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Reporting international news in a changing world: the significance of international relations in journalism education

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Despite the expansion of International Journalism (IJ) courses in the UK in recent years, there is no debate on what constitutes the knowledge base for IJ education. This article puts forward the argument that International Relations (IR) provides the most appropriate subject knowledge and understanding for journalism programmes that have an international focus. It argues that

journalism educators can draw on the rich insights of IR scholars in building the knowledge base for International Journalism courses. Through a thorough consideration of the links between the academic knowledge of IR and international news reporting, the article demonstrates that IR plays a very significant role in the education of journalism students and IJ students in particular. A review of existing journalism courses in the UK indicates that there is a greater awareness of the relevance of IR to journalism education. But the current approach is rather fragmented lacking a coherent approach to the integration of IR teaching and international journalism training. This article advocates an integrative approach to the teaching of IR to journalism students. It provides a detailed discussion of an IR syllabus that has been incorporated into an undergraduate IJ programme. A survey of the students who have recently graduated from such a programme shows that they are appreciative of the value of having a good knowledge of IR in their journalism education.

Key words: Journalism education; International Journalism; International Relations; international news reporting, global news gathering

Introduction

Journalism education in the United Kingdom has expanded substantially in the past three decades.

Before the 1990s, there were few Journalism courses in the UK. Ten years ago, Hugo de Burgh (2003) published an article arguing that Journalism should be treated as a serious academic discipline. Today, Journalism courses exist in almost every British institute of higher education and Journalism has been firmly established as a university subject.¹ While there is a general consensus among British journalism educators on what kind of academic and professional knowledge² should be included in the curriculum of ‘home’

1 For a succinct historical review of journalism education in the US and UK, see Sreedharan (2013), pp. 46-48.

2 According to de Burgh (2003, pp. 96-98), journalists need to have two types of knowledge. The first one is academic knowledge, which may draw on the ideas and concepts of such academic disciplines as Sociology, Politics, Philosophy and Media Studies. The other is professional knowledge, which is ‘more or less vocationally oriented’ (p. 98). This would include knowledge of public affairs, the media industry, the journalism profession, ethics, journalism regulation,

Journalism courses, very little attention has been paid to the subject knowledge of International Journalism (IJ) courses which appear to be growing in recent years.

This article argues that International Relations (IR) would provide IJ students with the most appropriate subject knowledge to support their training in international news reporting. It begins with a discussion on how the study of IR would assist the students to develop their intellectual capability and perform their professional duties. This is followed by a review of the current state of IR teaching in British journalism departments and a consideration of the subject knowledge of IR that can be incorporated into international journalism courses. Drawing on the experience of the author's department, the article presents an example of integrating the teaching of IR into an IJ curriculum with a discussion of the positive feedback from students who have taken the course.

The knowledge base in UK Journalism and International Journalism education

Over the past two decades, British Journalism education has been developed and transformed in line with the changing landscape of the news media and the Journalism profession. Some departments focus on specific disciplines such as Print, Online, and Broadcast Journalism; others offer specific types of Journalism courses (e.g. Sports Journalism). The majority of Journalism programmes are general courses covering the main disciplines with options that allow students to specialise in one of them or in a particular type of journalism. One branch of UK Journalism education that has been emerging, particularly at postgraduate level, is International Journalism. Increasingly, students are trained as multimedia journalists who are able to work in different platforms. University departments have by and large responded to technological changes well, incorporating the requirements of the industry into the skill training in their courses. Many departments have state-of-the-art facilities in their newsrooms and TV and radio studios. Journalism students are now trained to operate in a fast-changing technological environment and a digital culture.

There appears to be a consensus on what core knowledge home journalism students should possess. They are expected to have a good knowledge of local and central governments and some knowledge of European Union institutions, which usually forms part of a 'public affairs' module or unit (Morrison, 2013; NCTJ, 2013). In addition, there is normally a module that teaches students the law that regulates the press and media organisations and the ethical dimension of journalism (Frost, 2011; Hanna and Dodd, 2012; Keeble, 2008). Added to this are some media studies modules that aim to provide the social, economic and political contexts of journalism, covering theories of audience, representation, ideology, media structure and ownership, and so on. Increasing attention is now paid to the use of social media in news gathering and reporting. Together, law, politics, and media studies form the knowledge base of home Journalism degrees.

However, there is no agreement on what type of subject knowledge should be included in IJ courses. Basically, departments decide on what they believe to be necessary and appropriate for IJ students. Some training in reporting international news plus other key elements of UK journalism education (e.g. media law and regulation, content generation, etc.) are usually provided in these courses. But what academic knowledge do we want our

media law and so on. I would argue that the relationships between these two categories of knowledge are inextricably linked. For example, it is difficult to gain a thorough understanding of public affairs without some academic knowledge of Politics and Sociology.

IJ graduates to have apart from professional knowledge and the vocational skills required by the industry?

Traditionally, international journalists and foreign correspondents do not have a degree in Journalism or IJ. Instead, they have studied English, History, Politics, or other Arts, Humanities and Social Science subjects at universities. Their education in these disciplines would have provided them with some relevant academic knowledge to support their journalism work. Given the expansion of IJ programmes in British universities, it is important to consider what kind of academic knowledge should be taught to IJ students. But unlike home Journalism courses, there is no debate, let alone an agreement, on what constitutes the knowledge base for IJ education.

In discussing the nature and scope of the subject area of Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies,³ the subject benchmark statement published by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) recommends that degree programmes in this area may draw on 'different sources of conceptualisation and practice that feed work within the fields', including 'the theories and methods of enquiry developed within the arts and humanities' and 'the theories and research methodologies developed within the major social sciences'. History and Political Science, among other subjects, are listed as examples. The QAA expects that these programmes 'are multidisciplinary and, in many cases interdisciplinary' while some 'individual degree programmes use these sets of resources in different ways and in varying combinations' (QAA, 2008, p. 9).

The importance of 'International Relations' in international journalism education

This article argues that 'International Relations' is the most suitable subject that would provide the relevant academic knowledge for IJ students and, to a lesser extent, other Journalism students. News values and the global news agenda do not exist in a vacuum (Galtung and Ruge, 1965). Rather, they must be understood within a broader cultural, economic and political context. This argument is consistent with the QAA's benchmark guidelines, which state that graduates of Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies programmes are expected to demonstrate 'an understanding of the development of media and cultural forms in a local, community, regional, national, international or global context' (QAA, 2008, p. 10). They are also expected to show 'an appreciation of the complexity of the term "culture" and an understanding of how it has developed' and 'an insight into the different modes of global, international, national and local cultural experience and their interaction in particular instances' (QAA, 2008, p.12).

The subject matters of IR are directly relevant to the work of international journalists. It is multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary in nature, drawing on the knowledge, theories and methodologies of various Social Science and Humanities disciplines, including Political Science, History, Economics, Sociology and Psychology. It is a broad-based academic subject underpinned by various philosophical and methodological traditions, such as positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and so on.

