III PMMIS 2019
Post mass media in the modern informational society "Journalistic text in a new technological environment: achievements and problems"

NEW FUNCTIONS OF JOURNALISM IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

The digital environment makes the notion 'journalism' quite a loose concept as well as changes content consumption patterns. At present traditional media is undergoing a transformation. Both digital communication and gadgetization strengthen the role of journalism and generate such new media paradigms. The identification of a new role of journalism is the main task of this article. We would like to take a look at trends and tendencies occurring in both emerging digital environment and journalism. For this purpose the hypothesis that there are two key functions of journalism in the digital environment has been advanced. 1 – function of «self-identification»: Info-communication media supplements traditional media content with some content and products of new media. Digitalization eliminates differences between mass media and types of social media content. Mass communication is becoming 'customized' and 'personal niche', the most corresponding to interests and preferences of a user. An internet platform gives a reader a possibility to highlight his role by choosing a particular platform on the ground of some competitive advantage. 2 – function of «initiation»: By putting forward the function of 'initiation', we appeal to the case where the use of the term 'initiator' in relation to the rite of initiation (registration on any social network) is permissible – in reference to a person or a group of people who insisted on carrying it out.

Keywords: Journalism, internatization, gadgetization, personality, navigator.

1. Introduction

The digital environment makes the notion 'journalism' quite a loose concept as well as changes content consumption patterns. At present traditional media is undergoing a transformation. The difference between traditional media and digital is akin to that of a professional ballet production and a round dance that can be joined in by anyone. Both digital communication and gadgetization strengthen the role of journalism and generate such new media paradigms as a user (an an integral element of the communication process), content (media personality), multimedia (a new universal language), here and now (the only time that is available), hypertext (new grammar), knowledge (new information). Unfortunately, development solely depends on an internal sense of responsibility. It is journalism that due to its very nature volunteers to assume a new role in this new digital world – the role of a general navigator that sets directions and flight trajectories, our paths that helps preserve spirituality, morals and contributes to sustainable human development.

2. Problem Statement

The identification of a new role of journalism allows develop the author's methodology of complex linguistic and cultural aspects of journalistic text writing (Erofeeva, Boguslavskaya, Teplyashina, & Tolstokulakova, 2017) as well as to take into consideration the dynamics of changes in the economy, its digitalization and reconsider its previously immutable provisions. That is why we would like to take a look at trends and tendencies occurring in both emerging digital environment and journalism. For this purpose, the hypothesis that there are two key functions of journalism in the digital environment has been advanced.

1 – function of «self-identification» by means of various internet platforms;

2 – function of «initiation» by developing new habits of content consumption.

Let us look more closely at the implementation of these functions.

3. Research Questions

3.1. Function of «self-identification» by means of various internet platforms

Life requires 'dynamic visualization of fixed flow' of print media, i.e. both consideration on-going structural changes and new trends and tendencies in the media texts defined by the dynamics of their development. New and /or changed linguistic and cultural variables model media text as a specific type of a text by a specific author and characterized by specific communication modality within the sphere of the mass media.

Info-communication media supplements traditional media content with some content and products of new media. Digitalization eliminates differences between mass media and types of social media content. Mass communication is becoming 'customized' and 'personal niche', the most corresponding to interests and preferences of a user. A media text is not 'recognized' but actually is 'formed 'by readers (users) (Boguslavskaya & Boguslavsky, 2017).

An internet platform gives a reader a possibility to highlight his role by choosing a particular platform on the ground of some competitive advantage.

In this case a platform represents facility, providing services and in fact appears to be some kind of site that can create, regulate and distribute an information product.

According to the marketing research conducted by ZenithOptimedia Group (the 2014 data), people normally daily spend 8 hours on media, most of this time being spent on on-line resources. In 2014, users spent 110 minutes a day in the Internet while in 2010 that figure equaled 60 minutes (ZenithOptimedia, 2014).

Time daily allocated by people to the mass media, i.e. TV, radio, magazines and newspapers, decreased from 402 minutes in 2010 to 376 in 2014. The most noticeable decline in attention (from 26% to 19%) in these four years was registered for print media products.

