

Media Transformation

Vorlesung

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Woche 9



Storytelling and modelling

- Narrative vs. simulation
 - the game as a model simulating something
 - the game as a story
- Either or?
- Different games different mix of the two?
- Different aspects on games?
- Connected to differences in modalities?



The meaning of each element

- Space vs. text
 - geometry vs. sequence
 - iconic or symbolic
- Theatre vs. VR vs. other media
- Visual programming – space
 - image vs. figure
 - vector vs. raster
 - discreet vs. continuous



Intermediality

- All media are mixed
 - but some more than others
- The medium is the message?
- Words and drawings ask different questions

Every medium has the capacity of mediating only certain aspects of the total reality.

Elleström, Lars. "The Modalities of Media: A Model for Understanding Intermedial Relations." In *Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality*, edited by L. Elleström. Basingstoke, 2010: 24.



Intermediality

- Different art forms (or media)
 - theatre
 - VR
 - narrative texts
 - film
- Visuality, aurality, textuality, ...
 - how to understand the differences?
 - can we find structures?
 - abstraction
 - toolbox for understanding and practice



Media modalities

- A media product has a material interface
 - document pages, bodies dancing, sounds in a room
- which meets the senses of the recipient
 - seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, tasting
- in a spatiotemporally based interpretation
 - direct or reconstructed space and time
- based on a semiotic understanding.
 - symbolic, iconic, indexical



Media modalities

- Bottom up (or rather middle out)
 - an expression includes all four
 - analytical distinction
- Mode: “a way to be or to do things”
- Specify a medium
 - find the mix between modalities representative for this specific medium



Expressions and modalities

- An expression
 - will include all four modalities
 - each in a form specific for the expression,
 - classifiable according to general rules
 - cannot be divided into its modalities
- The distinctions between modalities
 - analytical, that is
 - based on our analysis only



Expressions and modalities

- Each modality consists of various modes
 - to be mixed in various ways
- To specify a medium
 - find a type of mix between modalities
 - representative for this specific medium
- Modalities cannot be separated in practice
 - to discriminate between them theoretically can help us understand media and expressions better



Meanings of 'medium'

- Technical medium of display
 - the physical entities needed to realize media products and hence media types
- Basic media types
 - based on the most basic features of media products
 - classified according to the most salient media modalities
 - example: still image
- Qualified media types
 - further qualified than basic media types
 - example: children's drawings



Material modality

“The latent corporeal interface of the medium;
where the senses meet the material impact”

- Important modes
 - human bodies
 - other demarcated materiality
 - not demarcated materiality
- Not the physical substance of the medium, but rather the potential in need of something to be expressed, that which is capable of being manifested in it.



Material modality, typical examples

- Television programs, motion pictures
 - more or less flat surface of changing images
 - sound waves
- Written text
 - flat surface, appearance not changing
- Music, radio theatre
 - sound waves
- Sculptures
 - extended, generally solid materiality



Sensorial modality

“The physical and mental acts of perceiving the interface of the medium through the sense faculties”

- Important modes
 - seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, smelling
- Sensorial stimulus and recollecting are closely related
 - all modes may be triggered by any medium
 - The Madeleine cake (Proust)



Sensorial modality

- Sense-data
 - from objects, phenomena and occurrences
- Receptors
 - our cells
- Sensation
 - experienced effect



Spatiotemporal modality

“The structuring of the sensorial perception of the material interface into experiences and conceptions of space and time”

- Space
 - manifested in the material interface
 - cognitive space (always present)
 - virtual space
- Time
 - manifested in the material interface
 - perceptual time (always present)
 - virtual time



Spatiotemporal modality

- All media receive both spatial and temporal qualities
 - have aspects of time and space
- Close to sense-data
 - relatively separate
 - overlaps with material modality
- Close to sensations
 - space-time distinction loses its relevance
- Four dimensions
 - width, height, depth, and time
- All media are realised in time



