

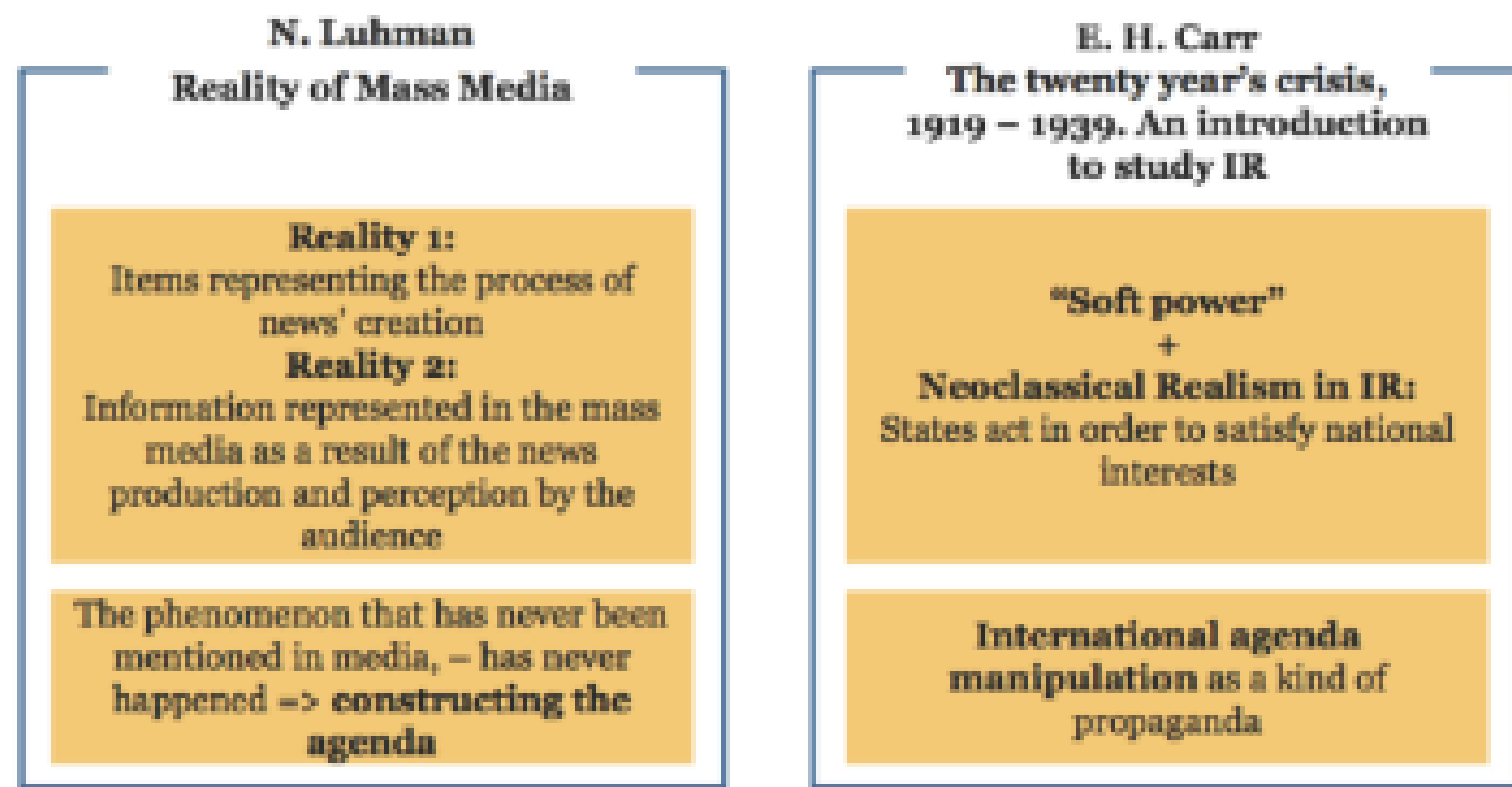
Political Propaganda and Power over Opinion: Multidisciplinary Methodological Approach and Evidence from African Cases Media Coverage

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Introduction

The multidisciplinary research brings together sphere of public opinion theories and IR, introducing the new methodological approach for investigating political propaganda with evidence from African cases.

