More than recycled snippets of news

Quote cards as recontextualized discourse
on social media

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Focusing on Facebook pages from public broadcasters in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, this paper looks at ways in which written quotations and snippets of news are reused and shared in social media posts. Drawing on recent theorization of digital quotations as recontextualized discourse, the study deals with a specific genre of digital news: quote cards. The qualitative analysis identifies common design patterns, examines the functions of quote cards and shows how text and image are remixed and integrated into multimodal offerings, providing affordances for news-sharing practices and responses into political discourses.

Keywords: news bites, public service media, Facebook, intertextuality, user comments, multimodality, media linguistics

1. Introduction

When traditional media organizations like public broadcasters use social media platforms to distribute their news, they are trying to generate referrals to their own websites and target "younger and hard-to-reach audiences off-site with native content" (Sehl et al., 2018, p. 5). To achieve this, they rely on a variety of resources. In the case of Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, for example, media organizations often leverage photo postings as a means to publish visually engaging 'snippets' of their news and invite the users to share and comment. This paper deals with a particular form of such visual posts, which I refer to as *quote cards*: multimodal ensembles of written quotations and visuals, extracted from existing news materials and rearranged for posting and recirculation on social media. Figure 1 shows the decomposition of a typical example.

    This quote card post was published on May 4th, 2019, on a public Facebook page operated by the Swiss public broadcaster. From a formal point of view, it
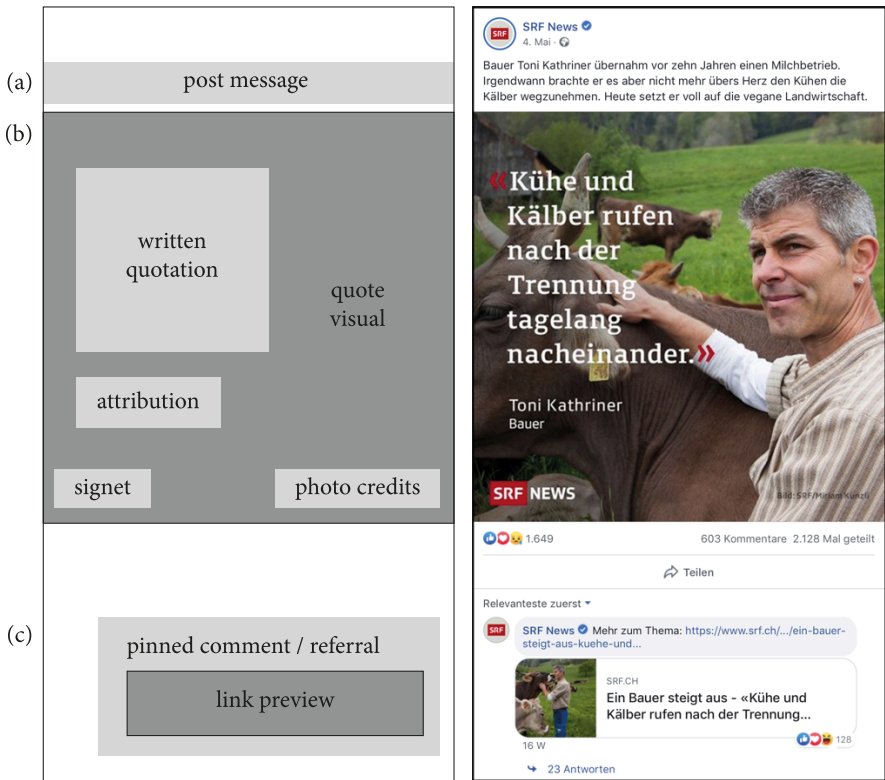
Figure 1. Decomposition of a quote card and its usage as a linked news bite in the context of a Facebook post by Swiss *SRF News*

consists of (a) a *post message*, acting as short caption, and (b) the *quote card* in the actual sense, technically a JPG file embedded as visual content. In terms of design options, there are notable differences: While text boxes provided by the Facebook platform itself constrain text styling, the quote cards are designed off-platform, affording a flexible multimodal design. Additionally, SRF News links to further information within (c) a *top comment*, which is 'pinned' by the site operators in the top position in order not to be lost in the other user comments following below. While the quote card post is typical when it comes to structure and visual design, it deals not (as is often the case) with political issues, but with animal husbandry: It is about a Swiss farmer who has switched to vegan agriculture. While the prominent quote is emotionally charged, the post message leads into this story. Three sentences introduce the who and what in chronological terms ("Farmer Toni Kathriner, took over a dairy farm ten years ago. At some point, he hasn't had the heart to take the calves away from the cows. Today, he is fully committed to vegan agriculture"). The quote card itself consists of a *written quotation*

enclosed in red quotation marks ("Cows and calves continue to call for each other for days after the separation"), an *attribution block* ("Toni Kathriner, Farmer"), and further elements (signet, photo credit line), all arranged against the backdrop of a *quote visual* (a photo of a man standing next to a cow, his right hand resting on the cow's head).

Quote card posts are closely tied to processes of *recontextualization* (Linell, 2009) in two ways: Generally both the written quotation and the quote visual are extracted from existing news discourse and recomposed as a quote card in order to draw attention to the linked article and promote it. In this sense, quote card posts function as 'news bites' (Knox, 2007): they are 'appetizers' designed to simplify and reduce articles using quotations and encourage readers to visit the full article. On the other hand, quote card posts are designed so that users can easily comment on them and share them with others. Quote cards are therefore also a possible starting point for further recontextualization activities initiated by the users. The quote card post in Figure 1 is a good example to highlight the user participation such a brief posts can spark: it reached 603 comments, 1,648 Facebook 'reactions' (including likes), and 2,129 shares. This indicates that quote cards are more than just visual ornaments (think of traditional pull-out quotes, for example). As quote-centric social media news formats, these quote card posts provide intertextual anchor points for user discussion and social positioning, enabling online interaction related to and fueled by news discourses and the quotes featured therein.

