

A visual communication approach to multimodal document analysis

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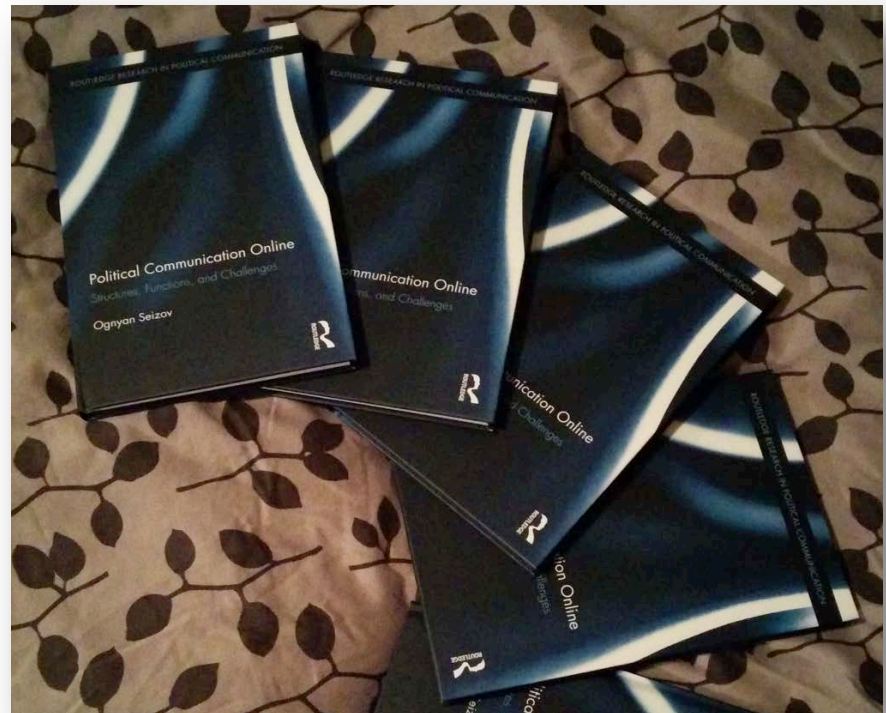
***EXZELLENT.**

Outline

1. Key terms
2. Online communication's specificities
3. Bridging the gap: guiding questions & study design
4. ICON: A multimodal annotation tool for online documents
5. Conclusions

Commercial segment

Seizov, O. (2014). *Political communication online: Structures, functions, and challenges*. New York: Routledge.



Key terms

- **Visuality:** the visual aspect(s) of communication artifacts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996)
- **Multimodality:** “a variety of visually-based modes are deployed simultaneously in order to fulfill an orchestrated collection of interwoven communicative goals” (Bateman, 2008, p. 1)
- **Political communication:** “All forms of communication undertaken **by** politicians and other political actors for the purpose of achieving specific objectives [;] communication addressed **to** these actors [; and] communication **about** these actors and their activities [...].”(McNair, 2003, p. 4)
- **Online communication:** “[multimodal] human communication *via* computers” ([Thorne, 2008, p.1]; Simpson, 2002, p. 414)

Online communication: Status quo

- Fast-paced innovation
- Production & consumption merging

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October 28, 2011 — Updated 1445 GMT (2240 HKT)

U.S. troops killed in suicide attack on convoy in Kabul

At least 13 U.S. troops were killed on Saturday when a suicide bomber struck a military convoy in Kabul. The Taliban claims 16 foreign soldiers died in the attack. [FULL STORY](#)

Bangkok residents trapped by floods

The Thai capital Bangkok has been hit by severe floods. CNN talks to one man desperately trying to save his business from rising floodwaters. [FULL STORY](#) | [CITY FACES 'PERFECT STORM'](#) | [MAPPING FLOODS](#) | [FLOODS EXPLAINED](#)

U.S. soldiers killed in Afghanistan

Deadly violence hits Afghanistan

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Online communication: Status quo

- Fast-paced innovation
- Production & consumption merging
 - **Prosumer**: a media user who also generates, circulates, and re-circulates media content (cf. Bianco, 2009)
- Media convergence (cf. Appelgren, 2004)
 - Merging of media and media content
- Mono-modal research still dominates the field
- Theoretical and methodological gaps to be filled...

