

Articles Summary

Research Paradigms

Media as a System-Trend: New Approaches in Medialogy

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Abstract

The authors attempt to make a case for presenting the existing media as a system-trend, which means that the media must be researched not only in statics, but first and foremost in dynamics, in various aspects of their operation in society in continuity.

The authors suggest new approaches to media research that involve an inclusion of dynamic series in the process of estimating and examining data to demonstrate changes of different objects during a certain period of time, using the method of mediametry and political mediametry as well. The authors propose to rethink the traditional approaches and introduce the notion of Dynamic Medialogy in scientific use. Dynamic Medialogy deals with objects of a new type, with a media system as a system-trend.

In this article, the authors consider the social existence of the media taking into account the basic media theories in order to identify the limits of these theories' applicability in the new socio-political conditions in the context of the rapidly changing picture of the world in different countries and at the global level. The driving force behind these new approaches to understanding the existential role of the media in new historical conditions (3D society) was the absence of the PROJECT which should accumulate all reliable information about society in its progress and should be regarded as an insight into historical processes. In order to research a media system as a system-trend, one must quickly adapt to "superfluid" socio-historical content. There is a need to deepen interdisciplinary research able to provide a positive impetus to the development of Dynamic Medialogy as a scientific endeavour.

Keywords: media, media system, system-trend, dynamic medialogy, information society, 3D consumer society.

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Agenda

Crisis Management in a Convergent Environment: the Experience of One Media Outlet

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Abstract

In the article, the author considers the problems of crisis management using the case method. Drawing on the example of one quality media outlet facing both financial and strategic challenges, the author analyzes the process of implementing the elements of convergence in the newsroom as part of the crisis management strategy and reviews the results of this implementation. The basic research tool was in-depth interviews with the top

managers of the magazine under study. The author reveals two main stages of newsroom transformation and identifies the concrete managerial actions that helped to amend the situation. Given the specifics of the turbulent market environment and the magazine's positioning, the most effective managerial decisions were: a) achieving newsroom autonomy; b) hiring new staff members with core "convergent" competencies; c) defining development priorities and repositioning; d) implementing technological innovations; e) covering all the top news; f) starting collaboration with news aggregators; g) re-organizing the newsroom; h) cutting costs; i) improving content by raising its quality; k) re-designing the website and the print version; l) updating the newsroom management system; m) updating the content management system. However, despite the evident financial success of the magazine accountable to the changes, the ongoing transformation proves to have problems: a lack of strategic planning and a number of shortcomings in creating the optimal management structure.

Keywords: crisis management, case method, strategy, convergence, newsroom.

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Diversification in the Russian Media Business in 2004-2014 (a case study of the RBK, Rambler&Co, Gazprom-Media, Natsional'naya Media Gruppa and CTC Media holdings)

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Abstract

In the past decades, the largest players in the Russian media market have bought and sold assets in various media branches, which has led to changes in the market. The paper examines the diversification processes in the Russian media business in a case study of five commercial companies: RBK, Rambler&Co, Gazprom-Media, Natsional'naya Media Gruppa and CTC Media. The companies under consideration are represented in the key niches of the media market (television, the press, radio, the Internet, films, production and web hosting), a fact that conditioned the main criterion of choice. The objective of this research is to identify the key niches within the frames of product diversification of media companies, distinguish the main markets for diversification on the geographical basis and define the spatial directions of diversification. To study these processes, the author selected information on deals on buying and selling core and non-core assets. The sources included business press articles and companies' reports over a period from January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2014. The author classified the information along a number of indicators determined by the objectives of the research (quantitative, geographical, spatial and niche ones).

The research showed that during the period under review the companies made 67 deals mostly following the model of cross-media diversification. The assets referring to the Internet and the new media attracted the greatest interest, while newspapers and magazines went up for sale. Thus, the Russian media business came to develop in the segment of the new media and the digital, with mass media moving to internet platforms. In less popular branches (event, web hosting and production), the companies mostly consolidated assets and their sales performance is zero. Diagonal diversification, in which a company would seek to control the whole chain, from content production to its distribution, is unrepresentative of the Russian media business.

