Quizzes
for Text/Digital Media (020059)
Intersession 2014

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Contents

Quiz 1: Introductory Quiz
(Given Jan. 13. 2013)

Problem 1.1 (Forster: the Book)

Why is Vashti so upset by the man who accidentally drops his book while boarding the airship? 2pt

Solution: The Book contains the instructions for using the Machine and is the only hard copy book left in this society. Since the general attitude towards the Machine verges on worship, the Book is viewed by many, including Vashti as a holy object. When the man drops his Book, Vashti sees it as sacrilege.

Problem 1.2 (Forster: Ideas)

What kinds of ideas are valued in Vashti and Kunos society, particularly after the abolition of the respirator? 2pt

Solution: Ideas that are second-hand, third-hand etc. Ideas based on other ideas, and not on direct observation.

Problem 1.3 (Forster: The Machine Stops)

Though there are several malfunctions before the Machine actually stops, the people dont do much except to report the problems and express their concerns and fears to each other: why is there not a more significant reaction? 2pt

Solution: The implication in the story is that people have become so deeply dependent on the Machine they are incapable of any real action against the machine. They are far too passive and lack the knowledge to solve the problems. They also trust the Machine implicitly, and therefore trust that somehow the Machine will go on.

Problem 1.4 (Cull: Reading and Internet Research)

True or False? 2pt

1. Research has proved that Internet use has specific social benefits.
2. Several studies have shown that in general, women read more than men.

Solution:

1. False
2. True

Problem 1.5 (Cull: How People Read)

Briefly describe one of the cultural shifts that occurred prior to 1950 and how it impacted the ways people read. 2pt

Solution: There are a few possible answers to this question. There was an initial shift from reading scrolls out loud to silent reading that started due to monastic regulations and became the common mode of reading. The invention of the printing press changed reading by making texts available and accessible to a wider public. As texts grew in popularity, reading out loud became common again since communities would gather to work while one person read to the group. Once the production of texts was industrialized, reading became even more wiespread and necessary for many jobs and a group emerged that engaged in leisure reading.

Problem 1.6 (Cull: Horizontal Reading)

Describe the process of horizontal reading. 2pt

Solution: Time spent on any one text (webpage) is quite short. Readers browse through contents on multiple pages, focusing on titles, headings, summaries, keywords etc. and following hyperlinks to other pages. Readers only read a small percentage of content any one page and tend to scan content rather than read in-depth. It is a non-linear form of reading.

Problem 1.7 (Forster and Cull)

Think about how people read in E.M. Forsters imagined future and compare it to the article: what did E.M. Forster predict accurately and what did he get wrong? 2pt

Solution: In Forster's story there is only one hard copy book, while Cull's article makes it clear that many avid internet users are still reading books. Forster's description of how people review multiple articles on a topic to gather ideas (instead of through direct observation) is true to the type of horizontal reading Cull describes where readers browse through many pages on a topic. Forster also imagines an overload of incoming messages/information, which also alligns with some of the points made in Cull's article. On the other hand, Forster imagines a world where all communication and information are through video and audio, whereas Cull of course discusses the reading of actual digital texts via the internet. There may be other solutions to this problem; the above are some suitable examples.

Quiz 2: Theories of Meaning
(Given Jan. 14. 2014)

Problem 2.1 (Bressler: the Sign)

Write the equation of the sign and define the terms. 2pt

Solution: sign = signified/signifier. The signified is the written or spoken word or mark. The signifier is the concept. The sign is the combination of the two.

Problem 2.2 (Bressler: Binaries)

Define "binary opposition" and explain what a deconstructionist reading might do with the binary oppositions in a text. 2pt

Solution: A binary opposition is one of the fundamental conceptual oppositions that structure Western thought (i.e. good/bad, male/female, etc.). A deconstructionist reading would seek to reverse the binary oppositions in a text.

Problem 2.3 (Culler: Anything Goes)

Why does Culler maintain that even though meaning is complex and elusive and a text can have multiple interpretations, it is not true that in literary or textual analysis, "anything goes"? 1pt

Solution: Because any interpretation of a text must be defended or proved.

Problem 2.4 (The Miracle of Logic)

Briefly explain what we understand by the miracle of logics. 2pt

Solution: A logic consists of a formal language $\mathcal{L}$, a class $\mathcal{K}$ of models, and an inference system $\vdash$. The miracle of logics is that we can express observations about the world as expressions of $\mathcal{L}$. If we have a set $\mathcal{H}$ of observations and we can derive a new expression $\mathbf{C}$ from $\mathcal{H}$ ($\mathcal{H} \vdash \mathbf{C}$), which is a purely syntactic process (only the shape of the expressions in $\mathcal{H}$ and of $\mathbf{C}$ matters in this), then the prediction $\mathbf{C}$ must be correct.

