




Theoretical Concepts Behind Heritage Interpretation

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Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or being described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.



Tildens's Principles of Interpretation


- 2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

"... it should also be acknowledged that once a certain idea of landscape, a myth, a vision, establishes itself in an actual place, it has a peculiar way of muddling categories, of making metaphors more real than their referents; of becoming, in fact, part of the scenery."

Shama 1996, Landscape and Memory

Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 3. Interpretation is an art which combines many arts whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.



Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
- Education is process of deliberate and purposeful influencing of conditions that enable optimal development of an individual to become authentic, integrated and socialized character. (Pelikán, 1995)*

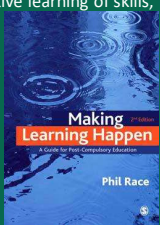
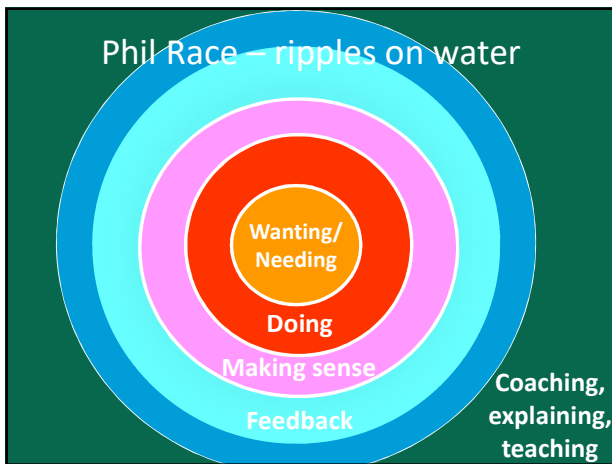
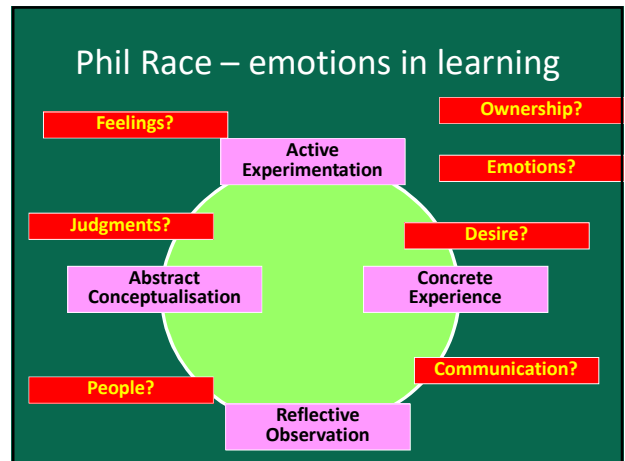
**What Tilden did not know?
How we learn**

Popular learning models in CZ:

- Experiential learning (Kurt Lewin => David Kolb)
 - experience – group reflection – generalization – planning
 - concrete experience – reflective observation – abstract conceptualisation – active experimentation
- E-U-R
 - spontaneous learning
 - Evocation – Acquiring knowledge – Reflection of learning (content & process)


What Tilden did not know? How we learn

- Peter Jarvis (1998) – response to experience
 - Non-learning (prejudice, disinterest, rejection)
 - Non reflective learning (learning of a skill, memorization)
 - Reflective learning (contemplation, reflective learning of skills, learning by experiment)
- Phil Race (2010)
 - focus on emotions in learning
 - learning process is affected by:
 - Motivation
 - Feedback
 - Meaningfulness and ownership
 - Mentoring, support

Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.



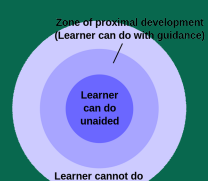
Tildens's Principles of Interpretation

- 6. Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.



Refining Tildens's classification

- sensori-motor (0-yrs)
 - touch of nature
- pre-operational (2-6 yrs)
 - intuitive thinking, fabulation plays important role
 - activities, exploration, hands-on, limited ability of classification and categorizing
- concrete-operational (7-11)
 - enormous ability to gain information
 - ability of classification
 - limited ability to consider alternatives
- Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development



Broadening of the principles Beck & Cable (2002)

- The interpretive presentation – as a work of art – should be designed as a story that informs, entertains and enlightens.
- The purpose of the interpretive story is to inspire and provoke people to broaden their horizons
- **High technology** can reveal the world in exciting new ways. However, incorporating this technology into the interpretive program must be done with foresight and care.
- Interpreters must concern themselves with the **quantity and quality** (selection and accuracy) of information presented. Focused well-researched interpretation will be more powerful than a longer discourse.

