ACTUALIZATION OF READER COMMUNICATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE (CREATING A LONGRID)

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Abstract

One of the problems of modern society is the crisis of reader communication. New digital technologies offer innovative approaches to solving this global problem. Reader communication as a process of transferring and perceiving knowledge, practical and cultural information is considered on the basis of new information products that can make readership more active. The specifics of creating a new interactive model of the media text are described in detail on the example of a longread that works to strengthen all types of reader communication, especially reading, as a connecting component. Longread is not a traditional journalistic text or audio-visual product; it includes elements that became available in the Internet era, for example, interactive maps, infographics, audio and video materials taken from an open database. The process of creating a longread and its promotion in the global network is technically interesting for a new generation of readers: presentation graphics programs (for example, MS Power Point) or programs for creating video clips (for example, Movie Maker) are most often used to develop longreads. At each stage of the development of culture, the formats of the text change, but reading retains its importance, being a way of socialization, a source of education and a form of communication. The creation of a longread as a creative project and a product of teamwork is one of the clearest examples of the actualization of reading in the conditions of digitalization of society.

Keywords: Digitalization, longread, reader communication, reading, text

1. Introduction

Each epoch offers humanity to solve new problems that arise on the path of civilizational development. The beginning of the XXI century is a period of global social changes, the scope of scientific, technical and cultural innovations. The issue of the formation of a special network communication environment by the modern information society is relevant, where reading takes an important place, acquiring new characteristics and formats in the digital world. Digital technologies have influenced traditional principles of information dissemination and reading methods (Lombina et al., 2019).

This article highlights the topic of updating reading in the digital age by the example of creating a longread. A *longread* is understood as such journalistic material, which is based on a rather long text with various interactive inserts. It is characterized as "directed", "meaningful", mono-topical (Galustyan & Kulchitskaya, 2015). Modern journalism from the point of view of language today is experiencing a powerful influence of Internet technologies. Digitalization of content simply leads to the replacement of textual material with audiovisual. And even today's fashionable longreads, like long reading — are a fusion of various forms of text presentation (photos, videos, infographics). The audience has turned from a reader into a consumer, and he does not want to read monotonous articles, noted Zhilavskaya (2015).

2. Problem Statement

Despite the abundance of research on the problems of reading, the issues of updating reading, from the point of view of reader communication, still require an in-depth, multi-aspect analysis. The problem is reflected in many sociological, philological and library studies related to the study of the dynamics of reader activity and the choice of electronic texts consisting of various multimedia elements.

Information computer technologies allow a modern journalist to create or choose a method of presenting information that allows effectively broadcasting a communicative intention that arises and is formed as a strategic plan of the author before the implementation of the statement. He consciously (less often unconsciously, under the influence of intuition or concentrated emotions) chooses exactly such language means that allow to verbalize the intention in speech/text with maximum accuracy, because in the media of the XXI century. "The goals and objectives remain the same – to inform the public about the events taking place; analyze, systematize and generalize facts, phenomena and events; influence public consciousness, form an attitude to these events, facts, phenomena" (Gerasimenko, 2014, p. 46). "For media texts, as well as artistic ones, the constant remains that "the author may have the intention to persuade the reader to his point of view" (Ivanova et al., 2020; Shcheglova, 2020, p. 161) without an adequately perceiving addressee — this will be a blank message.

Our research is based on Russian and foreign research on the problem of reading. The analysis of scientific works has shown that reading has largely become focused on information and pragmatic needs; a forecast of the use of digital reading in educational activities is proposed (Chernigovskaya, 2013; Gerasimenko, 2014; Ivanova et al., 2020; Melentieva, 2018; Petukhova et al., 2021; Simakova, 2019; Skakunova, 2018; Shcheglova, 2020; Stefanovskaya, 2009; Zhilavskaya, 2015). Chernigovskaya (2013), who noted the high importance of visual information, states that pictures are beginning to replace texts in

the public space. The information has moved to another field, everything is transferred to electronic media. But it's not about the carrier — it's not so important in principle. What is the difference: read a regular book or an electronic one? It is important that we began to use a different way of reading. This is a non-linear reading; these are hypertexts that refer to other texts.

