

Triangulation as an experimental approach:

Interpreting the synergistic relationship between the visual syntax, practical mechanisms and theoretical frameworks of typography used in brand marks of cultural festivals.

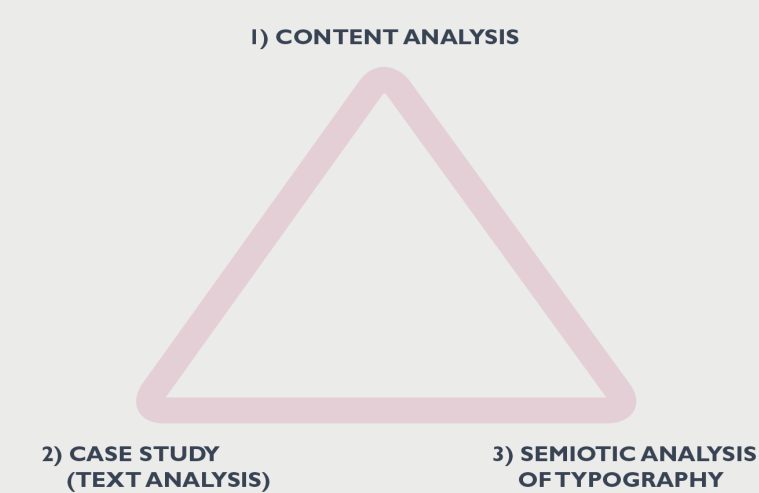
Melbourne, Australia

TYPOGRAPHY IS AN IMPORTANT VISIBLE ELEMENT OF A CULTURAL FESTIVAL'S BRAND MARK, YET IS OVERLOOKED WITHIN CULTURAL FESTIVAL RESEARCH.

An abundance of work has been published that examines cultural festivals from cultural, economic, tourism, and place-making perspectives, yet there is a shortfall in scholarly research addressing the key role typography performs to engage audience participation through cultural festivals' primary brand driver – the brand mark. This poster considers triangulation as a constructive and effective research framework for enquiry into typography deployed in the brand marks of cultural festivals and provides a roadmap to further research. Offering an analysis of how and in what way typography is being used in the brand

marks for cultural festivals, this paper contributes a discussion of appropriate research methods in the examination of this material. Triangulation is engaged as a research technique combining the methods 1) content analysis, 2) case study (text analysis) and 3) a semiotic analysis of typography as a framework to advantage three perspectives on typography, capturing the complexities of the phenomenon. Through a pilot study of 20 cultural festival brand marks from English speaking countries in 2016, the findings show that triangulation of three methods is beneficial to uncovering a rich and nuanced understanding of the

role of typography in brand marks. Although many research methods are available to design researchers, the authors argue that triangulation, is an appropriate method to analyze typography used in the brand marks of cultural festivals as it allows for the emergence of a heterogeneous understanding of the discipline.



Triangulation of Research Methods

Figure 1. Triangulation of Research Methods used in this study. Meyrick, T. (2017).

1) Content Analysis - Typeface Classification System

Using Bevington and Chong's (2013) typeface classification system (Figure 2) we formally divided typeface attributes into either, display or text categories. Grouped under text is serif and slab serif. Grouped under display are blackletter, topical and freehand. Although further groupings and extensions of typeface classification are allowed for, these were not applied in this small study.