The study of IR helps the training of IJ students as both journalism professionals and public intellectuals, who can perform the 'watchdog' functions in both domestic and international societies. Few would disagree that an international journalist needs to be well

³ This subject area includes a wide range of communication, media, film and cultural studies courses, including Journalism and International Journalism programmes.

informed of international affairs. They should not only be able to produce international news but be capable of understanding the significance of the international stories behind the headlines. An international journalist should also be able to discern the major trends and forces that are shaping the headlines in global news. To be able to do this, students need to have a broad intellectual horizon, a solid knowledge base in international affairs, and a critical mind, along with the relevant vocational or practical journalistic skills. They need to be able to ask searching questions, uncover the truth, and expose injustice in the world. As the QAA benchmark statement puts it, students are expected 'to develop analytical and research skills together with a critical grasp of their responsibilities as practitioners, and awareness of the dynamics, whether cultural, economic, ethical, legal, political, social or affective, which shape working environments.' (QAA, 2008, p. 9). Indeed, graduates are expected to demonstrate the ability to 'critically appraise some of the widespread common sense understandings and misunderstandings of communications, media and culture, and the debates and disagreements to which these give rise' (QAA, 2008, p. 14). They are also expected to 'critically evaluate the contested nature of some objects of study within the fields ... and the social and political implications of the judgements which are made' (QAA, 2008, p. 15).

IJ students need to be capable of analysing events from a variety of national and regional perspectives, as well as a global perspective (Hachten and Scotton, 2006). Journalists are inevitably generalists. They cannot and should not be specialists in every subject and every issue. But they should have sufficient general knowledge of the contemporary world in order to conduct research into specific topics efficiently. Some would argue that many journalists have not studied IR, yet they can still do their job. The logic of this argument is similar to the one that asserts that many working journalists do not have a degree in Journalism. The fact is that journalism education in the UK has expanded significantly in the past few decades and there is now at least one Journalism course of some kind in all British universities. Journalism is one of the most popular undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Many young journalists are now journalism graduates and there will be many more joining the profession in the coming years. It is therefore time to think about what sort of journalists we are seeking to produce who would be well positioned to report international news in a changing world. The rationale behind the argument that IR should occupy a significant place in the education of international journalists is that they cannot report international affairs without an intelligent understanding of the world. In this regard, IR could be seen as the international version of 'public affairs' that is central to the training of UK journalists.

Some Masters students may have completed their undergraduate studies in Politics/IR, and other Social Science and Humanities subjects. Do they still need to be taught IR as part of their journalism course? The answer to this is 'yes', because MA students come from a diverse disciplinary background and increasingly from different countries. Even if they have previously studied IR, they would not have done it in relation to journalism education. So it would still be beneficial for them to receive IR training that is embedded in a Journalism programme. For those who have received their undergraduate education in other countries, particularly in non-Western societies where IR may have been taught differently, a journalism education that is fully integrated with IR teaching would give them a unique perspective on how international news could be covered.

Some may argue that the world does not require a large number of international journalists, who have traditionally worked as foreign correspondents. These correspondents are widely regarded as elite journalists, who tend to receive a more attractive package of

remuneration and enjoy a higher status in the eyes of the public. They are typically based in an overseas bureau in a foreign country. With good local knowledge and sometime local languages, they are able to build an unrivalled network of contacts with officials, diplomats, business leaders, and influential people and organisations in their host country. Armed with first-hand information, these foreign correspondents can report news stories that are not usually available to home journalists. Most of them are employed by global news organisations or news agencies, and their journalistic outputs are distributed internationally and used by national news media around the world (Hannerz, 2004; Williams, 2011, ch. 3).

It is true that the demand for this type of elite journalists has declined considerably (Sambrook, 2010). There is some evidence indicating that international news reporting has decreased in the UK in recent years (Moore, 2010). It could also be argued that not everybody can be or wish to be a foreign correspondent like John Simpson or Jeremy Bowen, who is willing to work in dangerous and hostile environments covering news of conflict and war. That's fine. But one must recognise that the nature and operation of foreign correspondence is changing rapidly (Hamilton and Jenner, 2004; Sambrook, 2010; Williams, 2011). Gone are the days that the channels of news communications were monopolised by major national and international news organisations. Today, there are many avenues of news gathering and dissemination, thanks to technological advances and the expansion of social media networks (Hermida, 2010; Owen and Purdey, 2008). It is also much cheaper and easier for journalists to travel to other parts of the world.

Apart from traditional foreign correspondents, there are now other types of 'new' foreign correspondents (Hamilton and Jenner, 2004). The use of 'parachute journalists' (Moore, 2010, p. 43), who are only dispatched to a foreign country where a major story emerges (e.g. the Syrian crisis), has become increasingly popular. The flexibility of employing this type of foreign correspondents means that the level of international news coverage can be increased with lower costs. Another option for news organisations is to employ what Hamilton and Jenner (2004) call 'foreign foreign correspondents' who are foreign nationals to cover local stories rather than sending their own correspondents abroad. Another type of correspondents is known as 'local foreign correspondents'. The journalists who belong to this category are employed by local news media. While their main concern is local news, they are often able to identify the local/global links in many news stories.

In addition, journalists can work as 'foreign local correspondents' (Hamilton and Jenner, 2004). Essentially, they are foreign reporters for the news organisations in their own countries but their reports are widely available through satellites or other electronic media. These journalists are well informed of the local situation and have first-hand access to the local people and organisations. Through their reports, foreign readers can see the reporting of the same stories from different national or regional angles. As such, their reports are extremely valuable to international audiences. A growth area in foreign correspondence is the provision of 'premier service', which offers news and analyses for global audiences in business, finance, military and other specialist fields on a fee-paying basis. The Economist Intelligence Unit is probably one of the most well-known organisations providing this kind of business services to a global audience. Also significant is the emergence of 'in-house foreign correspondents' employed by large companies to gather global business intelligence through the latest technology. A new phenomenon in foreign correspondence is the emergence of 'amateur correspondents' or 'citizen journalists'. These reporters are not professionally trained but they are keen to disseminate news of various kinds on the Internet, especially via social networking sites. Many important news stories in foreign

countries have been reported or provided by this type of 'foreign correspondents' (Hamilton and Jenner, 2004; Moore, 2010, pp. 45-46).

This brief review of the changing nature of foreign correspondence shows that the demand for international journalists has not decreased. On the contrary, it has offered a much wider range of opportunities for international journalism graduates. In the past two decades, a variety of new satellite TV channels broadcasting in English have emerged from various regions, such as Russia Today, France 24, Al Jazeera English and CCTV International. These companies have provided some opportunities for new IJ graduates or aspiring international journalists to gain experience in a different cultural setting. Given the technological change in recent years, international news gathering has been transformed significantly (Paterson and Sreberny, 2004). A new phenomenon is that international news gathering can now be done by desk research via the Internet and other electronic channels. Indeed, an abundance of valuable sources for global news stories is now available on the Internet. If one has the ability to read foreign languages, there will not be a shortage of source material for global news. This kind of 'virtual foreign correspondence' (Moore, 2010, p. 44), while not distinctive in collecting first-hand information, does contribute to international news flow.

In order to identify and utilise the rich online news sources, international journalists need to be knowledgeable of what is happening in other parts of the globe. Specifically, they need to be aware of the mega trends, the major actors, and the key issues in a fast changing world. They must have a sense of direction as to where the world is coming from, what is happening now, and where the world is heading towards in the near future (Kegley and Blanton, 2012). Such a panoramic view of the world would help them immensely in making sense of seemingly unrelated events and incidents. This knowledge and understanding can be developed through a systematic study of International Relations. IR study can also help IJ students familiarise with the academic materials on international affairs, which could provide them with invaluable sources for their professional work. They will be able to locate the relevant academic and policy-related sources for background or specialist information on specific topics.