Digital technologies have become a part of DNA of the world's largest companies and they are focusing on designing digital ecosystems. The digital world of a particular person is becoming more and more personified. Leading companies are continually creating new communication channels making them attractive for potential clients by offering new application, products and services. Today communication is imposed on us at all possible points of contact just for the sake of attracting and keeping a consumer, making him to 'join the club' and maintaining his trust.

In the era of digitalization media be financially successful only if it implements innovative strategies, i.e. creates new products, services and processes more vigorously and efficiently than other media. In order to achieve this it is necessary to have both partners-consumers and partners-suppliers. The most important thing in these circumstances is the ability to coordinate cooperation on a large scale, ability of conducting various groups of consumers and suppliers, who must become part and parcel of media ecosystem.

Media ecosystem incorporates consumers, market facilitators (including agents and channels of goods flow, as well as all those who sell related products), suppliers and surely the publishing house itself. All these elements can be viewed as primary species inhabiting this ecosystem.

All media ecosystems also include proprietors and other stakeholders and, above all, powerful structures that cannot be ignored in certain cases, i. e. governmental structures, regulatory institutions, associations and organizations enforcing standards and representing consumers and suppliers. In one way or another ecosystems include direct and potential rivals and any other influential members of society.

Mass communication becomes 'customized' when each user gets what he wants in those niches that better fit his interests and preferences. A 'long tail' transforms the mass market into the market of 'mass of niches'. In aggregate representatives of new media – blogs are quite comparable with traditional media and for this reason despite the diversity and variability of a 'long tail' it is still possible 'to enhance objectivity' by 'increasing the number of subjective opinions' i.e. simply by reading several blogs. This, in turn, changes habits of information consumption, in particular, fewer people use traditional mass media. Consumption of information becomes more 'fragmented' and 'niche'. Mass media, for its part, acquire features of personal 'niche' information (Boguslavskaya & Boguslavsky, 2017).

Media in the era of digitalization should focus on developing new integrated ecosystems (Moore, 2016) so that to make users aware of innovations, making no attempts to win the game but simply changing its rule and therefore, achieving totally new result. One also should not forget that virtuality is replete services ignored by traditional economy.

Combination of 'internal' economies of separate media resources constitutes an integral virtual economy, represented mainly by 'black and grey markets'.

The integrity of virtual objects is provided by at least two following elements: working hours spent on their development or life time and efforts of users (authors and readers) as well as these objects containing various experiences.

Trend lays foundations for 'capitalizing on wishes': virtual ecosystems attract participants from the physical world and with their support seeks to provide its elements with maximum value forming something like a 'pyramid of wishes' (Lund et al., 2019).

Virtual economy has got good chances for developing into a fundamentally new system of capital redistribution backed by people's involvement in various media processes.

Consciousness and subjectivity are gradually becoming synonyms of principal desire of 'common' market players for decentralization. From some point, the virtual economy will be forced (and will be able) not only meet the demands for required types of experience but also will supply people with real welfare, the lion's share of resource extraction and refining, manufacture and logistics being a responsibility of robots.

The world is rapidly 'getting worse': major publishing houses keep only the best employees leaving autonomous bots to do the work of the support staff.

Internet publications, traditional newspapers and magazines cut down their editing and reporting staff, while of bot journalists become more widespread.

Robot reporters of The Associated Press generate articles on the minor baseball league (AP expands Minor League Baseball coverage, 2018)

At least one third of the content published by Bloomberg News is the result of various automated activity. With Cyborg, Bloomberg can compete with Reuters in the 'fast financial journalism', one of the most automatable industries in journalism. Automation helps major publishers withstand the competition of hedge-funds, which use AI to provide clients with fresh and up-to-date information. The Cyborg system helps people compile thousands of articles on the quarterly incomes of companies by 'taking apart' financial reports producing ready-made news articles made up of key facts and figures (Peiser, 2019).

Bots at The Washington Post provide their audience with news about school football teams (Marburger, 2017).

The Australian edition of The Guardian recently published a machine-generated text on yearly donations to the country's political parties (Okashin, 2019).

