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SPORTS INTERNET DISCOURSE ON FIGURE SKATING: GENRES, FORMATS, STYLE

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the discourse on figure skating. The focus of attention is the figure skating media texts posted on the Sports.ru website, the authors of which are professional journalists, readers, users, and fans. The article analyzes new genre-format, semantic, pragmatic and technological trends in media texts of various kinds: from professional journalistic texts to polycode texts created by fans. Gradual disappearance of traditional analytical and artistic journalistic genres can be considered the trend in the development of the genre system of journalistic sports Internet discourse on figure skating. Fans' discourse, on the other hand, is a special communicative environment in which they get the opportunity for creative self-realization, and users get qualitatively new content that differs from professional content in genre and pragma-stylistic semantic aspects. Analytics in the online discourse on figure skating are represented by ratings, reviews, longreads, investigations and pseudo-studies, etc. Artistic and journalistic genres and formats are represented by such types of media texts as an essay, "alternative", ironic review, art parallel, poetry. Such a genre-formatted variety of media products in the Internet discourse of fans is explained by new technological conditions and the creative implementation of the fans' competencies as authors, which allows achieving a high degree of individualization, differentiation of media products, and increasing the expressiveness of publications, both due to the ultimate creolization of texts, specific audio and video materials, infographics, and due to the postmodern style in the speech design of the text part of publications.

1. Introduction

Modern Internet media today demonstrate multidimensional trends that are becoming the object of scientific comprehension. The transformation of the genre system of online media, new genre forms and formats are actively studied (Gladkaya, 2017; Kachanov, 2020; Kolesnichenko, 2019); the constituent features of the communicative behavior of the subject of Internet discourse are investigated (Blokhin et al., 2016; Kukueva, 2019; Lazutkina, 2016); as well as the speech and pragmatic features of Internet media texts (Ivanova, & Klushina, 2018; Kozlovskaya et al., 2019; Kudrina, 2019; Shchipitsina, 2019).

Sports Internet communication is a kind of "mirror", which reflects numerous, often dramatic changes in the system of genres and formats of Internet media, in the system of interaction between addressers and addressees of Internet discourse, and finally, in the cognitive and pragmatic characteristics of Internet media text (Beljutin, 2014; Koshkarova, 2019; Malysheva, 2016).

Of particular interest to researchers are contemporary discursive practices associated with such a national sport as figure skating.

The "figure skating boom" that began after the 2018 Olympics has now led to the figure skating section being one of the most visited on sports Internet portals, often competing with football, and its content demonstrates the general trends in the development of Internet media.

Thus, the focus of attention in this article is the modern sports Internet discourse about figure skating, which is understood as the process of thematically conditioned communication about figure skating, represented in the media texts of specialized Internet media.

2. Problem Statement

The proposed understanding of the phenomenon of sports Internet discourse on figure skating means that the authors of media texts are both professional journalists and readers, users who can change the status of the addressee of the discourse to the status of the addresser.

The content of online sports media today is characterized by the activation of the role of the addressee, the fan, who not only leaves user comments on the texts of professional journalists, but also creates media texts that are largely superior in genre, stylistic and semantic characteristics to media texts of the "first order" (Dobrosklonskaya, 2019). In the media space, "there is also an authoring public now (Kachkaeva & Shomova, 2017, p. 77). On this occasion, Dan Gillmor ironically remarks: "The former audience joins the party" (Gillmor, 2006, para. 7).

Thus, the discourse of a fan is a discursive variety of the studied online sports discourse on figure skating., which is generally defined by Belyutin (2019) as "a special linguosemiotic formation, which, on the one hand, is subject to the laws and rules in force in sports discourse, and on the other, develops independent techniques, strategies, and scenarios for the representation of meaning" (p. 10).

3. Research Questions

In the course of this study, it is expected to obtain the following results:

3.1. to reveal the specifics of new genre forms used in journalistic sports Internet discourse;

3.2. to explicate trends in the development of the genre system of journalistic sports Internet discourse;

3.3. to systematize and classify a variety of genre forms and formats that are used by "citizen" sports journalists to create media texts about figure skating;

3.4. to study the pragmatics of the communicative behavior of addressers;

3.5. to draw conclusions about the stylistic features and the dominant tonality of media texts on sports topics.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research in this article is new genres and formats used by both professional and non-professional sports journalists, as well as the analysis of semantic and pragmatic dominants, explicated in the studied media texts. The research is carried out on the basis of the "Figure Skating" section of the sports Internet portal Sports.ru.

