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THE VISUAL ASPECT OF NEWS DISCOURSE

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Abstract

The present study is devoted to the visual aspect of the news discourse functioning, which, as a kind of mass media discourse, consists of different types of texts that appear during the production and dissemination of operational and up-to-date information. Taking into account that the interpretation of an event always presupposes freedom of interpretation of the event meaning and extends its boundaries, it is important to trace whether news, under the conditions of a visual interpretation can retain the features of objectivity and impartiality. In the course of the study, it is identified that the political preferences of the media distribution channel, as well as the communicative intention of the author, have an impact on the creation of the “image”. The analysis of chronicle photos and videos, which are an integral part of the modern news discourse, allows concluding that the visual image of the event with the circumspect narrative drama fully conveys social conflicts, disasters and people's suffering. Memorable visual images may build up public opinion and perception of an event. As a result, it is possible to attract the media audience attention to modern socially significant issues. In addition, the present study reveals that under the conditions when all the media is online, there is an opportunity to offer the audience a unique and diverse view on the news as a special kind of social discourse where visualization is the main way of transmitting information.

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1. Introduction

The concept of "discourse" is traditionally associated with the concept of "text." With the development of the Internet, news discourse turns to be seen as a kind of mass media discourse and form that is in the active language implementation in social practice. The activation of the discourse is greatly influenced by the news message visualization, which creates additional opportunities for the information interpretation. In the course of the study, the news discourse of online media is analyzed and identified visualization approaches related to the organization (structure) of online news, as well as the features of the linguo-pragmatic model of mass media.

The present study is based on the scientific studies divided into three groups. The first group includes the works related to the concepts of "text" and "media text" by such researchers as: Bakhtin (Bakhtin, 1997), Valgina (2003), Vyrovtsseva (2017), Raspopova (2015), Tertychny (2018), Chicherina (2007), Panova and Fedorov (2018). The second group is related to the study of media genres like studies by Raspopova (2017), Dobrosklonskaya (2015, 2016), Tyupa (2017), Krasikova (2018), Kiriya (2017), Shomova (2017). Finally, the third group of researches in the field of media content visualization. In particular, photographs. Within the context of the present study, it is necessary to name such authors as Kozhemyakin (2018), Vyrovtsseva and Simakova (2019), Svitich (2016), Simakova and Topchii (2018), Kovaleva (2017), Gradyushko (2016), Ishchenko (2016), Mitchell (2015).

The research is based on the news released on the websites Ekho Moskvi (Echo of Moscow) (<https://echo.msk.ru>), Lenta.ru (<https://lenta.ru>), Meduza (<https://meduza.io>), and Interfax (<https://www.interfax.ru>). As well as the analysis of the best chronicle photographs devoted to the display of real events that are presented in the world media (Jan Dago, Stanley Green, Thomas Dvořák, Alexandra Bulla, Christopher Morres, who are photojournalists), there is analysis of the Euronews channel television discourse: signatures, creeping line, text comments, news sound design that accompany the video clip sounds, cutscene plots, studio design.

2. Problem Statement

What are the specifics of the news discourse functioning in modern media and its' structural-semantic features related to the content visualization?

3. Research Questions

- What are the features of the news discourse functioning?
- What are the approaches to online media visualizing news discourse?
- What is the role of visualization in news interpretation?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify approaches to creating a visual image of the day, which is the interpretation of the event through its visualization.

5. Research Methods

The formulated purpose defines the methods and techniques of the research; these are functional and content-related approaches to the mass media study.

6. Findings

6.1. Text and media text. Difference

The development of the Internet, which increased the audience activity, led to the emergence of mass media discourse. Taking into account that the discourse is both a message and a channel, and other components of communication, it may be understood as a multi-level entity. According to Dobrosklonskaya (2015), the mass media discourse is undertaken and exists only in the form of specific media texts, combined on the basis of certain objective criteria. In the context of the foregoing, it should be noted that there are differences between the text and the media text. A text is a message, and a media text is a sequence of different characters: linguistic, visual, sound, graphic, combinations of which are determined by the mass media specifics. Moreover, visual signs are not secondary to language signs and, in turn, can replace them. As it is known, the image as a way of communication is the first material medium of information; the image has arisen earlier than writing, it is in the form of cave paintings and has not lost its relevance today.