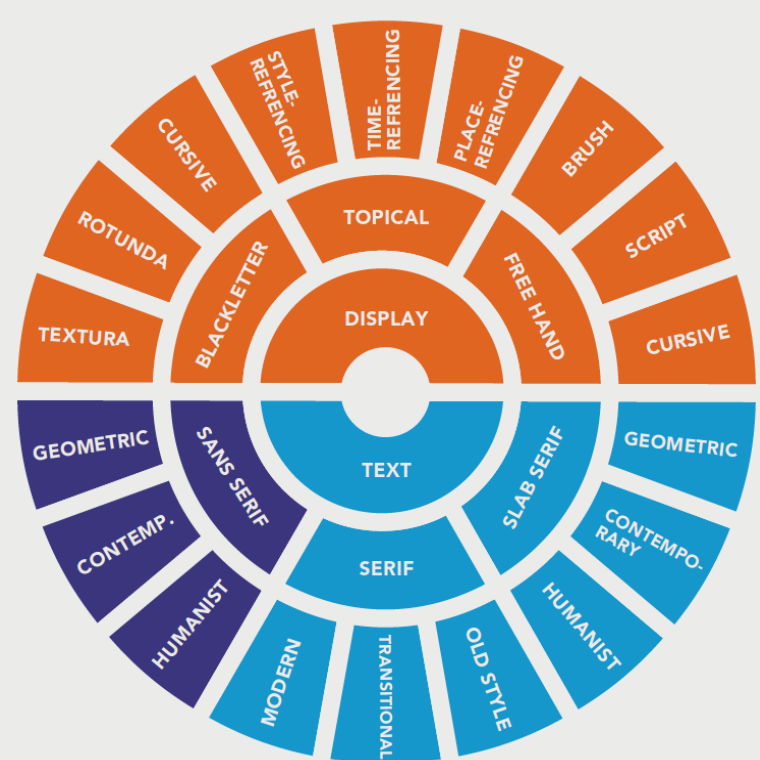


Figure 2. Typeface Classification System. Bevington and Chong, (2013).

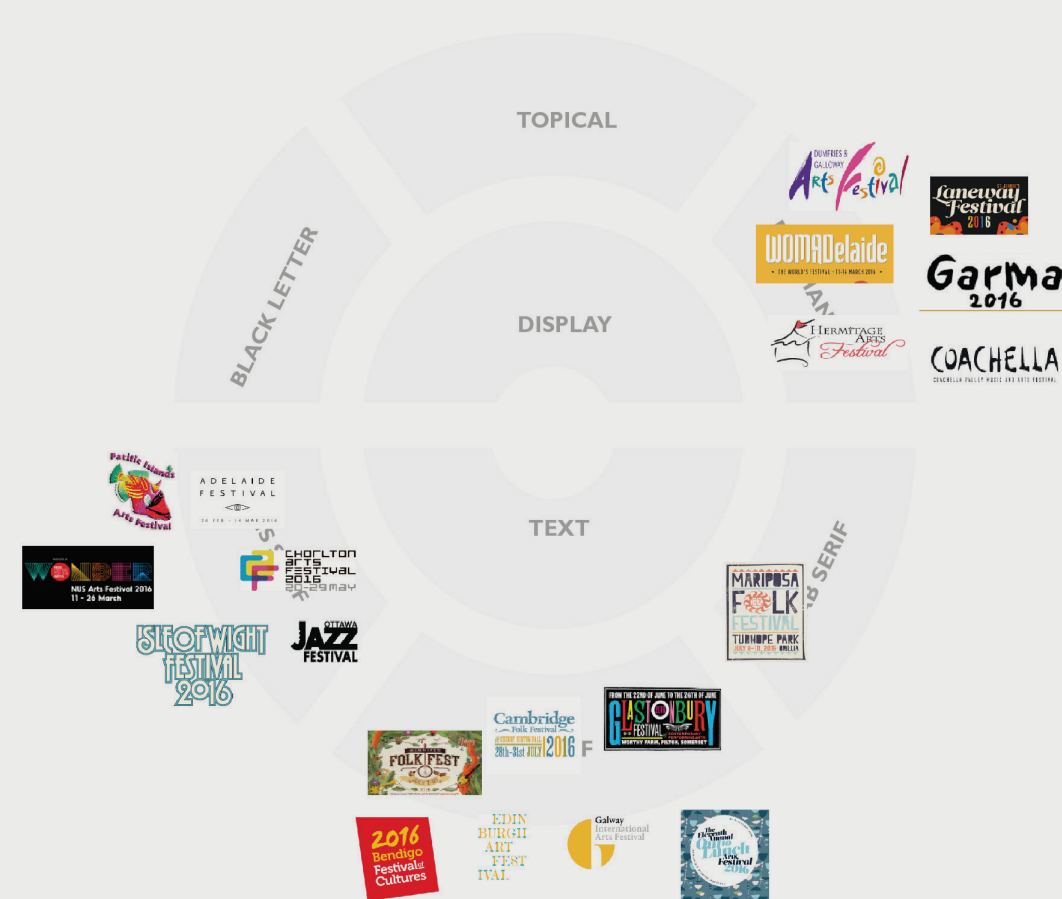


Figure 3. Pilot study diagram; position of typefaces in festival brand marks using Bevington and Chong (2013) Typeface Classification System. Meyrick, T. (2017).

