

Narrative Process Annotation of Comic Strips for Corpus Analysis

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Outline

- Comics and Multimodality
- Where I started
- Where I am now
- Analysis & Results

Comics and Multimodality

- Bridging the gap between:
 - visual & verbal representations
 - structure & meaning
 - single & sequential representations



Cham (1997-2014) PHD Comics.

<http://www.phdcomics.com/comics/archive.php?comid=1601> [last accessed: 08.09.2014]

Where I started: Humor construction in comic strips

- Research Question:
 - What resources are employed to create humor in comic strips?
- Hypotheses:
 - There is a general pattern across different comic strips to create humor.
 - The last panel in a comic strip activates the script opposition.
- Theoretical Frameworks:
 - Script-Based Semantic Theory of Humor (Raskin, 1985)
 - General Theory of Verbal Humor (Attardo, 2001)
 - Adoption of the GTVH for multi-modal analysis (Tsakona, 2009)
 - Narrative Processes (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006)
 - Speech functions and responses; Logico-semantic relations (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014)

Where I started: Humor construction in comic strips

- Analysis:
 - panel-for-panel analysis
 - restricted vocabulary
- Data:
 - 6 comic strips from PHD Comics (Cham, 1997-2014)
 - similar topic
 - same protagonists
 - published in 2013

COMIC STRIP										
Panel	1				2		3		4	
		Modality								
Narrative Processes	Conversion	Text, Image, Text+Image								
	Reaction									
	Mental Process									
	Verbal Process									
	Non-transactional action									
	Uni-directional action									
	Bi-directional action									
Speech Functions	INITIATE: offer, command, statement, question									
	RESPONSE: DESIRED: acceptance, undertaking, acknowledgement, answer									
Logical-semantic relations	ELABORATION:									
	EXTENSION:									
	ENHANCEMENT:									
Activated Script	ACTUAL/NON-ACTUAL, NORMAL/ABNORMAL, POSSIBLE/IMPOSSIBLE									
Modality	Text, Image, Text+Image									
Knowledge Resources	Language:	TEXT: pun; IMAGE: pun; IMAGE-TEXT: contrast, metaphor, exaggeration								
	Narrative Strategy:	Comic strip								
	Target:									
	Situation:	OBJECTS: PARTICIPANTS: ACTIVITIES: PLACES:								
	Logical Mechanism:	Reversal, analogy, exaggeration, juxtaposition, ambiguity								
	Script Opposition:	Actual/non-actual, normal/abnormal, possible/impossible								

Where I started: Humor construction in comic strips

- Results:
 - no general pattern across comic strips to construct humor
 - three different patterns of speech function pairs constellations
 - in 5 out 6 comic strips the last panel activated the script opposition

Sequential:

INITIATE^1	RESPONSE^1	INITIATE^2	RESPONSE^2
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Nested:

INITIATE^1	INITIATE^2	RESPONSE^1	RESPONSE^2
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Open:

