



Academic term paper:
Characterization of modern election campaign communication:
channels of political communication
Bamberg, September 11, 2022

Please note: This essay has been translated automatically. Translations might not be accurate.

Outline

1 Introduction	2
2 Theoretical foundations for characterizing modern election campaign communication	4
2.1 Elaboration of the tools of political communication in election campaigns	4
2.2 Presentation of the communicative trends in modern election campaign communication, including the digitization thesis	8
3 Theoretical approach and results	11
3.1 Necessary functions of modern campaign communication channels	11
3.2 Relevant communication channels of modern election campaigns	13
3.3 Characteristic channels of election campaign communication in 2022	15
4 Critical discussion and outlook	17
Bibliography	18

1 Introduction

Political communication undoubtedly carries a significant proportion of those relating to labor law merits, which the labor movement has won over time. In the late 19th century, the cigar-rollers played a special role in the fight against the oppressed participation of the working class in politics and the taboo on political discourse. During their working hours, they jointly appointed a reader for entertainment and Education of the Workers presented texts, also of a political nature (cf. Schröder 2011: 208f). It was probably also due to this impetus to education and thus to subsequent communication that the otherwise monotonously working cigar rollers* achieved a degree of organization that was able to guarantee their union a survival of the anti-union Socialist Law in Bismarck's time.

Even if access to political communication is mostly unhindered in today's Germany, its relevance for social coexistence remains, which is particularly evident in the increasing complexity of election campaign communication (cf. Vowe 2020: 10f). The "[...]acceleration at the micro level of individual political communication [...]" (Vowe 2020: 11) can be traced back to a structural change in the framework conditions of political communication, which through digitization (cf. Donges 2022: 211) is probably currently just as important opportunities for political participation through the use of digital infrastructure in election campaign communication, just as he created those possibilities in the 19th century by reading political pamphlets in factories. Conversely, it is particularly relevant from the point of view of strategic political communication to decide which communication channel *stop-down* must be used in the context of election campaign communication in order to reach as large an audience as possible.

Since the state of research on the rapidly changing political communication focuses to a large extent on its structural aspects, but leaves open which channels of political communication are used with regard to specific points in time or spaces, it is of interest in this context to fathom which communication channels of political communication it is from today's perspective that characterize modern election campaign communication. This leads to the research question for this thesis:

Which channels of political communication characterize modern election campaign communication? Since up-to-date literature is available on the current state of political communication, from which indications of certain communicative trends in modern election campaign communication can be derived, a theoretical investigation can be accomplished. Within the framework of a literature research, the temporal development of the election campaign communication, the basic as well as the further state of research and the effectiveness of individual channels are examined, with approaches to answering the research question being elaborated below.

2 Theoretical foundations for characterizing modern election campaign communication

2.1 Elaboration of the tools of political communication in election campaigns

At the beginning of the work u. a. based on Schmitt-Beck/Pfetsch (1994) are outlined in which theoretical framework the political communicationemotional. Furthermore, the basic technological aspects of election campaign communication are introduced using Tenscher (2012). The aim of this section is also to clarify how election campaign communication as such differs from the classic concept of political communication.

The term “channel” should be defined using its meaning in the “Lasswell formula”: Here, channels represent mediating instances between sender and receiver, which are accessible via the research field of media studies (cf. Beck 2013). A channel is therefore to be understood as a definable logistical infrastructure that can be used to transmit a message - this includes, for example, the Internet and television, but also the pasting of billboards and interaction with users in social media. Since modern election campaign communication is a priori thechannels modern strategic political communication has to serve, a selection of channels suitable for the investigation is presented below. It should already be ensured that these remain in current political communication in order to exclude completely insignificant and definitely no longer up-to-date channels from the theoretical investigation from the outset, since these cannot be the subject of current election campaign communication. Channels that play at least a subordinate role should be retained so that their expected further development and thus their relevance can be examined in a later part of the work. In order to be able to work under the condition of being up-to-date, a definition must first be made of how broad the concept of strategic political communication is to be understood in its origins in order to derive from this how the relevance of communication channels with regard to modern election campaigns can be determined. The concept of strategic political communication on which this part of the work is based is based on Schmitt-Beck/Pfetsch (1994), who present an exhaustive and fundamental definition of political communication in their text, which has a high application relevance for the present work: Strategic political communication is understood as political mediation, which “[...] [represents]

the attempt by political actors to to influence the public system through communication strategies” (ibid.: 108). Since this political mediation is a “[...] multitude of transactions that are related to each other in a conflictual manner” (ibid.: 109), it is important to consider in the course of the study the form in which political actors enforce their competitive communication interests assets (cf. ibid.). With regard to strategic political communication in the sense of election campaign communication - with the aim of convincing as many potential voters as possible to vote for their own party (cf. Donges / Jarren 2022: 191) - it is important to find out which channels are used for this. Need to become. First of all, it should be determined by which characteristics modern strategic political communication in terms of election campaigns is able to differentiate itself from other types of campaigns. Following this, as a further starting point, the categories of the channels for modern election campaign communication – based on Tenscher (2012) – are introduced.