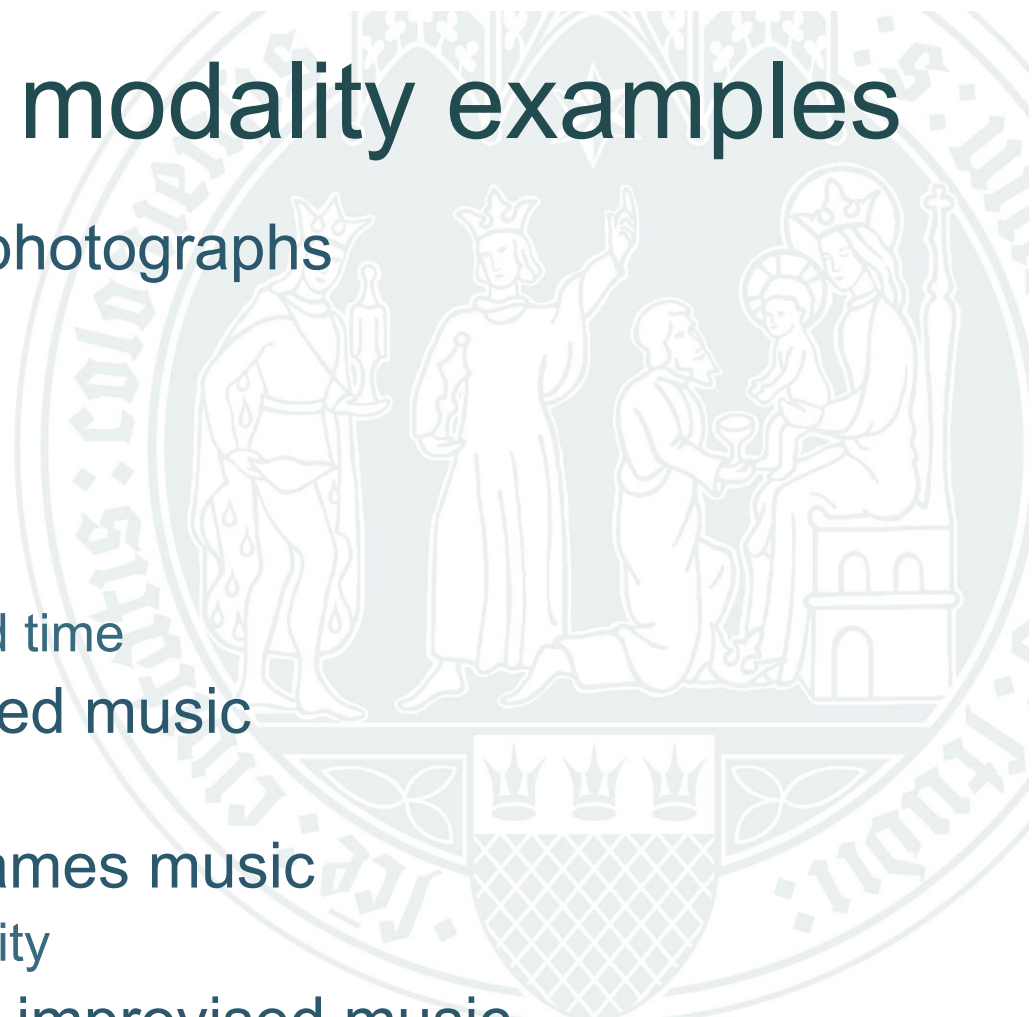
Spatiotemporal modality

- Static media
 - lacking time dimensions
 - sense-data remain the same
- Time incorporated in physical manifestation
 - sense-data change
 - three types
 - fixed sequentiality,
 - partially fixed sequentiality
 - non-fixed sequentiality
 - forms a graded scale



Spatiotemporal modality examples

- Corporeal interface of photographs
 - width and height
- Sculpture
 - width, height, and depth
- Dance
 - width, height, depth, and time
- Motion pictures, recorded music
 - fixed sequentiality
- Hypertext, computer games music
 - partially fixed sequentiality
- Mobile sculptures, truly improvised music
 - non-fixed sequentiality (potentially)



Semiotic modality

- “The creation of meaning in the spatiotemporally conceived medium by way of different sorts of thinking and sign interpretation”
- Important modes
 - convention (symbolic signs)
 - resemblance (iconic signs)
 - contiguity (indexical signs)
- Based on an interpreting mind
 - meaning seeking from the outset



Semiotic modality, typical examples

- Written text
 - symbols dominate
- Instrumental music, visual images
 - dominated by icons
 - iconic qualities differ
 - photographs: also an important indexical character
- Semiotic character of media very complex