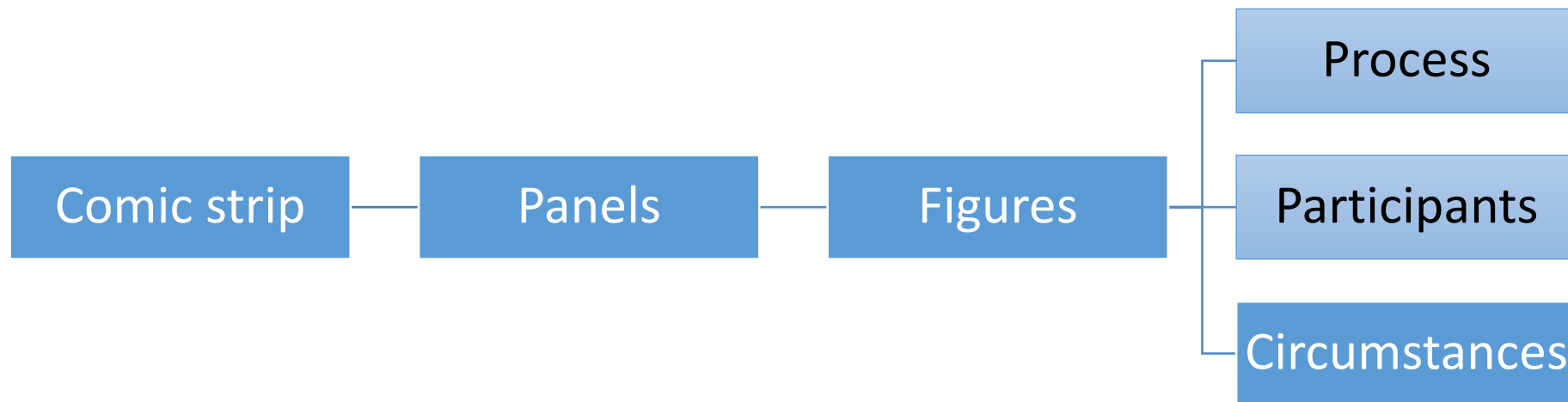
INITIATE^1	RESPONSE^1	INITIATE^2	INITIATE^3	INITIATE^4	RESPONSE^4
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Where I started: Humor construction in comic strips

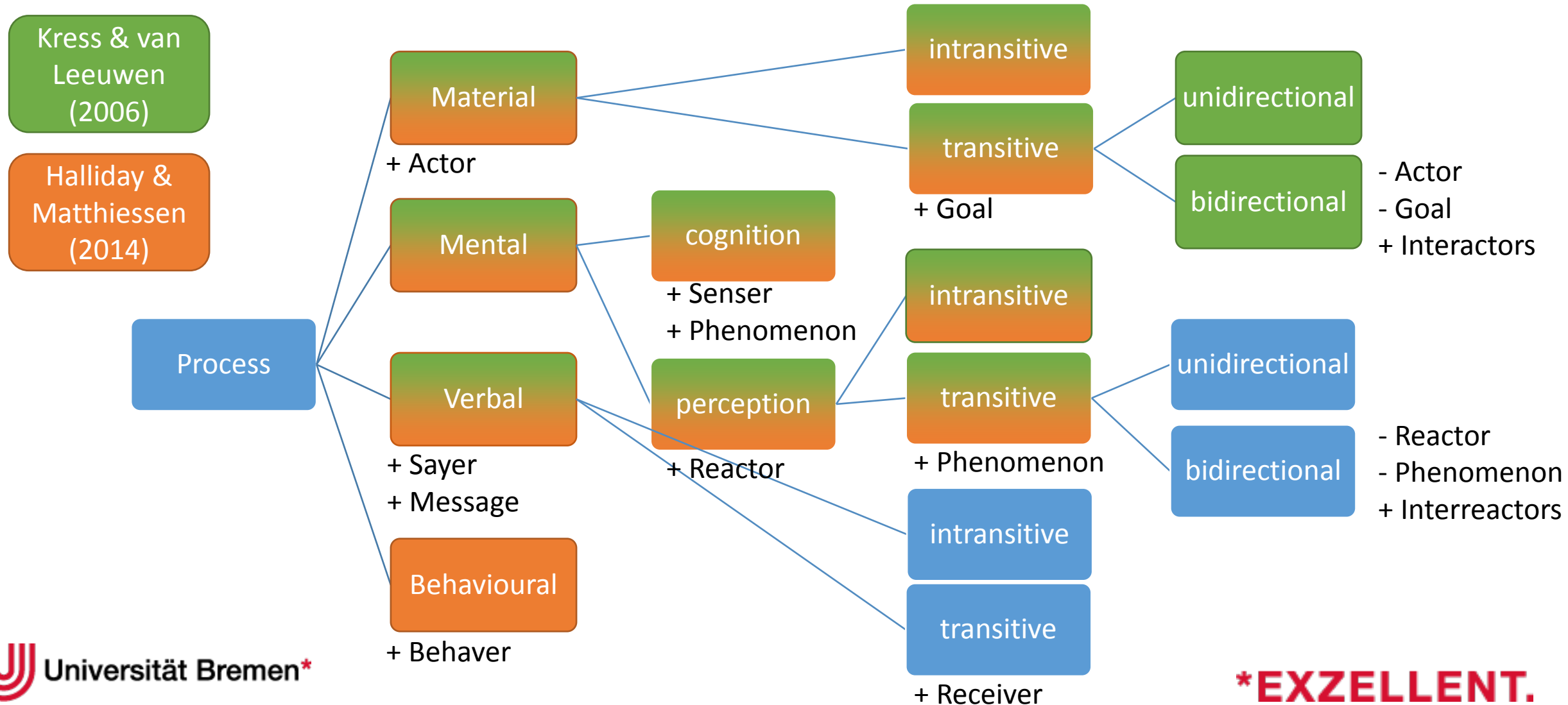
- Problems:
 - too many frameworks
 - results did not explain humor construction
 - very broad process types (action, reaction, verbal)
 - very little data
- Solutions:
 - no humor
 - 2 frameworks
 - refined process type analysis
 - more data