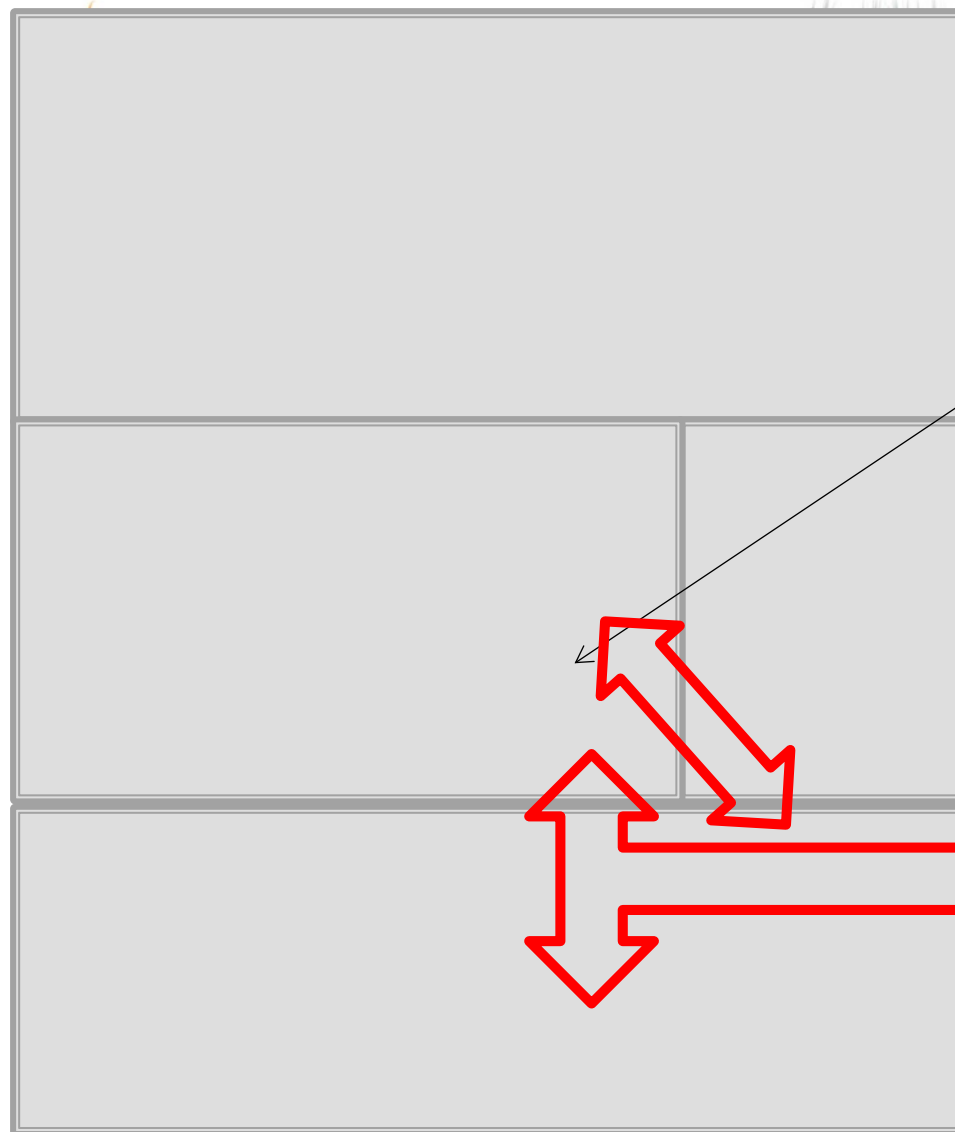
Bridging the gap: guiding questions

1. **How do political websites (co-)organize their content visually and verbally?**
2. **How do the different communication modes relate to meaning-construction patterns of the content?**
3. **Are there clearly identifiable medium- and genre-specific patterns of multimodal interaction?**

Bridging the gap: methodological synergy

- Methods
 - Political iconology (cf. Müller, 2009)
 - Visual content analysis (cf. Bell, 2001; Rose, 2007)
 - Systemic-functional linguistics (cf. Halliday, 1986)
 - Multimodal document analysis (cf. Bateman, 2008)
- All of the above: ICON - “Imagery & Communication in Online Narratives” (Seizov, 2014)

ICON's principle action



Visual analysis: what is being depicted and how?

