



Foto: Thomas Jösek

Media Transformation

Lecture Winter term 2024–25, week 8

Media modalities.

CAVE visit

- December 18, 12:00–13:30
- Gebäude 137
 - Serverhalle RRZK, Gyrhofstr. 17a
- VR—material interface
- VR and communication
- VR and movement

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

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

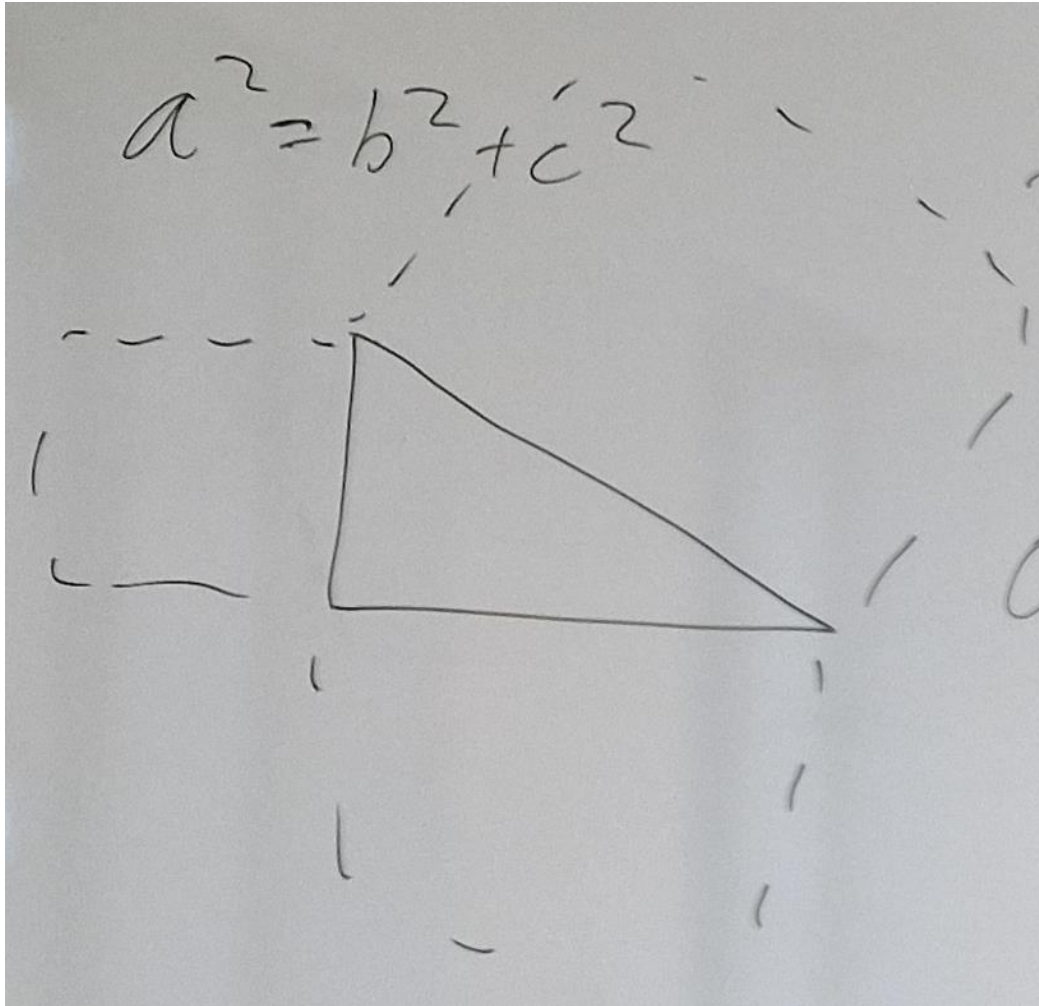
Spatiotemporal modality examples

- 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

Structural iconography



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

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The media modalities of texts and maps