Where I am now: Process Annotation

- Why processes?
 - experiential metafunction: clause as representation (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014)
 - figures: quantum of change in the flow of events



Where I am now: Process Types



Where I am now: Process Types

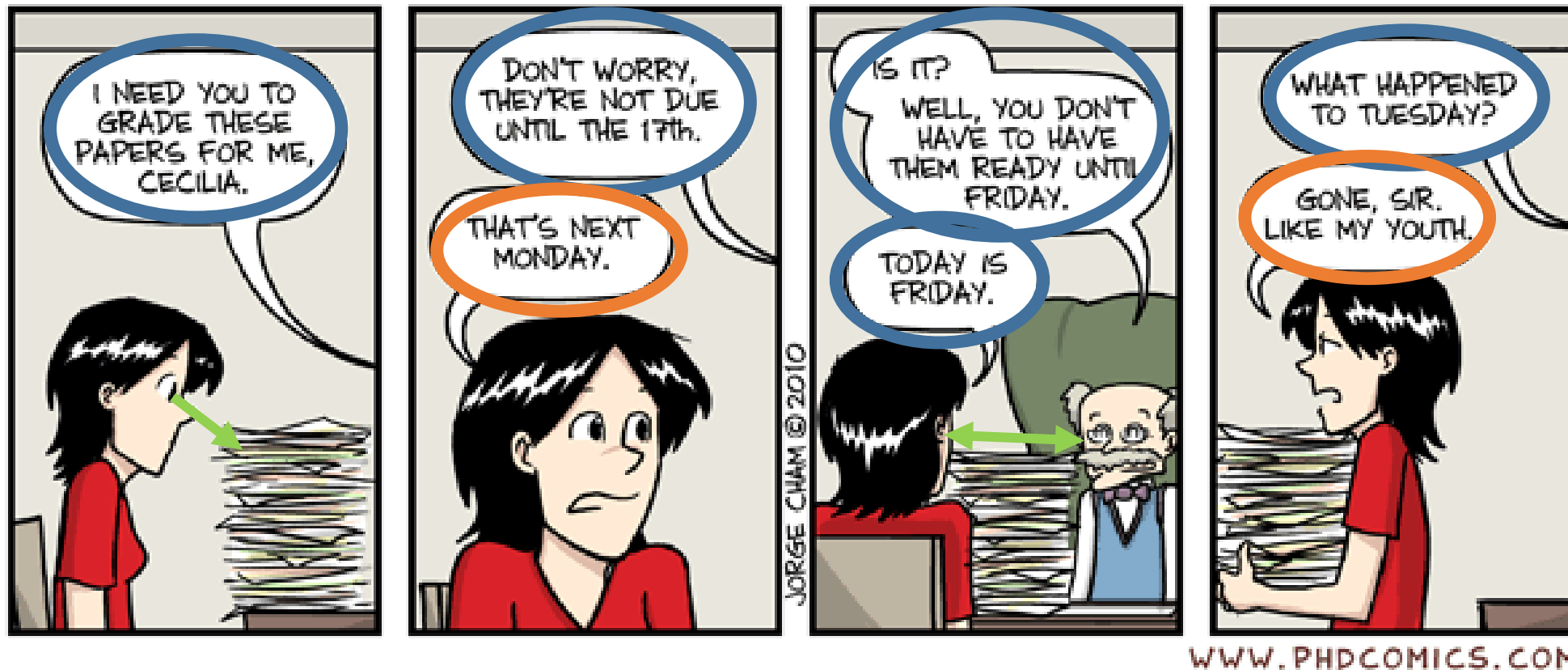
The Visible

- Material
 - material intransitive (hasActor)
 - material transitive unidirectional (hasActor, hasGoal)
 - material transitive bidirectional (hasInteractors)
- Mental
 - mental cognition (hasSenser, hasPhenomenon)
 - mental perception intransitive (hasReactor)
 - mental perception transitive unidirectional (hasReactor, hasPhenomenon)
