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Sommario/riassunto

The present chapter takes under scrutiny political blogs with a view to establishing their generic profile, both in terms of structure and functions. This relatively new genre in political communication is discussed in the context of "mediatization", a meta-process transforming the relationship between media, society and politics through creating a common spatiotemporal, cognitive and axiological sphere of shared experience, and supplementing the social activities

which previously took place only face-to-face with virtual interaction. The study demonstrates that what makes this process possible is the mechanism of "proximization", allowing for the reduction of the temporal, spatial, axiological, cognitive and emotional distance between the blogger and his or her audience, and thus for the mediation of experience and the creation of a virtual community around the "networked public sphere." On the theoretical level, the chapter offers a new integrated approach towards the discourse of the political blogosphere, combining pragmatic and cognitive linguistic perspectives with insights from social semiotics and media studies. Quantitative (e.g. keyword analysis, concordance analysis, semantic vectors) and qualitative methods are used to explore "proximization dynamics" in political blogs written by active party politicians: the corpus of Polish- and English-language data comprises the two most prominent political blogs in each country along with their readers' comments from the left and right ends of the political spectrum.