5. Research Methods

In addition to general scientific methods of classification, systematization, observation and description, the present study uses a number of specific scientific methods and techniques for analyzing empirical material, such as genre and pragmatic analysis of media texts; a technique for identifying formatting features of a media text; a method of complex analysis of verbal and non-verbal elements of a polycode Internet media text.

6. Findings

6.1. Genre trends in journalistic sports internet discourse

As a result of the study, it can be stated that the genre palette of the information segment of sports Internet media largely corresponds to the traditional one: in the "Figure skating" section there are frequent announcements of upcoming competitions, notes with information about the results of competitions and statistical data, express interviews, forecasts, text online - broadcasts, etc. However, daily *reviews of the publications* of athletes and coaches on *Instagram* and on their *YouTube channels* are also used as an information genre. It is significant that "events" from the social networks of skaters become news stories (The main things from figure skaters' social networks): Sports.ru presents a daily digest of events from the world of figure skating that were not included in the news feed.

In addition, the technique of **interview segmentation** (often published in other media) is becoming extremely popular, when the answer of a skater or coach to a separate question becomes an independent genre - a **remark** or **commentary**.

"A new life" in online sports media is being given to a format that is actively used in converged media - a **podcast**, which is usually understood as "a sound file, a program, a finished story. As a rule, this is a fragment of a radio program posted on the Internet or a well-read text of messages" (Loseva, 2010, p. 133). The Sports.ru Internet portal is not a converged media, but its journalists saw the content potential of

this format, which allows discussing the problems of modern figure skating within the framework of **the audio conversation / discussion** genre. Note that the website publishes a full transcript of each issue. The podcast "Our Figurine" is being created with the support of Otkritie Bank, and the author and host is Pavel Kopachev, a professional journalist. So, the topic of the last discussion is Eteri Tutberidze: genius or tyrant? The media text includes a title, an announcement, a plate with a theme and a photo of the main character and timecodes of the conversation. What is her greatness? How did it happen that Tutberidze has so many talents? Why doesn't Eteri communicate with journalists? Finally, is she a genius or a despot? - the journalists are trying to answer these questions.

It is curious that the demand for this format among users was initially checked by an unprofessional journalist, whose podcast "Icebreaker" was posted in the "Blogs" section.

The trend in the development of the genre system of journalistic sports Internet discourse about figure skating is the gradual disappearance of traditional analytical and artistic-journalistic genres, which were borrowed by the Internet media from the print ones: texts in the genres of analytical article, problem article, reportage, portrait sketch, etc. are rarely published on the Internet portal. Note, however, that specific Internet genres, which are a kind of "replacement" for traditional analytics and publicism, such as longread and storytelling, are also uncharacteristic for the discourse of professional sports journalists. The reasons why sports online journalism is not only gradually moving away from traditional analytics, but also inactively using the capabilities of modern analytical Internet genres, are very diverse and may become the subject of a separate study.

6.2. Genres and formats in the discourse of figure skating fans. Pragmastilistic dominants

In the fans' discourse, which is understandable, there are practically no traditional information genres. News notes published on the site are an informational occasion for bloggers, allowing them to quickly create analytical media texts in the genres of *a problem article* or *comment*.

In *event reports* - with the effect of presence and descriptiveness - there is a genre diffusion: the authors enrich the reportage with elements of a travel sketch with its inherent documentary character and author's vision. Thus, there are frequent materials of a large volume, divided into several parts, dedicated to the fans' trips to competitions of different levels. The speech structure of such media texts combines reportage and essayism, representing the figurative beginning, analyticity and a subjective view of the events described: ***Happiness from what he saw was doubled*** *when his gaze turned a little to the left, towards the short side: from there, with its habitually businesslike look, peeped out* ***the wise head of the great*** *Tamara Nikolaevna Moskvina - a coach,* ***whose magnificent pairs I remember exactly as long as I remember my hobby for figure skating*** ("In Waiting for Graz: Eyewitness Notes ").

Analytics in figure skating discourse are represented by ratings, reviews, longreads, investigations and pseudo-investigations, heat maps.