In addition, a good knowledge of IR would help journalists draw on the scholarly expertise in constructing and presenting international news. Well-connected journalists are often invited to take part in high-level policy conferences and 'track II' meetings, where major international economic, political and security issues are discussed by senior academics, diplomats and officials attending 'in their personal capacity'. The information obtained from these kinds of meetings can be used by the journalists but 'neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed'. This is known as the 'Chatham House rule', which originated at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in 1927.⁴ This rule has been widely used by the foreign policy and international affairs think-tanks in the UK and other countries. Moreover, international journalists are sometimes required to interview politicians, officials and business leaders in gathering or presenting international news. It is a common practice for journalists and news presenters to seek comments from politicians, diplomats and academics who have expertise in specific areas of international affairs. Having training in IR would definitely help increase the confidence of international journalists when undertaking such tasks.

One must remember that IR is not just about politics, diplomacy and security affairs, although these are undoubtedly important areas. Journalism students should be taught

⁴ For an explanation of the 'Chatham House rule', see <http://www.chathamhouse.org/about-us/chathamhouserule>.

that IR is inseparable from our daily life. It exists everywhere and at every level. Our life is influenced by IR directly or indirectly and we are contributing to its development one way or another. The boundary between 'home affairs' and 'foreign affairs' has become increasingly blurred in a globalising world. For example, should the global financial crisis be regarded as home affairs or international affairs? Is the challenge of global terrorism a concern for national governments or the international community? Should transnational organised crimes like human trafficking be seen as a domestic concern or a global challenge? Are infectious diseases like HIV/AIDs a domestic health problem or global health issue? The answers to these questions clearly indicate that IR should be the concerns of Journalism students, especially IJ students.

The current state of IR teaching in British journalism departments

From an educational perspective, we need to ask ourselves a serious question: what types of journalists should we be training at universities? Admittedly, the world would always need reporters to cover celebrity stories, music and fashion shows, sports events and so on. But journalism educators should have a sense of responsibility in that we should endeavour to produce journalists who have the capability of playing a 'watchdog' role not only in their own country but in international society. The purpose of a journalism degree, argues de Burgh (2003, p. 98), is to make people 'thoughtful citizens and potential contributors to the intellectual and cultural life of the society'. This is in line with the QAA's benchmark statement, which recommends the development of students' ability to have 'a critical grasp of their responsibilities as practitioners' (QAA, 2008, p. 9). Journalism students would not be able to scrutinise the work of those in positions of power if they are not well educated and well informed of current affairs, domestic or international.

Indeed, there is a growing awareness of the relevance of IR to journalism education, as evidenced by its inclusion in some university journalism courses. Roman Gerodimos (2012) has argued persuasively in a recent article that it is important to increase the awareness of journalism students of what he calls 'Global Current Affairs'. He also believes that this would contribute to the development of journalism graduates as global citizens. Hitherto, the teaching of international or global affairs in UK journalism departments is mostly piece-meal, lacking a holistic and integrated approach. This is understandable because those who are IR specialists lack journalism experience, although some of them may have written op-ed articles for newspapers. IR scholars would inevitably focus on IR teaching and research. There is no need for them to consider how their knowledge could be usefully applied to the education of journalism students. At the same time, few journalism academics have had formal training in the IR discipline and would not be confident to teach the subject to their students. Therefore, there is a missing link between the two fields of study.

As of July 2013, there are 65 universities and 2 colleges in the UK offering Journalism as a degree course. As Figure 1 and Tables 1 and 2 below show, 54 universities do not offer any IR teaching in their BA Journalism and IJ courses. 13 journalism departments include IR or at least one module related to some aspects of IR in their programmes.⁵

As of July 2013, there are 48 British universities offering MA Journalism and IJ courses. As Figure 2 and Tables 4 and 5 below show, 34 universities do not offer any IR teaching

⁵ The author's survey of UK Journalism and International Journalism courses is indicative rather than definitive. This is because university departments do not always provide full module details on their websites. In addition, the title of a module may not fully reflect the module contents. For example, there may well be some IR teaching in a module that does not include 'IR' or similar key words in its title.

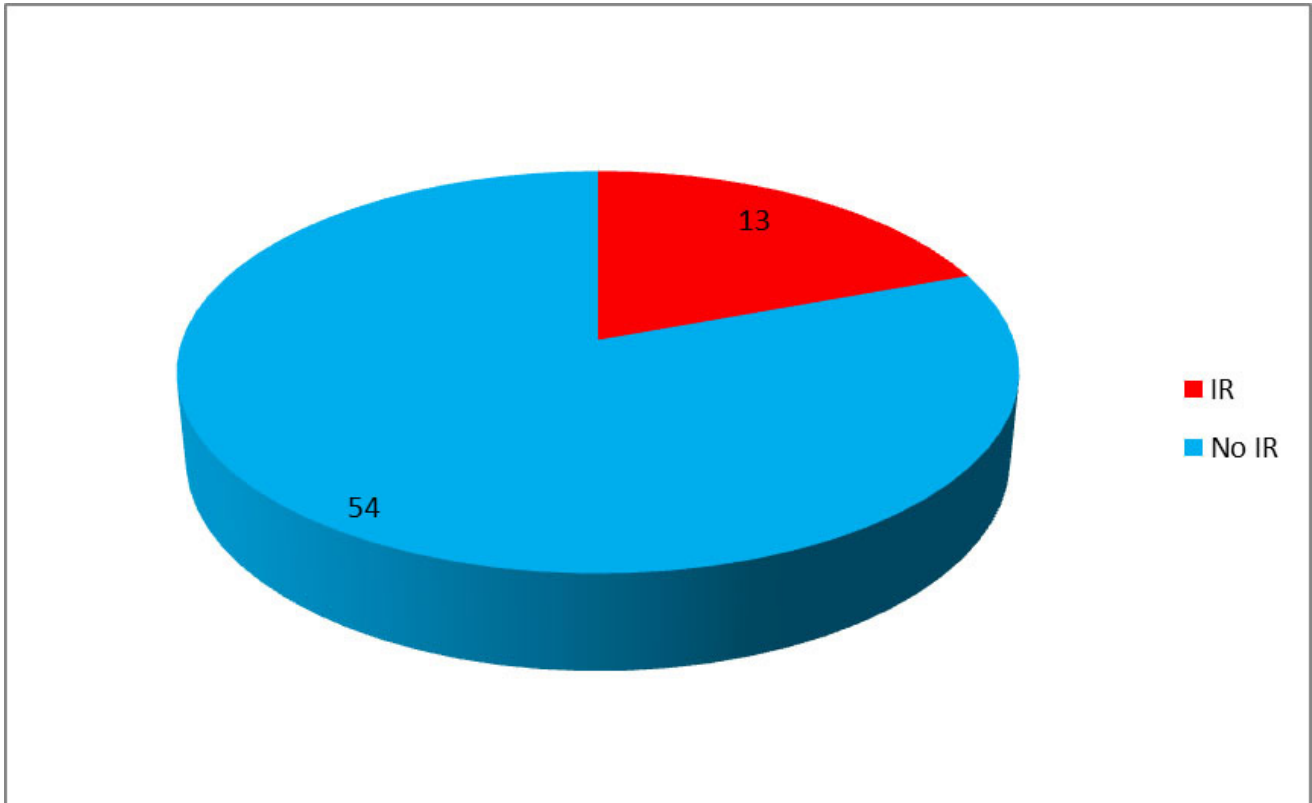


Figure 1: The number of UK undergraduate journalism courses that include IR teaching