The election campaign as an application situation of political communication is characterized by a campaign type in which politicians and parties take on the role of the sender. The recipients of advertising message are not initially divided into target groups, but are made up of all potential voters. Characteristic of the election campaign is its purpose of influencing the voting behavior of the recipients and thus the result of the election in favor of the sender (cf. Donges/Jarren 2022: 191).

To limit the investigation, two higher-level channels can already be identified within the framework of the aforementioned political communication, which are also of interest for strategic political communication from today's perspective: “[...] party organization and [...] mass media” (Schmitt- Beck/Pfetsch 1994: 110). The focus here must be placed on the mass media, since “public [...] in modern industrial societies [is] primarily a mass-media public” (ibid.: 112).

The aforementioned mass media take on the function of publicly effective representation (cf. Schmitt-Beck/Pfetsch 1994: 107) of politics. The authors assume that the dimensions of “making politics” (ibid.) and “presenting politics” (ibid.) can be viewed separately: It is “[...] logical to analyze politics as elite action [to distinguish [the dimensions of the production and the representation of politics] systematically from each other [...]]” (ibid.). This assumption is based, among other things, on the fact that the struggle for political influence is not fought out in the context of parliamentary debates, but rather in the public sphere (cf. Schmitt-Beck/Pfetsch 1994: 108).

The focus when examining election campaign communication must therefore be primarily on those channels which the representation of politics in

the context of election campaignsserve. Specifically, this is about the type of medium that is used in election campaign communication - such as a newspaper in which election advertising is integrated. In this area, it will have to be shown which of the subordinate channels in the area of political presentation are currently part of election campaign communication, and it will also have to be explored which of these channels may develop or differentiate over time through structural change in order to assess their relevance for to be able to justify modern election campaign communication. On the other hand, the pure production of politics does not play a relevant role, since it can be assumed that recipients of election campaign communication fall back on information that does not result directly from the production of politics, but rather from its mediation through the mass media and thus the political presentation, since "Politics as elitist action [...] overall [takes on] features of a permanent communication campaign" (Schmitt-Beck/Pfetsch 1994: 107).

It must be noted at this point that the dimension of policy making may be influenced by how political decisions are presented in the media. The "third-person effect [sic]" (Wolf 2013: 342) provides a clue for this. Based on this effect, politicians also overestimate the effect of the media on the public, which means that they adapt their behavior to the effects they suspect of the reporting (cf. *ibid.*). This can lead to misjudgments if, for example, the majorities portrayed in media reports or the social relevance of individual topics portrayed do not correspond to reality. It can therefore be assumed that the influence of policy representation is not limited to the general public as a whole, but also exerts a specific influence on those decision-makers who are responsible for policy making. This is particularly relevant with regard to the question of whether and to what extent media channels are currently being used strategically in the context of election campaign communication in order to influence not only public opinion but also the making of politics as such. This will be discussed briefly in Section 3.2.

Conversely, it can be assumed that modern election campaign communication and thus ultimately the portrayal of politics is largely controlled via the dimension of policy making, in that politicians, given their knowledge of the reporting resulting from their actions, try to do so within the framework of policy making if possible to assert that follow-up reporting, or more broadly, public reaction, is conducive to the campaign. This action occurs, for example, in the context of so-called stagings, through which "[...] political actors [try] to influence the content conveyed by the media in the interests of their goals" (Schmitt-Beck/Pfetsch 1994: 118).

Based on this, the question must be asked whether the distinction between the production of politics and the representation of politics makes sense at all,

