Concentration and media diversity: how to assess?  
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Mergers and acquisitions in media industry are often accused to reduce cultural diversity. Many researchers, as Werner E Meier (2005) come to conclusion, that multinationals firm, who are lead by financial interests, product more commercial than cultural media content, and contribute thereby to the decrease of the media diversity and to the standardization of the media content. The decisions of the multinationals firms certainly are lead by the pursuit of benefits, but the matter of the influence of the concentration on the media content deserves, in our opinion, to be precisely assessed.

The economic studies bring some more precise answers on this question. From different kind of categories as the genre (McDonald & Lin, 2004; Einstein, 2004; Van Cuilenburg, 2000), the geographic origin (Moreau & Peltier, 2004), or the quantity (Moreau & Peltier, 2004), tools of measure, as the Herfindhal Hirschmann Index or the Simpson Index are used to assess the level of media diversity at a given moment. The results give us some information about the evolution of the media landscape.

Using tools of measure is pertinent to assess the relation between the level of concentration and the evolution of the media diversity. However, we think that the categorisations employed by the economists, do not give enough details about the content, to precisely express, what we are watching on TV or reading in the newspapers. For instance, the category “genre” helps us to know what kind of TV show we are going to watch (Charaudeau, 1997), but it can’t help us to distinguish between two dramas or two quiz shows, which can be very different. “La roue de la fortune” (The Wheel of Fortune) and “Des chiffres et des lettres” are both quiz shows, but can we really say they are the same? We can fallow the same reasonment with the category “geographical origin”. This category is very relevant to evaluate the level of imports of the program, but it doesn’t give information about the plots of the shows. For this reasons, we think that it is important to “polish” the categorizations used for the measure of the media diversity.

A solution might reside in the content analysis (De Bonville, 2006). How could we evaluate the effects of the concentration on the media content, without working on this row material, which are the texts, the sounds and the pictures? With content analysis, we could in a first time collect the information contained in the media. With this information we could process in a second time to a more detailed categorisation. Thereby the influence of the concentration on media content could be more precisely evaluated.