 - mental perception transitive bidirectional (hasInterreactors)
- Verbal
 - verbal intransitive (hasSayer, hasMessage)
 - verbal transitive (hasSayer, hasMessage, hasReceiver)
- Behavioural (hasBehavior)

The Inferred

- Inferred Material
 - hasInferredActor
 - hasInferredGoal
 - hasInferredInteractors
- Inferred Mental
 - hasInferredSenser
 - hasInferredPhenomenon
 - hasInferredInterreactor
- Inferred Verbal
 - hasInferredSayer
 - hasInferredReceiver

Analysis & Results: Visible Processes



Cham (1997-2014) PHD Comics.

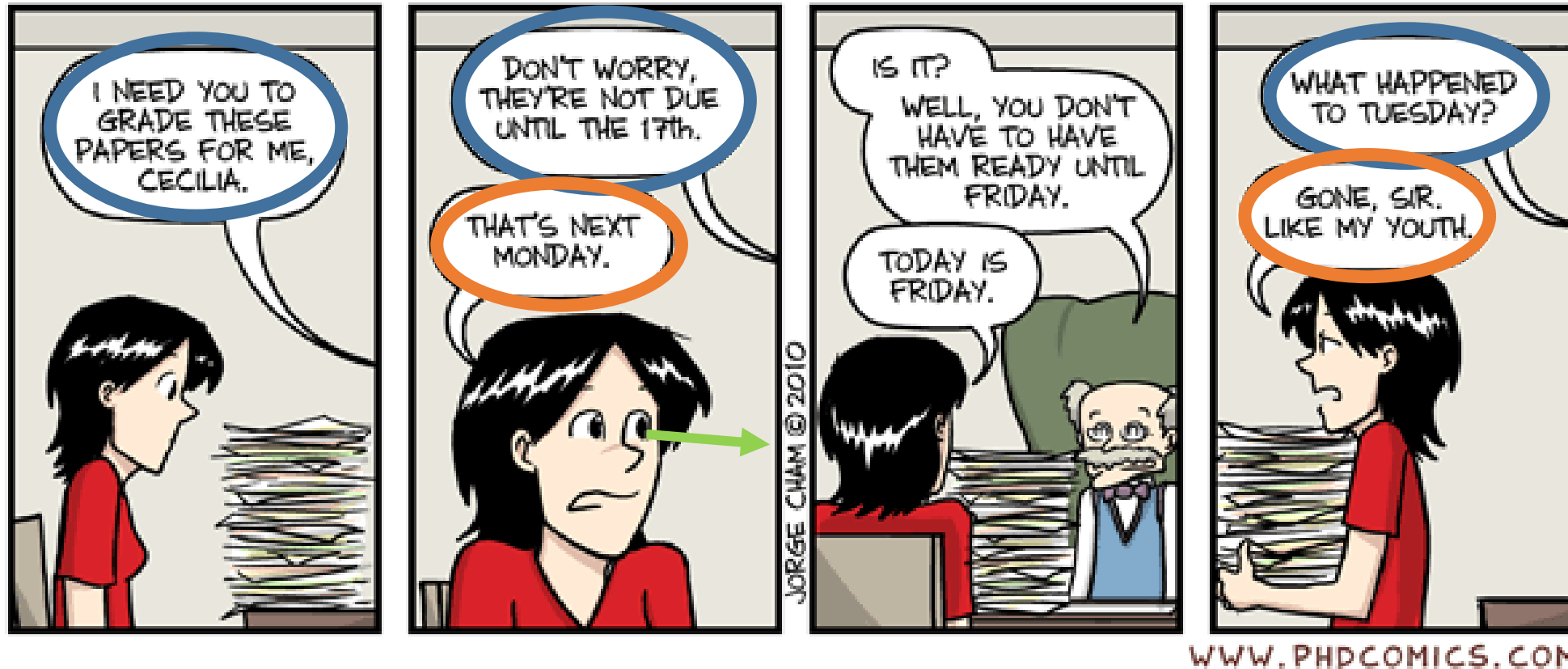
<http://www.phdcomics.com/comics/archive.php?comid=1318> [last accessed: 08.09.2014]