since the awareness of the media conveyance of politics is already embedded in the process of its production. However, this shows that election campaign communication is not only constituted through the direct use of various media channels, but is directly linked to the actions of political actors. It can be assumed that campaign communication actors are attempting to expand the opinion-forming function of the mass media through the targeted use of individual channels for campaign purposesinstrumentalize. The endeavor to “[...] influence the media in [the favor of the respective actors] through communicative staging strategies” (Schmitt-Beck / Pfetsch 1994: 119) already points to one of the categories of channels for election campaign communication, which may have evolved over time, but has in any case proved to be stable: The category “free media”, which includes “[...] daily news reporting [...]” (Tenscher 2012: 157). In addition to the categories “paid media”, “new media” and “direct communication” (ibid.), it has the highest degree of mediatization in the context of election campaign communication (cf. ibid.: 157). Probably due to the high reach of the “free media” (cf. ibid.: 158), in the context of the survey conducted by Tenscher (2012), “the free media activities [...] are classified as the most important by the responsible election campaign managers” (ibid.: 160). This shows that this category is of particular importance in election campaign communication. Schmitt-Beck/Pfetsch already stated in this context that “[the] effectiveness of news factors [...] and the importance of logistical framework conditions [...] as selection criteria [...] [make] news production calculable. and [...] political actors [open up] the possibility of designing media strategies [which consist of] offering the media specific occasions for reporting.” (Schmitt-Beck / Pfetsch 1994: 113).

In addition, the category of “paid media” is presented, which includes “[...] political advertising [...]” (Tenscher 2012: 157) and due to the non-existent influence of mediatization (cf. ibid.) a “ [...] uninfluenced, far-reaching penetration of the election campaign public” (ibid.: 158). At the same time, it should be emphasized that the “free media” promises greater reach, especially with regard to its expansion in the context of the “new media” (cf. ibid.). It should also be noted that with the introduction of that category, a clear distinction between “paid media” and “free media” does not appear to make sense, since the increasing use of “new free media”, i. H. the new “free media” channels that have been added by online media and in particular social online platforms, a new mechanism of payment for media presence is opening up, while the classic “paid media” is not obviously common in election campaigns. At this point, reference is made to the 58th presidential election in the USA, in which the candidate Trump owes his electoral success largely to the free reporting he triggered (cf. Fürst/Oehmer 2018: 36).

While "paid media" in the past was mainly achieved through the direct purchase of an advertising service, e.g. B. an advertising block or later by *onemicro-targeting* individually tailored online advertising (cf. Vowe 2017: 612f) - the latter could be described as "new paid media" -, the financial component in the area of "new free media" extends primarily to the payment of strategic advice and of marketing management. Here, a "[...] media-friendly staging of newsworthy events" (Tenscher 2012: 158) as well as free follow-up reporting in the sense of "earned media" (Fürst/Oehmer 2018: 36) is promoted.

It can be seen that the "new media" category is the most comprehensive of all categories, since, based on a purely digital further development of the media landscape, it includes all further developments that take place in the "free media" and "paid media" categories. Nevertheless, this is the most volatile category, although Tenscher (2012) was unable to address many of the innovations that only became apparent after 2012. This will be discussed in more detail in the following part.

Based on the development over time since 2012, it can be assumed that the categories mentioned by Tenscher (2012) are relevant in current election campaign communication, but possibly in a modified form and including mixed forms further developments of the channels named in those categories - or also further developments of the individual categories – exist. In view of this, it can already be expected that social media, in particular internet-based platformmedia, play a special role as influencing factors and possibly as an independent category of channels of political communication.

2.2 Presentation of the communicative trends in modern election campaign communication, including the digitization thesis

The starting categories of political communication channels that are relevant for modern election campaign communication have already been presented under 2.1. Now it will be explained which communicative trends characterize modern election campaign communication. In particular, the trend towards shifting communication to the Internet as part of the digitization thesis, as taken up by Vowe (2017), become. Digitization is seen as the driving force behind the structural change in political communication (cf. Vowe 2017, 608). It will be discussed which channels resulting from the categories according to Tenscher (2012) can be of importance in the context of modern election campaigns and taking into account the current framework conditions.

Vowe (2017) already shows that the digitization of modern election campaign communication in this context is not a quickly passing phenomenon. Even before the start of the corona pandemic, the author stated that election campaigns were increasingly being shaped by digital media: “What can be expected in the future from this aspect [of the influence of digitization on election campaign communication]? Election campaigns are becoming more digital” (Vowe 2017: 613). Therefore, when considering the channels relevant to modern election campaign communication, additional attention should be paid to those that can be viewed as part of digitization. These can be summarized under the category "new media" according to Tenscher (2012). The category "new media" does not represent a clearly defined category here, but "[...] a technical extension that includes both direct and indirect, synchronous and asynchronous, top-down and bottom-up, 'paid' and enables 'free' communication” (Tenscher 2012: 158). According to this, channels in the categories "free media", "paid media" and "direct communication" fall under the term "new media" if the technical requirements for digitized use are sufficiently met. This is the case, for example, when a daily newspaper makes its articles available online and collects user data in order to suggest topics to the readers based on an individually tailored preference profile. Applied to election campaign communication, digitization opens up new possibilities for integrating “new media”: “Election campaign communication is increasingly being encoded in binary and can therefore be computerized, networked and algorithmized” (Vowe 2017: 613). The potential of the “new media” is already evident here, due to the digital expansion of election campaign communication, a possible competitive advantage to be able to play off against the non-digital media categories. This could be exploited, for example, if the properties caused by the binary coding are used in such a way that the use of the digital infrastructure promises a higher sphere of influence than communication via non-digitized channels.

