NETWORK ANALYSIS WITH PALLADIO

Unveil Hidden Connections

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# Author’s Note

This author's note delves into the design and experience of my network analysis workshop for beginners. It explores the pedagogical choices behind the content, the challenges encountered, and solutions implemented, and the unexpected insights gained on my own DH journey.

Before I delve into the construction of the workshop’s content, I’d like to briefly address the aesthetics of the presentation. My philosophy for presenting extends beyond simply conveying information. I strongly believe in crafting presentations that are not only informative but also visually engaging. This commitment stems from my understanding of how visual elements can enhance audience comprehension and foster deeper engagement with the material. I also think this commitment to visual engagement aligns with the broader goals of digital humanities (DH). The use of visualization in digital humanities allows for communicating insights and fostering wider understanding. In this workshop, I utilized several strategies to create a visually appealing presentation. I incorporated:

* Graphics and images: Screenshots of examples of network analysis DH projects, sample visualizations using Palladio.
* Strategic use of color and white space: Balanced color palettes that enhance readability and avoided text overcrowding.
* Clear and concise data visualizations: graphs and diagrams that effectively communicate information.
* Interactive elements: live demonstration to encourage active participation and learning.

My initial workshop proposal titled *Data Visualization for Digital Humanists using Gephi* underwent an overhaul since its inception. Initially, the proposal included datasets that were not inherently networked data and would have required transformation. However, the [Introduction DH Networks](https://zoeleblanc.com/is578-intro-dh/schedule/07-introducing-dh-networks/) class offered a pivotal shift in perspective and allowed for a better understanding of the data types conducive to network analysis. I decided to change tactics and drew inspiration from Eichmann-Kalwara, Jorgensen, and Weingart (2018) analysis of representation of digital humanities conferences. I wanted to adopt this same approach but instead look at the International Conference on Digital Preservation (iPRES) conference and determine what insights I can get from there.

**Incorporating Feedback**

While my initial proposal centered on using Gephi, feedback on my workshop proposal suggested looking into alternative tools because Gephi needed to be locally installed on a computer. Since I wanted my workshop to be geared towards beginners to network analysis, I felt like needing a tool to be locally installed on a computer would have been a barrier of entry. Instead, I pivoted to using Palladio, a web-based platform, after exploring the tool in class. I felt this change was better because the interface was user-friendly and the various features.

In response to the feedback, I expanded the workshop’s scope to include a comprehensive walkthrough of creating a dataset for network analysis. I believe there is value in practical application and guided learning, so I designed the “Creating a Dataset” with participants in mind. This section walks through a workflow of five steps, each initiating reflections for participants to consider when they create their datasets. Creating this portion allowed me to reflect on the class discussions that centered around data analysis which left me wanting to offer more nuanced perspectives. Rawson and Muñoz (2016) highlighted how the term “data cleaning” can be problematic when applied to humanities data, often obscuring the richness and messiness that can be informative. This led me to embed my own experiences within each section, specifically walking through creating the iPRES dataset, not just to demystify the steps but also to showcase the complexities and challenges I encountered. Engaging with this data hands-on allowed me to delve deeper into the questions we raised in class about how to handle these complexities, ultimately shifting the focus from "cleaning" to exploring and indexing the information in a way that respects the context. I wish I had emphasized this more in the workshop.

I also integrated feedback from the workshop presentation by adding information about geocoded data used for Sample Visualization 2. While I initially opted to omit the details during the recorded session due to time constraints and its secondary focus, the feedback allowed me to see the potential of how this information would have enriched the content and showcase the possibilities of spatial relationships. I incorporated this into the written form to expand on the dimensions used for sample visualization. It’s worth noting that I wanted to provide sample visualizations to showcase its potential and concrete examples of what could be achieved with the tool.

**Conclusion**

Crafting this workshop wasn’t just about teaching others; it was a valuable learning experience for me. I actively applied concepts learned through the semester as I explored Palladio’s features with the iPRES dataset. Framing the workshop with beginners in mind forced me to simplify complex ideas and build upon basic knowledge, solidifying my own understanding in the process. I enjoyed getting to know the functions of Palladio and framing the workshop with beginners in mind. As a beginner myself, this helped set the stage for building upon knowledge and experience. In the end, this moved beyond introducing Palladio and building understanding of the capacity of network analysis.

**References**

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