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

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INTRODUCTION

The interdisciplinary 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

- Reality: 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.

HYPOTHESIS

Manipulating international agenda-setting process, Frist-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.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO ANALYZE INTERNATIONAL PROPAGANDA

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REFERENCES

The Modern-Day Digital Neolithic
Theoretical and Professional Implications of the Increased Use of Pictographic Communication by Mobile Device Users

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 photography 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 "re-evolution" back to ancient roots creating a modern-day digital Neolithic generation that uses photography to communicate. This trend poses an interesting question for designers and communicators—how do you design written communication for audiences that use photography 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. Photography 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 letterform. 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 (Grosz, 2004). A similar "writing effect" theory argues that advancements in both Eastern and Western cultures (Grosz, 2004) correlate with the development of alphabetic writing systems.

The Japanese word emoji translates to picture letter
(Zhou, Hentschel, & Kumar, 2017)

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 emotions through digital communication at work and 78% of those workers had used emoji in work communication ("Sentry 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 contextual and culturally biased.

- A study found that word emojis that included the smiley emoji resulted in a decrease in evaluations of the sender's competence (Slikker, Chein, & van Kleef, 2011).
- In China, the standard closed-mouth smiley emoji indicates a mocking attitude (MacLean, 2017).

The widespread use of emoji on mobile devices appears to ordre written communication back to its origins in photography. Like early picture-based systems, emoji are highly contextual and rely on cultural norms for correct interpretation. While emoji can convey simple emotions or conversational 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.

References
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

**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 media uses of interacting with these two types of media have experienced little change. Despite decades of social change and an increase in media and use of interacting with these two types of media have experienced little change. Despite decades of social change and an increase in media and use of interacting with these two types of media, the major gratifications are often the same, which implies that gratifications from media interaction such as emotional relief, realistic identification, or even interpersonal relationships are long-existing within the American media culture.

**Method & Key Findings**

- **Review of Herzog’s *On Borrowed Experience***
  - “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 milestone and bad luck of reality TV participants
  - Watched reality TV as an escape from reality
  - Used reality TV for emotional fulfillment
  - Examined reality TV participants’ behaviors for social cues
  - Watched reality TV 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 greater 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 do it” (Herzog, p. 152).

- **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.**

- **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 motivations 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”

- **Communication and Media Studies**
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 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 contemporary 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 is going to talk about here, is written form. Languages in all over the world are changing during time but this movement is somehow slow that we cannot feel it. As a 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 alteration 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 busy 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's life and 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 habits 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 attitude are constructed. 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, 433ff). 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 web, 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 the use of 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 language learning 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 reason of this issue. 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 they say 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 of 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 these accents affect and threaten the dialects that fewer people speak. 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 is 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 the reach in private or language teaching institutions. Real and affordable reach to the country of interest and language training in the destination country. Talking with Native people through the virtual world tools (like Imo, Skype, Wechat, 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 concern. 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 learning Persian through the internet, such as possibility for misunderstanding the words by Persian learner, reduction of vocabulary and language bridge 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.

The importance of e-Learning tools in Persian learning

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Mehrnews, 3821543. 1392. “The Persian language and alphabet is going to be destroyed in cyberspace”