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WAYS AND TYPES OF REALITY TRANSFORMATION IN MASS MEDIA TEXTS

Research article

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Abstract

The relevance of the proposed work is determined by the rapid development of mass media and the growth of their influence on the life of society. The aim of the article is to show the toolkit of expressive means of media text, which are used not only to transmit information messages and influence the target audience, but also to construct a new media reality. The analysis of specialised domestic and foreign literature has allowed us to identify two types of means for creating a new reality in media texts, relating to the structure of printed material, its design and verbal and visual implementation.

The first type is realised by means of infographics; this includes, first of all, the concept of gamification as a component of infotainment. However, gamification is considered not only and not so much as a means of entertaining the audience, but also as a way of informing and manipulating.

The second type of media reality creation includes lexico-stylistic ways of modelling reality on the basis of visuality. We are talking about "supra-tropes", a concept that is used to nominate the phenomenon that emerges as a result of the interaction of verbal and visual components in a creolized text. To the same type of media reality creation, we refer to the framing of information.

The task of identifying and analysing new techniques of meaning-making and modelling reality seems to be extremely urgent and promising.

Keywords: mass media, media linguistics, creolized media text, media reality, gamification, infotainment, supra-trop, framing.

ПУТИ И ВИДЫ ТРАНСФОРМАЦИИ РЕАЛЬНОСТИ В ТЕКСТАХ МАССМЕДИА

Научная статья

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Аннотация

Актуальность предлагаемой работы определяется бурным развитием средств массовой информации и ростом их влияния на жизнь общества. Целью статьи является показ инструментария выразительных средств медиатекста, с помощью которых происходит не только передача информационных сообщений и воздействие на целевую аудиторию, но конструирование новой медиареальности. Анализ специализированной отечественной и зарубежной литературы позволил нам выявить два типа средств для создания новой реальности в текстах СМИ, относящихся к структуре оформления печатного материала, его дизайну и к вербально-визуальной реализации.

Первый тип осуществляется средствами инфографики, сюда относится, прежде всего, понятие геймификации как составляющей части инфотейнмента. Однако геймификация рассматривается не только и не столько как средство развлечения аудитории, но и как способ информирования и манипулирования.

Ко второму типу создания медиареальности относятся лексико-стилистические способы моделирования действительности на базе визуальности.

Речь идёт о «над-тропах», понятии, которое используется для номинации того феномена, который возникает в результате взаимодействия вербального и визуального компонентов в креолизованном тексте. К этому же типу оформления медиареальности мы относим фреймирование информации.

Задача выявления и анализа всё новых и новых техник смыслопорождения и моделирования реальности представляется чрезвычайно актуальной и перспективной.

Ключевые слова: массмедиа, медиалингвистика, креолизованный медиатекст, медиареальность, геймификация, инфотейнмент, над-троп, фреймирование.

Introduction

Many years have passed since the appearance of the first mass media, the "living word" has long ceased to be the only force of influence on the audience, and in the last thirty years, due to the rapid development of digitalization, the mass media have become a completely independent space, an independent subject of interaction. Mass media have not only acquired a special status, but also enter into a special relationship with the external environment, possessing a specific set of rules for the representation of reality, in accordance with which information is selected, coded and disseminated.

The mechanisms of meaning creation receive special characteristics. Today, no one disputes the fact that media texts reflect reality, because one of the main functions of mass media is to inform. However, the German philosopher Niklas

Luhmann says that the media themselves construct reality as a reality delineated by the horizon of the representational possibilities of mass media [1].

In the XXI century, the set of representational possibilities of mass media has significantly expanded. We do not undertake to analyze all currently available mass media, we are interested only in print media, many of which have online versions. If we take print media as an example, the main "product" of their activity, i.e. a mass-media text, is no longer thought of as just a text, but as a certain fragment of reality. In this regard, the question arises: what makes a text real, or what makes the reader think that it is real? In this sense, it seems relevant to identify and describe both general and specific rules governing the practices of "meaning production" in mass media.

Main results

The above-mentioned task seems to be extremely interesting and promising due to the fact that the digitalization of virtually all spheres of life, which began in the late 1970s, gave rise to such a trend in journalism as data visualization. The visualization trend, in turn, became the "straw" that pulled conservative print media to a fundamentally new level, allowing them to compete in the modern media market with fashionable Internet publications and social networks. "Creolized media text" as a fusion of visuality and verbalism has become a fragment of media reality. The form of information presentation in a creolized media text is truly diverse: verbalism with a rich palette of lexical, syntactic and stylistic means of expression, visuality in the form of logical infographics and visual and stylistic components, structural organization, and design features.