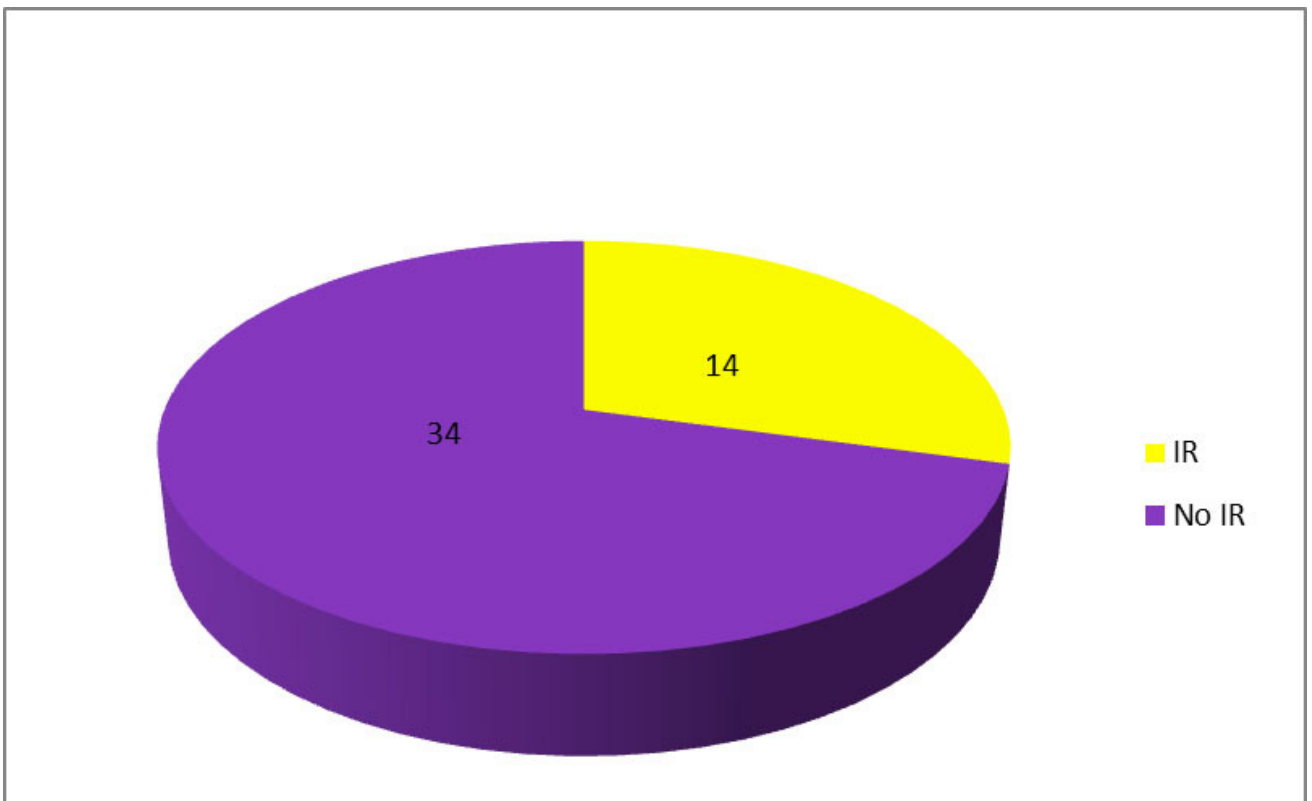


Figure 2: The number of MA journalism courses in the UK that include IR teaching in their MA Journalism/IJ courses. 14 journalism departments include IR or at least one module related to some aspects of IR, broadly defined, in their MA programmes.⁶

⁶ See the caveat in footnote 6.

University	Course	Notes
Buckingham	Journalism with International Studies (and vice versa)	IR is taught via the International Studies programme
De Montfort	Journalism and International Relations	The IR aspect looks quite comprehensive
East London	Journalism Studies and International Politics	A typical joint programme
Kingston	International Relations and Journalism	A typical joint programme with a focus on human rights
Liverpool John Moores	International Journalism	IR teaching is integrated into the IJ programme through several year-long core modules, including 'International News Reporting', 'Contemporary International Relations for Journalists' and 'International Journalism Careers'.
Northampton	Journalism and International Development (Major, minor, joint pathways)	The IR aspect focuses on issues of international development
Richmond	International Journalism and Media (Major) + Minor in another subject	Several IR and politics modules are available for students to choose, e.g. Introduction to IR/Comparative Political Systems; the EU in New International Systems; Diplomatic Studies.
Sunderland	International Journalism	The programme will start in 2014 and no information is available yet
UCLan	International Journalism	The programme appears to have a strong international dimension on the journalism side but no specific focus on IR
Ulster	Journalism and International Development	The IR aspect focuses on issues of international development

Table 1: BA International Journalism/International Relations Programmes

Source: UCAS website, BJTC website and UK journalism department websites.

University	Course	Notes
West Scotland	Journalism	The programme seems to have an international element, including some IR, e.g. the EU and IR (information on the website is limited)
Bournemouth	Multimedia Journalism	The programme has an interesting Year 2 IR module 'Global Current Affairs'
City	Journalism	The programme has some interesting international news reporting modules. IR modules include 'Politics and Current Affairs' (British and International politics), etc.
University of Creative Arts	Journalism	The programme has a module called 'Journalism in Context' which includes current affairs (mainly domestic affairs). No IR modules.
Falmouth	Journalism	International journalism is offered as an option. No IR modules.
Southampton Solent	Journalism	The programme seems to have quite a few international modules e.g. 'Journalism and Global Issues'; 'Global Affairs'
Brunel	Journalism	The programme has one year 1 international module called 'UK, European and Global Institutions'
Middlesex	Journalism and Media	The programme has an optional year 2 module called 'Global Journalism'. No IR modules.

Table 2: BA Journalism courses with international elements, i.e. specific modules on international topics.

Source: UCAS website, BJTC website and various UK journalism department websites.

University	Course	Notes
Bedfordshire	International Journalism	Has some international journalism teaching but no IR-specific modules.
Birmingham City	International Broadcast Journalism	One module called 'Globalisation and Communication'. No IR.
Bolton	International Multimedia Journalism	This course is based in Beijing – a collaboration between Bolton and Beijing Foreign Studies University. No indication of any IR modules.
Bournemouth	International Journalism	The programme will start in 2015. No information for IR modules.
Brunel	International Journalism	One IR module: 'UK, European and International Institutions'.
Cardiff	International Journalism	<p>IR teaching is incorporated into a core module 'Foreign News Reporting', covering major international actors, issues and trends in the world.</p> <p>Other optional IR modules include 'International Relations for Journalists' and 'Insurgency into the 21st Century'.</p>
City	<p>International Journalism</p> <p>Broadcast/TV Journalism</p>	<p>International modules include 1. International News 2. Journalism and Society.</p> <p>Some international issues and contexts covered. No specific IR modules</p> <p>Broadcast/TV Journalism covers international contexts and institutions of news reporting. Students take modules like 'Journalism and Society'. No specific IR modules.</p>

Coventry	Global Journalism	Module: 'Global Media and Communications'. No specific IR modules.
Edinburgh Napier	Journalism (International) for Media professionals	Offered as a full-time distance learning course and a part-time course too. No specific IR modules. No course details on website.
Falmouth	International Journalism	Includes teaching that aims to provide 'an understanding of the relationship between international politics and journalism.' But no module details are available.
Kent	International Media Journalism	There is a module called 'Reporting Conflict'. No IR modules.
Leeds	International Journalism	Some international modules e.g. 'Democratisation and Media in Asia'; 'Public Diplomacy, Propaganda and Psychological Operations'.
Liverpool Moores	John International Journalism News Journalism	IR is taught mainly through a year-long core module 'International Relations for Journalists'. Other international modules include 'Comparative Media Analysis' and 'Media Ethics and Human Rights'.
London Metropolitan	International Journalism	A 'Globalisation' module focusing on global communications. No IR modules.