Keywords: media market, diversification, assets, deals, Internet.

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Mass media abroad

Role of the Italian Media in Election Campaigns (2013-2015)

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Abstract

The intensity of political processes and the dynamism of the info-communication sphere lead to the transformation of political communication and its media coverage.

In Europe, Italy demonstrates its media campaign experience, the characteristics of which are of interest from both practical and methodological point of view. In order to reveal new processes in the media support for political campaigns in Italy, the author analyzed the 2013, 2014 and 2015 election campaigns, during which preparation for different election levels such as parliamentary, European, regional and administrative ones was under way. The empirical basis comprised both traditional and new media: information programs on RAI and Mediaset, materials of the key newspapers and weeklies, online mass media, sites of parties and political movements, politicians' accounts in social networks, blogs and re-translations of election square rallies. In addition, it included the monitoring of television and radio programs as well as research materials from scientific centers.

This article reveals the factors of influence on the course of election campaigns: the particularities of the political process, societal need for political information and media de-velopment level. The Italian experience shows that these factors are equally important.

There were some special aspects to the campaigns under consideration. From the political viewpoint, the campaigns showed the complexity and multi-format nature of the political process in Italy, where Euro-skepticism is evident, absenteeism is making progress and the volatility of the electorate is increasing. From the media viewpoint, each campaign had its own success formula for its leader. All the media retained their importance, television remained as the primary information source and the exclusive reliance on web resources did not proved itself. However, the issues related to the interaction and integration of the press, television and social networks, to the degree of their participation in agenda set-ting, to new forms of information visualization, are gaining currency. The process of media transformation forms a new media-political space, the contours of which are best visible in election campaigns.

Keywords: Italian media, election campaigns 2013–2015, Berlusconi, Renzi, Grillo.

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The Problem of Catalan National Identity as Covered in La Renaixensa and La Vanguardia Newspapers in the Late 19th – Early 20th Century

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Abstract

In the last quarter of the 19th century, Catalonia saw an escalation of the struggle for the political independence of the region from Spain. The greatest contribution was made by the Catalan press, published both in Catalan and Spanish. This paper examines articles of the leading Catalan dailies of that time, *La Renaixensa* и *La Vanguardia*, their role in strengthening Catalanism and national Catalan identity in the late 19th – early 20th century.

The author compares the ways the two newspapers cover political events and concludes that the Catalan-language *La Renaixensa* was more consistent in advocating nationalism than the Spanish-language *La Vanguardia*. Accordingly, *La Renaixensa* newspaper's struggle for Catalan national identity was more radical and intolerant to other political trends as distinct from *La Vanguardia* newspaper whose articles were more balanced and liberal. Most readers in Catalonia were interested in unbiased information. Although they were ethnic Catalans they did not consider national identity to be an essential part of independence and opted for *La Vanguardia*.

After becoming a party political publication, *La Renaixensa* newspaper went through a crisis and in 1905 had to cease publication. On the contrary, due to its lack of partisanship *La Vanguardia* increased its readership, came to become a Spanish national periodical and is still published.

Keywords: Spain, Catalonia, self-determination, referendum, nationalism, Catalan nationalism, press.