verbal transitive:
hasSayer
hasMessage
hasReceiver

Verbal intransitive:
hasSayer
hasMessage

Mental perception transitive:
hasReactort / hasInterreactor
hasPhenomenon / hasInterreactor

Analysis & Results: Inferred Processes



Inferred verbal
transitive:
hasInferredSayer

Inferred verbal
transitive:
hasInferredReceiver

Inferred mental perception
transitive:
hasInferredPhenomenon

Cham (1997-2014) PHD Comics.

<http://www.phdcomics.com/comics/archive.php?comid=1318> [last accessed: 08.09.2014]

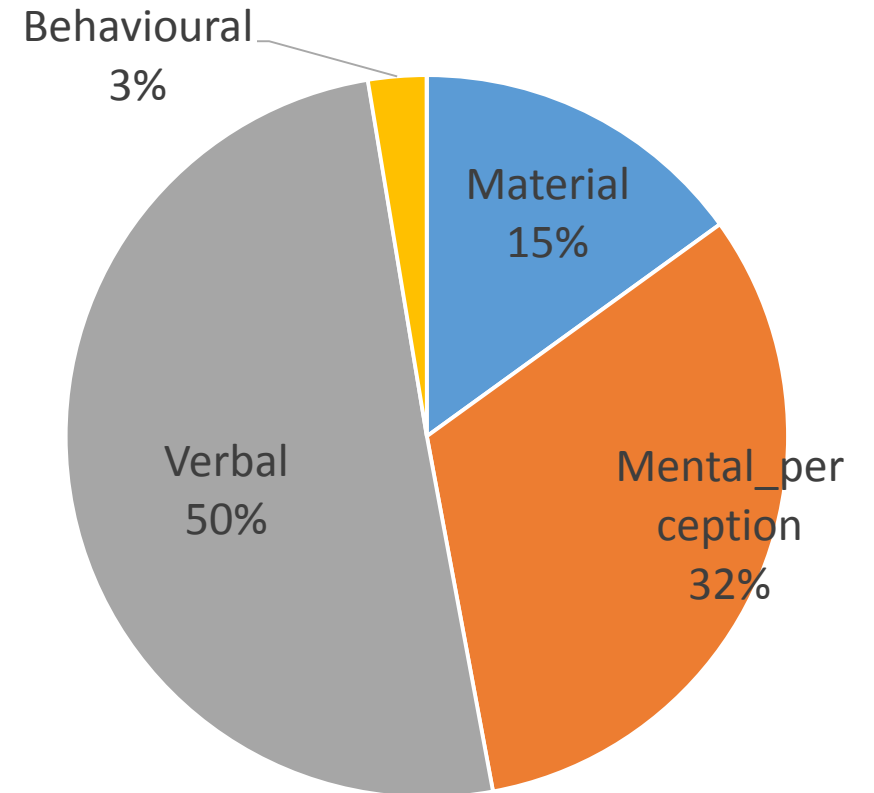
Strip_ID	Panel_ID	Process_Type	Process_Category1	Category1_Value	Participants1	Participants1_Value	Process_Category2	Category2_Value	Participants2	Participants2_Value
Strip_11	1	Material	transitive unidirectional	holding	ACTOR	Cecilia	transitive unidirectional	holding	INFERRED_ACTOR	Cecilia
					GOAL	cup			INFERRED_GOAL	cup
		Material	transitive bidirectional	shakingHands	INTERACTOR	student	transitive bidirectional	shakingHands	INFERRED_INTERACTOR	student
					INTERACTOR	Cecilia			INFERRED_INTERACTOR	Cecilia
	2	Material	intransitive	working	ACTOR	Cecilia	cognition	thinking		
		Mental	cognition	thinking	SENER	Cecilia			INFERRED_SENER	Cecilia
					PHENOMENON	Hmm, this person sort of knew what to do, but used the formula incorrectly.			PHENOMENON	Hmm, this person sort of knew what to do, but used the formula incorrectly.
		Mental	perception intransitive	looking	REACTOR	Cecilia				
		Mental	peception transitive unidirectional	lookingAt	REACTOR	Cecilia	peception transitive unidirectional	lookingAt	REACTOR	Cecilia
					PHENOMENON	computer			INFERRED_PHENOMENON	computer
		Mental	perception transitive bidirectional	lookingAtEachOther	INTERREACTOR	Cecilia	perception transitive bidirectional	lookingAtEachOther	INFERRED_INTERREACTOR	Cecilia
					INTERREACTOR	student			INFERRED_INTERREACTOR	student
	3	Verbal	intransitive	saying	SAYER	student	intransitive	saying	INFERRED_SAYER	student
					MESSAGE	oh. sorry.			MESSAGE	oh. sorry.
		Verbal	transitive	sayingTo	SAYER	Cecilia	transitive	sayingTo	INFERRED_SAYER	Cecilia
					MESSAGE	No, but I could have been.			MESSAGE	No, but I could have been.
					RECEIVER	student			INFERRED_RECEIVER	student
	4	Behavioural		crying	BEHAVIOR	Cecilia				



