Conference Paper

Representation of Symbolic Capital of Territories by Actors of "Digital" and "Analogue" Generations in Multimodal Texts

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Abstract

On the basis of the socio-semiotic theory of representation, the concept of symbolic capital of territories, ideas about "analogue" and "digital" media generations, the study analyzes specific institutional and non-institutional audiovisual messages reflecting the symbolic capital of territories. The study material was 157 audiovisual texts of different artistic and journalistic genres, selected due to a large number of viewings. These multimodal representational texts mainly reflect the symbolic capital of the Ural Federal District. The author developed her research methodology, which allowed revealing the structures of multimodal texts and interpreting their meanings. The results of the study indicate various generational "multimodal ensembles" of messages and, as a result, only partially coincident ``world caught in the frame''. The messages of professional journalists focus distinctively on industrial and human capitals, while those of non-institutional actors describe economic, cultural and social advantages of the territories. Although analogue and digital generations apply diverse multimodal tools, their way of filming stories is different as well.

Keywords: social semiotics, media generation, multimodal texts, symbolic capital of the territories.

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1. Introduction

The digitalization of the modern media landscape has led to renewed and more complex communication practices. First of all, these practices are due to the increasing presence of multimodal texts, which, in the era of "computerized media" (according to L. Manovich), use the resources of the "semiotic modus of several sign system, which are not limited to purely linguistic signs" [1, 234] and, in fact, mostly represent multimedia audiovisual messages. Secondly, the coexistence in the media environment of at least two subcultures of the "analogue" and "digital" generation of recipients. Thirdly, the development of information and communication technologies has made it possible to produce and broadcast audiovisual messages not only to professional (institutional) but also to non-institutional authors, which leads to an increase in the range

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of discourses, their classification, and the symbiosis between officially approved and public statements. This undoubtedly affects the possibilities and results of representing the symbolic capital of the territories as a significant resource for socialization and reflection of cultural identity in the era of global political instability. At the same time, communication practices that help to identify media generations following interests, history and culture of the country and a province, allow the social community to be sustainable and overcome social deformations of the global digitalization.

The research is aimed at revealing a complex of various semiotic resources, "multi-modal ensembles" of symbolic capital representation in institutional and non-institutional texts of "analogue" and "digital" generations of actors.

2. Depth of Scientific Research

The basics of sociosemiotic theory were developed by Michael Halliday, Bob Hodge, Gunther Kress, and Theodoor van Leeuwen. Michael Halliday suggests studying language as a social fact, as a broad social practise, not just as a symbolic system, thus focusing on the study of functional and semantic aspects of people's social lives. According to his position, "language and the entire meaningful life of people are infused with three meta-functions: ideational as a means of representing the world, interpersonal as a means of participation and action, and textual as an operational tool for the production of coherent and contextually relevant messages [2, 16]. M. Halliday singles out social contexts that have three dimensions: field, tenor and mode, which are correlated with language meta-functions. When developing ideas of social semiotics, B. Hodge, G. Kress, and T. Leeuwen propose and justify the ideas of convergence not only in the areas of research (e.g., psychology and sociology, system and cognitive research), but also in symbolic systems (e.g., images, speech, music) [3, 79], thus indicating the framework of texts multimodality.

According to G. Kress, the basis of multimodality as a field of social and semiotic action and interaction is a framework that unites "the problems of meaning, meaning-making, meaning-makers and agency" [4, 420]. V. A. Omelyanenko and E. N. Remchukova note that the avalanche-like increase in multimodal (mixed texts) is caused by the introduction of digital technologies in everyday life [5, 66], which is probably the reason why now "multimodality has taken the position of the core in the space of various sociosemiotic projects" [2, 21].

According to M. Y. Lebedeva, "multimodal (digital, multimedia) texts are fundamentally different from printed books <...>. The meaning range is vast and varied; its components

(image, sound, video) can complement and intensify a letter-written message. Nevertheless, these components can compete with the written text until the entire "message" acquires the opposite meaning [3, 6].

The technologies for the multimodal texts creation and the distribution of meanings are: "technologies of representation -- modes used in the creation of meaning materials; technologies of production -- both material resources such as pens, paper, devices (digital and non-digital), and non-material semiotic resources such as genres, frames, cohesive devices, discourses; display distribution / dissemination of meanings-as-messages" [4, 419].