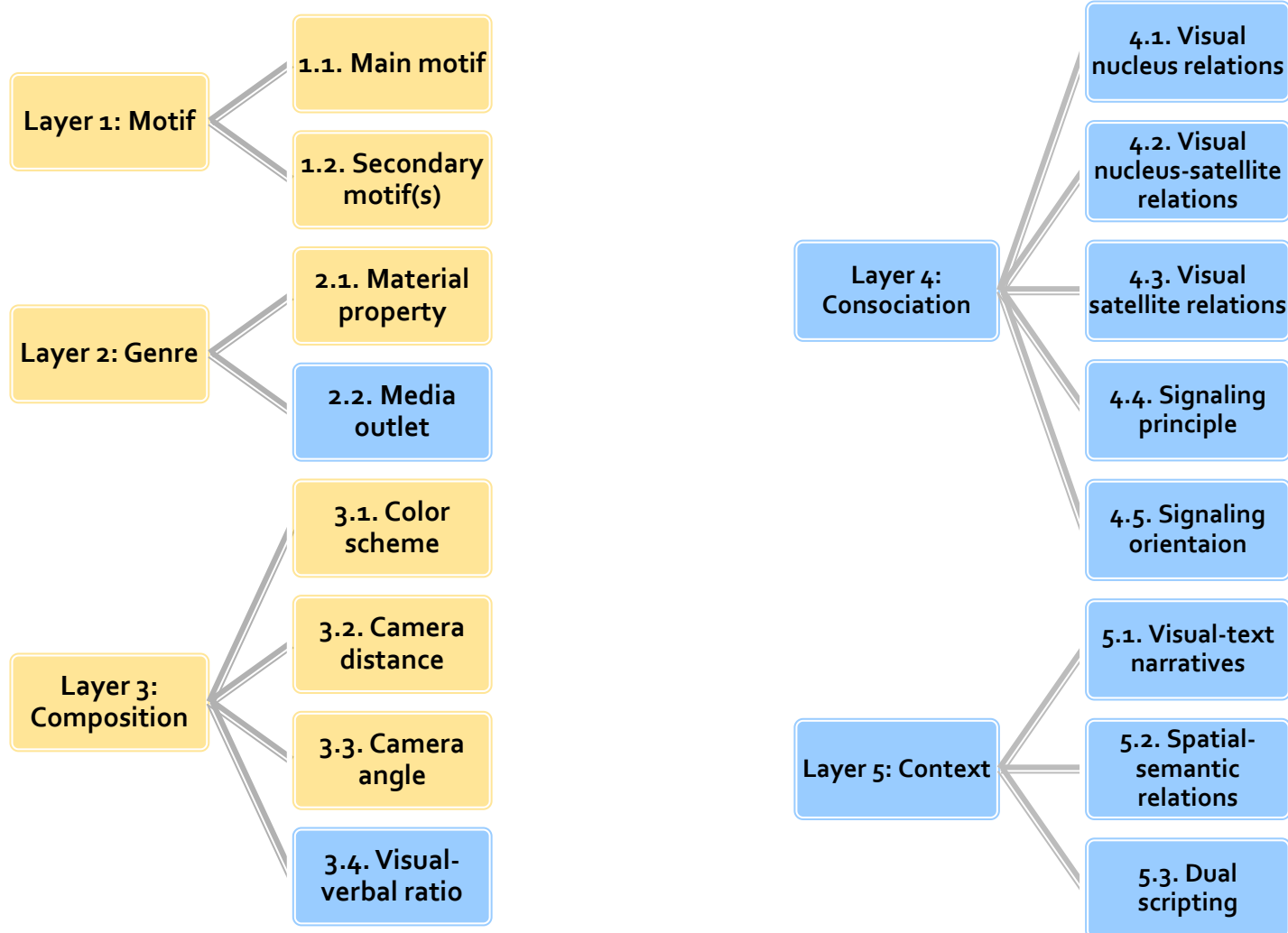
Layout: what is the spatial relationship between images and text and what orientation guides are there?