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Mediatext

Communication Strategy of an Advertising Text: the Information and Manipulation Component

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Abstract

This paper examines the communication strategy of a contemporary advertising text and its role in the process of content formation. Contemporary advertising has a great

impact on society through its constant presence in people's everyday life by means of television and radio programmes, the Internet and other advertising vehicles. It is notable that, despite the technological progress and the development of the opportunities for advertising delivery to the ultimate user, advertising is still based on an explicit verbal component which makes it possible to implement the major communication strategies: the information and the manipulation ones. In this respect, an advertising text appears to be a unique phenomenon, a product of economic institutions of society integrated into the media environment. This determines the double base of texts and the obvious role of the manipulation component. The interaction of the above mentioned strategies shapes contemporary advertising discourse and has an impact on advertising communication in general. This interaction is viewed in terms of the intentional method, which serves to trace the links between the verbal and semantic components of an advertising text and ensures the novelty of the research. In this connection, striking a communication balance in an advertising text seems to be critical for achieving its goals of economic efficiency. A study into the dynamic of the communication strategies has generated a hypothesis according to which a contemporary advertising text becomes part of impression sale: it is the impressions of goods and services that are sold but not the physical objects or services themselves.

Keywords: advertising, advertising text, communication strategy, information strategy, manipulation strategy.

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Online Literary Review: a Transformation of Genre and Stylistic Characteristics or Following a Tradition?

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Abstract

Over the past decades, researchers have repeatedly made statements about the transformation of literary criticism and its genres. The principles of newspaper and magazine criticism have been moving to the Web and literary journalists' priorities have been changing. It would be logical to assume that under the influence of general language trends and extra-linguistic factors a review being one the most popular genres of literary journalism in terms of its functions, richness of argumentation and style is turning away from the long-standing prototypes. However, the practices of book reviewers prove the contrary.

In order to confirm or disprove the transformation of an online review, the author turns to the literary sections of popular online projects on art, education and leisure: the Afisha-Vozdukh, Theories and Practices and Colta.ru websites. Besides, in order to trace the way online reviews mirror one literary event, the author uses some additional sources for 2014 in which reviews of the novel "The Goldfinch" by Donna Tartt were published.

The method of comparative, intentional and stylistic analysis makes it possible to conclude about the communication characteristics of contemporary literary reviews in online media, compare the structure of the traditional and modern review and check on the statements about the genre's transformation.

Easy narration, partiality, stylistic diversity, emphatic vividness, blurred boundaries of the genre, marked individuality and freedom from newspaper and magazine formats do not considerably change the nature of the genre: an online review does differ from information newspaper reviews and analytical magazine ones in that it contains more information, less analysis, more advertising and more entertainment but this difference is small. Information and analytical reviews coexist in contemporary media discourse adapting to online publications and carrying on the traditions of magazine criticism (Colta.ru), newspaper criticism (Theories and Practices) or being a compromise between these two (Afisha-Vozdukh).

Keywords: literary review, genre's transformation, online discourse.

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Precedent Phenomena (“Diangu”) in the Discourse of the Chinese Press

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Abstract

Precedent Phenomena (PP) belong to a type of culture-bound items and thus hold a considerable communicating potential if used properly in a text. In Ancient and Medieval China, scholars studied the usage of similar elements in literary writings dubbing them “diangu” (“classical precedents”) but considered them as mere traditional stylistic devices. However, recent studies suggest that these elements should be regarded as a form of PP of Chinese-language discourse and may be used as a powerful linguistic tool.

The research concentrates on 304 expressions dubbed “the corpus of diangu” which are linked to two important literary works of Chinese culture: “Sanguozhi” and “Romance of the Three Kingdoms”. A quantitative analysis of the text of 10 major Chinese daily newspapers showed a high rate of usage of some items in the above-mentioned corpus: over the course of 6 months 38 expressions appeared in more than 2500 publications in total, while the average occurrence of the rest 266 items was considerably lower. Further analysis revealed

that popular diangu play an important role in many media texts, they stylistically enrich the narration and implicitly express the author's appraisal making the text more persuasive and defining its basic structure. These findings indicate the need for a broader research in this field and for writing a reference book on the PP of the Chinese-language discourse which foreign journalists may require when they work with Chinese media texts.

Keywords: precedent phenomena, diangu, Chinese-language discourse, Chinese media, media discourse.

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