Problem 2.5 (Inference and Entailment)

3pt

1. Briefly explain the entailment and inference relations
2. how do we write "$\mathbf{A}$ entails $\mathbf{B}$" and "from $\mathbf{A}$ we can infer/deduce $\mathbf{B}$" in symbolism,
3. what is the difference between the two relations.

Solution:

1. The entailment relation $\models$ is defined via the models: We say $\mathbf{A} \models \mathbf{B}$, iff any model $\mathcal{M}$ that makes $\mathbf{A}$ true also makes $\mathbf{B}$ true. The inference relation $\vdash$ is defined by a set of purely syntactic inference rules.
2. "$\mathbf{A}$ entails $\mathbf{B}$" is written as $\mathbf{A} \models \mathbf{B}$ and "from $\mathbf{A}$ we can infer/deduce $\mathbf{B}$" as $\mathbf{A} \vdash \mathbf{B}$
3. Both are relations between expressions of the logic that try to model the process of argumentation from statements known to be true to new true statements. But entailment uses the notion of truth in a model, whereas the inference does this by a set of inference rules which are "known to preserve truth". In the best of all cases, the entailment and inference relations coincide. Then we have the "miracle of logics".

Quiz 3: (Given Jan. 15. 2014)

Problem 3.1 (Borges' Plot)

Briefly describe the main plot of the Borges story and explain how does Baudrillard retells it? 3pt

Solution: In the Borges story the Empire creates an enormous map that overlaps the whole land, but the map eventually falls apart. Baudrillard retells the story by reversing the elements: stating that in our world the map is surviving and the real is falling apart.

Problem 3.2 (Baudrillard)

Baudrillard gives several concrete examples (places, events, etc.) of simulation or the hyperreal: name one. 1pt

Solution: Possible answers include: Disneyland, Watergate, the military and medicine.

Problem 3.3 (Deconstruction)

Briefly define Derrida's concept of différance. 2pt

Solution: Différance is the slippage or fluctuation or interplay between the two components of a binary opposition. When one half of the binary is present, the other becomes present and there is a constant interaction between the two poles.

Problem 3.4 (Internet Alphabet Soup)

Name/expand and explain in one sentence the significance of following concepts: 3pt

1. URL/ URI/URN
2. WWW
3. HTTP
4. HTML
5. CSS

Solution:

1. URL/ URI/URN: Uniform Resource Locator/Identifier/Name. A URI identifies a data resource on the Internet, a URL also locates it, and a URN is a URI that is not a URL.
2. WWW: World Wide Web. The WWW is the hypertext/multimedia part of the Internet.
3. HTTP: Hypertext Transfer Protocol. The HTTP protocol specifies the way computers exchange
4. HTML: Hypertext Markup Language. HTML is the markup format for web pages on the WWW.
5. CSS: Cascading Style Sheets. CSS is the language for marking up the appearance of web pages that have been marked up functionally.

Problem 3.5 (XML the eXtensible Markup Lanuage)

Briefly explain the idea behind XML and XML technologies. 2pt

Solution: XML is a framework for defining markup languages that understand documents as trees (Document Object Models). XML comes with a bunch of parsing, processing and storage technologies that support handling documents as trees. For instance XPath, a language that specifies (sets of) subtrees in an XML document and its implementations that retrieve them for you.

Problem 3.6 (Clicking a Link)

Briefly explain what happens in the background when you click a link in your browser. 2pt

Solution:

1. The browser identifies the URL from the HTML markup of the link

2. it generates a HTTP GET request to the web server mentioned in the authority part of the URL
3. the web server answers with the corresponding web resource (usually a web page)
4. the browser decodes the web page, builds the DOM, and displays it to the user.

Quiz 4: January 16 Quiz (Given Jan. 16. 2014)

Problem 4.1 (Baudrillard and the Hyperreal)

Now that we have discussed Baudrillard and power structures in class, explain the following quote: 2pt

> As long as it was historically threatened by the real, power risked deterrence and simulationWhen it is threatened today by simulation (the threat of vanishing in the play of signs), power risks the real...

Solution: There are multiple answers to this question but a correct answer should reference the interplay or conflation of the real and the imaginary/simulated, the infinite spiral of the hyperreal, and should identify the idea that power is invested in its own continued existence.