All sorts of ratings and reviews are presented in the blogs: "Subjective divan rating of productions of the 2019-2020 season"; "Who throws out the best? Hit parade of the most traumatic pair elements with parsing and gifs. The second part of the pair analytics is already with you." The ratings-reviews often concern the costumes of the skaters: "In victorious red: dresses that have already gone down in history", "The best suits for singles in the 2019-2020 season", "Top-13 best suits for singles". A numbered list with

the names of athletes is accompanied by photos and comments of the author, as a rule, ironic: "In the category of unforgettable accessories, I would like to mention Burak Demirboga and his corset. It seems my grandmother had a similar knitted rug".

Analytical longreads, multimedia articles are presented in the blogs "The Scientist Cat's Blog", "Golovin for everithing". The topic of longreads is large-scale events and problems in the world of sports, for example, the use of meldonium by athletes.

An example of this kind of media text is the article "*How it was with Medvedeva and Zagitova at the Olympics*." The author analyzes in detail the physiological, strategic, tactical, moral, ethical, legal reasons, mental characteristics, obscure factors and financial motives that influenced the results of the competition. The reasons and factors indicated are related to the division of the text into parts. The author is sure that Medvedeva would have won the gold medal at the 2018 Olympics, if not for a number of circumstances, including the actions of the "coach": "If her first jump and cascade, like that of Zagitova, were in the second half, this would be enough for her to have the gold medal. And if her program was not made up of cheap toe loops, but something more expensive, it would be good. " One can note the factor of dramatization of the storyline, the introduction of an element of intrigue into the text. An important role for the implementation of the author's speech intentions, which determines, among other things, the functional orientation of the text, is also played by such linguistic and rhetorical techniques as latent irony (*the chick got confused where, to whom and what to say* - about Tutberidze), indirect questions, a shift in the semantic emphasis, the use of vulgar vocabulary, professional jargon, etc. The narrative framework includes the first-person statements of the characters in the form of video interview fragments and screen shots of printed interviews. The text has a rich multimedia support: photos, video illustrations, infographics. Voluminous texts and complex articles form the core of intellectual sports communication, although it should be noted that, in contrast to the declared objectivity of the analytical texts of professional journalists, the non-professional analyst has a different goal: not to find out the truth as a result of multilateral consideration of the problem, but to find arguments confirming the correctness only of the position of the author, which is based on fan preferences in figure skating and which no counter-arguments can change.

Particular attention should be paid to **background cartograms** in figure skating discourse. The authors of the "*Figure Skating Maps*" blog are developing thermal cartograms of skaters performance, which visually show the intensity of an indicator within the ice field, plotted in different colors of varying degrees of saturation. These cards visualize the structure of the program conceived by the choreographer and allow you to visually assess the trajectory of the skater's movement on the ice, the elements of sliding (transitions) and the variety of difficult steps, turns, jumps and spins. A distinctive feature is that all the transitions on these maps are signed. Interactive maps are already an integral attribute of the Internet discourse on figure skating and, we believe, a kind of "analytics of the future" that requires the creative work of not only journalists, but also specialists in various fields.

The symbiosis of artistic and journalistic genres and formats is represented by such types of media texts as an essay, "alternative" (alternative video versions of performances), ironic review, art parallel, poetry. So, in the blog "Figure scater's" there are frequent materials of a historical and biographical nature - biographies of figure skaters, coaches. The series of materials "The Childhood of Champions" is noteworthy. Let us consider the text "The Childhood of Champions. Adelina Sotnikova". The text is built

like a biographical sketch. The author indicates the key dates and moments in the life of the heroine: birth, circumstances that contributed to playing sports, the names of the coaches, etc. This information is interspersed with fragments of interviews with the heroine, in which she talks about the stages of her sports career, the first competitions, her experiences, emotions, etc. An integral visual component is a selection of photographs and video clips, almost unique - family with parents, as a child, photos from the first competition.