Forbes has tested its new Birdie instrument which provides human reports with drafts and templates for stories (Pletst, 2017).

Patch, a publication specializing in local news from different countries and regions, combines AI and the work of 110 permanent employees and well as a large pool of freelancers who cover over 800 communities. In one week, Patch produces over 3 thousand posts, 5-10% of them generated by machines (Today's Top Local News, 2018).

New York Times quotes the following program-generated posts published by The Associated Press (News From The Associated Press, 2018):

- TYSONS CORNER, Va. (AP) — MicroStrategy Inc. (MSTR) on Tuesday reported fourth-quarter net income of $3.3 million, after reporting a loss in the same period a year earlier.

- MANCHESTER, N.H. (AP) — Jonathan Davis hit for the cycle, as the New Hampshire Fisher Cats topped the Portland Sea Dogs 10-3 on Tuesday.

All in all, these are short, concise and to the point.

What other uses can robot reporters be put to and what business opportunities do they offer?

1 - In 2016, The Washington Post 'employed' a robot called Heliograf, which proved its efficiency in the Olympics and the elections. The publisher also started using AI for geotargeting, to promote articles of local interest aimed at readers in concrete regions. In 2016, Heliograf published about 850 stories, mostly texts about Congressional elections and high-school football.

2 - In 2017, the Chinese publication Southern Metropolis Daily published a robot-generated article on the tourist boom during the Chinese New Year celebrations. Robot Xiao Nan writes a 300-character article in one second!

Robots, bots and autonomous algorithms are unlikely to replace professional journalists in the near future. This principle is the same for most industries: automation makes the work of professionals easier, taking jobs away from inflexible and unadaptable workers, who have no drive for personal development and growth. And machines don't make typos.

Understanding these changes leads to the development of new models. For instance, when Iles (2018) realized that traditional business models in media are in crisis and local journalism is drawing its final breath, he created Civil. This blockchain platform allows readers to pay for the content they like in cryptocurrency, and to vote for the most interesting topics. Republic explains how Civil works.

Civil is basically a trading platform. With blockchain, Civil will have a controlled environment where all financial transactions and spending would be controlled by journalists and their sponsors, the readers.

Users can support two types of groups, newsrooms and stations. Newsrooms will be user-created. There, they can donate money for stories, which they consider interesting. Topics voted the best by the community will be taken by journalists. Readers can expel journalists from newsrooms if they are bad or if they ignore ethical norms.

Stations will be created by well-known journalists. To create a station, a journalist will need to write several stories for newsrooms. The stations will get a rating, which will depend on several factors, including how often the journalists write for newsrooms. Iles (2018) is sure that Civil will become a platform where authors are in constant collaboration with the readers, and not another place to promote your own content.

Numerous inventions for extracting information are being patented, like the System and Method for Presenting Content to a User by inventors: Gerrit Hollemans, Vincent P. Buil, applicant: KONINKLIJKE PHILIPS ELECTRONICS, N.V. (RU 2427901) (Patent RU 2427901).

This invention relates to the system and means for providing a user with assistance in finding concrete content from a body of content. The technical result is the interesting content by choosing the values of content-filtering, including associated property values and direct properties. The user choses one of many property values that characterize the body of content and filters the content using the value of the

filtering property. The system groups the filtered body using a grouping value. The grouping value can be associated with a value of the filtering property chosen by the user and/or can be defined from the values of properties of the filtered content body. The process of filtering/grouping can be repeated several times, as many times as is necessary to find the interesting content.

All media produce content, but the media of the future will be influenced by consumers, a combination of a thirst for knowledge, egoism, altruism, love, and other elements under the influence of different environments will form a unified environment for media texts – a media environment ecosystem (self-organizing environment). Here, the media text is not 'recognized' by the reader, but 'formed' with the reader's help.

In this context, the media is characterized as having two features: the *concept* and the *meaning* expressed by means of three things: the packaging (the form; the hashtag is a visualization and a systematization), the content and the means (platform, channel) exchanged for 'time and money'.