Analysis & Results: Data

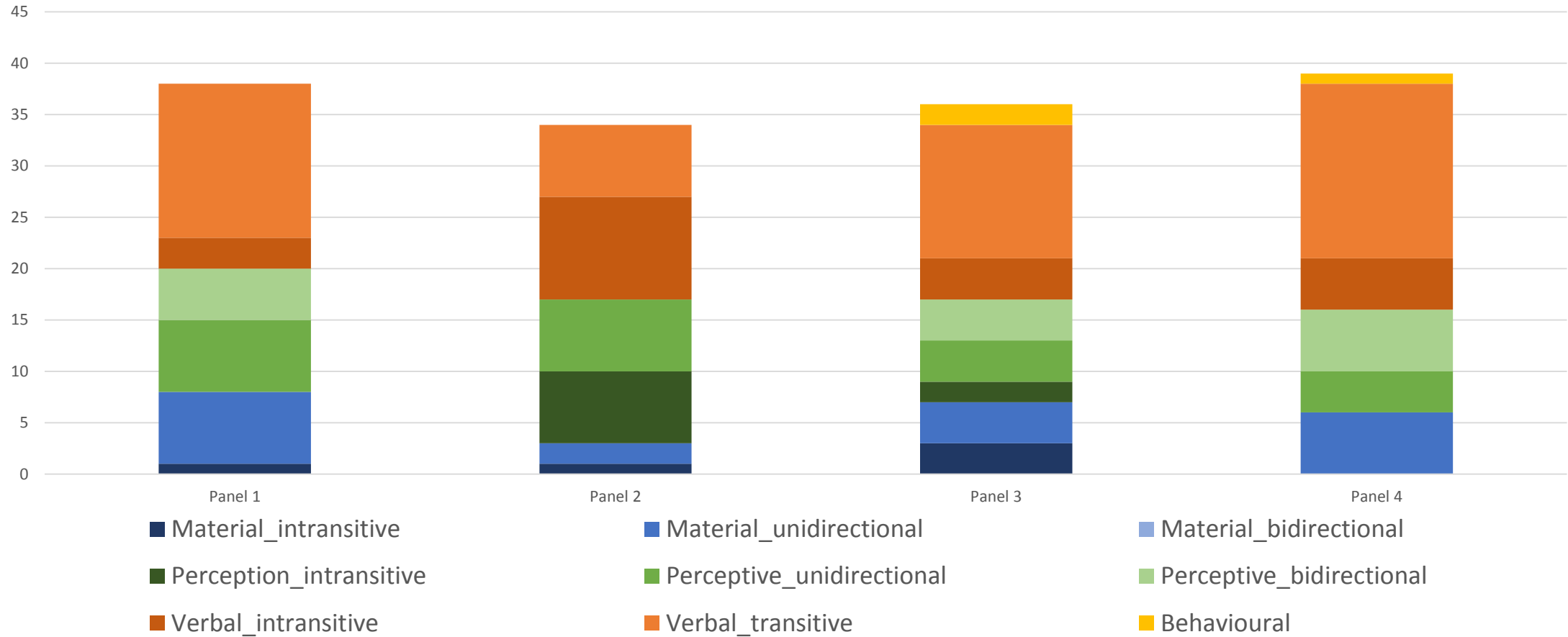
- 11 comic strips: „Cecilia“ (2010 – 2013)
- 3 – 6 panels
- max. 2 protagonists
- 156 processes (28 inferred)
- Halliday & Matthiessen (2014:215):
 - material > relational > mental > verbal > behavioural > existential