The dominance of multimodality allowed changing ways of the word perception. "A word that previously was basic information storage is replaced by an image, which is expressed in the priority of the visual over verbal" [5, 68]. M. V. Zagidullina develops ideas of panmediatization and analyses the reasons for the decline of the language as an imperfect means of communication. She concludes that "language as a primary medium, passing the way through emancipation from the human body <...>, received the meaning as a separate social practice, demonstrates features that can be considered as challenges to the language: imperfection in the transmission of the richness of human inner world and various forms of consciousness and subconsciousness; a high degree of metaphoricity and interpretative uncertainty; inconsistency of this form of communication with modern world's speed and the pace of life of modern people" [7, 60]. However, the results of research on the frequency and quality of production of multimedia (multimodal) texts in the regional media industry show that media holdings in the Ural Federal District produce no more than 5-7% of such materials monthly, and private companies produce significantly more texts than state-owned media [8, 243]. The situation is confirmed by the analysis of the Ugra-News and SIA-Press portals: "we see a clear tendency to reduce the visual component both quantitatively and qualitatively", since "regional journalism has so far no motivation, skills or means for such a "renovation" [9, 35].

Thus, an iconic turn characterized by the priority of visual code in the creation of "mixed texts" sometimes turns out entirely unnecessary. On the one hand, this contradicts the evolution of the media, but on the other hand, according to J. Friedman's theory of regional development, there is still a monopoly of language in the territories as the basis of the sign system in the production of journalistic materials. This does not negate the interest in multimodal texts from private regional media companies and non-institutional authors, who post their works on hostings, nor the recognition

that any audiovisual communication is a multimodal text by its nature, and therefore, "procedurality" and algorithms of semiotic coding can be applied to them.

Symbolic capital of the territories is constructed using social and semiotic coding and is represented to the media audience in communication processes. N. G. Fedotova defines the symbolic capital of a place as a set of significant elements (meanings) of the territorial environment that provide recognition, fame, and prestige to a local place [10, 144]. The value of the territory's elements is revealed through the use of concepts: trust in the territory, symbol of the place, territorial identity, "spirit of the place", collective memory [ibid., 145].

According to P. Bourdieu, symbolic capital is accumulated using its demonstration [11, 235]. "Demonstration of symbolic capital is carried out with the help of various communication technologies. Natural objects, geographical conditions, famous people or characters, visual components, symbols and monuments of the city, statuses and brands serve as typical markers of territorial identity" [12, 145]. Representation of attributive image-characteristics of territories is realized mainly using media "as it is the mass character, visualization, and virtualization of communication processes that provide publicity and visibility of the symbolic capital of the place" [5, 147]. Representation is "a process motivated by the interest of the "creator of the sign", defined by its cultural, social, psychological past and focused in a specific context" [8, 13]. Thus, the question about the actors ensuring the transfer of units of symbolic information about the territory, controlling the public discourse, setting the ways of interpreting the events or influencing the process of accumulation of symbolic capital of the place is actualized.

In this regard, the four groups of actors are identified: the "analogue" and "digital" generation, and institutional (professional journalists of state media) and non-institutional (non-professional amateur authors not related to officially declared discourses) groups. In our opinion, in the context of the digital gap, which is manifested in the fact that generations of the Russian media audience prefer different communication platforms, often in different media environments, the "analogue" generation includes those who meet the needs for information, addressing more often to the primary analogue media (radio, television) and press. This generation values content more than the quality of audio and "image", and it is less "information-competent", i.e. freely skilled in producing digital multimedia content [14, 422]. In its turn, the "digital" generation does not accept the primary analogue media, since their value dialogue takes place in other areas. These actors are fluent in information technology, accustomed to producing and "receiving information in a multimedia format, preferring short media texts, a simple explanation of complex phenomena, and a visual description. <...> Their content is only interactive

and visual, consumed from mobile devices [ibid., 79]. The importance of identifying groups of authors based on institutional affiliation is convincingly proved in the works of M.V. Zagidullina. The researcher concludes that the main practices of journalism are losing topicality and becoming marginalized, while "the new actors become journalism rivals, free from both normality, sustainable formulae and forms of journalism, as well as journalism's ethical principles..." [15, 33].