Especially with regard to the area of "paid media", due to the increasing networking of communication, it can be assumed that the shift of individual channels in the direction of "new media" will result in a significant increase in the reach of paid advertising while at the same time clarifying the definition of the target group (cf. Engels 2018 : 2) promises. In terms of election campaign communication, this can result in increased attractiveness compared to the classic "free media" channels, since the effects of "paid media" at the beginning of the influence of "new media" (cf. Tenscher 2012: 158) by " [...]" enormous financial costs and the risk of 'ephemeral' effects [...]" (ibid.) were limited. In relation to the "paid media" channel of the YouTube video advertisements, which can be seen as a digital extension of TV commercials, the price per person is higher - €0.18 vs. €0.03 - (cf Engels 2018: 2), however, computer-mediated online advertising enables both a more precise definition of

the target group and an interaction-dependent payment option (cf. *ibid.*: 1f). This ensures that the targeted recipients are more involved in the advertising and thus have a higher level of involvement. This makes a more conscious examination of the advertising message more likely (cf. Fahr 2012: 138f). In this way, the price-performance ratio criticized by Tenscher (2012) for classic "paid media" is significantly improved. An online study by the public broadcasters ARD and ZDF provides evidence of the increase in Internet-based communication in Germany: Compared to 2018, the usage time of online media has increased by 36%, and the usage time of videos on the Internet has almost doubled (cf. ARD / ZDF 2021: 14).

Furthermore, within the framework of paid media, increased flexibility is possible when adapting advertising strategies, since the digitally provided advertisements are more flexible than traditional paid media channels, such as with billboards or TV advertising blocks (cf. Tenscher 2012: 160) can be adapted promptly to the respective election campaign situation and thus enable a quick reaction to current political events (cf. Vowe 2020: 10). This applies to the digitized "new paid media" as well as to the digitized "new free media", whereby communication in the latter area is "[...] faster, denser, more intertwined and more unpredictable" (*ibid.*) and thus developed into a "[...] exhausting race" (*ibid.*). Within the framework of online communication, political actors take part in a battle for media sovereignty, in which it is always necessary to observe which emerging topics are currently attracting the attention of users and thus, to a certain degree of probability, also the attention of follow-up reporting in classic media dedicated to "free media". The aim of election campaign communication when dealing with the "new free media" is to provoke a public reaction in such a way that one's own topic determines the largely platform-based discourse and thus also the subsequent communication in the classic "free media". The AfD provides an example of the efficiency and success of this advertising strategy (cf. Vowe 2017: 613): "[someone] from the AfD [...] throws a handful of signs into a social network medium and gets a tremendous response [, whereby he] [determines] the agenda for the next excitement cycle, i.e. for the next three days with all talk shows and editorials" (*ibid.*). It shows that the initial reporting through the channel of the platform-based "new media" is directly linked to the subsequent reporting by journalists in the "free media", since the "public resonance" (Fürst/Oehmer 2018: 35) of individual topics is increasingly caused by journalists from social networks (cf. *ibid.*).

The further development of certain communication channels mentioned in 2.1 is primarily evident in the area of "new media". The clear further development of online media, in particular the at best marginally networked Internet forums (cf. Tenscher 2012: 160) in the direction of social platforms,

which appear as "[d]igital, data-based and algorithmically structured socio-technical infrastructures" should be emphasized here (cf. Donges/Jarren 2022: 79) and the increased development of the "[...] algorithmization of political communication" (Vowe 2017: 613), which enables a strategic evaluation of the user data generated on social platforms. It can therefore be stated that modern election campaign communication is only possible with the inclusion of the digital infrastructure already mentioned, which is why a special focus is placed on this in the following part of the work.

3 Theoretical approach and results

3.1 Necessary functions of modern campaign communication channels

Based on the assumption that "[...] human-computer communication [would] move more into the focus of election campaign communication" (Vowe 2017: 613), the question arises as to which properties and functions of modern communication channels must be made usable to use those channels in campaign communications. In this part, this is to be emphasized with regard to the communicative trends presented in 2.2.