Mass communication has long ceased to be verbal, so the image turned from a secondary source of information into an equal component of text. The visualization of the language form of the message created additional opportunities for the interpretation of information. Discourse in the broad sense turns to be regarded as "language in use." It is necessary to consider approaches to visualizing news discourse from the side of the internal structure of the media text and from the side of the linguo-pragmatic model of the media, which consists of different components.

6.2. The visual structure of news discourse

News is a kind of mass media discourse that includes analytics, opinion-based journalism, and advertising, which are created as a result of the efforts of people from the same professional community who collect, process and disseminate new information through mass communication channels. In the context of the foregoing, discourse of media news is discussed in the present study. The news that are released on social networks, as well as SMS newsletters.

The inner side of the news text visualization (first-level visualization) is determined by the schematic superstructure of the news text, which is determined by the set and nature of the categories and the order in which they are followed.

The news released online is called online news and are considered as a special type of discourse with a visual structure. Kiklewicz (2019a, 2019b) writes about the features of a journalistic text in media space. The role of graphic components in the interpretation of the text is denoted by Laikova (2016).

According to Krotova (2012), the news discourse possesses a single superstructure and consists of a set of matching blocks. The structure of the news includes the slagline, heading, dateline, information line, lead, context, details, background. Slagline (RUSSIA - YELTSIN - RESIGNATION) consists of

several words: from the general concept to a particular one. All words in the slagline are in capital letters. The heading outlines its essence, answering the question: "Who?" and "what happened?" The dateline informs where the information is coming from, the information line captures the essence of the changes. Lead news without unnecessary details denotes the key meaning of the message, develops and clarifies the headline. The quote, being the most striking and important statement in terms of meaning, stands out from the general text by font or color. The context is divided into small paragraphs necessary for understanding the situation, each paragraph is written with a new line. The news ends with a background, the history of the issue and the characters.

The discourse consists of headings, each is presented through hyperlinks. Heading is of a great importance. And it is accompanied by a central hyperlink and is highlighted in bold. The headline of the e-news is graphically simple: 1 idea = 1 paragraph, subtitles and words in bold. In the news discourse, hyperlinks play the role of a navigator.

Here is an example of news from the Ekho Moskvi.

17: 06 Natalia Nepryaeva has become the winner of the sprint race in the classical style at the World Cup in Germany

This is the first victory of the Russian skier this season (<https://echo.msk.ru/news/2020/01/26/>)

After activating the hyperlink, an extended text of the news message opens (<https://echo.msk.ru/news/2577253-echo.html>).

And hypertext can consist of different components: text, visual, and multimedia.

For example, when activating a news hyperlink on Lente.ru, dated January 26, 2020, **a tourist escaped from a trap in the mountains thanks to Tinder**, readers can read an extended version of the news and see a photo: @loniahaeger / Instagram

Thus, the audience possesses an opportunity to get acquainted with the news both in the traditional form, through text, and through video and audio, thereby significantly increasing the speed and degree of information assimilation.

6.3. The visual design of the news discourse

The visual design of the news discourse can be seen as a visualization of the second level. It is a linguistic-pragmatic model of the media, consisting of various components with which speech communication takes place: addresser - media text - addressee. The subject-functional orientation of the model is to organize interaction between all subjects of communication. For this purpose, online content dominated by news already on the first page indicates the date, time, announcements of articles, selections of headings and leads that visually resemble the front pages of newspapers, as well as news of the hour and main news of the day. So, on the start page of Lenta.ru online content, the news is presented in the "Main" section and there are 7 pieces of news in the top. When scrolling there are thematic news of different sections in the format of a multimedia note (image + sound + text), photo galleries, videos, and reports behind the main page.

