Interactive Exploration of Student Generated Content presented in Blogs
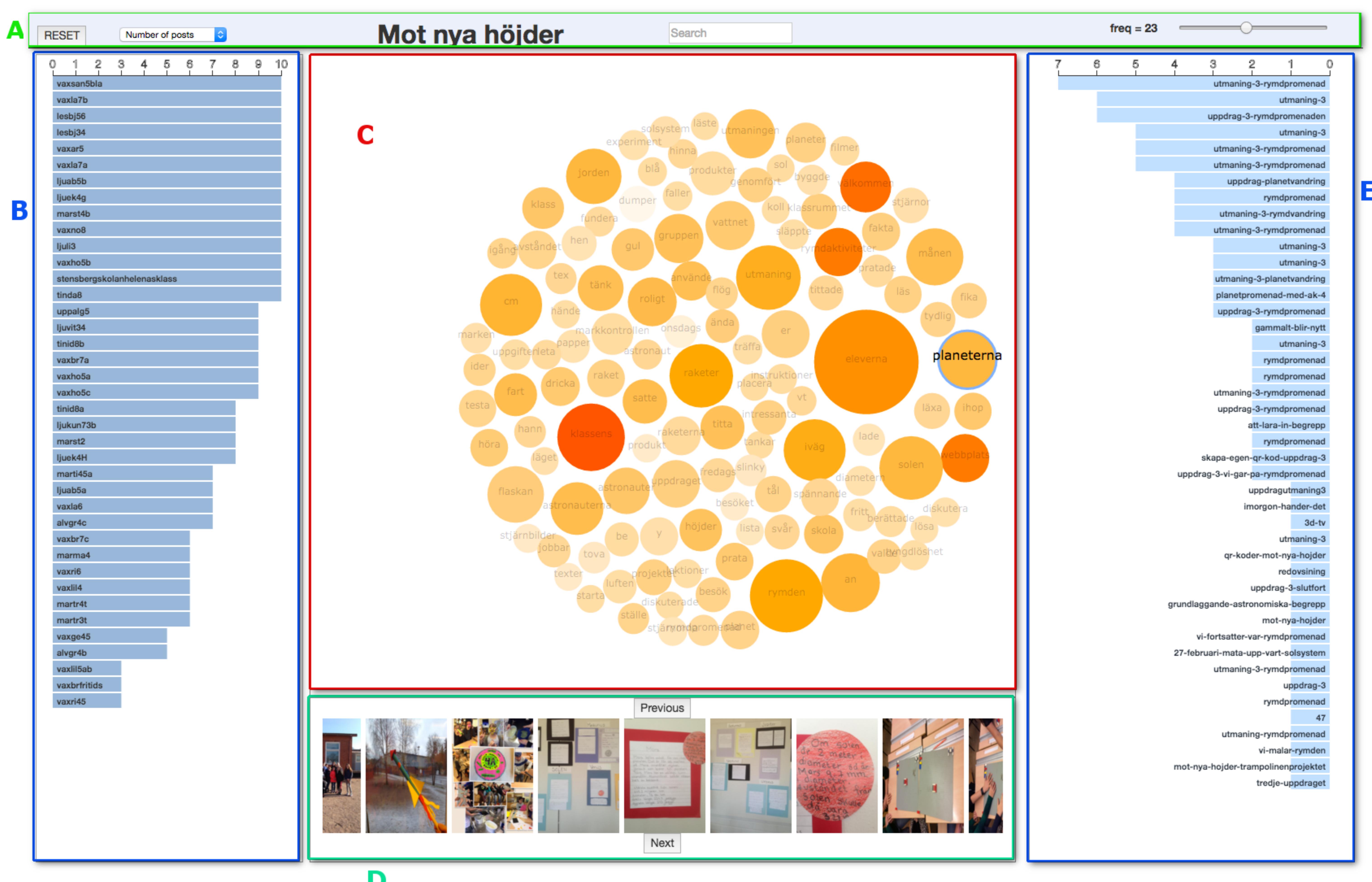
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Nowadays blogs are regarded as tools for communication as well as an important source for spreading information in almost every subject. In recent years, school teachers have started to take advantage of this technology in order to support their educational practices. In this paper we focus on the data generated by a project involving more than 50 Swedish schools where teachers and pupils are posting content related to their astronomy class activities in their blogs with the aims of improving the teaching process. The challenge here is to find suitable methods to explore all these blogs in an interactive and discovery fashion. Our proposed solution to this challenge is to provide a visual and interactive tool for the exploration of blog corpora by teachers, pupils, project managers and parents.

An overview of the GUI of our tool. The Toolbar panel is labeled with letter A. The Blogs View (B), shows the list of blogs using bar-chart metaphor. The Main View (C) visualizes the overall keywords. The size of the circle represents the relative frequency of the given keyword, while the color saturation represents the keyword popularity. The Posts View (E) shows the list Bf posts that contain the selected keywords visualized using a bar-chart metaphore. The Images View (D) lists the image thumbnails of the given selection.

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