



Narrativity & Multimodal Communication in the Age of New Media

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of the Abstract:
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Human beings have developed the *instinct of narrativity* as one of the fundamental solutions to the problem of transmitting thoughts and experiences from one mind to another (Greimas & Courtes [1979] 1982; MacIntyre 1981; Fisher 1987; Bruner 1991; Haidt 2012). It seems that our minds are resonating when we build and share meanings with the otherness in narrative forms (Stephens, Silbert, & Hasson 2010). Thus, we are emotionally and cognitively motivated to engage in cooperative behaviors (Zak, 2012). Through narratives, we can restore to otherness both the unpredictability of the real, with the paradoxes and the spectacle of ordinary life, but also its possibility, the prolongation of the real in possible worlds.

Understood as a specific form of semiosis characteristic of human *Umwelt* (Cobley 2014), narrativity fascinates with its distinct ways of meaning-making. According to Susan Petrilli and Augusto Ponzio (2001, 2020), the narratives “suspend the order of discourse offering a space for reflection, critical re-thinking, dialogue, encounter, hospitality” (2020: 48). This is because, most of the time, a narrative “always say more than they say, and often something else than they seem to say” (Pleșu 2012: 13). Narratives do not provide clear answers, instead they stimulate their search (Pleșu 2012). In this way, it allows the existence of a space for mediating meanings, in which the individual has the freedom to build their meanings based on their own experiences. In this perspective, narrative is one of the *universal paradigms* of human knowledge and communication (Marcus 2020), which functions as a signifying practice by which people give meaning to complex phenomena and experiences.

The paradigm of *narrativity* communicates in the most challenging ways with another fundamental paradigm of human communication, that of *multimodality*. Regardless of the nature of the narratives, whether they are spoken, written, or digital narratives, a variety of *semiotic resources* are integrated and work together in meaning-making processes. People express meanings through narratives by making *choices* between semiotic resources and/or modes that are available to them in a particular social situation and moment in time (Jewitt 2014; Jewitt & Henriksen 2016; Kull 2018).

In today’s multimodal society (Baldry 2000; Kress and van Leeuwen 2001; Norris 2004; Kress 2010), where new information technologies are expanding rapidly, revealing a dynamic information ecosystem, new opportunities are emerging to explore highly abstract issues, such as the interplay between narrativity and multimodality. This special issue aims to bring together contributions that explore the *multimodal nature of narrativity* (Page 2010), the particular ways in which the two universal paradigms – *narrativity* and *multimodality* – communicate, in a common effort to get closer to understanding the complexity of reality.

Given this background, we invite abstracts that focus on the multimodal nature of narrativity, on applications of a social semiotic multimodal approach to the narrative texts. More analytically, abstracts can be about topics such as, but not limited to:

- political narratives and multimodality;
- media narratives, multimodality, intermediality and narrativity, transmedial narration (narratives and stories in different media);



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- interactive digital narrative: how the digital technologies can be used to support multimodal narrative productions;
- multimodal narratives in teaching and learning processes;
- image and narrative: graphic storytelling and visual narrative;
- narrative structure in multimodal fiction and film;
- multimodal meaning-making in specific contexts: narrative structures in advertising, branding and marketing, video games, comics, theatrical performances, visual arts, painting and photography, music and dance, etc.

Prospective authors are asked to submit an abstract of approximately 300 words by mail to the guest editor, **Dr. Nicolae-Sorin Drăgan** (dragan.nicolaesorin@gmail.com; or sorin.dragan@comunicare.ro), including their affiliation and contact information. Acceptance of the abstract does not guarantee publication, given that all research articles will be subjected to the journal's double peer-review process.