THEORETICAL ASSUMPTION



Abstract

The reality of mass media consists of the items representing the process of news' creation; another reality is the embodiment of all the information represented in the mass media as a result of the news production. Therefore, the mass media has the function of determining "what happens and what should be considered as real," constructing the agenda, influencing and manipulating reality. The research is intended to be multidisciplinary mixing together the sphere of public opinion formation theories and IR, as the international affairs sphere can also be considered as "double-reality," where information - "the power over opinion" - is an essential tool for balance of powers. Thus, our research introduces new multidisciplinary methodological approach to analyze international sphere in terms of agenda-setting process. Our hypothesis on salience and manipulation of agenda by international organizations as the source of political propaganda is tested on the evidence driven from African conflict cases. The novelty of our research is to reframe the vision of international agenda-setting process not only within the legal context, but to expand it towards case-oriented empirical data.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO ANALYZE INTERNATIONAL PROPAGANDA

Approach	Details	Empirical base, method or respective subject
Sociological Approach	Socio-economic and cultural context	Contextual Analysis
Institutional Approach	Institute and its sources	UN, OSCE
Behaviorism	Individual behavior and mass response	No relevance due to the theoretical assumptions
Hermeneutics	Individual experience and subjective interpretation	No relevance due to the theoretical assumptions
Historical Institutionalism	Historical Perspective on Evolution of the Techniques and Institutes of Propaganda	Historical Analysis

Hypothesis

Manipulating international agenda-setting process, First-World countries isolate problems of Sub-Saharan African region, resulting in **concealing effect**: stability of this region is no longer included in its national interests and, thus, ex-colonial empires do not take responsibility for the local catastrophes in Africa even though in many cases they have direct connection to the region climate.