In the context of political communication in election campaigns, which due to an increasingly dynamic communication process can hardly be determined in terms of time and therefore take place around the clock (cf. Vowe 2020: 10f), political actors have to [orient themselves to "[...] typical media-democratic styles]" (Unger 2011: 37) in order to be able to communicate effectively with potential voters in a publicly effective way. This primarily includes the so-called "attention management" (ibid.), with which political actors pursue the goal of being present in the media as continuously as possible. This affects both their own active communication in the media and their reaction to spontaneously occurring excitement cycles, which requires constant monitoring of current trends in the media landscape (cf. Vowe 2017: 612f). The above-mentioned implement the media-democratic style particularly well. The decisive factor here is the platform character of the channel, which is achieved through the use of *keywords*. Within the framework of the hashtag function, it is possible to meet up with specific people to exchange information about specific topics (cf. Unger 2011: 73). At the same time, a search function can be used to determine which posts were written on

the respective topics and how often these posts were shared (cf. *ibid.*), from which an individual – albeit very subjective – opinion on the relevant topic is collected. The resulting assessment of public opinion forms the basis for giving the political actors cause for a media reaction in the context of election campaign communication and either reproducing or contradicting the recommended opinion, which opens up the possibility of a renewed link between "mass communication and group communication". (Vowe 2020: 11).

Furthermore must political actors to enable political communication (cf. Unger 2011: 37) cultivate the style "expressiveness and visibility" (*ibid.*). The political actor becomes the entertainer of an audience (cf. *ibid.*), which wishes politicians to appear more approachable, for example by giving insights into their everyday life. Platform-based online media are also useful in the context of this style, as they are quicker to access than press reporting and still reach a large audience (cf. ARD/ZDF 2021: 38). It can be assumed that the habitus of this self-representation in social media is tantamount to a modern form of symbolic politics, in which "[...] political action is condensed into symbols" (Vowe 2013: 332), whereby "[i]n critical version [...] the use of signs takes the place of political decisions, political appearances cover up political being" (*ibid.*). This is related to the fact that those signs are no longer conveyed in the classic form of "[...] rituals, acts of state, gestures, anniversaries, etc." (*ibid.*), but "[the actualization of the] recognition of rulership [...]" (*ibid.*) in the form of working through a media self-portrayal catalogue. Through the collective use of platform-based online media and the associated assumption of the role as *content creator* is the societal expectation of political actors, i. H. Politicians and their PR management to put themselves on public display, further strengthening internet platforms as directly accessible communication channels.

Another style mentioned is "talk showization" (Unger 2011: 37). This leads to a shift in high-profile debates to the context of talk shows, in which the focus is on the self-portrayal of political personalities (cf. *ibid.*). Such appearances in the traditional "free media" channels, especially on television, are essential for election campaign communication, since political actors are given the opportunity to achieve media presence without significant costs (cf. Fürst/Oehmer 2018: 36f). This represents the first line of "earned media" (*ibid.*), through which politicians actively and directly enter journalistic reporting. The second track of the "earned media" results from the influence of the news media through the use of social networks, in that follow-up reporting in the classic "free media" can be provoked (cf. *ibid.*: 36).

Finally, political actors use the style of "prominence" (Unger 2011: 37). Politicians aim to be perceived by the media audience as a political celebrity

(cf. *ibid.*). As a result of the associated expectation of politicians to fulfill their role as self-portrayal, "[...] only those political actors who have the skills to convey politics can be successful" (*ibid.*: 38). Since modern election campaign communication is also highly institutionalized from the point of view of prominence (cf. Unger 2011, 50), prominence must be accessible to professional agencies and consultants. Due to the professionalization of political communication, among other things, "[a] shift or expansion to social media [...] became unavoidable for political actors" (cf. Eckerl/Hahn 2018: 241f). It has been shown that the integration of social media can mobilize a much larger spectrum of users (cf. Unger 2011: 161). Digital platforms also open up the possibility of "[...] [measuring] popularity permanently and in real time" (Donges/Jarren 2022: 80), whereby indicators such as the number of followers or likes are used based on their effect on users (cf. *ibid.*) can represent an indication of the public impact of politicians for professional actors. The relevance of the "new free media" for election campaign communication is also evident here: on the one hand, because celebrities have assumed the character of a measurable indicator thanks to the analyzability of the data resulting from the use of social media, on the other hand, because politicians "[.. .] [can] increase their influence by increasing attention through presence [...] on social media platforms" (*ibid.*: 210).

From the above points it can be deduced which channels are at the top end of the cascade of effects of modern election campaign communication: Both the classic channels of "free media", which are characterized by journalistic reporting and thus serve to increase political influence (*ibid.*), as well as the "new free media" - this primarily includes platform-based media - which in themselves have a strong impact on the public, but also offer the potential for further coverage and thus generate more influence. It remains to be clarified to what extent the respective channels can continue to exist with regard to modern election campaigns.