In modern print media there is an active formation of a new type of text, – creolized media text, – in which full-fledged verbal and audio-visual parts are presented. Both parts create the integrity of a creolized media text, but at the same time, each of these parts can be absolutely autonomous and self-sufficient.

As Norman Fairclough rightly observed, "...we cannot make a complete analysis of content without simultaneously analyzing form, since the content of a message is always realized in a certain form...form is part of the content" [2].

At the same time, media discourse, as well as discourse in general, assumes an inherently inseparable connection with "pragmatic, sociocultural, psychological, etc. factors... Discourse includes paralinguistic support of speech (mimicry, gestures), which performs the main functions dictated by the structure of discourse..." [3]. Thus, in order to comprehend the reality of an information message in a printed publication, whether it is actually presented or artificially constructed, it is necessary to subject to a comprehensive analysis "a holistic picture of communication, reflecting a certain socio-political and cultural-ideological context".

Given the current direction of media text development, it is quite possible to say that media linguistics enters into a bifurcation relationship with it, which should be understood as "the acquisition of a new quality in the movements of a dynamic system with a small change in its parameters. <...> Knowledge of the main bifurcations makes it possible to significantly facilitate the study of real systems... in particular, to predict the nature of new motions arising at the moment of transition of the system to a qualitatively different state, to estimate their stability and area of existence" [4]. In other words, the media text ceases to be only a linguistic phenomenon, "absorbing" elements of politics, socioculture, etc. According to L. Krutkin [5], vision, like language, is important for mediating social relations; it cannot be reduced to language, to a sign or discourse. Images do not aspire at all to become language, to become texts, but they want equal rights with language".

Back in 1967, the French literary critic and philosopher J. Derrida in his work "On Grammatology" foresaw the emergence of a new type of text, full of voluminous and multidimensional information provided by means that produce new ways of text existence, in relation to which the usual printed text will be one of the possible options [6]. In this regard, it is thought that if medialinguistics manages to successfully master the language and culture of visuality, it will bring us closer to the creation of a general science of writing, as Jacques Derrida dreamed.

What are the ways of constructing reality in print media that can be observed now? Let us dwell only on some of them, and we propose to divide them into two main groups: those related to the structure of the printed material and its design, and those related to its verbal and visual realization.

As soon as we talk about the construction of reality, the term "gamification" comes to mind, a word that has become extremely popular in the last few years ("game"). A game is a process known to everyone since childhood that immerses the participant in an invented world, as we would say today, a virtual, constructed, unreal world. What is the relationship between gaming and journalism, which is expected to present information objectively?

Let's start with the fact that the classical definition of "gamification" sounds like the use of game elements in non-game contexts) [7]. Further, domestic researchers A. F. Ivanko and L. V. Kozlova believe that games can be interacted with, so they often explain complex relationships better than the journalistic texts we are used to [8]. Earlier named researchers made an attempt to typologize gamified media elements. Thus, they categorize projects by the degree of reader involvement. The first stage is "services of lazy authorship". For example, a journalist on the page of a publication offers a certain problem to the target audience for discussion. The "lazy authorship" service may well be launched in a print edition, where one should wait for responses in the form of readers' letters or messages in messengers; in an online edition, responses come immediately, forming, on the one hand, the public's opinion on a certain issue, and, on the other hand, constructing a new media reality.

The next stage is "news games", which involve virtual participation in key events featured in the news. News games, in turn, are divided into "editorial" – a response to an event or problem, "tabloid games" or "tabloid" – "yellow pages" about celebrities and sports or political gossip, and "reportage" – "a game version of a written article or TV spot" [8, P. 54].

Gamification is one of the techniques within the infotainment method, which is used in modern media both as packaging and as a game for the sake of the game.

It helps to create additional motivation for the user, making it easier to assimilate knowledge, learn innovations and adopt useful habits. Gamification, like any other phenomenon in journalism, has a number of functions that are often closely interdependent.

One of the most important functions of gamification is the informational function, with the help of which the journalist promptly informs people about events in society.