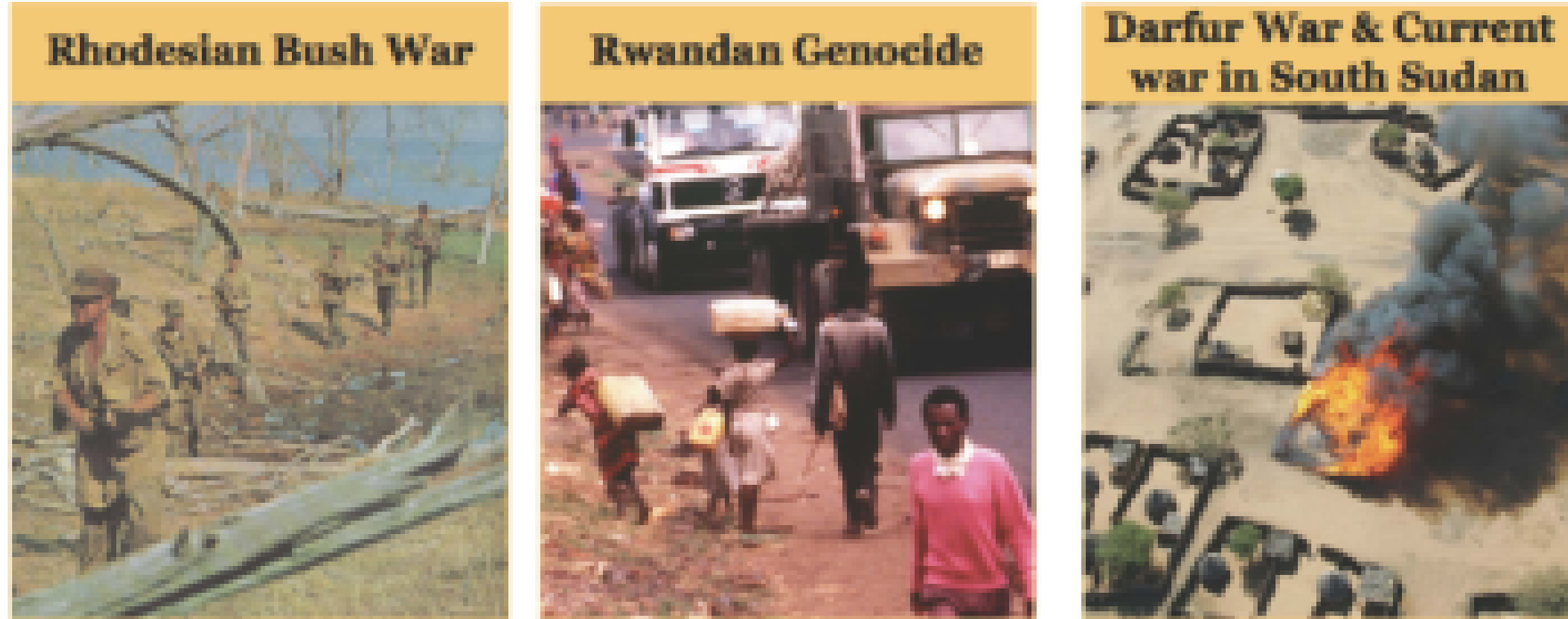
EMPIRICAL BASE

Method	Probable Empirical Base
Historical Analysis	<p>Legal Documents International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights European Convention on Human Rights International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination Parties</p>
Contextual Analysis	<p>Cases Rhodesian Bush War (1964 -1979), Rwanda genocide (1994), War in Darfur and the Current Civil War in South Sudan</p>
Content-analysis Discourse-analysis	<p>Media Coverage International Agenda UN: Regular Sessions, Relevant Special and Emergency Special Sessions, Past Conferences, Meetings and Events (1992-2014) OSCE: Summit documents, Ministerial council final documents, Plenary Meetings of the Forum for Security Co-operation, Press-releases</p>

Conclusion

In this project several methodological approaches and methods for propaganda research had been brought together and investigated. In order to deepen knowledge about international agenda-setting process innovative theorization of the propaganda on the global scale should be more than just analysis of legal framework. Moreover, empirical cases, used in this research, have shown that propaganda shifted from active open communication process to concealing effect, based on "second face" of power.

CASES



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The Modern-Day Digital Neolithic

Theoretical and Professional Implications of the Increased Use of Pictographic Communication by Mobile Device Users

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Introduction

As the global use of mobile and digital communication technology evolves, written communication is experiencing a “de-evolution” back to ancient roots creating a modern-day digital Neolithic generation that uses pictography to communicate. This cultural shift affects communication theory, information processing, and graphic design.

Abstract

Communication, technology, and culture have been linked since the earliest writing systems. The Alphabet Effect Theory argued that the evolution from pictographic to alphabetic writing systems formed the foundation for the development of Western culture. While the Alphabet Effect Theory minimized similar developments in Eastern cultures, a strong case can be made for a global “writing effect” where civilizations made significant advancements following the emergence of alphabetic writing systems.

According to the *Digital in 2017* report, approximately five billion people used mobile devices in 2017, or approximately 66% of the world’s population. Research indicates that mobile and digital device users are using emoji and icons to communicate. This form of written communication is distinctively visual and nonverbal in a way that is absent in alphabetic-based writing. It appears that as mobile communication technology evolves that written communication is experiencing a “de-evolution” back to ancient roots creating a modern-day digital Neolithic generation that uses pictography to communicate. This trend poses an interesting question for designers and communicators—how do you design written communication for audiences that use pictography to communicate on mobile devices? This trend also has potential theoretical implications for communication theory, semiotics theory, information processing theory, nonverbal coding theory, and graphic design theory.