According to the studied descriptions of longread as a convergent product that is created by means of different communication channels belonging to the media, it is a media text that reflects the rather laborious work of the author-journalist (Galustyan & Kulchitskaya, 2015). Researchers reveal how an individual story can realize its potential through any media channel, analyze what makes news material effective, how to determine the best platform for a particular story. The development of digital journalism is also discussed, of course (Franklin & Kanter, 2019).

3.   Research Questions

In connection with this problem, the article dwells on the following issues.

First, the issue of the reading crisis, which is being discussed in the world media and requires effective solutions in conditions when it is impossible to dismiss the influence of technical and information revolutions on the process, method and choice of reading in new digital communications.

Second, in modern conditions of communication, the journalistic text of *longread* is gaining recognition. In the digital era, it has changed its format, so it is necessary to pay attention to its structural, substantive and actually formal features.

Third, due to the increase in the volume of information and the speed of its processing, changes in the format of content submission to the addressee, the question arises about the actualization of reader communication, which has become a process of obtaining and transferring knowledge.

4.   Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to analyze the process of creating a longread and determine its role in the actualization of reader communication. The hypothesis is as follows: in the digital age, the emergence of a new reading format is a request of time and the result of the scientific and technological development of society involved in global processes. Longread makes it possible to read everything about one subject, person, historical event (Evdokimov et al., 2021; George, 2020) artifact, natural fact, etc., allowing to save the addressee's time for searching and generalizing disparate information on the Internet (Kouhbor et al., 2021) and at the same time activating the audience to form opinions and reflect them in the discussion, as a result of which the actual method of reader communication manifests itself.

5.   Research Methods

We turned to an issue of updating reader communication on the example of longread, showing his ability to activate interest in reading through dialogical and, possibly, polylogue communication, which ensure involvement in the topic, the continuation of reading the text on the basis of arousing interest in it during the discussion. Longread is not a traditional journalistic text or audio-visual product: it includes elements that were not available without the Internet, for example, interactive maps, infographics, audio

and video materials taken by the author of the mass media in one of the main sources of information – an open database.

Topics for longreads can be different: from educational or scientific to entertaining and sensational. The author suggests a topic for conversation – virtual communication is topically determined, and each reader can give a comment, discuss and even create their own possible continuation of the longrid. The new approach to the reading process, based on ICT, undoubtedly encourages the addressee to participate in it. The presentation of a longread itself is technically interesting to a new generation of readers: for the development of longreads, presentation graphics programs (for example, MS Power Point) or programs for creating videos (for example, Movie Maker) are most often used.

The procedure of immersion in the problems is characterized taking into account the experience of teaching practice-oriented disciplines in groups of student journalists, its generalization allows us to present a proven method of work that is aimed at updating reader communication and strengthening interest in reading.

So, as a practical task, students had to create digital storytelling (digital storytelling) on a free topic, and present it in the format of a multimedia project, a longread. To create the project, the students were divided into groups, since longread is mostly a team work.

1. The acquaintance began with viewing and discussing the most popular longreads posted on the network. The first discussed longread, published in 2012 in the New York Times "Snow Fall", then other multimedia projects, for example, longread "Generation" (Lenta.ru and LiveJournal), projects of the Kommersant publication: "The day when the war began", "Chernobyl. Exclusion Zone", CNN special project "50 states, 50 spots: natural wonders" about the protected places of America, etc. On the Internet, there are sites in free use that have collected high-quality multimedia longreads, which can be considered samples for beginners to create such a product.

2. Then the students had to find, read and study a lot of different educational, scientific and popular science literature, highlighting information on their chosen topic, taking into account the multidimensionality of the longread. In other words, the material was divided into the main, reference, additional, video and audio series; photographic materials were selected, taking into account the design development and subsequent layout of the received.

3. Next, an algorithm of actions of all team members was developed; roles were distributed-in accordance with the format of the editorial office.