This paper investigates forms and functions of news-related quote cards on social media. Drawing on recent theorizations of digital quotations as recontextualized discourse (e.g., Androutsopoulos, 2019; Gruber, 2017; Puschmann, 2015), along with linguistic work on quote-centric news genres (e.g., Johansson, 2019; Van Hout & Burger, 2017), it aims to connect the dots between digital quotation practices and emerging news genres on social media. How do journalists construct "shareability" (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017) through recontextualization of written quotations? How are such shareable quotes as "recycled snippets of political talk" (Van Hout & Burger, 2017, p. 462) used by audiences to participate in news-related discourse on social media? To address these questions, the article examines Facebook posts by public broadcasters from Austria, Switzerland, and Germany as well as selected user comments. After reviewing the relevant theoretical concepts (Section 2) and describing the methodological approach (Section 3), the main part of this article presents findings on the role of direct quotations in relation to user engagement, as well as qualitative insights on the form and function of quote cards as recontextualized discourse (Section 4).

2.   Recontextualizing news content as shareable news bites

Social media have become a constitutive part of the dissemination and public discussion of news texts (Newman et al., 2018). A growing body of research considers online practices such as commenting (e.g., Dorostkar & Preisinger, 2017; Carlson, 2016; Craft, Vos, & Wolfgang, 2016; Johansson, 2017; Ziegele et al. 2017) and sharing digital news (e.g., Kümpel, Karnowski, & Keyling, 2015; Kalogeropoulos et al., 2017; dos Santos, Lycarião, & de Aquino, 2019). In this research context, Harcup and O'Neill (2017) argued that *shareability*, i.e., the likeliness of news items to be recirculated and commented on via social media, is a contributing factor as to how the news is constructed on social media. However, there is a lack of research into the journalistic practices related to emerging digital news genres. In particular, there is no detailed linguistic study of the quotation practices underpinning the idea of shareability, considering both the journalists' (how to make news shareable) and the audience's perspective (how to engage with shareable news). Even though sharing practices afforded by social media platforms are conceptualized as quoting practices in the literature (e.g., Gruber, 2017; Puschmann, 2015), the notion of intertextuality is seldom discussed in the context of shareable news. While it is well established that quoting is an essential phenomenon in media discourse (Haapanen & Perrin, 2017), shaping journalistic working processes as well as media products and their reception, it remains unclear how digital quotation practices relate to shareability and user interaction on social media.

By looking at quote cards as a prime example of emerging digital news formats, this article argues that shareability on social media is constructed by practices that can be described as recontextualization. This notation has seen a recent uptake in various interdisciplinary research areas, including current theorizations and empirical studies on digital quotation (e.g., Gruber, 2017; Johansson, 2019; Puschmann, 2015) as well as studies on quoting in traditional mass media television (e.g., Ekström, 2001; Lee, 2012). Recontextualization refers to the "dynamic transfer-and-transformation of something from one discourse/text-in-context […] to another" (Linell, 2009, pp. 144–145). Based on this definition, Haapanen (2017b, pp. 23–24) elaborates three subprocesses: *decontextualization* (the selection and extraction of the discourse), *contextualization* (the positioning of the selected discourse in the narration of the news item), and *textualization* (the harmonization of the quoted discourse to fit into the co-text and meet the narrative goals). The concept of recontextualization is particularly suitable for the study of digital news discourse because it highlights textual changes: "When parts of texts or discourses are relocated through recontextualization, they are often subject to textual change, such as simplification, condensation, elaboration, and refocusing" (Linell, 1998, p. 155). This transformational relationship between the relocated parts and

the original texts or discourses can be seen as what Fairclough (1992, pp. 130–133) calls an *intertextual chain.*

Quote cards are multimodal ensembles consisting of written quotations (direct quotes) and visual elements. Journalist use quote cards to convert news stories into shareable social media posts through what Knox (2007, p. 47) calls the "atomization of news content." Applying the analytical terms of Haapanen (2017b), the construction of quote cards can be seen as a three-step process: written quotes and visual elements must be extracted from existing materials (decontextualization), they must be relocated and positioned in a post to be shared on social media (contextualization), and they must be harmonized to fit with provided templates and the co-text of the social media post (textualization). This results in quote-centric *news bites* recontextualized from more extensive media discourses and intertextually linked to them. Such bite-sized snippets of recycled discourse come close to what have been explored in the literature as sound bites (Lee, 2012), image bites (Grabe & Bucy, 2009), interviews bites (Kroon, Lundell, & Ekström, 2010), or text bites (Van Hout & Burger, 2017).

The first aim of the analysis is to examine quote-centric recontextualization practices that link news bites and original media coverage: How do journalists turn digital news content into shareable news bites through recontextualization of quotations on social media? Which quote-centric news genres are emerging and what recurrent multimodal design patterns can be found in quote cards?

Quote cards are well suited for social media platforms that favor concise, visually rich content and optimize for user engagement. Previous linguistic research has established that language use in social media is "inevitably bound to standardized templates and text automation tools that gradually define and standardize user actions" (Eisenlauer, 2017, p. 234). In the case of Facebook these platform affordances include for example the ability to post comments and share the quote card with others, as well as the 'Like' button, which enables user to interact with posts using one of five predefined 'emoji reactions' ("Love", "Haha", "Wow", "Sad", or "Angry"). As quote cards are themselves "circulable texts" (Park & Bucholtz, 2009, p. 486), the second aim of the study is to examine user practices that further recontextualize quote cards: How does the news audience engage with shareable news content and evaluate the quotes presented?

