Chapter 15

Global Evocations of South-Ness Online: Mass Search Data, Book Corpora, Social Imagery Tags, Article Networks, and Hashtag Tweetstreams

Shalin Hai-Jew

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8863-0175

Kansas State University, USA

ABSTRACT

To understand mass evocations of the Global South and its depiction via formal and informal media, it may help to capture a sense of the human massmind by using some mass-scale methods: mass search data, text search data from a mass digitized published-text corpus, related tag networks from social imagery, article-article networks from a crowd-sourced encyclopedia, and hashtag tweetstreams. It may help to contrast the sense of “south-ness” with those of “north-ness,” “east-ness,” and “west-ness,” given how people maintain mental models of regions and places—in terms of peoples, cultures, values, social practices, languages, and other dimensions. This data-heavy, bottom-up coding approach, based on grounded theory, enables the creation of mass-scale glimpses and ephemera, through the indirection of verbal and visual inferences at web scale.

INTRODUCTION

In the U.S., common stereotypes of the “American south” are that it is an easygoing place, with people who tend to be laid back. The south is supposed to be sunny and a great place to vacation. Its cuisines are mostly fried foods, served with beer (Kollar, Feb. 22, 2018). From abroad, the Global South is seen as a place that can benefit from global interactions but which have sensitivities which should be avoided related to colonial history, racial identity, social issues, and others (“Picturing the Global South—The Power Behind Good Intentions,” 2018).

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-9821-3.ch015
Stereotypes originating from colonialism are often set up as oppositions between the Global North and the Global South: developed vs. underdeveloped, rational vs. emotional, ordered vs. chaotic, adult vs. child, rich vs. poor, urban vs. rural, technological vs. natural, healthy vs. sick, modern vs. traditional, civilized vs. “wild/authentic,” white vs. black, superior vs. inferior, and “North <-> South” (“Picturing the Global South—The Power Behind Good Intentions,” 2018, p. 24). As such, these polarities are inaccurate and offensive shorthand about complex spaces and peoples. [Negative stereotypes exist about the Global North as well.]

In the communications among people, there are many senses of “south”: the American South, the Global South, and the Southern Hemisphere, with some overlaps (Figure 1).

This work aims to explore the nuances between terms and conceptions, often fitted in tight spaces between people’s concepts, some of which are ephemeral and local and limited and others which are more persistent and spatially distributed. This work is based on bottom-up coding of social media data and is generally based on grounded theory, which is in a sense somewhat atheoretical.

**A formal definition.** The “Global South,” as a region comprised of various countries and peoples and networks, is not a simple concept. A more formal definition involves a range of features, with various socio-political implications (Glassman, 2010). A formal definition follows:

*The global south is a complex and dynamic concept that straddles multiple social science and humanist disciplines. Emerging around 2000, it reflects the agenda of two ascending forces in those years: the antiglobalist (alterglobalist/global justice) movement and the World Social Forum, on the one hand, and an alliance of Southern states within the World Trade Organization on the other. Generally seen as an inheritor of the emancipatory thought behind the notion of the ‘third world,’ in the social sciences the idea of the ‘global south’ is also entangled with more classical academic themes such as modernity, development, and (post)colonialism. (Kalb & Steur, 2015, p. 186)*

Figure 1. Some Overlapping Senses of “South”
Related Content

Policies Information Literacy, Equality, and Gender: The Case of Spanish Prisons
María Antonia Agúndez-Soriano and Aurora Cuevas-Cerveró (2019). *Infocommunication Skills as a Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration Tool for Inmates* (pp. 126-145).
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/policies-information-literacy-equality-and-gender/210892?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/policies-information-literacy-equality-and-gender/210892?camid=4v1a)

Shapes of Threats in the Global South: An Exploration of Social Imagery
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/shapes-of-threats-in-the-global-south/243066?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/shapes-of-threats-in-the-global-south/243066?camid=4v1a)

Restricted Communication: Social Relationships and the Media Use of Prisoners
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/restricted-communication/210897?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/restricted-communication/210897?camid=4v1a)

“Intertwined Lives”: Narratives of Children With Disabilities and Their Siblings
Shyamani Hettiarachchi, Gopi Kitnasamy, Dilani Gopi and Fathima Shamra Nizar (2018). *Handbook of Research on Psychosocial Perspectives of Human Communication Disorders* (pp. 72-95).
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/intertwined-lives/206429?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/intertwined-lives/206429?camid=4v1a)