The blog about figure skating *"GoldenIce"* presents media texts in the genre of ironic review, which reveal the processes of genre diffusion, a combination of elements of reporting, analytical commentary, ironic notes and essays. The compositional structure of an ironic review in an author's blog assumes the following obligatory elements: a cover-picture with a mandatory verbal component, an ironic title (*Four Continents Championship 2019: Say a word about poor Juliets*); an introduction, the main body and a general conclusion. The author of the blog in question recreates the event-competition from a certain ironic angle of view, selecting the most indicative multidimensional characteristics of athletes, coaches, competition atmosphere, as well as funny moments that often escape the attention of fans, but are also extremely informative. The selection of video frames from the competition - gif-elements - determines the semantic organization of the text and sets the ironic, comic tone of the review of the sports competition. The text model is characterized by the synchronous interaction of verbal and visual codes. The verbal part also presupposes the presence of an informative-analytical component, demonstrating the author's ability to analyze issues related to the physical form of athletes, the level of technique and artistry of figure skaters, and the artistic and musical features of the programs. The generalizing conclusion is a list of winners in playfully ironic "nominations", which vary depending on the author's impressions of the described competition. The pragmastilistic features of the studied texts are determined both by their thematic dominant - a kind of sport, and by the author's pronounced personal principle, manifested in the abundance of subjective assessments. The lexico-stylistic design of the verbal component of the sports ironic review is carried out through stylistic convergence, which manifests itself in stylistic dispersion - a mixture of sports slang, terms, jargon, colloquial and vernacular, marked, including graphically (urgently giVe lebrette; I prepared, depilated my bust), and bookish vocabulary; deliberate deviation from the spelling norm in order to create a comic effect (*I'm scary **pazzionate** and scary jealous*); explication of the author's assessment using the "imitation of editing" technique - strikethrough of text elements (*The music of the next ~~sufferer~~ the participant has already begun*).

The blog "Without a tongue even a bell is mute" presents the so-called art parallels. An art parallel is a series of photographs of athletes during the competition (freeze frames from the competition), each of which is accompanied by an artistic image - a work of fine, graphic or photographic art. The basis of the text of the parallel is "associative-symbolic illustrations (in the terminology of A. L. Svitich) - graphic images based on the principles of comparison, analogy, comparison with the displayed object" (Svitich, 2015). So, in the post "Surrealism, allusions and much more," the author presented collages with surrealist painting, computer graphics. Such a visual series acquires an aesthetic meaning, influencing the addressee's emotional and sensory sphere. The blog "Art on the theme of FS" presents alternative video versions of skaters' performances: the author Maxim Gavrilov carefully selects another, alternative musical accompaniment to the skaters' performances. So, the author presented a whole series of such "alternatives"

for Alina Zagitova's performances. An alternative version of Alina Zagitova's performance to Diana Arbenina's song "Catastrophically" after the announcement of the suspension of her sports career can be considered a landmark. The verbal component of this media genre is minimal: in the preambles, the author justifies his choice of music.

7. Conclusion

Speaking about genre-format characteristics, it should be noted that the modern Internet discourse on figure skating today is characterized by a high degree of individualization, differentiation of media products. Traditional type and genre boundaries are easily overcome with the help of creative competencies and deep knowledge in this sport of the subjects-fans, carrying out activities in the field of sports journalism in new technological conditions. These creative competencies allow authors to increase the expressiveness of publications, primarily due to the extreme creolization of texts, specific audio and video materials, infographics - on the one hand, and postmodern style in the speech design of the text part of publications – on the other. Within the framework of the Internet discourse on figure skating under study, there is a tendency "to increase the volume of visual information, which has a higher information capacity and wider commercial potential than verbal information" (Svitich, 2014, p. 63). It is significant that bloggers take into account the clip-like nature of modern thinking and often manage with short video timing and / or short video elements - gif-elements, skillfully embedding them into a narrative or informational-chronological canvas of the text.

It is obvious that the trends in the genre and format system of modern sports Internet media, which are shown, first of all, in the media texts of fans, can be assessed as positive. However, the analysis of the "semantic scenarios" of the fans' publications allows us to see the negative tendencies that the fan discourse, brings to the sphere of modern sports communication in general and to the sphere of sports media in particular. Thus, in the texts of various genres and formats, created by fans, features inherent in this type of discourse are revealed: aggressive speech behavior; intolerance towards any opinion other than one's own; explication of active rejection of the interlocutor's position; active opposition of "friends" and "aliens" within the site; division of fans into "groups", etc. Naturally, what has been said generates a general aggressive stylistic "background" that characterizes the communication of users in sports Internet media, their comments under media texts of any genre. We can add that, unfortunately, public statements, interviews of many athletes, coaches, etc. are characterized by the same style.

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