This way, every publication (or platform) has its own set of media features that influence the content (systematization and content), the form ('packaging') and the means (channel) of the media text:

– defining the conceptual representation of the text; its formation strategy for a situation with minimal context – a text to tick a box, for search engines

– defining the meaningful content of the future text; tactical ways of text formation – a text with high ranging knowledge extracts (maximum usefulness, minimum 'waffle');

– defining the process of 'writing' the text; implementation of operational activities – highly specialized personal information.

The media text consists of visually perceived characters. A large number of these creates a visual text space. It can be said that the reading process and, consequently, the interpretation, passes through a series of 'nodes', morphologically constant, disjunctive character elements – markers that remain well-defined after the narrowing of the perceptive zone. These 'nodes' the content and meaning structure of the text and the motives and aims of the communicator (i.e. their intention) (Erofeeva, Boguslavskaya, Teplyashina, & Tolstokulakova, 2017).

Another important characteristic of a media text is its visual aspect. In our world view time is perceived as a certain space. Only a part of the space can be both the form of a character (graphic or acoustic), and its referent, and value. A character is a space intended to replace another part of space, as well as time. People can create character spaces that have never existed before. Hence the perception of language and text as a space.

3.2. The function of initiation through the formation of ways to consume content

Let us reveal the author's understanding of this function. The word initiation (initiatio) is defines are 'performing certain mystical rituals'. At the same time, this noun is also associated with words that mean 'entering into something' or 'the beginning of something': initiare, initium and inire. Therefore, we accept the following way of interpreting the original meaning of the word 'initiation': it means 'starting something'. The word 'initiation' itself is most often used with regard to introduce a certain person/group of people to various religious, occult organizations, and sometimes social institutions. In fact, this is the process of inclusion. Of the three known types of initiation in the modern world, registration in any social network can be considered an example, as 'adherence to a narrow circle of specially selected people'. At

the same time, the 'initiator' is a person (organization) who is at the origin of some idea, movement, project, etc. In other words, this person is the one who initiates something (Iniciaciya - eto chto takoe? Primery upotrebleniya slova "iniciaciya", 2018).

This way, by putting forward the function of 'initiation', we appeal to the only case where the use of the term 'initiator' in relation to the rite of initiation (registration on any social network) is permissible – in reference to a person or a group of people who insisted on carrying it out.

Traditional media and familiar communication channels are no longer enough for a successful business. Digital communications have become more prominent, a powerful tool for interacting with consumers and performing various tasks. In digital communication there is only an individual – a consumer, not a person. Take as an example an element of the ecosystem of digital communication and a representative of modern gadgets, a smartphone. Despite the fact that it always provides relevant information, the smartphone also leads the user from new features to new dependencies.

A survey conducted by Kaspersky Lab showed that almost 50% of Russians would prefer to be in the rain without an umbrella, rather than leave the phone at home. 'Gadgetization' becomes 'the road to Hell', and not a device for communication and self-realization. It is not by chance that Apple, in its new version of the updated OS, decided to control the time spent behind the screen.

A gadget is a device that makes a person's life easier. Therefore, it can be assumed that 'gadgetization' is the process of saturating a person's environment with various miniature devices in order to improve the quality and standard of living. A gadget allows you to quickly find what you need and what you don't need at the same time. Taking a gadget with a specific goal – finding the right information, we change our own motivation to use the gadget as a tool, forgetting about the original goal. Understanding is difficult, but the simplest intellectual recognition and combinatorial skills that block the independence of thinking are brilliantly shaped.

Humans from the new generation have faster reactions but are slower thinkers. Their intelligence is lower. To quote from Il'f and Petrov: '...the radio has been invented, but people are still unhappy'. We produce countless texts to be read anywhere at any time of day by any reader – writer. Multimedia is a new language, the hypertext – a new grammar, links – a new alphabet. We communicate more and are always online, but we have less time to think.

All we have is content: information and posts – no more thoughts. The triad 'concept – meaning – text' becomes 'Melchuck's new formula': 'I saw (the meaning) – I wrote (the text)' (Erofeeva, Boguslavskaya, Teplyashina, & Tolstokulakova, 2017). Our posts on social media that live a mere moment confirm the idea of the uselessness of information as such. Understanding that, with reflection and application, produces knowledge, is becoming obsolete.