3.2 Relevant communication channels of modern election campaigns

In the following, the relevance of the already identified category of "new free media" will be further justified. For this purpose, it makes sense to take a look at the development and use of the category "new free media", through the increasing importance of which social platforms ultimately emerged as an independent, dominant category. The results of an investigation into the federal election campaign can serve as an example of the practical application of the

use of social media²⁰⁰⁹ be used, in which "[...] the social media activities of the parties are each summarized in an activity index [...]" (Unger 2011: 122). Although this election campaign dates back a long time, it is a suitable example of how to deal with the category "new free media" in view of the influence of digitalization, which is still significant. The curve of the development of the "social media score" (ibid.) makes it clear that the activity of almost all parties increased almost uniformly in the analyzed social media during the election campaign (cf. ibid.: 127). The fact that this is related to the election campaign becomes clear when the corresponding social media scores are considered after the election: Although the values increase slightly, they are roughly on a comparable plateau (cf. ibid.: 141). This indicates an intensive use of resources to develop the potential of the Internet, which can be explained by the fact that the parties are in competition for maximum media presence, at least during the election campaign. Unger (2011) has already established that the way parties use social media after the end of the election campaign is not sufficient to retain voters in the long term (cf. ibid.). Vowe (2020) makes a similar statement. Due to the hybridization, which encourages a merging and parallel use of different digitized communication channels, such as digital offers of the classic "free media", and the direct sharing of these in channels of the "new free media", "[...] the social Net media to the eye of the needle that political messages have to go through if certain target groups are to be reached" (Vowe 2020: 611).

A consequence of this is, for example, this *Astroturfing*, through the use of which large non-political interest groups, but also governments, often try to increase the dimension of policy making, as already mentioned in 2.1, in their favor (cf. Oswald 2018: 24f). Through the application of *Astroturfing* the emergence of an apparently spontaneously occurring social activism is feigned in social media in order to give certain topics a political impetus through agenda setting (cf. ibid.). In this context, too, the digitization thesis is a central topos in Vowe's theory (2020): "[p]rofessional communicators [...] will have to think about and move, especially in a digital world" (ibid.: 613), since the use of digital and digitized channels has become a strategic communication obligation.

From the temporal development presented, there is a chronologically increasing relevance of platform-based online media, which means that they can be considered the central channel that characterizes modern election campaign communication to a considerable extent.

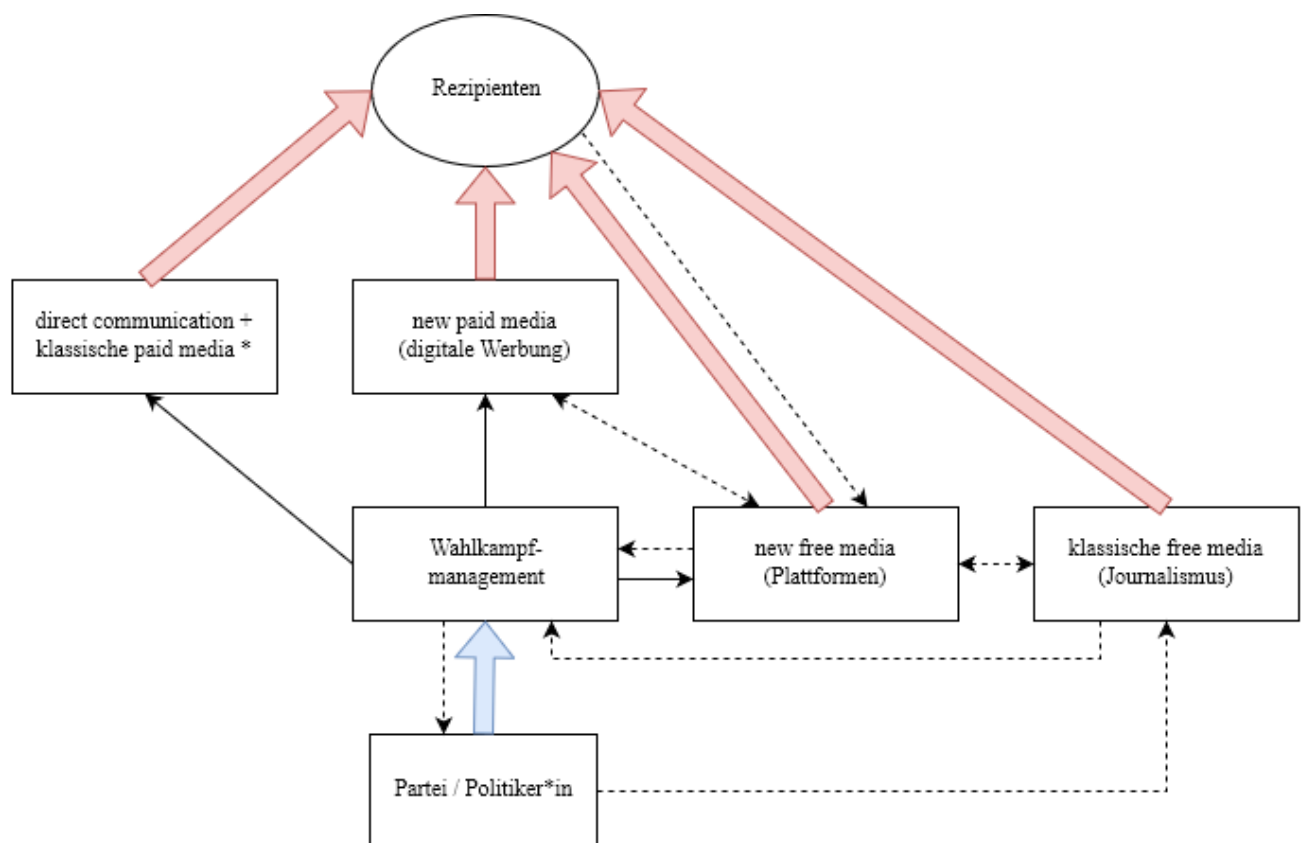
3.3 Characteristic channels of election campaign communication in 2022