Occurrence of Process Types



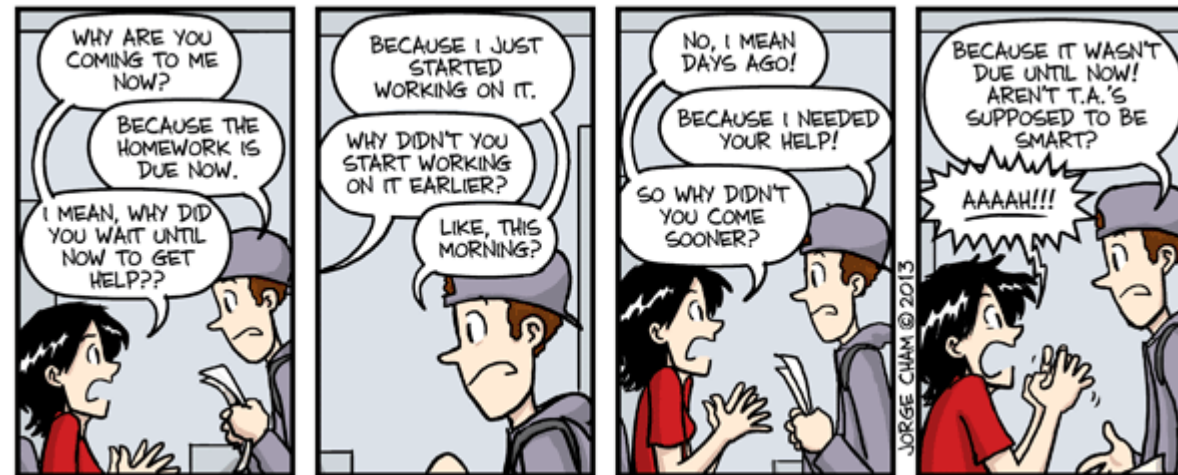
Analysis & Results: Findings

Processes per Panel



Analysis & Results: Issues

- How to deal with text boxes? (Existential process?)
- How many processes can there be?
- How to interpret processes with the „correct“ value?
- How to deal with inferred processes?



Cham (1997-2014) PHD Comics.

<http://www.phdcomics.com/comics/archive.php?comicid=1573> [last accessed: 08.09.2014]

Outlook

- Relation between message of verbal processes with other processes
- Relation of panel processes to the strip as a whole
- Relation of inferred processes to visible processes
- Applicability to other comic strips

Thank you very much for your attention

Questions? Comments? Remarks?

Bibliography

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