Background

ALPHABET EFFECT THEORY & WRITING EFFECT

Pictographs were early forms of written communication used in ancient civilizations. Pictography used drawings to communicate written messages. This form of communication was highly contextual and required the “reader” to understand the cultural context and norms for correct interpretation.

Modern **phonetic alphabets** are based on a small set of characters, each with a unique and consistent letterforms. The shape and associated verbal sound of these letters have remained the same for thousands of years and spans different civilizations.

The **Alphabet Effect Theory** argued the evolution from pictographic to alphabetic writing systems formed the foundation for the development of Western globalization, democratization, and scientific innovation (Grosswiler, 2004). A similar “writing effect” theory argues that advancements in both Eastern and Western cultures (Grosswiler, 2004) correlate with the development of alphabetic writing systems.



USE OF EMOJI IN PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

According to the *Digital in 2017* report, approximately five billion people used mobile devices in 2017, or approximately 66% of the world’s population. Those mobile device users are using emoji to communicate, even in professional situations. One survey found that 81% of American workers wanted a more effective way to communicate emotion through digital communication at work and 76% of those workers had used emoji in work communication (“Survey Finds 78 Percent of American Workers Are Emotionally Disconnected at Work,” 2014). Recent research indicates emoji serve multiple functions including

- to convey emotions in online communication (Lo, 2008).
- serve functional purposes including improved communication for low-literate populations (Zhou, Hentschel, & Kumar, 2017).
- simplify user interfaces on smaller mobile screens (Zhou, Hentschel, & Kumar, 2017).

Despite the popularity and utility of the use of emoji in personal and professional communication, research also indicates that the connotative meaning of emoji are highly contextually and culturally based.

- A study found that work emails that included the smiley emoji resulted in a decrease in evaluations of the sender’s competence (Glikson, Cheshin, & van Kleef, 2017).
- In China, the standard closed-mouth smiley emoji indicates a mocking attitude (MacLellan, 2017).

The widespread use of emoji on mobile devices appears to circle written communication back to its origins in pictography. Like early picture-based systems, emoji are highly contextual and rely on cultural norms for correct interpretation. While emoji can convey simple emotions or connotatively rich written messages in personal communication, the use of emoji in professional communication is much more complex. The highly contextual nature of emoji presents a challenge for communicators and media designers.

The Japanese word
emoji
translates to
picture letter

(Zhou, Hentschel, & Kumar, 2017)

Relevance for Communication Theory

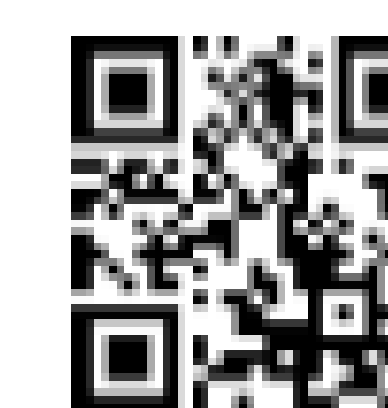
Digital Neolithics use emoji in personal and professional communication to convey emotion, increase efficiency, and add connotative meaning to digital communication. Emoji are used both in combination with phonetic alphabetic letters as well as in place of traditional text. However, research indicates that context and culture influences the perceptions of the sender and interpretation of the message. This poses interesting questions for communication theory.

- What are the cultural implications of the widespread use of emoji?
- In what contexts is the use of emoji in professional communication appropriate and effective?
- Emoji are intended to add emotional and nonverbal elements to written messages. Is this a similar or different process to nonverbal body language?
- Emoji are following a similar pattern of development as ancient pictography—images that represent literal objects or concepts to images that represent abstract and complex ideas. What are the implications for theories related to information processing, semiotics, nonverbal coding, and graphic design?

Implications for Professional Communicators

The reliance of mobile device users on emoji also has implications for professional communicators.