Thus, the representation of symbolic capital in multimodal texts as a subject area of communication can be explained on the basis of the analysis of semiotic modes. These modes ensure the processes of coding and decoding of "significant materials", as well as the use of screen technologies in the production and distribution of semantic messages in institutional and non-institutional texts of "analogue" and "digital" generations of actors, providing the tone of the dialogue.

3. Research Material

The empirical basis of the study includes 157 audiovisual messages (multimodal texts) representing the symbolic capital of the territories and selected based on the analysis of media text viewings (more than 2000). Reports of different artistic and journalistic genres, such as small videos, thematic television programs, documentary films, are created by both institutional authors (professional journalists of state media) and non-institutional ones (non-professional amateurs). Multimodal representational texts mainly reflect the symbolic capital of the Ural Federal District and are available in the video archives of TV and radio companies and private production studios, as well as on YouTube.

4. Methodology and Research Methods

Theoretical-methodological basis of the research is the socio-semiotic theory (G. Kress, T. Leeuwen, M. Halliday, B. Hodge), the concept of symbolic capital (P. Bourdieu) and symbolic capital of the place (N.G. Fedotova), as well as an author's ideas about the "analogue" and "digital" generations of actors and media audience. The research method is a multimodal discourse analysis of public audiovisual messages, in which the symbolic capital of the place is accumulated and structured. The methodology is specially developed for this work and implemented based on the coding table, including the following parameters:

1. Institutional and non-institutional messages.

2. Messages of "analogue" and "digital" generations actors.

3. Symbolic capital of place: an element of territory as a symbol of place (natural and architectural objects, features of geography, well-known people or characters, city monuments, etc.); a type of symbolic capital (economic, industrial, cultural, social, intellectual, creative, human, political, etc.); stable associations and the images identifying a place; a way of fixation (official and unofficial level).

4. Ways of representing symbolic capital in multimodal texts: multimodal tools (discourse, sound, picture, graphics); screen technologies (composition -- information value, materiality, framing); method of capturing (static, panoramic, camera moving, from the lower/upper point, linear perspective); field size (long shot, medium long shot, mid shot, medium closeup, big closeup, extreme closeup); light (artificial, natural); color (black-and-white/color image, color palette, saturation and contrast of colors); type of editing (narrative, reportage, associative-figurative); sound (speech, music, noises); graphic parameters (font, color); multimedia production technologies (photo, video, text, graphics); method of distribution of meanings (official mass media, video hosting).

The research is based on the application of methods of visual messages analysis of E.Yu. Meshcherkina-Rozhdestvenskaya (description, reconstruction, socio-cultural interpretation) [16, 31] and J. Fiske's levels of coding (social, technical and ideological codes) [17].

5. Interpretation of the Results

The analyzed audiovisual messages in 49% of cases are created by institutional actors, and in 51% by non-institutional ones, besides 55% of all producers of multimodal texts are representatives of the "analogue" generation, and, accordingly, 45% are representatives of the "digital" generation, i.e. institutional actors are mainly the "analogue" generation, and non-institutional is the "digital" one.The decoding of the messages has made it possible to identify institutional and non-institutional authors of large metropolises and provincial territories, while in metropolises the ratio of digital and analogue generations is almost equal, and in provincial territories, there are more actors of "analogue" generation among both institutional and non-institutional creators. All this is reflected in the content and in ways of representing the symbolic capital of the territories.

Each territory seeks to identify and demonstrate its identity. "Absolutely exceptional place" (D.N. Mamin-Sibiryak about Ekaterinburg), the following things were said about Nyazepetrovsk "the boondocks", "city on 9 hills", the railway in which is constructed by order of D. I. Mendeleev; "coal capital of Russia" was said about Prokopievsk, "industrial heart of Russia" -- about Chelyabinsk, "city of oil workers" -- about Surgut.