In the following, it should be noted which channels characterize political communication. The main focus here is on the channel of the platforms, which has contributed to a strong increase in the importance of the category "free media" and thus represents an independent category of channels of modern election campaign communication (cf. Donges 2022: 215). However, the channels of the classic "free media" must also be considered characteristic of modern election campaign communication, which, however, due to the influence of digitization that has already been highlighted, are inextricably linked to communication via platforms or the platform character in the form of comment functions, such as among online newspaper articles, have implemented in their own way of working. The decisive factor here is therefore not the fact that the channels of the "free media" have experienced a mere expansion of their offerings as a result of digitization, but rather that this has created a mutual dependency between platforms and "free media": Although journalism is oriented towards As already explained, events arising through platforms are increasingly linked to events since "platforms [simplify] interaction selections, for example through standardization and automated pre-selection, which makes the success of communication (in the sense of enabling follow-up communication) more likely" (ibid.). On the other hand, journalism often takes part in the formation of opinions on platforms, for example when online newspaper articles are shared there, and in this way makes it possible to deal with the editorially produced content. Due to the press code would beto acceptthat journalism acts relatively independently of the demands of election campaign management. However, the thought suggests itself that this, through its influence on platform-based media, can weight the importance of individual topics through agenda setting in such a way that the perceived relevance of these topics forces them to be included in the reporting of the classic "free media".enter. Influencing journalistic reporting is therefore only possible if social platforms act as mediators, which is why no vector from election campaign management to classic "free media" has been drawn in the following graphic. It should be noted, however, that there is still a faint connection between the two appearing in that graph, for example due to the issuing of press reports by the campaign managementcomponents present.

The role of the "new paid media" is also closely linked to the functioning of platform-based Internet media, since the data provided by platforms can be used to display individually tailored communication to users, which, in comparison to the use of the classic " paid media" channels can be more

effective. Here, too, it can be seen that the influence of the "new paid media" channels is characteristic of modern election campaign communication.

The use of "direct communication" and classic "paid media", on the other hand, is only a sideshow in view of the advancing digitization of modern election campaign communication. However, this does not mean that those categories are completely irrelevant (cf. Vowe 2017: 613). Rather, it can be assumed that when using the respective channels, the aim must be to achieve the broadest possible public response. However, this is only possible if strategies are used that use classic "free media" and "new free media" as multipliers be included. The relationships between the components of modern election campaign communication, which are at least outlined in the present work, are to be presented in the following model - albeit greatly simplified:



Legende:



* Anmerkung: Auf die Beeinflussung der klassischen free media sowie der new free media durch direct communication und klassische paid media wird einerseits zur Reduktion der Komplexität, andererseits aufgrund ihrer hintergründigen Bedeutung in der modernen Wahlkampfkommunikation nicht näher eingegangen.