- Recent research indicates that the use of emoji in user interface designs can improve the communication experience for low-literate and visually impaired populations.
- Emoji are bound by both culture and context. This presents a challenge for message creators and user interface designers who are creating communication that can be accessed in multiple cultural contexts and on multiple devices.



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Scan with a QR reader to see the reference list.

Gratifications of reality television: A comparative analysis of the potential gratifications between reality television and Herta Herzog's *On Borrowed Experience* Elyse C. Gessler



Americans devote **2.7 hours** to television viewing each week.
-American Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016

Abstract
Herta Herzog's study, "On Borrowed Experience: An Analysis of Listening to Daytime Sketches," exposes 1930s housewives motivations to frequently listen to popular radio programming. Today, media popularity centers not on just the radio, but also the television, and one of the most popular types of programming—reality television. By analyzing existing research on audiences' stimulus for watching reality television and comparing it to Herzog's found gratifications, it can be suggested that the needs and uses of interacting with these two types of media have experienced little change. Despite decades of social change and an increase in media awareness and consumption, the major gratifications vocalized by media audiences remains untouched, which implies that gratifications from media interaction such as emotional relief, realistic identification, or even parasocial relationships are long-existing within the American media culture.

Americans owned almost **30 million radios** by the beginning of the 1940's
-PBS, 2014

Uses and Gratifications Theory

Herta Herzog

- **On Borrowed Experience**
 - Herzog examined 100 Greater New York women over a two year period who were active radio listeners
 - Herzog wanted to discover these women's motivation for listening to radio shows
- **Motivations**
 - Participants were in repetitive scheduled lives and sought a method of escape
 - Participants utilized radio to find characters with experiences and shortcomings similar to the ones they felt in their own lives
 - Participants sought to find new and satisfying relationships
 - Participants used the information in the radio programs to solve their relationship or personal issues
- **Findings**
 - Herzog found three Gratifications of her participants (Herzog, p. 142):

"Listening to the stories offer an emotional release"

"Listening to the stories allows or a wishful remodeling of the listener's drudgery"

"Listening provides an ideology and recipes for adjustment"

Blumler, Katz & Gurevitch

- A unique perspective on media/audience interaction
- Questions why people choose specific types of media and what they use it for.
- 5 Components (1974)
 - Active Audience
 - The audience determines their gratification with media choice
 - Satisfaction with media competes with other types of satisfaction
 - Research data comes directly from the members of the audience
 - Value judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms.
- This interpretation of uses and gratifications is an extension of Herzog's gratifications and can be used to interpret the complexities of an audience's motivation for viewing reality T.V.

Method & Key Findings

- Review of Herzog's *On Borrowed Experience* produced several interesting themes
 - "They take them as reality and listen to them in terms of their own personal problems" (p. 141)
 - "Getting into trouble and out again" (p. 140)
 - All of these listeners look for the troubles in the story" (p. 141)
- In order to find any current relevancy regarding Herzog's Gratifications, a compilation of literature involving the Uses and Gratifications of Reality Television was examined and included several key findings. The study participants within the literature:
 - Used reality television to identify with others
 - Enjoyed the misfortune and bad luck of reality T.V. participants
 - Watched reality T.V. as an escape from reality
 - Used reality T.V. for emotional fulfillment
 - Examined reality T.V. participants behaviors for social ques
 - Watched reality T.V. for excitement and lifestyles they themselves could not obtain
- These generalized findings aligned with Herzog's three major findings:
 - Listened for emotional release
 - "The variety of incidents in these programs is many times great than anything which these women could live through or observe themselves" (Herzog, p. 140).
 - Remodeling of the listener's "drudgery"
 - "The stories are as real to the listener as an actual experience" (Herzog, p. 145)
 - Recipes for adjustment
 - "If the radio people can manage their troubles I might be able to also" (Herzog, p. 152)
- Future Research
 - This initial comparative analysis of Herzog's original article with current literature raises cause for additional research
 - Current literature examining U&G of reality T.V. focuses on both men and women, whereas Herzog's participants were only women. Additional research should be conducted to examine a more specific, female audience to produce results that may be more accurately compared to Herzog's study.