Narratives: what is the semantic relationship between visuals and visuals & text?

Some previous multimodal annotation schemes

- Genre and Multimodality – GeM (Bateman, 2008)
- Intersemiotic Complementarity (Royce, 1998, 2002, 2007)
- Multimodal Discourse Analysis (O'Halloran, 2004, 2008)
- Djonov (2007, 2008)
- Knox (2004, 2007)

Imagery & Communication in Online Narratives (ICON): An integrated approach



The five layers of the ICON annotation scheme (Seizov, 2014)

ICON in action

Layer 1: Motif

111 – persons | 129 – n-a

Layer 2: Genre

211 – photograph

221 – news

Layer 3: Composition

311 – warm color

316 - grayscale

321 – close-up

332 – level

333 – low

342 – textual



ICON in action

Layer 4: Consociation

411 – nucleus-nucleus consociation

422 – nucleus-satellite dissociation

432 – satellite-satellite dissociation

4412 – textual signaling

452 – mostly external

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21 June 2012 Last updated at 01:53 GMT

North Carolina rejects funds for sterilisation victims

Victims of forced sterilisation in the US state of North Carolina will not get compensation, after a payout plan failed in the state Senate.

A plan to give \$50,000 (£31,600) to each victim passed the House but was rejected in the Senate. Republicans said the state did not have the funds.

Democratic Governor Beverly Purdue set aside \$10m for the plan in her budget.

It is thought about 7,600 people were sterilised in North Carolina from 1929 to 1974. Many were poor black women.

While many states had sterilisation plans targeted at "feeble-minded" people, North Carolina stands out for widening its programme after World War II.

'Lost all hope'

The measure was also supported by Republican House Speaker Thom Tillis, who has said that he sees the Senate's exclusion of the measure from the state budget as a personal failure.

Earlier, the plan was approved by the House.

Another lawmaker who supported the bill said the decision made her ashamed to be part of the General Assembly.

"I'm appalled that the North Carolina Senate today took no action to compensate the victims that we as a state robbed of their rights to reproduce and to have children," Democratic lawmaker Earline Pamon said.

"At this point, I have lost all hope."

But Republican senators said the state could not afford to include the money in the state budget.

"The state has no money anyway and the teachers would like to have a pay raise, and state employees would like to have a pay raise and you're dealing with a \$250 million shortfall in Medicaid," Senator Austin Altran said.

He added that passage of the measure might encourage other groups who say they have been victimised in the past to seek compensation from the state.

Elaine Riddick was not told she was sterilised after giving birth

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ICON in action

Layer 5: Context

511 – consonant

521 – spatial contiguity

531 – dual scripting

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Pilot: Data sample and coding (Seizov, 2014)

- One-shot sampling on June 21, 2012
- N_{total} = 52 webpages
 - N_{news} = 20
 - N_{campaign} = 16
 - N_{NGO} = 10
 - N_{citizen} = 6
- Intra-rater reliability: Krippendorff's $\alpha=.84$

Structures and functions in political communication online (Seizov, 2014)

LeadVisual MultipleVisuals Text-flow



Conclusions

1. How do political websites (co-)organize their content visually and verbally?

Images are harmoniously embedded in the dominant text.

1. How do the different communication modes relate to meaning-construction patterns of the content?

Multimodal contextualization is done through semantic and spatial proximity.

2. Are there clearly identifiable medium- and genre-specific patterns of multimodal interaction?

Three structure-functional combinations emerged.

Limitations & outlook

- Sampling (size, period, unequal distribution)
- No moving image analysis (only first frame)
- One researcher
- Complicated and time-consuming coding procedure (software)
- Outlook:
 - Large-N follow-up
 - Reception study and expert interviews
 - Grasping presumption and amateur multimodal production

Thank you for your attention!

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