4 Critical discussion and outlook

Modern election campaign communication has developed rapidly. It is to be expected that the contrast between current channels and those that will open up over the course of this century will be roughly the same as the contrast between reading aloud in cigar factories and sharing a YouTube video on social networks. It would have been exciting to find out what role semi-publicmedia such as Telegram or online communication through the use of artificial intelligence (cf. Vowe 2017: 614) as part of this development, and whether this also results in a possibility of instrumentalization for election campaign communication. However, both of these relatively new trends could only be considered in passing. It was also not possible to go into all the individual channels within the scope of this work, but only those that are within the framework of the literature research as relevant and structurally influential. It is to be hoped that with the present work at least individual aspects of the research question could be deepened.

Bibliography

Please note: All literal quotes in this essay have been translated from their original versions in German, coming from the literature listed below. Since the translation was made automatically, the translations might not be accurate.

ARD/ZDF (2021): ARD/ZDF Onlinestudie 2021. Abgerufen unter https://www.ard-zdf-onlinestudie.de/files/2021/ARD_ZDF_Onlinestudie_2021_Publikationscharts_final.pdf (09.09.2022)

Beck, K. (2013): Lasswell-Formel. In: Bentele, G. / Brosius, H. / Jarren, O.: Lexikon Kommunikations- und Medienwissenschaft. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 182.

Donges, P./Jarren, O. (2022): Politische Kommunikation in der Mediengesellschaft. Eine Einführung. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Donges, P. (2022): Digitalisierung der politischen Kommunikation. In: Köln Z Soziol 74, 209-230.

Eckerl, T./Hahn, O. (2018): Die Selfie-Seite der Macht: Instagram in der politischen Kommunikation in Deutschland. In: Oswald, M. / Johann, M.: Strategische politische Kommunikation im digitalen Wandel. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf ein dynamisches Forschungsfeld. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Engels, Barbara (2018): Werbung: Online ist oft teurer, aber auch präziser. In: IW-Kurzbericht No. 57/2018. Köln: Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft.

Fahr, A. (2013): Involvement. In: Bentele, G. / Brosius, H. / Jarren, O.: Lexikon Kommunikations- und Medienwissenschaft. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 138-139.

Fürst, S./Oehmer, F. (2018): „Twitter-Armies“, „Earned Media“ und „Big Crowds“ im US-Wahlkampf 2016: Zur wachsenden Bedeutung des Nachrichtenfaktors Öffentlichkeitsresonanz. In: Oswald, M. / Johann, M.: Strategische politische Kommunikation im digitalen Wandel. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf ein dynamisches Forschungsfeld. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 35-61.

Oswald, M./Johann, M. (2018): Strategische politische Kommunikation im digitalen Wandel. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf ein dynamisches Forschungsfeld. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Schmitt-Beck, R; Pfetsch, B (1994): Politische Akteure und die Medien der Massenkommunikation. Zur Generierung von Öffentlichkeit in Wahlkämpfen. S. 106-138. In: Friedhelm Neidhardt (Hrsg.): Öffentlichkeit, öffentliche Meinung, soziale Bewegungen. 1994. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag [Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie: Sonderheft].

Schröder, W. H. (2011): Arbeit und Organisationsverhalten der Zigarrenarbeiter in Deutschland im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert. Ein Beitrag zur Erklärung der Führungsrolle der Zigarrenarbeiter in der frühen politischen Arbeiterbewegung. Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung. Supplement, 23, 195–251.

Tenscher, J. (2012): Medien- und Kommunikationskanäle in Wahlkämpfen: Relevanzzuschreibungen aus der Akteurssicht. In: Zeitschrift Für Politikberatung (ZPB) / Policy Advice and Political Consulting, 5 (4), 155–164.

Unger, S. (2011): Parteien und Politiker in sozialen Netzwerken: Moderne Wahlkampfkommunikation bei der Bundestagswahl 2009. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Vowe, G. (2013): Symbolische Politik. In: Bentele, G. / Brosius, H. / Jarren, O.: Lexikon Kommunikations- und Medienwissenschaft. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 332-333.

Vowe, G. (2017): Sieben Tendenzen des strukturellen Wandels der politischen Kommunikation. Wie verändern sich Wahlkämpfe in der Onlinewelt? In: Media Perspektiven, 12/2017, 607-615.

Vowe G. (2020): Digitalisierung als grundlegender Veränderungsprozess der politischen Kommunikation. In: Borucki I. / Kleinen-von Königslöw K. / Marschall S., Zerback T. (eds): Handbuch Politische Kommunikation. Springer VS, Wiesbaden.

Wolf, S. (2013): Third-Person-Effect. In: Bentele, G. / Brosius, H. / Jarren, O.: Lexikon Kommunikations- und Medienwissenschaft. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 342-343.