All institutional actors without exception designate the industrial capital of the territories, and the leading infrastructure triad of provincial actors is "factory, Orthodox church, palace of culture", and the most common combination of actors in a metropolis is "architecture, socio-cultural and business objects, and transport". Natural landscapes, people and the search for signs of development are the subject of interest of institutional and non-institutional actors of "analogue" and "digital" generations of provincial territories. Human capital is of great importance. For example, Serov is "the city of people; the city of heroes", Gubkinsky -- "northern people made of fire and steel", "special people of Nadym" (about Nadym), Volchansk -- "people are not animals". "Kindness, responsiveness, hospitality, and patience of the locals" are the symbolic capital of the institutional actors in the provincial areas. This is due to the severe conditions of everyday life, which emphasizes the value of "life despite", and the leading ideologeme of institutional actors of the "analogue" generation of provincial territories is a "work as a symbol of happiness". Institutional actors of both "analogue" and "digital" metropolises seek to acknowledge the diversity of examples of territorial development: cultural, social, intellectual and creative. For example, high-rise buildings and historical architectural ensembles of houses and estates such as Sevastyanov, Uvarovs, and Zhelezny houses are the symbolic capital of Ekaterinburg.

Judging by the methods of symbolic capital representation in multimodal texts, it should be noted that video footage is almost always shot under natural light during summer, which is probably presented from the position of the Ural population by the time of the highest prosperity and comfort of the worldview. The exception is shootings of the northern cities of the Ural region, where long and icy winters are an integral part of the culture of everyday life, which makes no sense to hide it. Also, life in these conditions, i.e. "life despite", is a marker of symbolic capital in these places.

Various multimodal tools are used to create audiovisual messages for both analogue and digital generations. Most institutional authors use analogue-generation screen technologies, and actors in large metropolises prefer to use digital production methods, such as TimeLapse, aerial photography and graphics, as confirmed by our past research [18, 79]. Institutional actors usually use all kinds of cinematic techniques. There are interesting differences between the way of filming that non-institutional actors of

provincial territories and metropolitan areas prefer. The use of aerial photography in all cases allows presenting a "top view". In provincial authors' stories it is read as a demonstration of "unprecedented distance and space", and in stories of metropolis actors it is a demonstration of "unprecedented scale of development". Shooting "from a lower point" is practically not used in provincial territories, and in works of actors of metropolises it is considered as "an opportunity and growth potential". As a rule, medium closeup and closeup sizes are more often for the production of institutional actors of the "analogue" generation of provincial territories. Audiovisual messages, which are produced using digital technology, certainly have a more saturated colour palette and bright images, that attract attention. All of this is aimed at attracting the digital generation of recipients. The "analogue" generation mainly presents long form of audiovisual messages, such as thematic television programs and television documentaries, while the "digital generation" prefer only short formats -- simple, accessible and practical information. Therefore, the prevailing type of analogue generation editing is narrative, and the digital generation prefer associative-figurative editing.

As for sound coding, the rhythm of music is measured in the provincial media and dynamic in large cities ones. The "digital" generation of a province uses mostly electronic instrumental music and English songs, which causes a dissonance, for example, when it is laid over beautiful landscapes of the Ural rural hinterland. Besides, the province's "digital generation" often uses local rap as a musical "voice" of the territory. The "analogue" generation of provincial territories prefers authentic compositions reflecting the national colour of the place and bard songs written by local authors. Actors of the "digital" generation of metropolises often turn to symphonic music, "voicing" the symbolic capital of the territories. Multimedia technologies are used to a greater extent, i.e. the "multimodal ensemble" is more diverse and colourful in designating the symbolic capital of large cities. Distribution of meanings is realized both through official media of institutional actors of "analogue" and "digital" generations of a province and metropolis and other available sites. Non-institutional authors primarily use video hostings to communicate with the audience.

6. Conclusion

The results allow stating the coexistence of multiple subcultures of symbolic capital of territories' meanings transmission, which are conditioned by institutionality, belonging to the "analogue" or "digital" generation of actors, the level of possession and demand in the territories of digital technologies in the production of audiovisual messages.

"Multimodal ensembles" of mixed texts are more diverse when produced by the "digital generation".

The composition, the multimodal texts accents -- everything works for the semantic task inherent in this or that generation of actors. Discourses generated and broadcast by institutional and non-institutional actors, especially by actors of the "analogue" and "digital" generations, are only partially overlapping symbolic systems. As a result, the same territories (events and phenomena) are given different interpretations, and different dominants are represented. The symbolic capital of natural resources and development markers remain common. A distinctive feature of the institutional actors, especially the "analogue" generation, is the emphasis on industrial and human, and non-institutional, especially the "digital" generation, makes the emphasis on the economic, cultural and social capitals of the territories.

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