In the Russian-language online media Meduza (news aggregator), news are selected in manual way. Meduza the news headings reveal the idea, which is presented on the first page. Here is an example:

More than 80 people have died due to the new coronavirus. 15 Chinese cities with a population of 57 million are completely or partially closed (<https://meduza.io/feature/2020/01/27/ves-mir-govorit-o-novom-viruse-iz-kitaya-umerli-bolshe-80-chelovek-neft-i-rubl-desheveyut-na-birzhah>).

Behind the heading is a photograph from a hospital in Wuhan, where people are infected with a new virus. The text of the news is divided into headings, which are highlighted in bold and together form a single text.

81 people have died from pneumonia caused by a new type of coronavirus.

Due to the spread of the virus, 15 Chinese cities with more than 57 million people have been completely or partially closed.

Zhengding County Government Announces Award for Helping Detecting Locate People from Wuhan - Those Who Did Not Register at the arrival

In Russia, there is not a single sick person yet.

The largest charter companies in Russia have stopped sending tourists to China, and tour operators have stopped selling tours to the country

The Russian ruble rate has decreased to the virus.

Twitter rumours that Chernobyl series is deleted from the Douban Chinese movie service

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will donate \$ 10 million to fight the new virus.

It is important to note that the text of the news with 3 thousand characters contains 26 links to text, video, photos that reflect current events in China at the time of news coverage. Thus, the editors, implementing elements of typography, through hyperlinks, provide the reader with the opportunity to choose briefly reading or delving into the content.

Another example can be Euronews, the European daily 24-hour television channel that combines video chronicle of world events and audio commentary in 13 languages, applies streaming video from events and mass events to create the effect of maximum presence and synchronization of the event and information about it. Signatures, creeping line, text comments, sounds, screensaver “pictures”, design of the studio complete the video.

In the modern communicative environment, spoken and written languages are the main means of communication, but not the only one. It is known that at first a reader focuses on the image, and not on the text. In order to “read” the image level, one does not need any knowledge other than those required for direct image perception. Therefore, in the news discourse, a special role is taken by photographs that do not capture the facts, they convey the author's attitude towards them. Erenburg (1961), speaking about the essence of photography, wrote:

The artist studies his model, looking not for deceptive external similarities, but for revealing the essence of the model in the portrait. When a person poses, changing shades gradually disappear from his face, the face loses what we usually call an “expression”. Another thing is photography: it is valuable not by a deep disclosure of essence, but by the fact that it treacherously observes a fluent expression, pose, gesture. Painting is static, and photography speaks of the minute, of the moment - that is why it is “instantaneous” (p. 26).

In the interaction of verbal signs with visual signs, a news discourse can maximize its communicative functions. The analysis of chronicle photographs devoted to the display of real events that are released in the world media (Jan Dago, Stanley Green, Thomas Dvořák, Alexandra Bull, Christopher Morres – photojournalists) is a vivid confirmation of this. These are sketches depicting the daily lives of people: conflicts in Serbia, Angola, East Africa, the invasion of US troops in Iraq, military operations in Colombia, Afghanistan, Somalia, Yugoslavia, Chechnya and other countries. Bruno Stevens: “I am observing, thinking, and analyzing. My photos are stories in which I put my emotions and feelings. They must be deep, like metaphors ... I do not create anything. My camera is like a notebook or journal” (Maximishin, 2014, para. 5) Photo reports due to the presence of visual images contribute to the events interpretation, which is based both on the author’s assessment of what is happening and on the political views of the media.

The analysis of chronicle photos and videos, which are an integral part of the news discourse, allows to conclude that the visual image of the event with circumspect narrative drama fully conveys social conflicts, disasters, people's suffering (Simakova, 2018).

Memorable visual images possess a great impact on public opinion and perception of an event. Due to this, it is possible to attract the attention of the media audience to socially significant issues of the modern world.

7. Conclusion

A news discourse that operates in a communicative space has a visual structure, the sequence of components of which foregrounds the operational meaning of the context. Online news message is a combination of language and visual-graphic means of presenting a news message.

News discourse in online media is determined by the hypertext format of information organization. The effectiveness of the functioning of online communication is facilitated by the content visualization, which creates additional opportunities for the information interpretation. The visual design of the news discourse by a wide range of tools forms the interpretation of the event.

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