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CAPTIVE vs. NONCAPTIVE AUDIENCES

Interpretation and Communication | 13

Differences between Captive and Noncaptive Audiences	
Captive Audiences	Noncaptive Audiences
Involuntary audience Time commitment is fixed External rewards important Must pay attention Will accept a formal, academic approach Will make an effort to pay attention, even if bored	Voluntary audience Have no time commitment External rewards not important Do not have to pay attention Expect an informal atmosphere and a nonacademic approach Will switch attention if bored
Examples of motivations: grades diplomas certificates licenses jobs/employment money advancement success	Examples of motivations: interest fun entertainment self-enrichment self-improvement a better life passing time (nothing better to do)
Typical settings: classrooms job training courses professional seminars courses required for a license (e.g., driving)	Typical settings: parks, museums, zoos, aquariums, etc. informal education programs at home watching television, listening to radio, reading a magazine

Figure 1-2. Typical characteristics of captive and noncaptive audiences.

Ham 2013:13



QUALITY INTERPRETATION

- has a **strong theme**,
- is well **organized**,
- is **relevant**,
- is **enjoyable**.

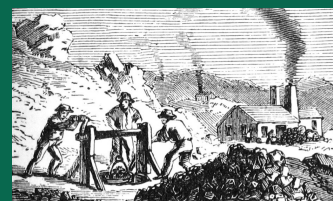
I call this a TORE model.



Ham, 2013

TORE - THEME

Speedwell Cavern was not only the most unprofitable lead mine in the world, but it also reminds us of industry that brought death to many poor families



TORE - MAIN THEME

- simplifies preparation of interpretive programme
- eliminates fragmented experience (supports concentrated attention)
- eliminates information overload
- creates logical frame for visitors' experiences
- **strong main theme**
 - high probability to adress programme participants (-> provoke thinking)

Exercise

Choose one main theme about brown bear and devise themes:

Topic: brown bear

Possible main themes:

- Brown bear is again migrating to parts of Europe where he was made extinct.
- Brown bear survives because of its excellent foraging skills.
- Brown bear illustrates, how humans change their attitudes towards nature.
- Brown bear was part of life and beliefs of our ancestors.
- Brown bear is overcoming fear and forages close to humans.
- ...

Exercise

Create themes to a chosen main theme about brown bear.

Example – main theme:

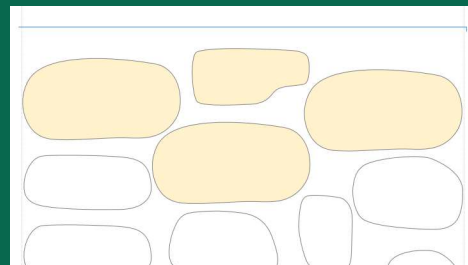
Brown bear is again migrating to parts of Europe where he was made extinct.

Themes:

- Brown bear is migrating **because** humans changed their opinion about them.
- Brown bear is migrating **because** weaker males are pushed away from their territory by stronger ones.
- Brown bear is well prepared for migration **because** it can walk up to 50 km a day.

Exercise

Choose a topic and create 3-4 possible main themes for interpretation



TORE – HI IS ORGANIZED

- we are more reactive to information we understand,
- new information are much better retained, if within logical structure (= are easy to follow)
- we are not able to make sense out of more than **4 ideas**

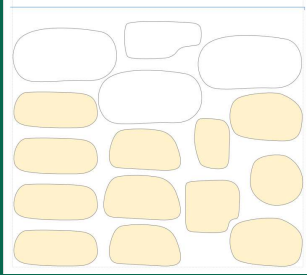


MENTAL CAPACITY

- George Miller (1956): „on average people are capable of making sense out of only five to nine separate and new ideas at one time“
- Nelson Cowan (2001) – revised to 3 to 4

Exercise

Create themes to each of your main themes.



TORE – RELEVANT

- Interpretation is meaningful
 - resonates with my knowledge = is within my context,
 - I can understand the message.
- Interpretation is personal
 - touches my emotions = uses universal concepts = extreme emotions (love, heroism, friendship) & basic biological



Universals



Mental frames

- The concept comes from semantic linguistic and was developed in 1970s
- “The frame idea is this. There are certain schemata or frameworks of concepts or terms which link together as a system, which impose structure or coherence on some element of human experience...” (Fillmore 1975:123).
- The frame is kind of script that brings with a word, story or a metaphore all we know factually and procedurally about the word or situation. This may include how we feel about it, and in this way frames can activate values.

Mental frames

Neuroscience tells us that each of the long-term concepts that structure how we think are not things that can be changed just by someone telling us a fact. **We may be presented with fact, but for us to make sense of them**, they have to fit what is already in the brain. Otherwise facts go in and then they go right back out. They are not heard, or they are not accepted as facts. Then we label the fact as irrational, crazy, or stupid.

