

Assignment: Tool criticism and the CLARIAH Media Suite

Based on the class instruction and the readings, investigate the “entire stack” of the Media Suite (Van Es et al., 2018). This means that you reflect on **how the tool** (e.g. its data source, working mechanisms, anticipated use, interface, and embedded assumptions) **affects the user, research process and output.**

Write down your observations about the following:

1. The infrastructure (how are the tools presented in terms of functionality - see the About page, the examples given)
2. The platform of the Suite: how does it function, how can users search and how does that shape the findings?
3. Can you say anything about how research outcomes are sorted (ideas about how the Suite “works”? What can you find about this?)
4. Data (what is included? Meta data? Annotations?)
5. Interface (how does the interface shape use?)

Focus	Observations
The infrastructure	<p>Media Suite’s tools support researchers in every step of a research process, it allows exploration, search, bookmarking, and analysis (annotation) within a wide range of Dutch media collections.</p> <p>The ‘Search’ is a very useful and with a clear goal tool dedicated to searching and exploring. When a user starts the exploration using a simple query, the process is simple and direct. However, for users who are not familiarized with filtering using the so-called ‘facets’ or systematic search, the process can be quite complex and overwhelming, especially for the beginners since the plethora of options make it hard to identify and select the most suitable.</p> <p>The ‘Explore’ tool is using the DIVE+, an event-centric linked data based digital collection, which allows serendipitous exploration and the creation of narratives around event or entities topics. It is an amazing tool which practically exposes unexpected relations between entities and media objects, enables narratives and links between collections. It works using an innovative feature of exploration path and search narratives. One huge disadvantage is that English translation is not applicable.</p> <p>Whereas the ‘Compare’ tool that enables comparison of saved queries created with the Search tool is a stage for more advanced users.</p>
The platform of the Suite	<p>Starting with the Home page, the navigation and information architecture are clear and user friendly. The</p>

	<p>structure of the blocks is organized and allows the user the flexibility to navigate.</p> <p>The individual pages are simple and contain all the necessary functions.</p> <p>A very useful element of the platform is the existing learning material and the given tutorials, as well as the quotation mark giving all the necessary answers.</p>
Search outcomes	<p>Search outcome is very often connected to the relation and interaction between researcher and tool, meaning that the outcome is interwoven to what the user wants to find and to what (s)he actually is doing to find it. More precisely, if the user does not use the appropriate key words, or combination of supported Boolean operators, it is likely not to take what (s)he is looking for. Existing learning material and tutorials are necessary to guide the user to use the most suitable tool, filters, keywords, and combination to lead him where (s)he wants to go.</p>
Data	<p>The CMS provides access to various large data collections of Dutch archives via the CLARIAH infrastructure, such as the Open Images Project, The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, EYE Film Museum collections, DANS oral history interview collections and more. The innovative part is that it works with multimedia data sets, such as audio, video, images and text.</p> <p>It offers a wide range of functionalities that support any type of activity, from creating a project in the workspace to save, store, bookmark, annotate and share, bookmark, data.</p> <p>However, users need to be careful during the search and using filter functionalities of facets because the metadata import is not perfect.</p>
Interface	<p>CMS has a user-friendly interface and advanced services that provide direct access to the data via an API, working as link between an overview of collections from various institutions in the Netherlands and set of tools to work with the data. It constitutes an environment for research, analysis and collaboration.</p> <p>An element that could support a new user to navigate and manage the platform, at least during the first tasks, would be a search box at the top right side of the home page, instead of the 'Help' feature.</p>
Any other observations	<p>Need for multiple language support. If users could have the ability to select their preferred language, CMS could be an</p>

	international application for doing research with data collections.
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