Understanding is the basic spiritual form of human existence in the artificial environment. Understanding is the interpretation, imparting a unique singular or special nature to the universal (the content of texts, cultural objects, etc.). To understand the meaning, to create it on the basis of one's inner world, prior knowledge and experience is, in fact, the essence of understanding, which transforms into knowledge. Judging by the social networks there is a surplus of both knowledge and experience. The very thought of such an inner world seems scary.

Our mind, well-organized knowledge, is drowning in the flow of redundant information. It seems that everyone knows everything. However, the level of erudition being off the scale, systemic creativity deceases. There are fewer and fewer projects examples of reasonable and systemic combination of imagination and intuition.

As speeds are becoming higher, time is flying away quicker. This results in a lack of knowledge and experience. The strength of the human spirit (the personality) weakens with improvements in life comfort. Our feelings are short-lived, our thinking and speech are quick. The focused attention and brooding silence, which the philosopher Vasiliy Rozanov called the guardian angel of the human soul, irretrievably disappears from our lives (as cited in Pushchayev, 2018).

Internetization generated by gadgets, contributes to the emergence of new standards of communication: short-term benefits, usability; lack of demand for a holistic vision of the problem or phenomenon. The direction of a person's attention wanders. But the very result of attention is the improvement of any human activity.

Human attention loses its focus. And it is attention that is responsible for the improvement in any human activity.

Silence as a special form of communication is disappearing. Being full of gadgets digital communication media discourages a person from being silent. We start thinking only by means of sound (textual) speech though silence is a form of inner speech and by ceasing to use sound speech, for any reason, a person does not cease to think (Krestinskiy, 1988).

Another important task is the ability to compete with the crowd. This is not an easy task, especially for many journalists halfway through their career development. In fact, it all starts with a simple, but fundamental change in your mentality: writing an article does not end with its publication, on the contrary, it lasts long after reading (if it is actually read at all).

Next, you need to learn how to develop and use products that will help you in the presenting, testing and interpreting the plots.

It is necessary to understand that the physical environment of a modern person gets separated from his social environment.

And, perhaps, the next stage in the development of social networks will be an attempt to befriend online with those who are already physically close to them. People return to exploring what surrounds them in their everyday lives trying to find new values in it.

Keywords or hashtags are becoming a new social public space. Instead of gathering in Trafalgar Square and shouting loudly about what is important, people post videos on YouTube. Local communities are no longer united around specific geographical places on the map, they rather prefer to be united around keywords. Previously, the process of media consumption was passive. But for the local subculture, user-generated content may be more important than professional content. We predicted that the replacement of one Facebook tape, which everyone turns to, would come in a lot of small and local tapes that would tell you what is important to you, who are at this particular point on the map.

Instead of a single post tape like on Facebook, you have millions of tapes in every possible location where someone wants to say something (Tajny novostnoj lenty v Facebook: kak zastavit' Cukerberga pokazyvat' vashi posty chashche, 2018).

Instead of one place with a million users, there will be a million places with several users who will receive very relevant information and will be much more involved. It will be important for them know what people are writing in the place they found themselves. The street you live will be represented by one tape, your place of work – with another, the café you usually work in by the third one. And it are not the developers who decide how and why these tapes are used.

Anonymity not only unties the knot from one's tongue, but also destroys the social hierarchy. Slight can play the function of a democratizer for a large organization (Disleksik iz Britanii sozdal socset', kotoroj mogut pol'zovat'sya molchuny i anonimy, 2014). Employees will freely express their opinion about the work of the company and about those who are higher in the hierarchy without fear of further sanctions.

Consumer behavior is changing, too. People find themselves overwhelmed by digital reality.

Companies should stop being active, venturesome, and noisy in order to increase brand awareness. Instead, they should rather focus on creating user-friendly products that respect the users and value their time. Caring for people and taking into account their needs should be their first priority.

In this case, investment in content can be a good option. When personal contacts are rare, every interaction is important. It is advisable to invest not only into the content, but also into the form.

