

Metaphors of Identity

How can good, tool-supported metaphors aid the move to more secure management of e-identity.

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Introduction

This document describes the data collected for the project Metaphors of Identity.

The project investigates online identity across different age groups and across cultures. The driving aim of the project has been to study how metaphors are/can be used in order to increase understanding of how identity is perceived, appropriated and manipulated online by different groups of people. How different age groups present themselves and develop situated identities online through an analysis of metaphors.

Our argument is that metaphors can be particularly useful for defining and understanding new phenomena, such as identity online, because they serve as carriers of meaning.

We examine metaphoric representations of user's online identities across three different age groups:

- Teenagers (15-17 years old)
- Young adults (19-29)
- Older age group (50-60).

We also collected data from different cultures:

- United Kingdom
- Cyprus
- Taiwan
- Brazil

General Methodology

Metaphors

We have chosen to use metaphors in our investigation of how different age groups present themselves online. We use metaphors as investigative tools to uncover and provide deeper insights of users of social networks, in particular Facebook.

Focus Groups

Focus groups have been the main method in our investigation. Focus groups, a type of qualitative research, involved a small group of people (3 to 6 participants) across different age groups: teenagers (15-17 age group), young adults (19-29 age group) and an older age group (50-60 age group). Focus groups took place between the period March 2012 and March 2013. Each group engaged in a metaphoric discussion that largely arose from a projective technique involving themes pertaining to different levels of abstraction and then subjected to the phenomenological process of 'eidetic' reduction. A visual representation of the metaphor was produced by the participants.

There were two stages during the focus groups; first participants were asked to discuss different metaphors that can explain a specific online space that of Facebook, and then to decide collectively on the one that best represents this online space. The chosen metaphor was then used for the drawing produced by the group.

Data Collected

Data is presented for **forty nine** focus groups. These were conducted by Dr Ben Marder, Dr Fabio Nemetz , Dr Niki Panteli, Dr Joyce Y Lee and Miss Lucy Marchant .

The following naming convention was adopted:

Country code (following ISO 3166-1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BR: Brazil• CY: Cyprus• GB: United Kingdom• TW: Taiwan

Age group:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TE: teenagers• YA: young adults• OU: older users

Artefact:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DR: drawing¹• CO: comments by researchers²

¹ In some cases a drawing is annotated by the researchers – in these cases, the original drawing will have the suffix DR1, and the annotated one, DR2.

² Comments are not available for all groups.

As an example, **GBTE01_DR** means drawing (**DR**) of Group **1** formed by teenagers (**TE**) from the United Kingdom (**GB**).

Young Adults

The results for **Young Adults (YA)** in the **United Kingdom** (file **GBYA.rar**) are listed in Table 1:

Table 1 Young Adults in the United Kingdom

Group	Drawing	Comments
GBYA01	GBYA01_DR.jpg	GBYA01_CO.pdf
GBYA02	GBYA02_DR.jpg	
GBYA03	GBYA03_DR.jpg	GBYA03_CO.pdf
GBYA04	GBYA04_DR.jpg	GBYA04_CO.pdf
GBYA05	GBYA05_DR.jpg	GBYA05_CO.pdf
GBYA06	GBYA06_DR.jpg	
GBYA07	GBYA07_DR.jpg	

The results for **Young Adults (YA)** in **Taiwan** (TWYA.rar) are listed in Table 2:

Table 2 Young Adults in Taiwan

Group	Drawing	Comments
TWYA01	TWYA01_DR.jpg	
TWYA02	TWYA02_DR.jpg	
TWYA03	TWYA03_DR.jpg	
TWYA04	TWYA04_DR.jpg	
TWYA05	TWYA05_DR.jpg	
TWYA06	TWYA06_DR.jpg	
TWYA07	TWYA07_DR.jpg	
TWYA08	TWYA08_DR.jpg	
TWYA09	TWYA09_DR.jpg	
TWYA10	TWYA10_DR.jpg	
TWYA11	TWYA11_DR.jpg	
TWYA12	TWYA12_DR.jpg	
TWYA13	TWYA13_DR.jpg	
TWYA14	TWYA14_DR.jpg	
TWYA15	TWYA15_DR.jpg	
TWYA16	TWYA16_DR.jpg	
TWYA17	TWYA17_DR.jpg	
TWYA18	TWYA18_DR.jpg	
TWYA19	TWYA19_DR.jpg	
TWYA20	TWYA20_DR.jpg	
TWYA21	TWYA21_DR.jpg	

The results for Young Adults (YA) in **Cyprus** (CYYA.rar) are listed in Table 3:

Table 3 Young Adults in Cyprus

Group	Drawing	Comments
CYYA01	CYYA01_DR.jpg	
CYYA02	CYYA02_DR.jpg	
CYYA03	CYYA03_DR.jpg	
CYYA04	CYYA04_DR.jpg	
CYYA05	CYYA05_DR.jpg	
CYYA06	CYYA06_DR.jpg	

The results for Young Adults (YA) in **Brazil** (BRYA.rar)are listed in Table 4:

Table 4 Young Adults in Brazil

Group	Drawing	Comments
BRYA01	BRYA01_DR.jpg	
BRYA02	BRYA02_DR.jpg	
BRYA03	BRYA03_DR.jpg	
BRYA04	BRYA04_DR.jpg	

Teenagers

The results for **teenagers** in the **United Kingdom** (GBTE.rar) are listed in Table 5:

Table 5 Teenagers in the United Kingdom

Group	Drawing	Comments
GBTE01	GBTE01_DR.jpg	
GBTE02	GBTE02_DR.jpg	
GBTE03	GBTE03_DR.jpg	
GBTE04	GBTE04_DR.jpg	
GBTE05	GBTE05_DR.jpg	
GBTE06	GBTE06_DR.jpg	
GBTE07	GBTE07_DR.jpg	

Older Users

The results for **older users** in the **United Kingdom** (GBOU.rar) are listed in Table 6:

Table 6 Older Users in the United Kingdom

Group	Drawing	Comments
GBOU01	GBOU01_DR1.jpg	GBOU01_CO1.pdf
GBOU01	GBOU01_DR2.jpg	GBOU01_CO2.pdf
GBOU02	GBOU02_DR1.jpg	GBOU02_CO.pdf
GBOU02	GBOU02_DR2.jpg	
GBOU03	GBOU03_DR	GBOU03_CO.pdf
GBOU04	GBOU04_DR	GBOU04_CO.pdf

Conclusions

This document introduced motivations, methodology and data collected for the project Metaphors of Identity. Further analysis and results can be found in publications such as:

1. Panteli, N., Marder, B., Davenport, J. (2013) **Through the Lens of Age: Situated identities online across different generations.** In Proceedings of the British Academy of Management Conference (BAM2013), September 10-12, 2013, Liverpool, 2013.
2. Marder, B., Panteli, N., Davenport, J. Marchant, L. and Nemetz, F. (2013) **Rock 'n' Roll at Club Facebook: Consumer metaphors of Facebook and the situated social roles within.** In Proceedings of the Social Networking in Cyberspace Conference (SNIC 2013), July 15, 2013, Wolverhampton, UK.