3) Semiotic Analysis of Typography

In our semiotic analysis of the typography used in the Edinburgh Art Festival, we uncover that connotatively the brand mark communicates to both a prestige audience through the initial visual appearance of the serif typeface and resonates, or denotatively communicates with a youthful, modern audience through embellishments. When this dual meaning potential is read in combination with the diverse array of festival acts performing at the events, there is a stable and assured communication well suited to achieve the desired market share.



Figure 8. F. M. Studio, (2013), Edinburgh Art Festival. Brand Mark.

2) Case Study - Text Analysis

In our text analysis, we examine the written information, namely key text phrases available on the festival websites in the hope of making visible explicit links between those discovered and the patterns which emerged from the content analysis. We discovered the following:

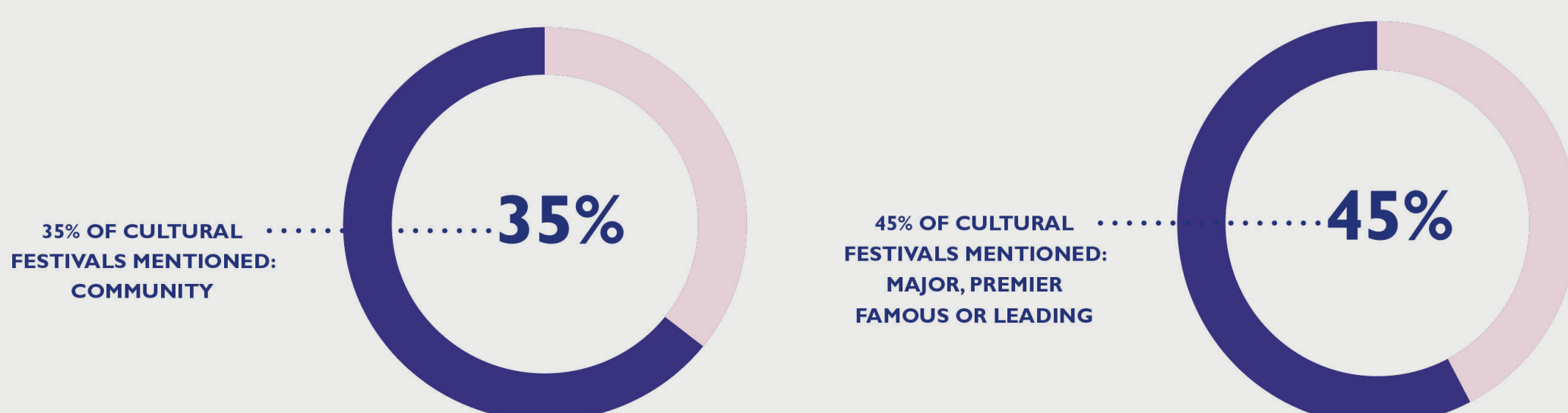


Figure 4, 5. Case Study – Text Analysis (Festival websites mentions of key descriptive text) Meyrick, T. (2017).

Conclusion

This paper offers a reflective approach to examine typography within a triangulation research framework. Revealing the complexities of typography's discourse this approach combines the triangulation of 1) content analysis, 2) case study (text analysis) and 3) a semiotic analysis of typography. A promising start to the triangulation framework, these findings as presented here suggest further research is advisable and although triangulation has been used frequently in science research and rarely in typography research it is a worthwhile method in the study of typography's visual syntax, practical mechanisms and theoretical frameworks used in the brand marks of cultural festivals. This paper set out to critically consider triangulation as a constructive and effective research framework for enquiry into the typography used in cultural festivals brand marks. The triangulation framework allowed the emergence of a heterogeneous understanding of the area which would have otherwise been obscured. Offering a solid foundation to evaluate the typography used in brand marks of cultural festivals, the significance of this paper lies in its potential contribution to typography research and in providing a roadmap to further research.



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