3.   Data and method

The data is derived from a larger online ethnography (Varis, 2016) of public media organizations on social media platforms. In particular, I analyzed Facebook posts by public broadcasters from Austria (*Zeit im Bild*), Switzerland (*SRF News*), and Germany (*Tagesschau, ZDF heute*). The data collection was carried out using the Netvizz application (Rieder, 2013). This collection relied on the Facebook programming interface (API) and yielded a dataset consisting of approx. 100 posts per Facebook page. The obtained dataset contains post messages and visual media content (photos or videos) published on the public Facebook pages in May 2019 as well as user reaction data (Facebook reactions, shares, and comments). Retrospective data collection via the public Facebook API does not yield complete sets, especially for pages with a high post frequency (Villegas, 2016). Therefore the dataset should be considered as an algorithmically curated sample and not as a complete collection of all published posts. Implementing a research strategy proposed by Latzko-Toth et al. (2017), I supplemented this dataset using manual data collection.

For analysis, I explored the sample for quote-centric news bites and conducted a qualitative content analysis using the software ATLAS.ti. My analysis was twofold: First, I searched for news bites consisting of direct quotes to assess the relevance of quote-centric news genres. For a quantitative review, I coded all Facebook posts (including photos and videos) in the sample with regard to written quotations. All posted photos and videos that consisted solely of direct speech (i.e., that did not contain the voice of journalists or foregrounded other contextualizing utterances) were coded as direct quote content and compared regarding the user activity counts (Facebook reactions, likes, shares). Focusing on quote cards, I looked for emerging design patterns and examined notable cases more closely at the micro-level. Following a multimodal approach to visual analysis (Ledin & Machin, 2018) and language use in online communication and interaction (Giles et al., 2017), I explored the semiotic choices made (regarding color, typography, iconography, etc.), decomposed the inner structure of the quote cards on the micro-level, and asked how discernible differences in the multimodal design of the quote cards affect the commentary discourse. To reconstruct the recontextualization practices and visualize the intertextual chains, I also considered the linked texts and related materials of the media discourse as well as user comments. When handling the public data and, in particular, the user comments, care was taken to ensure compliance with research ethical standards (Markham & Buchanan, 2012). In all quotations of this paper, the user names are anonymized.

4.   Findings

The section is structured as follows: First, I present quantitative findings regarding the relevance of quote cards in the context of quote-centric news formats and user engagement. Then, I present qualitative results, describing the form and functions of quote cards and their multimodal design. In a final step, I use two case studies to reconstruct practices of recontextualization and user interaction.

4.1   Quote-centric news bites and user engagement

I evaluated all Facebook posts with regard to the use of direct quotations. Of the total of 405 Facebook posts examined in the sample, 20% can be considered quote-centric, i.e., consisting of photos or videos that solely present quotations. While the remaining majority of the Facebook posts showed a newswriting style that typically mixes and matches written quotes and journalistic voice. This shows that the quote-centric reduction of news is a common journalistic practice on the investigated sites. One can further differentiate these quote-centric news postings into quote cards (photo posts showing written quotes) and quote videos (video clips containing audiovisual sound bites). Table 1 provides an overview of the published quote cards and quote videos in terms of average user activity (avg. number of user comments, Facebook reactions including likes, and shares).

   The findings suggest that the quote-centric reduction of news bites encourages user interaction. While quote videos are used more often, static quote cards, on average, have more comments, reactions, and shares. This may be because quote cards as static images can be consumed and reacted to more easily and quickly. Across all evaluated posts, content consisting of direct quotes has higher engagement counts on average. In Table 1, this can be seen by comparing the number of average user interactions of the direct quote formats (gray column) with those of the non-quote-centric formats. For all four pages in the sample, these user engagement numbers are approximately equal or higher, with the gap being particularly pronounced in the case of the *Tagesschau*: here, 25 direct quote formats generated an average of over 4500 reactions, more than twice as many as the 74 non-quote-centric postings; the static quote cards in the sample rank even higher, with over 7000 reactions and almost 2000 comments.

   When evaluating a possible relationship between direct quote formats and user engagement, however, various limitations must be taken into account. An important factor not monitored in the coding is the news topic (e.g. political vs. non-political). Virality, i.e., the tendency of online content to be spread or popularized by means of people communicating with each other, is partially driven by

Table 1. Evaluation of direct quote formats (quote cards and quote videos) and average user engagement (rounded to nearest integer) from selected Facebook posts of *Zeit im Bild* (*n* = 103), *SRF News* (*n* = 99), *ZDF heute* (*n* = 102), and *Tagesschau* (*n* = 99)

	Quote cards	Quote videos	Direct quote formats	Non-quote-centric content
Items *Zeit im Bild*	7	16	23	80
avg. comments	697	587	642	654
avg. reactions	3,284	2,145	2,715	2,641
avg. shares	428	1,099	764	267
Items *SRF News*	1	6	7	92
avg. comments	603	34	318	23
avg. reactions	1,648	75	550	41
avg. shares	2,129	9	1,069	23
Items *ZDF heute*	12	14	26	78
avg. comments	868	526	697	487
avg. reactions	1,294	599	946	552
avg. shares	223	127	175	140
Items *Tagesschau*	10	15	25	74
avg. comments	1,947	1,043	1,495	934
avg. reactions	7,316	1,711	4,513	2,218
avg, shares	756	726	741	250

physiological arousal (Berger & Milkman, 2012). News articles that evoke high-arousal emotions (e.g., anger, awe, anxiety) generate more engagement from the start, regardless of presentation format. Because the sample examined is only of limited significance, such influence on the user engagement can only be partially offset. This is particularly evident in the case of SRF News, where user activity is generally low and direct quote formats are rarely used. Yet a single post dealing with the special issue of animal husbandry (see Figure 1, above) has triggered far above-average reactions, distorting the overall average, but also revealing how easily quote cards can provoke extensive discussions on controversial topics.

