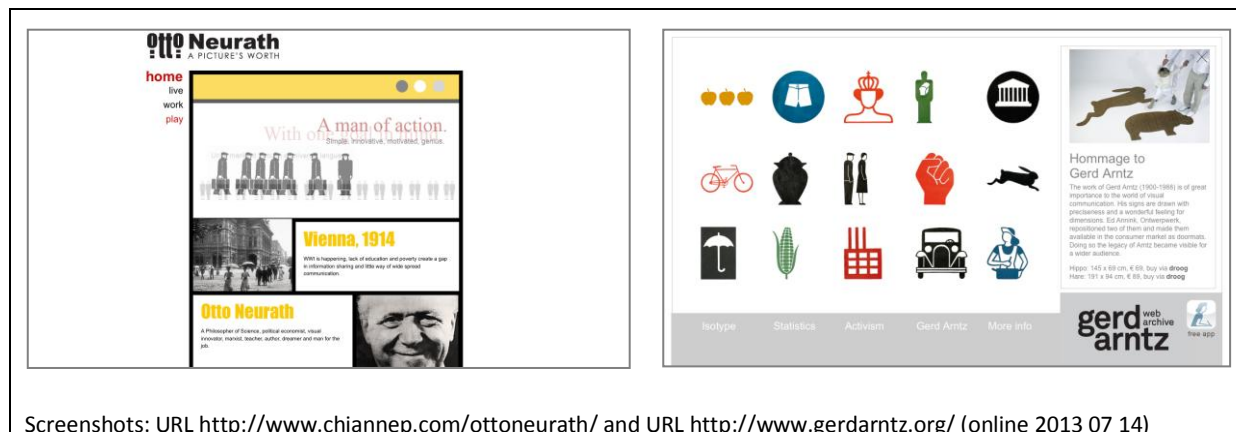


TIMELESS SIGNS. Otto Neurath & Gerd Arntz, two pioneers of our visual world



Screenshots: URL <http://www.chiannep.com/ottoneurath/> and URL <http://www.gerdarntz.org/> (online 2013 07 14)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Icons, pictograms, apps, are, briefly put, the current representational symbols that not only shape our modern communication, but provide international visual orientation configuration, as well. Even the recent wave of political revolutions was powered by universally understandable pictograms. This bare bones approach to conveying information actually originated in Otto Neurath's concept of pictorial education.

Developed in the 1920s and 1930s, Neurath's "*Vienna Method of Pictorial Statistics*" became a system of visualization used around the world. This is nowadays mostly known as ISOTYPE, International System of Typographic Picture Education. Only very few users of modern pictograms are aware of their historical roots.

The Austrian adult education specialist, philosopher and economist, Otto Neurath, his wife Marie Neurath and his partner, the critical cartoonist Gerd Arntz, offer – be it through their work or through their lives - material for all types of language conversation courses. It was only after their forced exile, caused by the Nazis, that their work took on historical and international dimensions. Nowadays, the internet provides for all kinds of approaches to the topic prepared visual aids.

Further, pictograms and icons provide learners with the means of both telling and constructing their own stories.

MATERIALS

Prepare everything you need for class: Organise a computer and a beamer if needed, prepare the transcript of the video or the pictogrammes and icons you want to work with.

Selection of links (online July 2013)

- See Wikipedia articles on Otto Neurath, Gerd Arntz, Isotype
e.g. URL [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isotype_\(picture_language\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isotype_(picture_language))
- Website of Chianne Peterson on Otto Neurath, with the play “create a story”:
URL <http://www.chiannep.com/ottoneurath/play.html>
- YOUTUBE DESIGN HISTORY – Speaking Isotype / University of Applied Arts, Vienna:
URL <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9YfqKT3LU0>
- The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy on Otto Neurath:
URL <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/neurath/>
- Exhibition, Vienna 2013: URL <http://www.zeitlose-zeichen.at>
see more links: “background”
- URL <http://www.datascope.be/sog.htm>
See Chapter 6: Neurath and the Vienna Method of Picture Statistics:
URL <http://www.datascope.be/sog/SOG-Chapter6.pdf>
- Gerd Arntz Webarchive: URL <http://www.gerdarntz.org/home>
- Isotype revisited: URL <http://isotyperevisited.org/>
- 1930 statistical atlas on society and the economy by Otto Neurath and Gerd Arntz in PDF format: URL http://libcom.org/files/Gesellschaft_und_Wirtschaft_1931.pdf
- **Migrantas**: URL <http://www.migrantas.org/>
- **Laundry symbols**:
Wikipedia: URL http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laundry_symbol
Website with the codes for Nafta (USA; Kanada, Mexiko)URL
<http://www.paxar.com/carelabel/>
- **Street signs** in Vienna & Gender Mainstreaming: URL
<http://www.wien.gv.at/menschen/gendermainstreaming/pdf/sehen.pdf>

STEPS

Choose a subject you know.

Learning by listening

Learners have to listen to a presentation in the internet (see “Youtube Design History”/Materials)

Learning by reading

Watch Video.

Read the transcript (provided by the teacher)

Identify and discuss all open questions relating to grammar, vocabulary, etc.

Watch the video once again.

Learning by communicating

Start a discussion (see the project “migrantas”/Materials)

Storytelling with pictograms

Provide the learners with different pictogrammes which you have put together, and, then challenge them to think up a story (see the play “create a story”/Materials)

Learning by drawing or writing

Each person takes a set of icons and tells his or her own story.

Homework: to write a story

Learning by visual explanations of words or expressions

Discuss the meanings of pictogrammes and icons. These can include everything from traffic signs to washing instruction labels on clothes!

Feedback: Don’t forget to actively seek feedback on whatever activity.

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