Newcastle	International Journalism Multimedia Media and Journalism	Some international elements, especially in a module called 'Public Affairs: Politics, Journalism, PR'. There is an optional module called 'Political Communication'. 'Public affairs' is an option in the Media and Journalism course – not sure whether this covers international affairs.
Northumbria	Journalism Global Journalism	No information available on the website.
Salford	International and Online Journalism	One module called 'Global Perspectives in Journalism' which looks at 'journalism's role in global, social, cultural, political and economic constructs'. Not sure how much IR is included.
Sheffield	Global Journalism	One module called 'Globalisation and Development'. Some interesting optional media and communications modules.
Sheffield Hallam	International Broadcast Journalism	This course is not currently running.
South Wales/ Glamorgan	Journalism (International)	No international journalism or IR modules.
Sussex	International Journalism	Some international elements but no IR.
UCLan	International Journalism	No IR modules.

Table 3: MA International Journalism Programmes

Source: BJTC website and various UK journalism department websites.

University	Course	Notes
Birkbeck College	Journalism	2 year part-time course. Typical Journalism course. No IJ. No IR.
University for the Creative Arts	Fashion and Lifestyle Journalism	No IJ or IR.
East London	Journalism and Society	Currently suspended. Optional module: 'Global Media' – no details. Another optional module: 'Politics, Power and Culture'. No IJ or IR.
Glasgow Caledonian	Multimedia Journalism	No IJ or IR.
Gloucestershire	Journalism	No IJ or IR.
Goldsmiths	Journalism	Clearly no IR.
Hertfordshire	Journalism and Media Communications	No IJ. No IR.
Kingston	Journalism Journalism in Open Societies	No IJ. No IR.
Leeds Trinity University College	Broadcast Journalism	No IJ. No IR.
London College of Communications (part of Uni of the Arts)	Journalism – television pathway; print and online pathways. Photojournalism and Documentary Photography (another MA)	No IJ. No IR.
Lincoln	Journalism, War and International Human Rights Journalism	Some interesting international modules e.g. 'International Human Rights', 'War and the Media'. Journalism course has no international focus but has 'International Human Rights' as an option.
Manchester Metropolitan	Multimedia Journalism	No IJ. No IR.

St. Mary's University College; Twickenham (London)	Sports Journalism	No IJ. No IR.
Nottingham Trent	Broadcast Journalism	No IJ. No IR.
Robert Gordon	Journalism	No IJ. 1 module called 'Politics and Public Affairs' – no details available and it is likely to be about domestic issues.
Southampton Solent	Multimedia Journalism	No IJ. No IR.
Staffordshire	Journalism Broadcast Journalism Sports Broadcast Journalism	No notes.
Strathclyde	Digital Journalism, Investigative Journalism, Literary Journalism.	No IJ. No IR.
Sunderland	Journalism, Magazine Journalism, Sport Journalism and PR.	No IJ. No IR.
Swansea	Comparative Journalism	The programme is offered through the Department of political and cultural studies. This includes international aspects of media and journalism. No IR.
Teeside	Journalism	No IJ. No IR.
Ulster	Journalism	No IJ. No IR.

Westminster	Multimedia Journalism (Broadcast)/(Print and Online) Global Media	One module: 'Issues in Journalism: Freedom, Human Rights, Democracy' – cover these issues across the world. No IR. Core module: 'Global Media'. Optional modules include: 'Political Analysis of Communication Policy' – includes international aspects of communications policy; 'Chinese Media'; 'Development and Communications Policy' in relation to issues in developing countries e.g. technologies, democratisation etc.; 'Media, Activism and Censorship' – looking at the role of media in political mobilization, social movement, dissent, wars, conflicts, elections and political and social crises.
West of England	Journalism	Issues covered in some modules include human rights, social and political problems. It is not clear how much international content is in the programme. No further information indicating teaching of IJ and IR.
West of Scotland	Broadcast Journalism	No IJ. No IR.
Winchester	Journalism	No IR.

Table 4: Other MA Journalism Programmes

Source: BJTC website and various UK journalism department websites.

As Table 1 shows, some departments offer joint Journalism/IR courses for their undergraduate students. This is a good step forward but it may not be the best approach for several reasons. First, journalism departments would find it difficult to have enough space to teach all the relevant professional and vocational skills in a half-programme. Second, what often happens to a joint programme is insufficient integration between the two halves of the degree. Academics teaching on these programmes are different subject specialists, who may not have sufficient awareness of the work of the other programme and how it is related to their own programme. Finally, students are essentially taking two separate academic programmes and they will be struggling to establish the links between the two subjects and find the best way of utilising their IR knowledge for their journalistic work.

In short, students are somewhat left to decide what they wish to study or what they think

is necessary or important as part of their IJ education. What is lacking is an integrated approach to the design of an IJ syllabus, of which IR is an organic and integral part. The IR components of the programme should not aim to cover everything a normal IR course would cover – this is both unfeasible and unnecessary. What the IR training should include must be carefully selected to suit the needs of IJ students.

What is the best approach to teaching IR to journalism students?

The challenge for journalism educators is to decide how best to integrate the two separate fields of IR and Journalism. The aim is to ensure that the students would have sufficient knowledge and training in IR to help carry out their professional practice without being overwhelmed by too much detail of the subject matter. Clearly, IR itself is a distinct discipline which encompasses a wide range of traditions and topics. The question is how best to assist students to benefit from the knowledge and insights of the IR scholars. The students should not be expected to learn everything that an IR student is supposed to learn, which is simply impossible. What is essential is to help students develop an intellectual capability to appreciate the complexity of international affairs and the interconnectedness of events that are taking place in different parts of the world.

To begin with, an understanding of the historical path through which we have reached the present world is needed. What this means is not to offer the students a module of world history. What is required though is to give them an overview of the evolution of what is widely known as the ‘international system’ within which interactions among states take place. Although the world has become increasingly globalised, much of international relations is still organised around the Westphalia principle in that states are treated as independent and sovereign entities. It is very difficult, if not impossible, for students (and indeed any informed citizens including journalists) to appreciate the nature and complexity of many of the current international issues without some knowledge of what has been happening in the recent past, at least since the end of the Second World War (Calvocoressi, 2008; Young and Kent, 2004). The purpose here is not to teach them the history of the world. Rather, it seeks to give students a historical perspective on contemporary events and issues. For example, it is difficult to understand the situation in the Middle East without some knowledge of its historical roots, whether we are talking about the Iraq conflict, the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, or the current civil war in Syria. Similarly, most of the unresolved territorial disputes in Asia and Africa are a product of historical legacy. The recent tension between China and Japan over the sovereignty of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in the East China Sea is closely related to their historical animosity.