4.2   Quote cards as multimodal ensembles

Quote cards are multimodal ensembles composed of a written quotation, an attribution block, and further elements (e.g., signet, photo credit line), arranged against the backdrop of a quote visual. These basic structural elements have already been outlined in the introduction section (see Figure 1, above). In order to further investigate the composition and visual design of quote cards, I conducted a qualitative analysis. More precisely, I explored the different ways in which written quotations and quote visuals are related in the multimodal design. I have identified three basic design patterns. (1) There are text-only quote cards, which put a written quote as a stylized text on a template background. If photo elements are present, they can relate to the written quotes in two ways: (2) quotee-related visuals depict the quoted person or source (as a talking head or in other settings), while (3) quote-related visuals represent an aspect addressed in the quote itself. Below, I discuss these basic design patterns using typical exemplars taken from the data.

4.2.1   *Text-only quote cards*

Text-only quote cards allow journalists to present a written quotation in a typographically branded environment. Figure 2 shows four typical examples. In the case of (a) and (b), both from the Austrian Facebook page of *Zeit im Bild,* the written quote is presented against a blue background (the corporate color of the news program), in the case of (c) and (d) from the German *Tagesschau,* the quote visual is composed of a gray backdrop with a partial map cutout added as a blue column on the left side. Such quote cards can be called "text-only" because there are no significant photo elements. For example, (a) presents a statement by climate activist Greta Thunberg without showing a photo (of her or any other object). But the visual design nonetheless offers contextual cues about the reporting media organization. All four quote cards use design templates based on the visual corporate identity of the media organizations. Typography can also be used as a means of textualizing, e.g., highlighting certain keyword as can be seen in (c). However, overall, this type of quote card follows a consistent design scheme that can be understood as an index to the media brand, thus contextualizing the quote. Providing such contextualization cues is an important function of quote cards: When recontextualizing discourse, quote cards enable persistence in a branded design. This characteristic, of course, is something quote cards share with other news bites that are designed for social media dissemination.
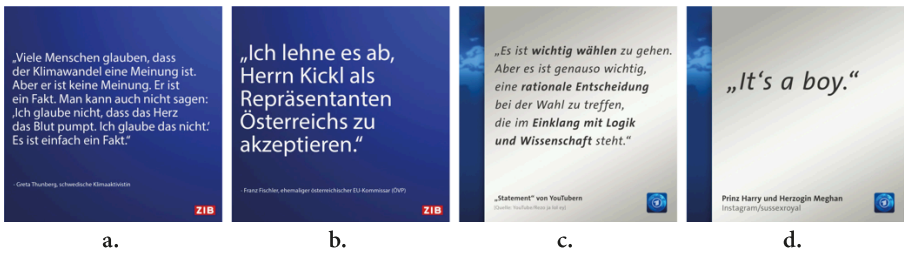
Figure 2. Examples of text-only quote cards

4.2.2 *Quotee-related visuals*

The most obvious pattern in combining text and image in quote cards is to depict the person quoted next to the quote. The spatial arrangement alone implies that the person depicted is the quoted source. Even without a speech bubble, this is a familiar pattern known from comics and other visual media. Figure 3 gives four examples that all show and quote politicians. A talking head visual as seen in (a) and (b) is the most common type of quote card observed, probably because a head and shoulder close-up is particularly effective to show facial expressions and gestures. Often photos taken during the quoted event (e.g., the press conference or public speech) are recontextualized alongside the written quotation. Journalists vary this design pattern by portraying the quoted person from a different perspective, e.g., a long shot as seen in (c), or in a different, non-speaking setting (d). Quote cards designed this way allow the viewer to focus on quotee and quote alike and conveys information that extends the mere verbal quotation in several ways. Irrespective of whether the presented photographs are actually related to the quoted situation or not (which can only be clarified by research), these compositions of a written quotations (extracted from oral speech or recontextualized elsewhere) and the selected images (e.g., extracted as a still image of a physical performance or a posed photo) lead to a multimodal ensemble that are more than the sum of their parts. The quote cards as a whole form the sites in which such a mutual contextualizing of the elements can take place.

Figure 3. Examples of quotee-related visuals

By juxtaposing a written quotation and a press photo in a multimodal ensemble, such quote cards can be used to recontextualize a certain setting and context. This is a crucial feature of quotee-related quote cards. One not only learns who said what but can also get indications as to what this person looks like and in which setting the quoted statements were presumably made. In practice, however, it can be assumed that the visuals can often be taken from an image archive. Quote cards then only give the impression that the quotee is saying the quoted statement in the manner presented via the quote visual. The quote cards in (a) and (b) show quotes and the politicians appearing 'on stage.' Even without detailed knowledge, the microphones and gestures visible in the photo suggest a snapshot. As multimodal ensembles, these quote cards function as forms of recontextualized discourse that visually relate quotations to their original speech events. In posed photographs in which the individuals are not depicted as speaking, less reference is made to the cited occasion and other functions of portrait pictures dominate. This may be limited to enabling visual recognition of the speakers as in (c), or highlighting unique aspects as in (d), where on first sight the conspicuously different dress style (hooded sweater instead of suit) is not indicative of a politician and vice versa allows to visually highlight an unconventional approach to politics.