Gamification has a cultural and educational function. With the help of a game it is possible to present various information from the world of science, culture, which a person will easily perceive.

The main task of modern Internet publications is not only to attract the audience, but also advertisers. A high proportion of commercial Internet media live precisely at the expense of advertising, so gamification is also actively used to create advertising and affiliate materials.

If the first type of reality construction was mostly concerned with the structure and design of the printed media text, then further on we will talk about lexical and stylistic ways of modeling reality on the basis of visuality. First, we will talk about "over-tropes", a concept that is used to nominate the phenomenon that arises as a result of the interaction of verbal and visual components in a creolized text. Moreover, it is more precise than the term "trope" in denoting the cognitive space that emerges in the semiosphere of a media text under the influence of visual-verbal tropes. The distinctive feature of the supra-trope is that in order to express certain meanings, the producer verbalizes one part of the thought content while visualizing another part of it. For this reason, it is the visual-verbal stylistic device that becomes the most vivid and illustrative example of the conjugation of two genetically dissimilar mental spaces. The perception of the photographic component of the text is transformed into a representation that is included in the recipient's general system of knowledge, becoming the necessary basis for the possibility of expressing verbally some thought content.

Moreover, the visual components of creolized media texts enter into a trope-propagating interaction with the verbal components, which have multidirectional links between the two components, the interaction of which, possessing a fundamentally different degree of freedom, is capable of generating a synergetic effect. For example, the image of a ship in European print media can become a starting point for modeling a variety of media realities, all depending on the verbal accompaniment of the visual component and on what background cultural and historical knowledge the reader will be exposed to. Thus, in 1494 Sebastian Brant's work "Das Narrenschiff" ("The Ship of Fools") was published in Latin, in 1962 American writer Katherine Anne Porter published the novel of the same name "The Ship of Fools"; the ship is an attribute of the Apostle Peter, it symbolizes a person's life journey. This list could go on for a long time. The main thing is that the "collision" of the same visual component with a different verbal complement will bring to life completely different and sometimes unpredictable supra-tropes, and therefore media realities.

Second, such a process as framing helps to construct a new media reality. It is not accidental that journalists and media linguists turn to the framing of information and to the frame as a certain result of this process, because in addition to the informative function, the mass media widely use the influencing function. The strategy of framing, i.e. the process of selecting certain aspects of the displayed reality, strengthening the nature of the representation of certain aspects in order to formulate certain cause-and-effect relationships, meets the main functions of media texts – to inform and influence. Creolized media text offers a "double" opportunity for framing and reframing (the process of reprogramming consciousness) of events, as it is represented by verbal and non-verbal means of expression.

The frame is most often considered as a structure of knowledge and as a structure of knowledge representation. On the one hand, a frame is a part of the human cognitive system, "a structured fragment of knowledge of the world, formed in consciousness around some entity as a generalized summary representation..." [10]. On the other hand, a frame is a tool for representing a cognitive model [11]. N. N. Boldyrev defines a frame as "a voluminous, multi-component concept representing a "package" of information, knowledge about a stereotypical situation" [12].

Having analyzed the variants of frame definitions, its structure and classification, we come to the mechanism of frame action, to the work of framing strategy. The first component of the strategy is the narrowing of the problem field, i.e., concentration on a small number of questions [13]. The second component of the strategy is to promote correct interpretations. The strategic goal is to form favorable images and evaluations in the world pictures of target groups. Some researchers talk about the necessity of media framing, justifying their opinion by a number of reasons. The works of foreign researchers Sniderman and Bullock mention a curious theory of "menu dependence" [14], according to which people do not want to be influenced by a menu [14], according to which people do not realize their true interests, because they do not have exhaustive knowledge about the current situation, variants of its development and its consequences. As a result, readers cannot independently rank political or economic problems in terms of importance, and as a consequence, they are forced to trust the choices, assessments and solution methods that journalists offer.

Conclusion

The constant development of technology, the emergence of new means and methods of communication, and the transformation of the needs of the target audience's representatives steadily lead to the evolution of the representative means of meaning-making in mass media texts to such an extent that the recipient turns from a passive subject into a creator of a new media reality.

The text itself becomes a fragment of this new constructed reality. Since one of the main functions of the media is to influence and sometimes manipulate, the task of identifying and analyzing new techniques of meaning-making and reality modeling is extremely relevant and promising.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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