Secondly, IJ students should have knowledge of the nature and operation of the international system (Shimko, 2010, ch. 3), which is known as an ‘anarchic’ system in the sense that there is no one single authority governing the behaviour of states. Within a specific territory, the people are represented and ruled by their government that has the supreme power to make or unmake any law and is accountable to no external authority. Thus, the international system is seen as a ‘self-help system’ and the action of each state is guided by its national interest as defined by political leaders and policy elites. However, ‘anarchy’ in this context does not mean chaos, and rules and norms do exist in the international system. This kind of understanding is important in helping IJ students understand the ways countries interact with each other. It is crucial in appreciating why states are sometimes suspicious of others, why they engage in conflicts, how international order and stability can be maintained, and why it is possible for states to have cooperation.

It is also essential for IJ students to have a good knowledge of the changing structure of the international system (Mingst and Arreguin-Toft, 2010, ch. 4). This is because the major issues of war, peace, and prosperity are usually associated with systemic changes in international relations. The international system has always been dominated and driven by the great powers. This can be seen by the ideological and military rivalry between the United States and the former Soviet Union throughout the Cold War years. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the structure of the international system changed from a bipolar system to a unipolar system where the United States became the sole dominant power in the world. However, America's predominant position has gradually been challenged by other powers or power centres (e.g. the European Union), particularly the emerging powers like China and India (Pape, 2005). Many believe that the world is moving towards the direction of multipolarity, where several great powers are competing for power and influence (Renard and Biscop, 2010). But this multipolar system is different from the one that existed in the inter-war years when European powers were competing with each other. Some analysts argue that we are living in a non-polar world in that no one single power is capable of dominating the international system (Haass, 2008). IJ students and international journalists should be fully aware of the nature and implications of these structural changes in order to appreciate the dynamics of international relations.

Third, IJ students should be aware of the multi-dimensional nature of IR. The most important dimension of IR is related to political and diplomatic relations. Traditionally, much of international relations is defined, shaped and directed by governments. States are expected to develop their relationships, negotiate agreements, and resolve their differences through established diplomatic channels. To report international news, IJ students need to understand the important role of diplomacy in conflict prevention and resolution (Berridge, 2009). This is certainly the focus of many news reports during the 2003 Iraq invasion, the recent North Korean nuclear crisis, and the current debate on taking military actions against the Assad regime in Syria. Related to diplomacy is the legal dimension of international relations, which is also important in understanding the ways states behave and interact with each other and how inter-state disputes may be resolved (Evans, 2010).

Another important aspect of IR is the security and military dimension of inter-state relations (Kolodziej, 2005; Williams, 2008). Given the 'anarchic' nature of the international system, states are inevitably preoccupied with the protection of their security and survival. They are concerned that the activities of other governments may threaten their security, or that other states may seek to undermine their security for all sorts of reasons. Their security concerns, imagined or real, may sometimes lead to tension or even conflict. History has shown that countries cannot always have an amicable relationship. They are bound to have different interests and disagreements on certain issues. Ideally, states prefer to deal with their differences through peaceful negotiations but this may not always be possible. There are occasions when states feel that it would be necessary or expedient to use military means to achieve their goals. There is ample historical and contemporary evidence showing that states are willing to resort to the use of force as a policy instrument. While not all IJ students wish to become war correspondents, a critical awareness of the major international and regional security issues is certainly needed for any aspiring international journalists.

Moreover, IJ students should understand the enormous significance of trade, economic and financial activities in today's world (Schenk, 2011). International trade is not a new phenomenon but it has expanded dramatically in the past few decades. Trade is an important part of international interactions and countries have become much more interdepend-

ent in their trade relations. Even states that are suspicious of each other's strategic intentions, they cannot afford to have an antagonistic relationship because of the high level of their trade links. US-China relations are a prime example of this. IJ students should have a sound understanding of the importance of economic affairs in shaping government policy as well as the daily life of ordinary citizens. Indeed, reports relating to the global financial crisis and its impact have dominated news across the world since 2008 (Smith 2010).

Last but not least is the growing relevance of social and cultural forces in shaping state policy and international affairs. IR is not just about politics and diplomacy. It exists at every level of domestic and international societies. Culture, art, media, music and tourism are all part of the process of international interactions that are affecting our lives on a daily basis. States have become much more active and proactive in using education, culture and entertainment to increase their economic strength and political influence. There is much talk of developing 'soft power' as a means of enhancing a country's status and influence in the world (Nye, 2004). A major component of soft power is culture, which has attracted considerable attention from many countries. Western powers have long been promoting their cultural attraction in different ways. The role of the British Council in Britain's external relations is well known. The establishment of Confucius Institutes in various countries is clearly a conscious attempt by China to increase its soft power through the promotion of learning Chinese language and culture. What is interesting is that smaller countries are now joining the competition for soft power. South Korea is probably the best example of this. With the backing of its government, Seoul has been very successful in increasing its cultural exports through the promotion of Korean dramas and music in Asia, and increasingly in other parts of the world. This has helped increase the visibility of the country, strengthen its tourism industry, and improve its economic performance. Clearly, IR is linked to our daily life in many ways and through various channels. This is why a good knowledge of the subject is inseparable from the work of international journalists, and journalists more generally.

Fourth, IJ students need to appreciate that states are not the only actors or entities in today's world despite their significance. There are a wide variety of non-state actors, which are playing an increasingly important role in international affairs (Higgot, Underhill and Bieler, 2003). These include intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation, and many others. In addition, they should be aware of the growing importance of numerous non-governmental organisations in driving or influencing public debates and policy discussions on global issues, especially in areas like human rights and the environment. The Amnesty International and Friends of the Earth are the most prominent organisations among others. Also relevant are the activities of multinational corporations (MNCs), which have a truly global reach in their operation and impact. They are capable of shaping government policy and the global economic environment as well as our day-to-day life. Their investment decisions and activities can help create jobs but they can also have damaging effects on the economy. After all, most global news organisations are owned by MNCs that have commercial interests in other business areas in various parts of the world.

Finally, IJ students should be aware of the significance of the major global issues that are affecting the lives of citizens across the globe (Hough, 2008; Salmon and Imber 2008). These issues are capable of connecting or affecting the peoples in distant communities, whether in positive or negative ways. They are the main concerns of policy-makers around the world. The way that these issues are tackled could have profound implications for peo-

ple of this generation, and possibly future generations. Many of the issues are global in nature, which require global solutions in the sense that the international community has to come together to tackle the challenges arising from them.

Some global issues reflect traditional security concerns such as the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The Syrian government's alleged use of chemical weapons against its own people has presented a serious challenge to the international community. The development of nuclear weapon programmes is also a major threat to global and regional security. This explains why the nuclear issues in North Korea and Iran have attracted much attention in international news. Another major security issue is the challenge of global terrorism, which has increased substantially since the terrorist attacks on America on 11 September 2001. This has affected not only state security but the security of ordinary people in many countries.

