the actually clarity of adding another number of reactions to the earlier like-button. In theory, another feature should result in a clearer media. However, this study presents that maybe this is not the case since the high speed interactions of showing affection by a click on a button maybe will result in less comments and thereby less personal content on Facebook. The loss of personal content may bring questions within interactions since it leaves the receiver a huge space for interpretation. By using the reaction-button it can also be argued that the user is a part of the telemediated life. This participation creates questions about users actual activeness online. Furthermore, the Digital age we are living in maybe is creating a type of collective experiences and behaviors by users and also a experienced feeling of being present everywhere at the same time, although the case might be the opposite. Namely, that the user is spreading out its focus in so many places when keeping up with the social acceleration that the loss of specific focus results in slower interactions with a loss in communicative value.

In addition to this, the fact that the reactions already is chosen in advance and created by Facebook may result in misconceptions since they can be hard to match with posts of different topics. Once again the discussion regarding potentially harmed social relationships is being brought into the discussion since misconceptions online might have an effect on physical interactions. It can also be argued that the usage of the reaction-button results in a different behavior in “real” life if the user is feeling that they already have shown affection online by using a virtual reaction. In these terms, the reaction-button can be described as a part of the mediation of everything since it is a result of trying to compress human thoughts, feelings and expression into just one small virtual button. This is of course problematic since human interactions are more complex than this. Today, communications is no longer just words or pictures. Today, you can communicate by pressing buttons. Maybe the increasing speed in society is leading us somewhere great, maybe not. The important thing is to reflect over its actual meaning and by questioning its effects, the development might consist of improvements which will lead us to a more effective communicating world.
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Appendix 1 - Interview questions

Introduction
• How old are you?
• Where do you live?
• What do you work with/study?
• Have you studied earlier? If so, what?
• For how long have you been using Facebook?
• Why did you start using Facebook?
• Why are you using it at the moment?

Facebook content
• What are your most common activities on Facebook?
• How often do you post anything on Facebook?
• What type of content are you posting?

Emoji-reactions
• Have you been using the new reaction-button on Facebook? If no, why?
• If yes, when do you use the different reactions? How do you choose what reaction to use?
• Do your Facebook friends use the reaction-button? If so, do you reflect on how and when they are using it?
• How do you like the reaction-button compared to the earlier like-button?
• Do you see any benefits or negative consequences with the new reaction-button?
• Do you believe that the new reaction-button will have an impact in how we communicate with each other? Less personal comments, possibility to communicate at a higher speed etc.