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www.TheMemoryStore.org

An online novel with reader generated content



The year is 2115, Jules Stewart is a Pattern Surveillance Officer in the Liverpool corporate strata. This is her memory store account, an archive of her investigations.

She needs YOU, citizens of the Liverpool Corporate Strata, to write and upload your memories of your life in 2115 to help her solve her current case, that of missing person, Estelle Fischer.

Her pioneering method of detection is to make connections between your memories to uncover evidence and establish the plot.



How can someone disappear without trace? Read Jules Stewart's memory transcripts to reveal the mystery of Estelle Fischer.



Explore the Liverpool Corporate strata. Discover what makes this place tick.



Contribute your memories of life in Liverpool in 2115 and help uncover the plot.

The Memory Store examines authorship as a collective experience in an online environment, considering the increasing ways in which we might collaboratively construct stories. Researching new ways of telling stories and new ways of engaging readers in the narrative experience. What are the possibilities for this way of reading and writing? What might digital technologies offer that could be considered new for storytelling?

The Cyberspace: Opportunities and threats of internet in learning Persian language

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Introduction

Language is a commonly used tool for communication. Our thoughts also show themselves in the form of words when they come to existence, even in our minds, in order to decide or do any mental work, we must first put the contents of the mind in the form of language. As a result, the most important means of communication, science, advancement and technology of any society can be its language. Language in its cotemporary meaning, can be seen in several categories like written, oral, pictures and symbols. All these shapes are various fit to different languages and cultures and of course, are changed during time. The form of language are going to talk about here, is written form. Languages in all over the world are changing during time but this movement is somehow slowly that we cannot feel it. As great part of our written language nowadays is on computers, tablets and other tools of cyberspace, our language is the result of interaction with technology. Due to this interaction, language is changing subtle every day. This alternation could be seen easily in speaking form of language but slowly go through writing form. We have new things so use them, name them, call them and put away some old things which less use them or call them in another form because more and more in this hurry society people do not have enough time for speaking or writing in long shape; the solution is short form. We spend huge part of our daily time online rather than watching TV or listening to the radio so Internet has the most influence on our life. For a while, cyberspace (in its various forms) is at the same time beside the people of the world. In Iran, in spite of the filtering of some social networks such as Facebook and wechat, people are using an extraordinarily wide variety of social networks. The form of using this communication tool in this country has its own characteristics. No matter when, where and how cyberspace is used, it causes affects. Bourdieu (1992) argues that social values and behaviors are made up of complex and deep-rooted dispositions which often work at a pre-conscious level. These dispositions are described as habitus and are learned or inculcated in everyday action. He suggests that aspects of day-to-day life including leisure, family life and education are fields in which social relations are constructed and enacted. Within these fields, patterns of action, perception and attitudes are established. Everyday communicative practices constitute one such field and the new modes of communication described here could be sites in which existing or emerging forms of social relations are acted out. In The Production and Reproduction of Legitimate Language, this conceptual framework is applied to the study of language as a form of wealth (Bourdieu 1992, 43±65). As language important in everyday life and it is a tool of communication so changing language causes changing culture eventually. In this research, the potential, threats and opportunities of the cyberspace, especially internet, are addressed to the Persian language and survey displays that what the opportunities and threats of the Internet for teaching Persian language are and what the possible solutions to control the powerful effects of networks on learning Persian language.