4. Students were asked to explore the possibilities of various services for creating longreads: Tilda, Exposure, Medium, Myalbum, Readymag, etc. Basically, they chose the Tilda Publishing platform, since this Russian-language constructor allows users without deep programming knowledge to create and post their longreads on the Internet using professional design templates, ready-made blocks (text, image, menu, forms, header, basement, etc.).

5. At the end of the project, it was necessary to protect it; during the discussion, the advantages and disadvantages of the project were indicated.

6. The last stage of the work is the publication of the longread in social networks.

As a result, it should be pointed out that students understand the importance of their work, the result, as they say, was "on hand". Students-journalists created the project with interest noted the

usefulness of the work for the acquisition of professional competencies. The teachers stated that in the process of activity, first of all, the selection of content, elements of text creolization and other elements, their communication as readers was updated (Karpov & Karpova, 2020).

6. Findings

We will confirm the observations of Stefanovskaya (2009), who underlined that traditional reading in all its forms in the modern world comes into fierce competition with visual images, and society risks losing the entire set of codes, rules and behavioral skills associated with reading. New ways of reading are approved or imposed, changes in the carriers of written texts force the use of new intellectual practices.

However, the analysis of theoretical issues and the work with the teams of students on creating longreads allow us to conclude the following.

- High-quality reading gives a huge potential for the intellectual development of a person. This determines the benefit of the longread, which allows the modern reader to save time on searching for any information, since it is created and exists thanks to the capabilities of digital technologies, it is always relevant.

- The rapid development of information computer technologies has allowed us to talk about the advent of the era of paperless communication, when digital reading as a special way of interaction between the reader and the text gives rise to new digital content that actualizes reader communication in general.

- The main goal of the creator of the longread is to captivate the reader, tell him an interesting story, show a relevant topic from an unusual side: it, like in a literary text, presents the image of the author-journalist and an assessment of the events described, perhaps implicit. But the difference between a longread text and an artistic one is in its content, since the authors of a longread necessarily rely on data journalism to represent a current event in Russia or a world problem.

- It should be noted the role of longread in the educational process as a product of teamwork, in which the individual abilities of each participant are realized, taking into account his role load. To create longreads, students need not only to learn how to work with online services, but also to master the basics of web design, methods of presenting information. The experience of such work will undoubtedly be useful in the future professional activity of a journalist.

- Longreads can be created in the educational process when mastering different disciplines. With their help, the media education of young students increases (Petukhova et al., 2021). The communicative-activity approach in education involves project activity, when a project in the longread format can become a winning one, which can be easily and usefully published on websites, blogs or posted on social networks.

- We have noted that there are sites where the best (according to the statistics of views) longreads are collected. Perhaps a single virtual library of longreads will be created, where you can find material on a variety of issues.

7. Conclusion

At each stage of cultural development, the formats of text and reading change. Reading retains its importance: this is not only the process of decoding written information, but also a way of socialization, a source of education and a form of communication. There is a consistent increase in the role of information and, consequently, the social significance of reading in the conditions of digitalization of society.

In longread, a journalist is able not only to reveal his creative potential, but also to express his point of view on the presented problem. Thus, a longread can be considered an author's text, where the content creator is implicitly present, and the author has the opportunity to directly "join" it, for example, to voice a video with his own voice. For a professional journalist, longread will serve as a platform of opinions.

> *Observations reveal that a number of participants in various communicative situations may still try to hide their "inner self" and use a variety of speech techniques of desubjectification, hoping to relieve themselves of responsibility and present their statement as objective. But <...> many talented professional journalists, propagandists, defending public interests, do not hide themselves in the verbal fabric, constantly use grammatical forms of the first person, and the author's subjective modality is clearly manifested in their texts.* (Ivanova et al., 2020, p. 2824)

The preparation of a longread partly solves the issue of self-media education. Undoubtedly, the reader who is interested in the topic of a longread is conditionally involved in a virtual dialogue and gets the opportunity to make his own longread in the continuation of the topic he likes. The creation of a longread as a creative project and a product of teamwork is one of the clearest examples of the actualization of reading.

Acknowledgments

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