Lakoff, G. (2004)

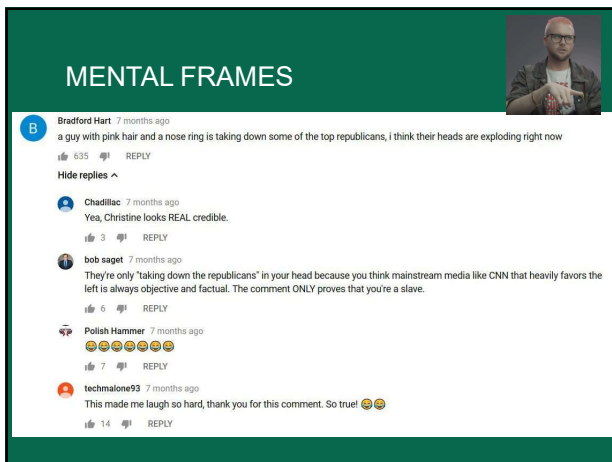
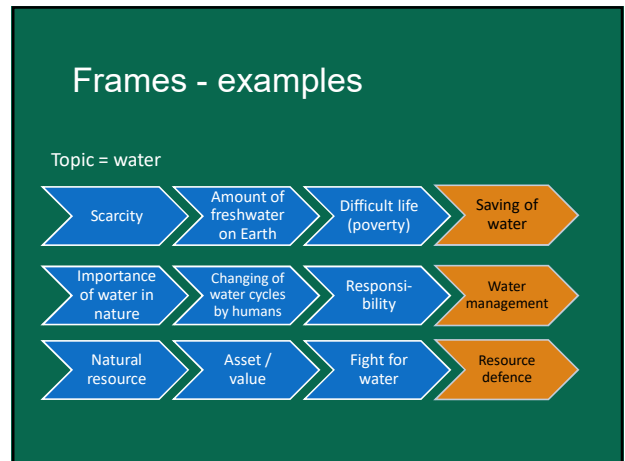
FRAMES - EXAMPLES

9/11 and the ‘War on Terror’



Brought up by Lakoff, G. (2008) The Political Mind. New York: Penguin

‘War’ and ‘crime’ represent deep frames.



WHAT FRAMES CAN DO

Frames can:

- encode meaningful stories with one word
- provide orientation but also create illusions
- trigger values but also hinder them

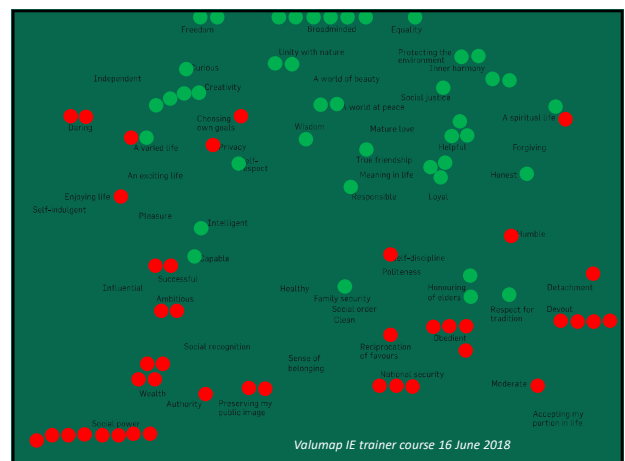
Frames vary across time, across cultures and across social milieux.

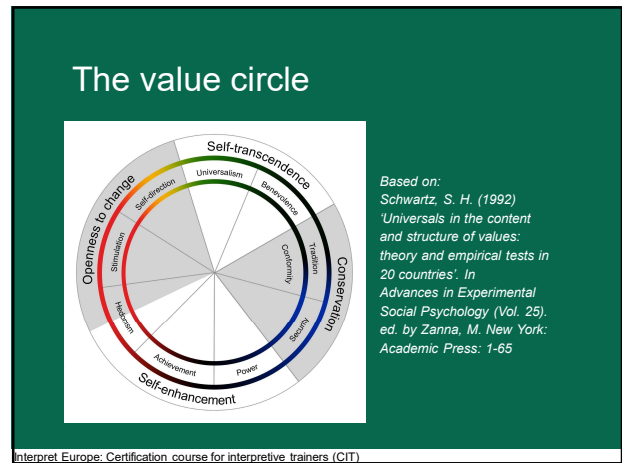
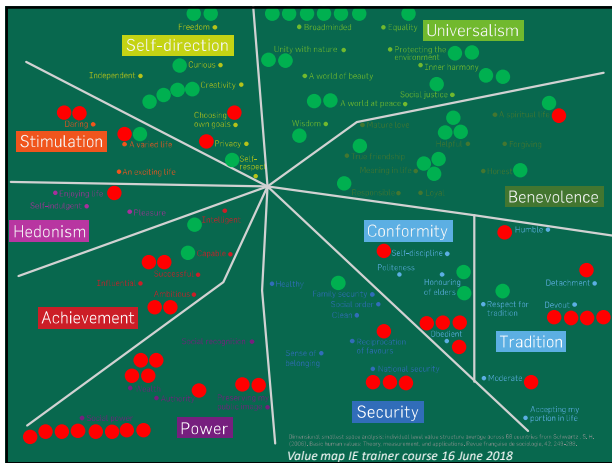
WHAT VALUES CAN DO

Values can:

- serve as motivators
- guide perception
- transcend actions

Personal values imply ratings and might be quite resistant to change.





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