Abstract and keywords

Abstract

Something that these days we talk and think about more and more is how media specially, internet threatens our language. It is obvious that media directly or not, has a massive influence on language. In this paper we can see how this enemy, "Cyberspace", make opportunities for languages to be learned in all over the world. As I teach Persian language can see despite of the change cyberspace, especially internet, has made in language, it offers a big help in several ways to language learners easily become familiar with all aspects of the new language. This paper tried to find opportunities and threats which Internet bring to learning Persian Language and how they effect on learning this language as a new one. It seems that although there are many threats for Persian language and learning it on the Internet but the opportunities are more and as we cannot omit cyberspace especially Internet from people's life, so should use its advantages in learning this language.

Key Words: Cyberspace, Internet, threats and opportunities,

learning Persian Language.



Threats and Opportunities

Threats

The prevalence of fragmentation and genius that is considered by the new learners who do not have access to the main sources is the main form of the word. The word-shifting of words and the repetition of this, to the extent that the original form of the word becomes false. The existence of different sites for language teaching that may not properly teach the language properly, or those that say they are not correct and are timely. The use of stickers and consequently the gradual reduction of vocabulary. The lack of suitable equivalents for words that enter the body of mind and communication in the vast volume of the Internet. For these words or equivalents, the Persian Language and Literature Academy has created equivalents that are unusable. The internet reinforces the accents and dialects that have more power and spoken by more people, and thus affect and threaten the dialects that fewer people speak. When written and spoken mistakes, words and grammar are commonplace, the difference in official speech and writing becomes more difficult, making it more difficult for learners to learn languages. Because of our editing programs automatically, correct our emails and our writing, our spelling knowledge is reduced. Some programs in internet forces users to write shortcuts in sections such as twitter (140 characters).

Opportunities

Possibility to use videos, PowerPoint and images to learn and teach Persian language. Access to educational materials and materials in the distant parts of the world at a lower cost and faster than the written content of the book with DVDs burned on CDs. Ease in finding and communicating with people who speak the Persian language, thus allowing the use of Native Accents. More and easier access to people who teach in private or language teaching institutions. Better and more affordable travel to the country of interest and language training in the destination country. Talking with Native people through the virtual world tools (like Imo, Skype, Whatsapp, We-Chat and Telegram and Viber) and the use of virtual language classes. Take advantage of simultaneous translation features like Google Translate and a variety of general and specialized dictionaries to understand the concept of texts, videos and music of the original language. Despite the fact that the use of stickers and abstracts makes it possible to narrow down the vocabulary of Internet users, but desirable or unsatisfactory, words are being made to use cyberspace. In learning a language, academically or in language institutes, the language is taught, is formal language while through the Internet learners can better understand dialects, accents, and even the street talk of a language. The ability to get acquainted with the culture of the target language lies behind any cultural language. Chat rooms do not need to adhere to the rules of grammar, and in some ways, it makes communicating possible and easy without any grammatical concerns. Without the Internet, texts that were produced in different dialects and different accents of Persian language could not be easily reproduced and made available to learners.

Conclusions

According to the above, the Internet has accelerated the speed of language change around the world, and this has certainly faced all the societies with challenges. On the one hand, there is disadvantages to learn Persian through the internet, such as possibility for misunderstanding the words by Persian learner, reduction of vocabulary knowledge because of stickers, abbreviations and short writings, making hard the learning writing for beginner because of difference between speaking and writing, and so on. But on the other hand it has advantages like fast and easy access to native speakers and teachers and to Persian news, ability of downloading Persian movies and songs, becoming familiar by culture behind the language and literature and so on. Since the use of cyberspace and its presence in all aspects of our lives is inevitable, the best way to face this phenomenon is to use the best of all the possibilities in all aspects of our lives. Learning and teaching in today's world has a huge contribution to personal development. Knowing each language is equal to knowing its culture and expanding the material treasure. As a result, learning Persian should also be more active by activating applications that are able to use this language and more active in teaching Persian language on the internet. We must turn, as much as possible, threats of Internet, for learning the language, to opportunities and more and more focused on the advantages that this educational tool offers to us.

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