Social Tagging as interpretative production: liminality and information practice

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Phatic communication on social media

- Varis and Blommaert (2014)

- Liking and sharing

- Users are **encultured into communicative systems** which both **facilitate** and **limit** communicative practices : **structural level systems**

- users, as communicative agents, **negotiate** these systems to create shared communicative spaces within which to undertake their own creative production of meaning: **agency**

Types of social media (Van Dijck, 2013)

- 1 Social Network Sites (SNS): "promotes interpersonal contact, whether between individuals or groups; they forge personal, professional, or geographical connections, and encourage weak ties". e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google +, Foursquare

- 2. User Generated Content (UGC): "they support creativity, foreground cultural activity and promote the exchange of amateur or professional content" e.g. YouTube, Flickr, MySpace, GarageBend, Wikipedia

- 3. Trading and Marketing sites (TMS): e.g Amazon, eBay, Groupon, Craigslist

- 4. Play and Games Sites (PGS): e.g. FarmVille, CityVille, The Sims Social, Word Feud, Angry Birds (p. 8-9)

- identify the official descriptions of tags offered by social media sites,
- examine tag practice in two social media sites and
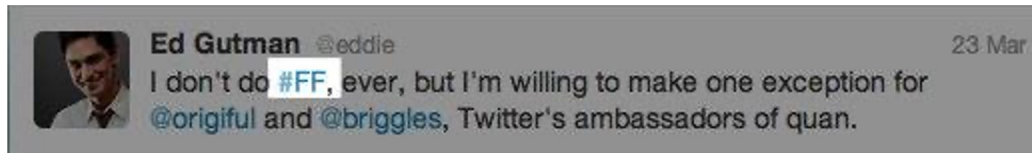- consider how information systems might go beyond the tag.

Flickr

What are tags?

You can give your photos and videos a "tag", which is like a keyword or category label. Tags help you find photos and videos which have something in common. You can assign up to 75 tags to each photo or video.

Twitter

- **Definition:** The # symbol, called a hashtag, is used to mark keywords or topics in a Tweet. It was created organically by Twitter users as a way to categorize messages.

- **Using hashtags to categorize Tweets by keyword:**
  - People use the hashtag symbol **#** before a relevant keyword or phrase (no spaces) in their Tweet to categorize those Tweets and help them show more easily in Twitter Search.
  - Clicking on a hashtagged word in any message shows you all other Tweets marked with that keyword.
  - Hashtags can occur anywhere in the Tweet – at the beginning, middle, or end.
  - Hashtagged words that become very popular are often Trending Topics.
- **Example:** In the Tweet below, @eddie included the hashtag #FF. Users created this as shorthand for "Follow Friday," a weekly tradition where users recommend people that others should follow on Twitter. You'll see this on Fridays.

Ed Gutman @eddie   23 Mar
I don't do #FF, ever, but I'm willing to make one exception for @origiful and @briggles, Twitter's ambassadors of quan.

- **Using hashtags correctly:**
  - If you Tweet with a hashtag on a public account, anyone who does a search for that hashtag may find your Tweet
  - Don't #spam #with #hashtags. Don't over-tag a single Tweet. ([Best practices](#) recommend using no more than 2 hashtags per Tweet.)
  - Use hashtags only on Tweets relevant to the topic

Denotation and Connotation

- **Denotation**: straightforward or common sense meaning of the sign

- **Connotation,** refers to cultural meanings attached to the sign. Connotations derive from specific social and cultural contexts.

After the fall

Horses in Umbria

Image removed for copyright reasons

Levels of Meaning table

Level & Category	Description	Some examples
1.1 Biographical	Information about the image as a document	Photographer/artist, date & time of creation, colour/B&W, Size, Title
1.2 Structural contents	Significant objects & their physical relationship within the picture	Object types, position of object, relative size (or importance) within the picture, e.g. car top right.
2.1 Overall content	Overall classification of the image	Type of image, 'landscape', 'portrait', ...
2.2 Object content	Classification of each object defined in 1.2	Precise name & details of each object (if known), e.g. Margaret Thatcher, Ford Orion...
3.1 Interpretation of whole image	Overall mood	Words or phrases to summarise the image, e.g. 'happy', 'shocking.
3.2 Interpretation of objects	Mood of individual objects (when relevant)	e.g. Margaret Thatcher triumphant, defeated.

After the fall table

Level & Category	Description	
1.1 Biographical	Information about the image as a document	*Rheinfall, Switzerland, Rhein*
1.2 Structural contents	Significant objects & their physical relationship within the picture	*Waterfall, lifeboat, lifebelt, boatage, flag, rapid, clouds, water, crowds, evening sky, sunset, sundown, turbulance, , outdoor, down the river*
2.1 Overall content	Overall classification of the image	Type of image, 'landscape', 'portrait', ...
2.2 Object content	Classification of each object defined in 1.2	*Swiss flag*
3.1 Interpretation of whole image	Overall mood	*Evening mood, evening light, in a safe place, adventure*
3.2 Interpretation of objects	Mood of individual objects (when relevant)	*wild water*

Horses in Umbria table

Level & Category	Description	
1.1 Biographical	Information about the image as a document	*Nikon, D7110, Castellucio, Sibillini, Italia, Italy, Umbria, Perugia, Norcia Di Pian, Grande, Parco, Nazionale, National Park, landscape, Paessaggio*
1.2 Structural contents	Significant objects & physical relationship in picture	*Monti, cavalli, horses, scenery, nature, natura, montagna, mountain, grasslands, field, outdoor, hill,*
2.1 Overall content	Overall classification of the image	
2.2 Object content	Classification of object defined in 1.2	
3.1 Interpretation of whole image	Overall mood	*Raw, serene*
3.2 Interpretation of objects	Mood of individual objects	

#GreeceCrisis

#Greece

#grreferendum

#beautiful

#Russia

#Tunisia

#not

" **#GreeceCrisis** is trending............. wow that feels nice #not"

#Wimbledon

- #Wimbledon2015
- #EugenieBouchard
- #TheQueue
- #waystowin
- #Hottestdayoftheyear

Beyond the Tag

- Hugo Liu, Henry Lieberman, MIT Media Lab
- **ARIA (Annotation and Retrieval Integration Agent)**

- underpinning this approach is the notion of World Semantics (based on the Open Mind Common Sense semantic network project at MIT Media lab) – back to the future…

Concluding remarks

- Our obervation was that while users are **encultured into communicative systems** which both **facilitate** and **limit** communicative practices, **structural level systems**, users, as communicative agents, **negotiate** these systems to create shared communicative spaces.

- We can see something of this practice in the creative uses of the tag and hashtag which go beyond the initial, official envisaged purposes and uses.

- And in the creative re-use, tags and hashtags might offer new approaches to search - not only informational search, but also emotional, mood, phatic, and even in the use of the #not hashtag, critical searching.

Thank you for listening