4.2.3 *Quote-related visuals*

Another design pattern can be found in quote cards that do not depict the quoted individuals but rather show matters that are addressed in the quote itself. Since here the motif is not dependent on the quoted speaker, there is a wider variety of forms. Four examples are shown in Figure 4. Quote visuals can for example take the form of thematic illustrations. In (a) the quote is about a report of a commission on coal mining, and the picture shows something that can be identified as a coal mine. In (b) the need for midwives is addressed in the quote while the picture shows the abdomen of a pregnant woman and surrounding staff, implying the context of a medical checkup; in addition, a small portrait of the quoted president of the German Medical Association is juxtaposed above the quote. But the relationship between quote visual and written quote can also be quite loose and associative. Quote card (c) deals with the political development in eastern Germany, the picture is showing some general urban setting. Although with some local knowledge (or a little research) one can find out that this is a city view of Dresden, the point here is not to show a specific city, but only to illustrate the quote. On the other hand, what is depicted can be the focus of the quote. In (d) a German soccer player is criticized for an advertising campaign with the gambling industry, the picture shows the advertisement in question. Here, the picture not only illustrates the quote, but also functions as visual evidence within the multimodal ensemble.

Figure 4. Examples of quote-related visuals

4.3   Political opinion review and dialogization

After this overview, let's move on to the first of two case studies. An interesting recontextualization practice emerging from the data employs quote cards where several quotations are compiled together. Figure 5 shows an exemplary selection of four complex quote cards.

Figure 5. Complex quote cards featuring a multimodal compilation of several quotations

On a structural level, the written quotations on these four cards are compiled in various ways: Either the available canvas is tiled by combining different quote visuals such as (a) talking heads or (b) thematic illustrations; or by combining quotes (c) on the same background visual in an angled and rather impressionistic form or (d) in a more rigid design. In the following, I want to highlight two functions of such complex quote cards.

On the one hand, complex cards can be used to present a compilation of standpoints. Johansson (2019, p. 154) studies a genre of digital news she labels political opinion review, describing it as "a multimodal compilation or mix of quotations that are integrated within a news story in a way that ties the quotations together." In an opinion review, it is the task of the journalists to make clear what the quotations

have to do with each other, i.e., they have to present the quotations by introducing them through quotative clauses and, if necessary, briefly summarizing and evaluating the statements. In the example shown in Figure 5(c), such a summery is integrated in the multimodal design of the quote card itself in the form of a headline that hints at the relationship of the three quotes compiled below ("Politicians praise critical YouTubers"). The other quote cards have no such extra text elements. What can be observed instead is a presentation logic and sequential structuring that exploits the affordances of Facebook posts in a functional manner: The quote card (as multimodal content designed off-site and embedded as a picture file) deals solely with the presentation of direct speech, while the journalistic voice operates within the scope of the Facebook post message (captioning and framing the post on the platform), both parts working together in the recontextualization process.

Besides political opinion review, quote cards can also function as dialogization devices. Let's take a closer look at the first two-piece quote card shown in Figure 5(a) to see how dialogization is implemented in the context of the entire Facebook post. The post message introducing the quote card is phrased as follows:

(1)   Kramp-Karrenbauer bekräftigte, dass sie an "Stabilität in der Regierung bis zum Ende der Legislaturperionde" interessiert sei. SPD-Generalsekretär Klingbeil reagierte auf Twitter.
        (ZDF heute, 2019–05–17 15:30, 844 reactions, 222 comments, 45 shares)
        [Kramp-Karrenbauer affirmed that she was interested in "stability in the government until the end of the legislative period." SPD General Secretary Klingbeil reacted on Twitter.]

The two sentences contextualize the quote card by introducing both quoted persons and designating the second quotation as a "reaction." Behind this stands an intertextual relationship that can be reconstructed as follows: It starts with an interview, that Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, leader of the German Christian Democratic Union (CDU), has given to several European newspapers. Quotes from the interview were reported in the German media, contextualized in the light of German domestic affairs. This media coverage is then followed by Twitter commentary of Lars Klingbeil, Secretary General of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in Germany, the counterpart to Kramp-Karrenbauer. Figure 6 outlines this intertextual chain constituting the quote card.

While the original interview is quite long (the English text published by the newspaper La Repubblica is 2,231 words long), the German coverage of the interview foregrounds a quote relevant to German domestic politics:

(2)   I do not get up every morning with a saw in my hand to go to the Federal Chancellery and try to saw away at Angela Merkel's seat. I cannot do anything manually: it is not my style.
        (Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, repubblica.it, 2019–05–17)

c. Tweet

a. Interview **b.** Coverage of the interview **d.** Quote card post
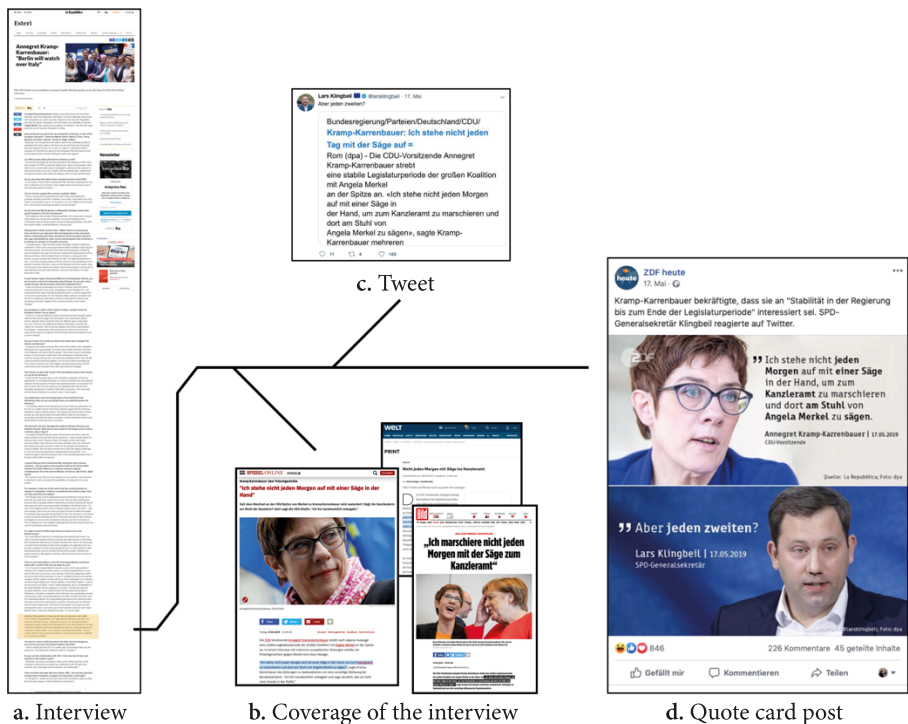
Figure 6. Intertextual enchaining of a Facebook post that recontextualizes two quotations in a quote card: A written quotation (extracted from an interview) and a comment on it (extracted from a tweet that reacts to the coverage of interview)

The German idiom *an jemandes Stuhl sägen* (lit. saw away at someone's seat) means 'to undermine someone's position,' 'to cut the ground out from under someone.' Kramp-Karrenbauer exploits the literal meaning for a pun by adding that manual labor is not her style. The narrative structure and this punch line increase the 'quotability' of the statement. In the quote card, this utterance (translated into German) is contextualized alongside a quote stemming from a tweet by Lars Klingbeil. He shares a screenshot of the Kramp-Karrenbauers' quote on Twitter with following commentary:

(3) *Aber jeden zweiten?*
            (@larsklingbeil; 2019–05–17 12:04; 11 replies, 4 retweets, 143 likes)
     [But every second?]

The elliptical formulation of Klingbeil's comment presupposes Kramp-Karrenbauer's assertion and expands the quotation, while the terseness of his contradictory remark adds to the joke. The journalistic quote card posted on Facebook by *ZDF heute* presents both quotes (with certain expressions highlighted in bold) combined with portrait visuals decontextualized from other sources. The multimodal

design suggests a quasi-dialogical relation: The arrangement with top and bottom can be interpreted as a sequence, while the offset placement of the portrait pictures and the writing contributes to this impression of confrontation. The color design also signals a contrast (dark writing on a light background at the top, light writing on a dark background at the bottom).

In summary, it can be said that the quote card post recontextualizes both quotations as a "cross media struggle" (Johansson, 2019, p. 155): a confrontational political conversation that never took place like this, brought together in the quote card as part of what Ekström (2001, p. 579) calls 'imaginary dialogue.' One could describe this as the dialogization of recontextualized discourse. It is the opposite process from what Haapanen (2017a) has described as monologization, i.e., the simplification of the interactive turn exchange between the journalist and the interviewee(s) that is happening when interview is converted in a news item. That the quote card is perceived as a quasi-dialogue is also apparent when the audience response is included in the analysis. On the one hand, readers position themselves with comments by applauding Klingbeil for the successful joke (4) and emphasizing his sense of humor (5):

(4) *Danke Lars, der war wirklich gut.* 👍😂   (Frank I., 2019–05–17 15:37, 18 likes)
   [Thanks Lars, that was a good one. 👍😂]

(5) *Humor hat er – im Gegensatz zu AKK.*   (Julia S., 2019–05–17 15:35, 18 likes)
   [He has a sense of humor – unlike AKK.]

The recontextualization of the rather jocular Twitter response in the context of political reporting, on the other hand, also leads to comments that see it as an inappropriate style for political discourse, comparing it to cabaret, framing it as childish and expressing a lack of appreciation in a jocular way (6–8):

(6) *Kabinett oder Kabarett? Langsam weiß ich es auch nicht mehr* 🤡
                                        (Stefan S., 2019–05–17 16:12, 35)
   [Cabinet or Cabaret? Slowly I don't know any more either 🤡]

(7) *Was für ein Kindergarten* 👦👦👦👦👦   (Marita A., 2019–05–17 16:12, 15)
   [What a kindergarten 👦👦👦👦👦👦]

(8) *Kasperletheater*   (Hannes V., 2019–05–17 17:19, 1)
   [Dog and pony show]

These user comments show that the audience understands the multimodal arrangement of the quotations as an interaction between two politicians who exchange jokes rather than arguments. The fact that this is considered inappropriate for political discourse triggers the comments. Here again we can note the significance of the

multimodal design: The way the quotations are juxtaposed with each other evokes a quasi-dialogical impression, which promotes such reactions.

4.4   Contrasting multimodal design and quotation discourse

In my second case study, I address the question how the multimodal design of quote cards and differences in their contextualization impacts user discussion. I conducted a contrastive microanalysis of several quote cards dealing with the same issue. The occasion was a government crisis in Austria, which was triggered in May 2019 by the publication of a secretly filmed video material leading to early elections (the so-called 'Ibiza affair'). At this moment, the Austrian Federal President Alexander van der Bellen addresses the Austrians in a televised speech.

In a first step, I compared the written transcript of the speech with the quote cards. The entire speech consists of 47 sentences (textual units delimited by graphological features such as periods). Figure 7 gives an overview over the speech extracts recontextualized in the four quote cards that were considered for analysis. Quote cards (a), (b), and (c) are from public broadcasters, the text-only quote card (d) was published by Alexander van der Bellen's account. In constructing the quote cards, different passages from the speech are decontextualized. All three journalistic quote cards focus on the Presidents' appeal at the end of the speech. In (a), *Zeit im Bild* presents a quote of extracts [45] and [46]. In (b), the *Tagesschau* combines extracts [42], [45] and [46]. An interesting case is quote card (c), because *ZDF heute* contextualizes extract [42] before [28], changing the sequential order of the original speech. In contrast to these journalistic quote cards, the quote card (d) posted by on Facebook profile of *van der Bellen* quotes extracts [27–29], a coherent passage from the middle of the speech.

If we take a closer look at the post messages introducing the quote cards, we can see functional differences in the contextualization practices. The quote card posted on the Facebook account of the Austrian president is designed as a personal address that continues the public speech with other means. By contrast, in the case of journalistic reporting of *Zeit im Bild* (9), *Tagesschau* (10), and *ZDF heute* (11), the post messages briefly summarizing and evaluating the quote discourse:

(9)   *Bundespräsident Alexander Van der Bellen richtet sich inmitten der Regierungs-*
      krise an Österreich. Er entschuldigt sich für das Bild, das die Politik gerade hin-
      terlässt – und er sagt: (*Zeit im Bild*, 2019–05–21 19:53, 6.631/826/199)
      [Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen addresses Austria in the midst of
      the government crisis. He apologizes for the image that politics has just left
      behind – and he says:]

[27]	Und in diesem Sinne entschuldige ich mich für das Bild, das die Politik bei uns gerade hinterlassen hat.	And in this sense, I apologize for the image that politics has just left us.
[28]	So sind wir nicht, so ist Österreich einfach nicht.	This is not how we are, this is just not how Austria is.
[29]	Das müssen wir nun alle gemeinsam beweisen.	Now we all have to prove that together.
[…]		
[42]	Liebe Österreicherinnen und Österreicher, ich bitte Sie: Wenden Sie sich nicht angewidert von der Politik ab.	Dear Austrians, please do not turn away from politics in disgust.
[…]		
[45]	Meine Damen und Herren, nur Mut und etwas Zuversicht.	Ladies and gentlemen, just courage and a little confidence.
[46]	Wir kriegen das schon hin.	We'll work it out.

a. Zeit im Bild   **b.** Tagesschau   **c.** ZDF heute   **d.** Van der Bellen
[45]+[46]   [42]+[45]+[46]   [42] + [28]   [27]+[28]+[29]

Figure 7. Overview comparing the recontextualization of the public address in the four different quote cards. The numbers in square brackets denote the quoted speech extracts

(10) *Österreichs Bundespräsident bittet um Entschuldigung für das durch das Ibiza-Video entstandene Politiker-Bild. Trotzdem sollten seine Landsleute zuversichtlich bleiben.*   (*Tagesschau*, 2019–05–22 07:30 2.149/901/69)
[Austria's Federal President apologizes for the image of a politician created by the Ibiza video. Nevertheless, his fellow citizens should remain confident.]

(11) *"Meine Damen und Herren, nur Mut und etwas Zuversicht, wir kriegen das schon wieder hin." – Der österreichische Bundespräsident Alexander van der Bellen hat angesichts der schweren Regierungskrise vor Politikverdrossenheit gewarnt und versucht, seinen Bürgen Mut zu machen.*
(*ZDF heute*, 2019–05–22 05:57, 1.408/636/89)
["Ladies and gentlemen, be brave and have a little confidence, we'll get it sorted out." – The Austrian Federal President Alexander van der Bellen warned of political disenchantment in the face of the severe government crisis and tried to encourage his citizens.]

All three post messages contextualize the quote cards by highlighting certain aspects of the speech. In (9) the setting (presidential address), the occasion (government crisis) and the speech act (apology) are given. This example is also interesting because the post message ends with a reporting clause ("He says:"), tying in with the quote card as a supplement after the colon. Examples (10) and (11) provide context by highlighting certain aspects of the speech as a concise summary, stating what the speaker had been doing (apologizing, warning, and encouraging).

In a second step, I compared the comments initiated by the quote cards. I focused on the question to what extent differences in the multimodal design of the quote cards are also reflected in the commentary discourse. While all quote cards have triggered extensive discussion, for the analysis I only examined initial comments (without reply comments). Many comments are reactions or remarks, where nothing from the quote cards is repeated or reflected (e.g., simple "thank you" comments that were very frequent). I would like to take a closer look at two types of recontextualizing user comments that have emerged from the data: comments addressing the parts of the journalistic summary in the post message and comments addressing the written quotations themselves.

In the first type, users take up the journalistic summaries and quotative clauses written in the post message. For example, in the case of the quote card of *Zeit im Bild,* the speech is summarized and evaluated as an apology (see Example (9) above). The following two user comments relate to this evaluation:

(12) *Er entschuldigt sich, weder Kurz noch Hofer haben sich in dieser Deutlichkeit für diese Vorfälle entschuldigt. VdB ist eben ein Staatsmann.*
                                                    (Markus W., 2019–05–21 19:56, 87 likes)
        [He apologizes, neither Kurz nor Hofer have apologized in such clarity for these incidents. VdB is a statesman.]

(13) *Wann entschuldigen sich eigentlich die beim Volk, die das angerichtet haben? Der Kurz würde auch dazugehören.*   (Jutta W., 2019–05–21 20:53, 3 likes)
        [When do those who have done this actually apologize to the people? Kurz would be one of them.]

These comments are further evidence of how important post messages are for the contextualization of quote cards. Another reference point beside the post message is the written quotation themselves. It can often be observed that users manually copy text from the quote cards (as copy and paste is not possible with the photos) and include them in their own comments as quotations. The following three users adopted this recontextualization practice in commenting on the *ZDF heute* post:

(14) "*So sind wir nicht, so ist Österreich einfach nicht*" *– naja irgendwie doch, schließlich die FPÖ eine österreichische Partei, oder?!*

(Mirko D., 2019–05–22 10:17, 9 likes)

["This is not how we are, this is just not how Austria is" – well, in a way, it is, after all, the FPÖ is an Austrian party, isn't it?!]

(15)   *"Ich bitte Sie, wenden Sie sich nicht angewidert von der Politik ab." sagte er.*
       Schwierig! 😒   (Gabriele H., 2019–05–22 09:17, 2 likes)
       ["Please don't turn away from politics in disgust," he said. Difficult! 😒]

(16)   *Wenden Sie sich nicht angewidert von der Politik ab. Sehr schwer! Wie anständig*
       sind Politiker denn? Schröder, Merz, Bahr.… wie fragwürdig assoziiert deren
       Ämter und Folgejobs beieinander liegen.… um nur drei Beispiele zu nennen.
                                            (Gabriele H., 2019–05–22 06:55, 0 likes)
       [Don't turn your back on politics with disgust. Very difficult! How decent are
       politicians? Schröder, Merz, Bahr… how dubiously associated are their offices
       and subsequent jobs with each other.… to name just three examples.]

In the case of direct quotation, the repositioned text can be marked as a quotation using quotation marks as in (14) and (15) or can be left unmarked as in (16). The recontextualization of quotations enables users to position themselves using statements, file an objection (14) or make assessments using very short comments (15) or longer, partly argumentative passages (16). However, a direct follow-up to the statement can also be made without an explicit quotation, for example simply by renouncing it. Such direct responses are particularly noticeable in the quote card of *ZDF heute*. As described above when comparing the quote cards with the written speech transcript, the quoted text ended here with a sentence, to which many comments refer directly ("This is not how we are, this is just not how Austria is."). The following three comments all use the German expression *doch* (on the contrary) to contradict the negative statement in the quote:

(17)   *Eben doch!*   (Steffi N., 2019–05–22 07:15, 2 likes)
       [Yes, you are!]

(18)   *Oh doch, genau so seid ihr. So sind alle Politiker.*
                                            (William M., 2019–05–22 06:00, 10 likes)
       [Oh, yes, you are. That's what you are. All politicians are like that.]

(19)   *Doch so seid Ihr* 💩💩💩💩💩   (Enrico B., 2019–05–22 20:25, 0 likes)
       [On the contrary, this is how you are 💩💩💩💩💩💩]

Compared with the other Facebook posts and their user comments, such direct and quasi-dialogical replies to the quote discourse can only be found in the quote card of the *ZDF heute*. The rearrangement of quotes that prominently placed the referenced statement at the end, seems to provoke such reactions. This is an indi-

cation how subprocesses of recontextualization, such as contextualization in this case, can affect the follow-up discourse.

From all the different forms of intertextual reference to the quote cards that can be found in the material examined, the reference to the visual context should be mentioned at the end. In the case of the two quote cards that depict the president as a quote visual, there are also comments on his physical appearance:

(20) *Haben wir gelacht alter Mann.*   (Ingo F., 2019–05–22 08:02, 9 likes)
    [We laughed, old man.]

(21) *Irgendwie sieht er immer wie eine penner! Unrasiert, und nicht gepflegt*
                                  (Miriamme B., 2019–05–22 06:20, 0 likes)
    [Somehow he always looks like a hobo! Unshaved, and not groomed]

(22) *Wenn ich den sehe bin ich angewidert … ;-)*
                                  (Achim Z., 2019–05–22 07:09, 37 likes)
    [When I see him I am disgusted … ;-)]

In these derogatory comments, which address the appearance of the Austrian president, the impact of a more visual presentation of direct speech on the public discourse becomes manifest and, thus, also the responsibility of the media in the production of such shareable news bites.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to investigate emerging genres of digital news through the lens of recontextualization and to develop the small body of previous work on shareable news and quoting practices on social media. In particular, I have explored quote-centric 'news bites': snippets of news discourse embedded in social media posts that consist mainly of direct quotations at their core, only supplemented by short journalistic comments. Drawing upon a corpus of Facebook posts by public service news, the analysis has looked at how journalists recontextualize snippets of news discourse consisting solely of direct quotations at their core and how they construct and contextualized shareable news bites. Specifically, Facebook posts by public broadcasters from Austria (*Zeit im Bild*), Switzerland (*SRF News*) and Germany (*Tagesschau, ZDF heute*) were analyzed.

The quantitative analysis has showed that all four Facebook pages regularly publish content consisting exclusively of direct speech and that these quote cards and videos receive an above-average number of likes, comments, and shares. Based on the qualitative analysis, a quote card can be understood as a multimodal recontextualization device that affords a prominent presentation of written quotations

in a branded, highly visual typographic design. Journalists use quote cards to present quotations as reportable facts (e.g., present commentary on current political issues) and as a way to promote their work (e.g., link to published news stories on the issue) on social media. In contrast to audiovisual 'sound bites' presented as video clips, quote cards are compositional wholes shaped by design practices. Looking at ways that written quotations are arranged together with quote visuals in multimodal ensembles, the analysis described basic compositional templates and explored forms that are more complex.

In two case studies, the analysis also considered what news audiences do with these shareable quote cards and the statements recontextualized therein. The microanalysis showed in detail how quote cards provide affordances for newssharing practices. It also became apparent how the follow-up discourse in response to quote cards can be influenced by their multimodal design. To broaden the first steps undertaken here, additional corpus-based inquiries into quote-centric discourses in social media are needed. Further research on digital quotations should focus on the interaction between journalistic practices and the online interaction they trigger. In this area, applied linguistics could contribute to the question of how public discourse in social media is shaped and such a study could make an important contribution to social media research in general.

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