People seek true personalization. Not everyone fits into outdated demographic and behavioral types. For a long time, marketers have classified consumers according to such traditional demographic segments as age, sex, marital status, and the like. Today we should be guided by 'post-demographic consumerism' and take into account other factors, example, lifestyle and mentality. However, until now, most companies have been developing products based on quantitative data, ignoring the situational behavior of consumers.

It is obvious that organizations will explore mindsets with technology. They will combine big data (quantitative data), thick data (qualitative) and wide data (expectations, trends and insights) (Sirvida-Lorente, 2019). Corporations will develop tools for hyperpersonalization, and each user will get his unique content and offer.

Create a symbiosis of quantity and quality. Combine ideas and facts to breathe life into them.

Put consumer thinking above segmentation. People require authenticity. Today, the need for truth is one of the most important trends.

Businesses should strive for data intelligence, a symbiosis of Data Science and cybersecurity.

Society is changing and soon consumers will no longer be end users of products, but will become a part of production cycles, changing both them and supply chains

The physical and digital worlds are increasingly integrating into each other.

The integration of offline and online spaces will continue, digital and real being intertwined.

Create an ecosystem: services, experience, and consumer mentality.

Business are betting on Intelligent Distributed Systems, which can be created using robotization, artificial intelligence and Extended Reality. Our physical world is transformed into an intellectual reality, but the current IT-architecture is not focused on its support. To introduce AI, robotics and other revolutionary technologies, companies will have to change business processes, rebuild infrastructure and upgrade equipment.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to formulate new functions of journalism determined by the dynamics of media development in recent years and reveal the mechanisms for their implementation in the digital environment.

The infocommunication environment complements the content of traditional media with content products of new media. Digitalization erases the differences between media and media content types. Mass communication is becoming 'customized', 'personal-niche' and a better match for the interests and preferences of the user. The media text is not 'recognized' but is 'formed' by the reader (user).

5. Research Methods

The basic principle has not changed and we still believe that for any media text and any predetermined goal there is a linguasociocultural structure that 'generates' this media text for this purpose, and vice versa: for any linguasociocultural structure and any goal there is a media text that is 'generated' by this structure for this very purpose. The meaning of a word, in this case, can be considered as an order parameter, and an understanding of a media text can be represented as the creation of a hierarchy of order parameters through a sequence of symmetry breaking.

Authors' approach allowed them to formulate and reveal two new functions of journalism as well as mechanisms for their implementation in the digital environment within the framework of 'customized' mass communication and digital 'niche' media.

6. Findings

Our goal was to identify and disclose the basic functions of journalism and the mechanisms for their implementation in the digital environment, determined by the trends of the last 10-15 years; forming a kind of 'skeleton' with 'nodal points' for understanding new and / or changed lingua-sociocultural variables. From this point of view, we have come to the following conclusions:

6.1. Our present is characterized by a kind of 'self-determination' of journalism, the adjustment of the business model in the digital environment to 'its customer base'(authors and readers), and defining of principles and rules of mutual existence and mutual benefits. All this is achieved by means various Internet platforms,

6.2. This or that way of content consumption actually becomes the 'initiator of the rite de passage'. Thus, a circle of users (authors and readers) is formed. After registration in any of social networks, the latter becomes 'attached to a narrow circle of selected people'.

7. Conclusion

Developing of mass mastery and skills in all spheres of the society is seen as a key problem of the digital world and the information society. According to the definition suggested by well-known Russian scientist Moiseev (1993), the information society is a society, in which the Collective Intelligence (the

Collective Mind) plays the role similar to that of the human brain in the functioning of the body, i.e. contributes to society and assists in overcoming growing challenges. The origins of the Collective Intelligence lie in the information exchange, communicative processes without which no development of the society is possible. The Collective Intelligence promotes language development. The Collective Intellect is the formative principle of the spiritual, socio-cultural environment of a person. It is a system that unites people by information and communication links in the space-time continuum. The media, in turn, naturally acquires the features of personal 'niche' information, and journalism as a whole begins to play a major role - the role of the navigator of the digital world.

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