One serious global issue that affects state, society, the economy and individuals is transnational organised crime. The horrific impact of human trafficking on women and children in various countries has been widely reported in the news media. Another global issue that has captured media attention is environmental degradation, such as climate change and deforestation, which poses a significant threat to both global and local communities. Other global issues threatening human security include infectious diseases like HIV/AIDs, Avian flu and other emerging diseases. Some diseases are closely linked to poverty and hunger in developing countries, which need to be addressed by the international community via the World Health Organisation and governments. Many stories that figure prominently in international news are directly or indirectly related to these global issues. It is therefore essential for IJ students to appreciate their complexity and significance.

An integrative approach to IR teaching within an International Journalism programme

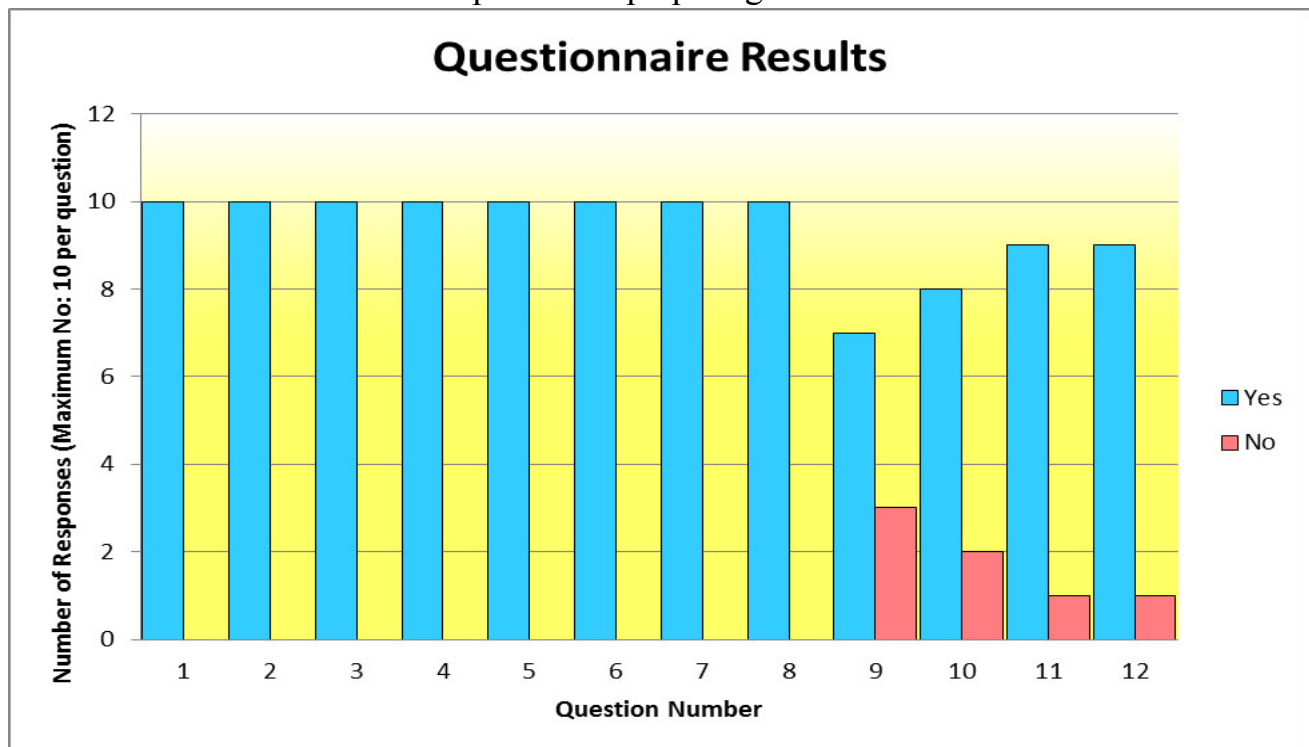
This article has argued for the case that the academic subject of International Relations should be incorporated into the curriculum of International Journalism and Journalism more generally. Over the past eight years, our department has made a serious effort to develop an IJ programme that is fully integrated with IR teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The pedagogic experiment we have and the responses from the students have shown positive results of this integration.

For our BA (Hons) International Journalism programme, the teaching of IR in the first year is integrated into an 'International News Reporting' module. It starts with an overview of the geographical and historical context of the contemporary world. The main purpose of this is to allow students to acquire a good knowledge of the key developments in international relations since 1945. The module also considers how global news reporting in various parts of the world is shaped by their different political and economic systems. This is important in making students appreciate that international news is closely linked to a complex international environment, and that it can be reported from a variety of perspectives. Along with IR teaching, the module covers the opportunities, challenges, and safety issues for international journalists, the changing face of foreign correspondence, global news flows and news agencies, digital and social networks in global news, reporting conflict and disasters, and reporting international sports events. Through a series of 'global newsrooms' and other workshops, students can practise their international news gathering techniques and writing skills. They are trained to identify international news

stories and produce news articles for different global audiences.

In the second year, students take a module ‘Contemporary International Relations for Journalists’. This module is designed for students to gain a sound understanding of IR that is relevant to the concerns of global news organisations. It begins with an overview of the nature and operation of the contemporary international system. This is followed by an examination of the legal dimension of international relations, focusing in particular on the legality of the use of force in international disputes. In addition, the utility and effectiveness of diplomacy in maintaining international peace and security will be considered. The increasing prominence of cultural issues and forces in international relations will also be examined. Moreover, the module assesses the significance of a range of non-state actors in international relations, including the UN and the EU as well as various non-governmental organisations. The role of multinational corporations in shaping global affairs and the growing importance of international trade and economic activities are analysed in this module. Special attention is paid to the nature, processes and consequences of contemporary globalisation. One way of linking IR and international news reporting is to look at how global conflict and terrorist events are reported by the news media (Allan and Zelizer, 2004; Pludowski, 2007; Zelizer and Allan, 2011). Thus, a substantial part of the module focuses on the analysis of the complexity of conflict and terrorism coverage within broader cultural, political and military contexts. Specifically, it considers how news coverage of major events relating to global terrorism is shaped by a variety of domestic and international factors in various parts of the world.

In the final year of the programme, IR teaching is incorporated into an ‘International Journalism Careers’ module. Apart from preparing students for the world of work in in-



ternational journalism (including work placement) and assisting them to develop their own creative processes, this module aims to expand IJ students’ understanding of the broader global economic and security environment within which major international news arises. The IR teaching starts with an overview of the changing structure of the international system identifying the great powers or power centres in today’s world. This is followed by an analytical survey of the changing world economic landscape, with particular emphasis

on the major economic trends, issues and actors in the 21st century. The challenge and implications of the global financial crisis are considered in detail. An important part of the teaching is to critically examine a range of significant traditional and non-conventional security issues, including great power competition, the threat of weapons of mass destruction (especially nuclear weapons), global terrorism and the ‘clash of civilisations’, transnational organised crime, resources and environment degradation, infectious diseases, and poverty and hunger. Various IR theories are utilised in examining the nature, significance and implications of these global security issues. We believe that a good knowledge of major global issues will help students identify and report international news within the context of a rapidly changing world. It will also put them in a stronger position when competing for jobs in national and international news organisations, and help them seek international employment opportunities.

