

## Submission for consideration for a research paper for DHBenelux 2021

**Title:** Distant and close reading in literature: a case of networks in Periodical Studies

### Authors

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### Abstract

The question of how to read, and specifically the opposed approaches of distant and close reading, has long been contentious in the humanities and specifically in the field of literary studies. In practice, computational tools are increasingly implemented by scholars, resulting in a constantly evolving debate around the reading of research objects. We seek to explain through the lens of network studies the various ways networks are being used and can be used in humanities research including modelling information as relational, visualizing networks, and implementing quantitative network analysis. We argue that, in contemporary research practice, distant and close reading necessarily coexist and are methodological approaches that answer different yet complementary research questions. This is explained through three types of applications of network studies which focus on periodicals: close reading and network visualisations, close reading and network visualisations and analysis, and the computational generation of networks from databases for exploring relational phenomena with network analysis. We assert that there is a need for greater awareness and transparency about the role different approaches play in present-day research. Instead of pitting these two approaches against one another, we urge researchers to consider the mutual benefits of reading practices in order to facilitate a conversation on the value and role of different technologies and ways of reading in the humanities. This is a presentation of a forthcoming paper of the same title in a special issue on digital literary studies in the journal *Interférences littéraires*.