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Information Visualization: Infographics from a Linguistic Point of View

As an administrator of several Facebook pages, including Series Visual Learning, my impression is that the most popular, most liked and most shared posts are the ones which integrate text with visual content, like an image or video. Naturally, it may be misleading to measure popularity by the number of Facebook "likes" (e.g. consider the notion "courtesy like" which means pressing the "Like" button to maintain the relationship with the poster rather than to recommend the content posted), still, page view and user activity statistics can be taken as an indicator of the community's interest. Such information support in a quantifiable way that messages are viewed by more users if accompanied with visuals. Visualised information can be any text complemented with a photo or graphics (preferably selected to match the text) but may also take the form of "infographics", especially in the posts of news and popular science websites.

In part, this observation led me to the topic of information visualisation, more specifically to the examination of infographics from a linguistic point of view. The presentation deals with information visualisation using infographics as an example and it also touches on issues such as the big data phenomenon, compression methods, source criticism or the "reading" of images and texts.

The examination of the relationship between information visualisation and linguistics has to be divided into two directions: the first deals with how and for what purpose information visualisation is used by linguistics, which is primarily concerned with word-language; the second deals with how and from what aspects can infographics integrating images and texts be examined with the tools and methodology of linguistics.

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