Problem 4.2 (Eco on Disneyland)

Why does Eco feel that Disneyland is more hyperrealistic than the wax museums? 2pt

Solution: Because the wax museums are aiming to mimic reality, while Disneyland creates a real place that is openly a fantasy–it is not mimicking a real place or real people.

Problem 4.3 (The Toynbee Convector)

What does Shumway do with the proof that the Time Traveler lied about his travels to the future and why do you think he does it? 2pt

Solution: He destroys the evidence. There could be different answers to the second part of the question. One possible answer would be that the mythology of the Time Traveler is so valued that Shumway doesn't want to destroy the myth. Another answer might be that Shumway is personally very invested in the story of the Time Traveler and knowing the truth is upsetting–he assumes others would also be upset. It may also be that he feels the fact that the story is a lie doesn't matter; the story is more valuable if it is perceived as truth and so he decides to continue as if it is truth.

Problem 4.4 (Problems with Intellectual Property)

State two problems of treating intangibles as (intellectual) property 2pt

Solution:

Delineation Problems How can we distinguish the product of human work, from "discoveries", of e.g. algorithms, facts, genome, algorithms, which are not property

Philosophical Problems The implied analogy with physical property (like land or an automobile) fails because physical property is generally rivalrous while intellectual works are non-rivalrous (the enjoyment of the copy does not prevent enjoyment of the original).

Practical Problems (Software) patents are often used to stifle innovation in practice. Moreover, copyright is seen to help big corporations and to hurt the innovating individuals.

Problem 4.5 (CopyLeft)

Briefly state the the copyleft clause in the GNU Public License or in the Creative Commons licenses, and explain how it works. 2pt

Solution: The copyleft clause states that if a derived work of a licensed work is distributed, then it has to be licensed in exactly the same license as the licensed work.

This makes sure that anybody who wants to make a derived work of the licensed work, they have to decide whether they

- want to distribute it – then they have to license it under the copyleft, and contribute to the Open Source Domain, or
- don't, then they do not have to license it at all (but do not get the benefits of distribution/sale).

Problem 4.6 (Regular Expressions)

For each of the two regular expressions below, give three strings that they match. 2pt

1. [hcmr]at
2. (.)(.)(.)\3\2\1

Solution:

1. [hcmr]at: hat, cat, mat
2. (.)(.)(.)\3\2\1: hannah, aaaaaa, lollol

Quiz 5: January 17 Quiz (Given Jan. 17. 2014)

Problem 5.1 (Franzen)

Now that we have discussed Baudrillard and power structures in class, explain the following quote: 2pt

> Why does Franzen believe that an American living in the 1890's had less privacy than an American living in the 1990's?

Solution: He believes that in the 1890's since most Americans lived in small towns, their families and neighbors were always aware of what they were doing but in the 1990's most people are able to live quite anonymously–don't know their neighbors, live away from their families, etc.

Problem 5.2 (McLean)

According to McLean, why would Zeek feel she needed to adapt her accent in person but can use both American English and Trinidadean slang on her facebook wall? 2pt

Solution: People react negatively to her accent in person but on her facebook page her American and Trinidadian friends all provide positive reinforcement for her different voices. McLean argues that her facebook page is a space where she can create an identity that integrates her past and present communities and selves.

Problem 5.3: We reviewed the top 5 writing tips, identify three them. 2pt

Solution: Organize, Be specific, Be succinct, Edit, Consider your goals and your audience to guide your tone, format and content

Problem 5.4 (LaTeX Macros)

2pt

1. What does the following LaTeX macro do: `\def\foo#1#2{#1#2#1}`? Describe! What does `\foo{a}{nn}` expand to?
2. Write a LaTeX macro `\lic` that breaks that takes an argument ⟪foo⟫ out into a cheer "⟪foo⟫ is cool. Hip Hip Hurrah! Hip Hip Hurrah! Hip Hip Hurrah!". Minimize duplication with an auxiliary macro.

Solution:

1. `\def\foo#1#2{#1#2#1}` takes two arguments, and prints the first, followed by the second, followed by the first again (without intervening material). `\foo{a}{nn}` expands to `anna`
2.
```
\def\lic#1{#1 is cool.\hhh\hhh\hhh}
\def\hhh{Hip Hip Hurrah! }
```

Problem 5.5 (Programming Documents)

Briefly describe the advantages of "programming documents" using LaTeX as a paradigmatic example or role model. 1pt

Solution: having an internally extensible markup language that is also a programming language.

Problem 5.6 (Structure of ePUB eBooks)

The ePUB format was presented in class yesterday. An dPUB eBook consists of three 3pt

kinds of files. Briefly describe each of those, their role, and how they hang together to make an eBook.