The teaching of IR on the MA International Journalism programmes in our department is conducted mainly through a dedicated year-long module ‘International Relations for Journalists’. Much of the IR syllabus in the BA (Hons) IJ programme discussed above is covered in this MA module in a condensed form. Obviously, Masters students are expected to demonstrate a higher level of theoretical understanding, critical ability, and analytical skills in their work. They need to show the capability of drawing on the analyses and insights of IR scholars in gathering and constructing international news.

The module evaluation forms for various IR modules in the past eight years have consistently shown that students have found the teaching of IR both interesting and challenging, and relevant to the professional work of international journalists. This is confirmed by a survey of the students graduated from the BA (Hons) International Journalism programme in July 2013. The questionnaire was sent to 20 students and 10 students returned the questionnaire.

According to the quantitative data (see the Questionnaire in the Appendix and the graph below), 100% of the students who have completed the questionnaire agree that the study of IR has helped increase their interest in and awareness of international affairs. 100% of the respondents feel that it is helpful for international journalists to have a good knowledge of IR. All of them also agree that the study has contributed to their understanding of various global security and economic issues, and that it has helped them develop their ability to analyse international news. All of the respondents believe that their confidence in dealing with international issues in their journalism work has increased after studying IR modules. Similarly, 100% of the respondents agree that IR study has helped them understand the broader global context within which international news arises and appreciate different perspectives on world affairs. 70% of the respondents concur that the academic research skills for the IR study are useful for their work, while 80% agree that the knowledge of IR helps them identify the sources relating to international news gathering. Moreover, 90% concur that the academic knowledge they have acquired from the IR modules is helpful in identifying and constructing international news stories. Finally, 90% of the respondents feel that the IR knowledge they have acquired has helped increase their confidence in interviewing officials and diplomats in doing their job.

The qualitative data gathered from the survey is equally positive. In response to Q1, one student comments: ‘The IR modules were fantastic ... thoroughly going into the different elements of international affairs ... broadened my interest in the subject.’ A student has responded to Q2 by saying that the study of IR ‘definitely has made me aware of global affairs in general, particularly when watching the news. It has been the best aid to this course because I have become a lot more conscious of international affairs.’ The response

of another student to Q4 reveals that ‘having a more in depth knowledge of International Relations has been a great enhancer in my confidence when dealing with international issues. For example, writing about global issues is something that has become an enjoyment.’ One response to Q5 reads: ‘Without studying International Relations I would never have known the vast differences in cultures and even reporting laws across different countries. I feel that studying International Relations has helped me understand these.’ Another student comments in the response to Q6: ‘Studying IR has helped me to understand how the locality of certain stories can affect its placement on the news agenda.’

One response to Q7 reads: ‘I think a lot has to do with studying theories, particularly when we were looking into the world order and the relationships between states ... I began to appreciate different perspectives on world affairs even more in our second year when we were preparing for our exam and looking at the different theories that supported these ideas ... it really got my mind working and engaged.’ Another student has responded to Q8 by saying that ‘it has made it a lot easier to understand how and why international news has been reported in a certain way.’ When asked whether academic knowledge in IR helps identify and construct international news stories (Q11), a student says that ‘the awareness is something that has come from learning about it academically. Being able to spot an international news story comes more naturally now as it’s easier to identify what’s important and useful when identifying news stories.’ The response to the last question on whether IR knowledge has helped increase students’ confidence in interviewing officials and diplomats (Q12) is particularly encouraging: ‘Yes, because I feel I know what I am talking about in discussing international relations topics now.’ This view is shared by another student who has commented: ‘The knowledge of international Relations does give me a lot more confidence; I think it’s down to the fact that when you know more you are less likely to feel intimidated. I do think International Relations has been the spine of the International Journalism course, because I have come out of the course more confident and I have gained a lot of knowledge about foreign affairs. So I’m more prepared as a whole.’

Conclusion

This article has argued that greater attention should be paid to the knowledge base in the education of international journalists. As de Burgh (2003) puts it, ‘skills are not enough’. Knowledge is essential – knowledge that would help students understand the complexity of international affairs and the significant issues in an increasingly globalising world. Without such knowledge, IJ students would not have the level of confidence that is required to handle complex international news stories, interview diplomats and high-level policy-makers, and play a ‘watchdog’ role in examining the work of those who are responsible for making important decisions on foreign affairs and international issues.

As the QAA benchmark statement recommends, Media, Communication and Journalism courses should draw on the ‘different sources of conceptualisation and practice’ from a range of arts, humanities and social sciences disciplines (QAA, 2008, p. 9). This article puts forward the argument that International Relations would provide the most relevant subject knowledge and understanding for journalism programmes that have an international focus. It argues that journalism educators can draw on the rich insights of IR scholars in building the knowledge base for International Journalism courses. Through a thorough consideration of the links between the subject knowledge of IR and international news reporting, the article has demonstrated that International Relations plays a

very significant role in the education of journalism students. A sound understanding of IR is especially helpful for international journalists in gathering and reporting global news in various areas.

A review of existing journalism courses in the UK indicates that there is now a greater awareness of the relevance of IR to journalism education. A number of journalism departments offer some modules that cover international issues and institutions, but the current approach is rather fragmented lacking a coherent approach to the integration of IR teaching and international journalism training. This article has advocated an integrative approach to the teaching of IR to journalism students. It provides a detailed discussion of an IR syllabus that is incorporated into an undergraduate IJ programme in the author's department. The course has been running for eight years. A survey of the students who have recently graduated from this programme clearly shows that they are appreciative of the value of having a good knowledge of IR in their journalism education.

Journalism education at universities should not just be about offering training of journalistic skills despite its importance. As the QAA benchmark statement recommends, graduates in the field should be expected to display 'coherent knowledge', 'understanding of a range of concepts, theories and approaches' and 'skills in critical analysis, research, production and communication appropriate to the learning tasks set by their programme' (QAA, 2008, p. 18). Journalism departments should seek to produce graduates who have good vocational skills, relevant academic and professional knowledge, and critical and analytical capabilities. As the journalism profession has become increasingly global in terms of its operation, it is important to produce journalism graduates who have both the knowledge and skills to deal with international issues. By making a case for including IR as a significant part of journalism courses, this article hopes to make a useful contribution to the development of journalism education and the education of international journalists in particular.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

To select your answer for each question, please double click the grey box you wish to tick (yes OR no), and under the ‘Default value’ section of the pop-up box, select ‘Checked’, and then click ‘OK’. You are welcome to include any additional comments for each question.

1. Has the study of International Relations helped increase your interest in international affairs?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

2. Has the study of International Relations helped increase your awareness of international affairs?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

3. Has the study of International Relations contributed to your understanding of various global security and economic issues?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

4. Having studied the International Relations modules, do you feel more confident in dealing with international issues in your journalism work?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

5. Do you think that it is helpful for international journalists to have a good knowledge

of international relations?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

6. Do you think that the study of International Relations has helped you understand the broader global context within which international news arises?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

7. Do you think that the study of International Relations has helped you appreciate different perspectives on world affairs?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

8. Do you think that the study of International Relations has helped you develop your ability to analyse international news?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

9. Do you think that the academic research skills for the study of International Relations are useful for international news gathering?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

10. Do you think that your academic study in International Relations helps you identify the sources relating to international news gathering?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

11. Do you think that the academic knowledge you have acquired from the International Relations modules helps you identify and construct international news stories?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

12. Do you think that your knowledge of International Relations has helped increase your confidence in interviewing officials and diplomats?

Yes No

Additional Comments: