Book review

Dan, V. (2018). *Integrative framing analysis: Framing health through words and visuals*. New York, NY: Routledge. 170 pp.

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Most extant framing research has a singular focus, studying either the words in a vacuum, or looking at only the visuals. However, this approach passes over the reality that both words and visuals contribute to the audience's understanding of issues. In this book, Viorela Dan introduces the integrative framing analysis, a method she developed to study verbal and visual framing concurrently, thereby remedying this blind spot in framing research. Contrary to what the book's title may imply, this work is not only worthwhile for those studying health communication, as Dan's framework is valuable for everyone who is interested in how issues and people are represented in a communicative context.

The book's first four chapters present a condensed yet comprehensive literature review. First, Dan compellingly argues why integrative framing analyses are an improvement over mono-modality framing analyses: Aside from the more ecologically valid view that arises from studying both verbal framing and visual framing at the same time, only an analysis that studies both can determine whether or not the two are congruent. This is important given that in cases of incongruity, the visual frame is more influential than the verbal one. The next chapter in the literature review gives an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of various conceptualizations and methodologies for studying verbal and visual framing. This allows researchers to make conscious methodological choices when designing their own integrative framing analysis. The literature review ends with a discussion of frame building, as Dan argues that no framing analysis would be complete without reflecting on the frames' sponsors and their reason for presenting the issue the way they do. Given that the influence of actors in constructing and disseminating frames is often glossed over, this part is a welcome addition to the literature review.

In chapter 5, the methodology for the integrative framing analysis is introduced in a clear, step-by-step format. For most of the procedure, the verbal and visual elements are studied independently as this assures that the visual framing does not influence the way in which the verbal frames are understood, and vice-versa. Only in the final step are the two analyses integrated, at which point researchers can determine the congruency between the two modalities. A

commendable characteristic of the integrative framing analysis is its openness: Although Dan acknowledges that some verbal and visual methodologies may need adaptation to enable their use in an integrative framing analysis, she leaves the choice about which to use up to the individual researcher. As a result, the method is valuable for framing researchers of all stripes. That said, the way in which the integrative framing analysis is presented in this book makes it seem more suitable for deductive and quantitative analyses rather than inductive or qualitative research. This is especially clear in the unique selling point of the integrative framing analysis: studying the congruence between the verbal and visual framing. While quantitative-minded researchers are presented with a formula to calculate congruency, those preferring qualitative or critical methods only receive the advice that they can attempt to do this manually for each unit of analysis. Although the general principles of the integrative framing analysis are certainly applicable to qualitative research as well, qualitative researchers will largely have to find their own way of translating the provided framework into a practical methodology.

The final and largest chapter of the book gives an elaborate description of a case study, which offers a lot of information about the verbal and visual frames used by U.S. news media, special-interest publications and public service announcements to describe people living with HIV/AIDS. Researchers studying the media representations of people living with HIV/AIDS will find this chapter especially interesting, but it is somewhat unfortunate that it gives little additional insight into the practicalities of conducting an integrative framing analysis. To promote and facilitate its use, it might have been better if this last chapter had provided step-by-step guidance on how to conduct the analysis, supported by concrete, practical examples. For instance, the way to calculate the verbal-visual frame congruence ratio could have benefited from a demonstration using an article from the sample, as it remains unclear whether and how the ratio can deal with frame weights. Although the theoretical methodological exposition offered earlier in the book is clear, a hands-on approach with real-life examples could have made the integrative framing analysis even more tangible and may have prevented some trial-and-error by researchers using the method for the first time.

Given the convincing arguments and the openness of the methodological framework presented in this book, the integrative framing analysis can play an important role in framing research, offering a more detailed and ecologically valid overview of how topics or people are represented. Aside from providing more depth in framing analyses, the verbal-visual frame congruence ratio might also play a valuable role in expanding the breadth of frame building research. One possible avenue for research would be to investigate which features of the newsroom context affect the congruence between verbal and visual framing. For

instance, it seems logical that the ratio would be higher if journalists have the final say about which visuals accompany their articles.

In conclusion, *Integrative framing analysis: Framing health through words and visuals* ably presents the merits of conducting an integrative framing analysis and introduces a flexible framework that can be adapted to researchers' preferred framing methodologies. Although the book somewhat favors those preferring quantitative methods to study framing, it is a helpful guide on the road to studying both visual and verbal framing concurrently, and it will certainly help framing research reach new heights.