Chapter 14
Statistics and Graphics Online: Links Between Information in Newspapers and User Experience Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

In the chapter are indicated the main links of the isotopies between the static information and the different ways of graphic representation for the readers of online newspapers. Besides, a set of examples of news is presented with statistic data, analyzing those that boost or discourage iconicity and the ease of understanding. Finally, a study is made of the link between the statistic and the use of the comic to draw the attention of the user.
INTRODUCTION

For the realization of our study we have used notions stemming from semiotics, descriptive statistics, online interactive design and communicability. From semiotics we use the notion of iconicity (Eco, 1979; Saussure, 1983; Greimas, 1984; Nöth, 1995). Having the status or properties of a icon; fulfilling the function or playing the role of an icon (a sign which represents its object by virtue of a resemblance to that object). We will try to locate that iconicity in each one of the graphics that make up the current work. Our universe of study is made up by statistic graphics of 2012, 2013 and 2014 from an online Spanish paper “El Pais” (www.elpais.es), reducing the change of style to represent the graphic stemming from the statistic data. The sign (+) means that communicability is present, (++) denotes that the ease of understanding of the statistic data and the iconicity are present. In contrast, if there is a negative sign (-) or signs (- -), they have an inverse sense, that is, it means the absence of the previously enumerated components.

The graphic representation of statistic information in the newspapers must be regarded as a means or a complementary tool to transfer round-ups, synthesis, conclusions and so on to public opinion. These graphics have acquired great diffusion in the written press of the 20th century, especially for economic and social information. Later on, those graphics were accompanied by pictures, illustrations, etc, thus establishing a link with infographics (Ware, 2013; Smiciklas, 2012). Whereas in Spain the word “infographics” is normally used as a synonymous of a computer animated image, in other countries it is rather related to the explanation graphics and illustrations in general, such images may apper published in a newspaper, accompanied by statistic information (Ficarra, 1993). Now in the graphic arts both uses are correct. In contrast, in some Latin American countries and in several European countries infographics is a synonymous for computer graphics (computer-made static point of view of the image). The truth is that since 1990 the graphic arts transit in the era of digital communication, boosted by the Internet (Cipolla-Ficarra, 2005). Hence it is necessary to speak of the infographic arts: info (for information) and graphics (computer made images in 2D and/or 3D). Here the term infographics is used as synonymous of computer graphics. Besides, in such area are seated the originality and creativity factors of a graphic arts work. In infographics usually converge not only the technological aspect, but besides the creative factor (Lankow, Ritchie, & Crooks, 2012). Now the
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