Solution: The three types of files packaged in an ePUB document:

1. book content in XHTML5 (the XML serialization of HTML5), together with images, etc.
2. a manifest file that lists all the files in the package and their media types in XML
3. a navigation file that describes the table of contents of the book in XML

The ePUB document is realized as a ZIP file which gathers the files in the package and compresses them into a single one.

Quiz 6: January 20 Quiz (Given Jan. 20. 2014)

Problem 6.1 (Brown and Czerniewicz)

Define the terms "digital native" and "digital stranger". 3pt

Solution: A digital native is someone who has several years of experience using digital technology, has regular access to digital technology and considers him/herself comfortable using digital technology. A digital stranger is someone who has very minimal experience with and minimal access to digital technology and is not very comfortable using it.

Problem 6.2 (Herrera)

What website became so popular with young Egyptians that when some of its pages were briefly blocked in 2010, many young people were very upset? 1pt

Solution: Facebook.

Problem 6.3 (Performance, Identity and Culture)

How are performance, identity and culture/language connected? 2pt

Solution: We desire an identity that is constructed by culture/language,so we perform it, but as we perform the identity we reinforce the cultural construction. It's a cycle.

Problem 6.4 (Version Control Systems)

Briefly explain how a version control system works and what its advantages are. 4pt

What do the following actions do in Git?

1. git pull
2. git push
3. git commit
4. git clone

Solution:

1. git pull pulls changes from one repository (the source) to another (the target), given sufficient read access of the target on the source. The action often also updates the working copy associated with the repository pulling the changes.
2. git pushpushes changes from one repository (the source) to another (the target), given sufficient write access of the target on the source.
3. git commit moves changes from the working repository to its associated local repository
4. git clone creates a local repository and an associated working copy on the machine where the command is issued.

Problem 6.5 (Manuals for Technical Systems)

Briefly explain the advantages of a topic-based representation format like DITA for managing technical documentation. 2pt

Solution: DITA is all about reuse. Reuse is facilitated by two things DITA invests in:

1. *content markup* which allows the repurposing modules in different contexts, and
2. *small knowledge modules* which allows aggregating of the modules into documents, which become relatively lightweight structures (and therefore cheap).

Quiz 7: January 21 Quiz
(Given Jan. 21. 2014)

Problem 7.1 (CDC Zombie Novella)

In the CDC Zombie novella, what does the twist at the end reveal? 1pt

Solution: That it was all a dream.

Problem 7.2 (Virtual Immortality)

What is the difference between physical or biological immortality and virtual or digital immortality? What is one potential problem with virtual immortality? 3pt

Solution: Physical or biological immortality is living forever in your body; whereas virtual or digital immortality is the idea of having the consciousness (or some part of the consciousness) live on in a digital or robotic platform. The second part has multiple answers that might include: is a digital you really you; we don't have the technology to do this yet; it could lead to people trying to create improved versions of themselves; and it reinforces the hyperreal and therefore dilutes the idea of real life or real self.

Problem 7.3 (Technology is a Virus)

In the introduction to his chapter, Dinello describes the "*virus of technology*". How is technology like a virus? 2pt

Solution: Technology replicates itself, can grow and change very quickly, can be uncontrollable, and is a parasite on human civilization or society.

Problem 7.4 (Semantic Web Technology)

Semantic Web technology comes in two parts, RDF and OWL. Briefly describe their roles and make an example that shows their interplay. 3pt

Solution: RDF is the "Resource Description Framework", it is used to describe the relationships between web resources (essentially everything that has a URI) in the form of subject/predicate/object triples.

OWL is the "Ontology Web Language", it is used to describe concepts (classes of web resources) and the relationships that hold at the level of concepts.

RDF and OWL can be seen as the ABox and TBox parts of the web ontologies.

Problem 7.5 (MathML)

MathML has two sub-languages, briefly sketch their purposes and explain the concept of parallel markup and name applications. 3pt

Solution: Presentation MathML is a language for describing the visual appearance of mathematical formulae in terms of layout trees that describe the arrangement and contents of bounding boxes.

Content MathML describes the functional structure of mathematical expressions in terms of operator trees.

Parallel markup combines Presentation and Content MathML representations of the same formula in a single markup tree and cross-references corresponding subtrees. It is used in situations, where we want both aspects of a formula, e.g. when showing a formula in a browser (using presentation markup, hiding the content markup), and a user selects a sub-formula, then we can determine the corresponding content formula and act on this, e.g. sending it to a computer algebra system for computation or to a screen reader for disambiguation where the aural representation is more specific than the visual one.