

Personal Media Trajectories in the Digital Sphere: Educational Potential

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ABSTRACT

In the epoch of post-literacy, the traditional practice activities of reading and writing got enriched with new means of information coding and decoding. In relation to it, appeared a special text format – the multimodal one, offering to a subject the information for simultaneous reading/comprehension, submitted through different means: verbally, visually, auditorily, etc, which gets easily apprehended and doesn't require any long time loss.

In the situation, when in the process of education appears the necessity of referring to the practice activities, which are actively represented in the global network, appears acute necessity of ranging topics and content nature, reveal representativeness and potential. And the skills of critical thinking serve as the basic ones not only in the process of information interpretation, but also for the means of the personal self-actualization. One of such skills is a vlog.

We consider the vlog to be the multimedia text, which is an integrant part of the contemporary educational space. Its main properties are as follows: openness, specific degree of liberty in the choice of professional and personal development trajectories, dialogs and the opportunity of studying continuously, accessibility as a result of performing life activities in the digital area.

The Russian media practice activities are oriented to the foreign ones in their experience. But the things, which have already become an integrant part of educational process abroad [Kent; Meeder; Prensky, and others], just gain speed in the national one.

Keywords: *videoblog, multimedia text, personal media trajectories, educational space, personal self-actualization*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the post-literacy epoch, develops the wide variety of communication practice activity options, determining the connection of social standards and of system of values and senses, reproduced in each social activity. A contemporary person reads them as a text, arranged in a complicated manner. The traditional process of the text reading (verbal, auditory, visual) represents the combination of successive operations, executed by the subject-interpreter: perception, understanding, comprehension, and, if necessary, the following transmission of the senses and content, laid down in it. In the context of the 21st century, the tactics of reading has changed in some way in the view of the special nature of communication activities, conditioned by the videocracy (“the authority of images”) of the mass culture, eclectic perception of reality, numerosity and different levels of quality of the informational flows, unavailability of distancing from the culture, within which a human lives. This results in the decrease of reflexive-critical attitude to the events, occurring in the world around, and

the problematic character of a human's “apprehension” of the complete image.

The contemporary practice activities' effect is visually and auditorily oriented to a human, as to an active culture consumer. The multimedia text became for a person an attractive mean and mechanism of learning information: the telecommunication technologies, nonlinear narration principle, organized with the help of speech structures of different qualities, visual and auditory fragments, color and sound solution, static and dynamic images, and also the opportunity of the interactive interaction of a text and a person (broadly defined one) are at the core of its constructional features. Probert, D. stated, that the media text is any structured media product or a mean of communication, comprising both printed and audio-visual arrangement, which may be analyzed and deconstructed [Probert, 2005].

For a contemporary person, the deconstruction serves as a mean of apprehension of the text contents in its entirety, determination and arrangement of “objectified” units of the language culture. According to the definition of Pilgun, M.A., the multimedia text is the syncretic unity of verbal and nonverbal elements; it unities the speech structures, video sequence, static and dynamic images, sound and color effects [Pilgun, 2015, p. 201]. As

a follow-up, we shall note, that a person can transform into new forms, being exposed to hybridization, becoming, basically, multimodal. These particularities of the multimedia text influence also on the development of a reader of the special type – of a reader, who engages different channels of information perception.

For the major part of multimedia texts, the following characteristics are inherent:

- Technological effectiveness,
- functionality,
- relevance,
- popularity (closeness of audience, situationality, dramatic character of narration (eventivity and expressiveness),
- up-to-dateness and immediateness,
- contextuality,
- intertextuality,
- stereotypeness and standardizing,
- multimodality,
- availability of engaging a consumer into the multimedia space.

The multimedia text is highly sought as in the everyday life of a separate person, as in the professionally oriented society. The communicative nature of such text determines the necessity of putting emphasis upon such terms, as “author”, “recipient/perceptive one”, “addressee”, “sense”, “context”, which, in the aggregate, determine the understanding of a text as a cultural practice activity.

In the conditions of the contemporary educational process digitalization, the use of multimedia text becomes the common practice: the subjects of education get the opportunity of working with the material remotely, in the time and space, comfortable for them, build proper itineraries and scripts in accordance with the assigned tasks and objective.

2. STUDY METHODOLOGY

We would like to specify the following in the quality of key positions, determining this study methodology:

- The technological effectiveness of communication, which prevails over the contents: depiction of the world’s image with the values and senses, natural for it, is important for a contemporary person, if it associates with the actual forms of expression and principles of creation of the hybrid texts, intended for different perception channels, easy for reading through and comprehension within the situation of “here and now”.
 - For a person of the 21st century, the visual “grasping of the image of reality” acquires the nature of technology, and it actively does rounds in the social medium, inciting the creators to the organization of new practice activities and forms of communication,
 - “The represented one” serves as the mean and result of the personal self-actualization,
 - The development of critical thinking in the process of basic communication skills realization (operational,

structural, logical and creative thinking), and of working with the information of different qualities in the conditions of the social medium [Simbirtseva, N.A., 2019, p. 88-98].

In the human sciences, *the method of data visualization* organically collocates with the method of *culturological interpretation* of events of reality. Both methods are oriented to the revelation of the particularities of multimedia texts organization and representation in conditions of the digital medium.

The interpretation, being in the quality of a method, is one of the cross functional ones in the work with the cultural phenomenon and multimodal texts: it represents the mean, with the help of which the words, artefacts, events and their historical and cultural realities get explained and analyzed.

3. STUDY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As of today, two means of the multimedia text existence have been developed. The first one – scientific-educational projects, programs, resources, promos, which correspond to the requirements of non-fiction. This is the narration in the language, comprehensible and understandable for a regular person, well unicity of the contents, absence of mistakes, “entertaining” component (intrigue), holding spectator’s attention, references to the representative sources and author’s competence. The video materials “Arzamas”, “Academia”, “Polit.Ru”, “PostNauka”, etc. serve as examples of such texts. Here, the projects are organized and implemented with attraction of the professionals, and they are accompanied with the required comments and additional information.

The second mean is “the public creative activities”, registering “emotional splashes” and/or giving the opportunity of publicity stunt in the hot topic of the day. And here, a contemporary user-reader is offered various genre options, satisfying his/her taste, predilections, interests, consumer wants, etc. For example, a review, let’s play, prank, educative video (life hack, beauty-video), videoblog, show, dialogue, guide, challenge, sketch, trolling-video. Each genre is oriented to “the proper” reader, but sometimes “an accidental” user may become its reader.

It is enough difficult to find competently framed up and lined up representative information in such array of continuously updating resources, if you don’t have skills of critical perception and thinking. Our attention is focused on the videoblogging, which represents the multimedia texts on art, which have, basically, educational and teaching potential, which are distinguished by good quality and high level of professionalism. We shall make a reservation, that there aren’t many of such videos.

In comparison to the textual mean of transferring material, the videoblogging offers much richer web-experience, oriented to the visual representation of the reality, being lived through, and its depiction in the visible images. The last ones are massively caught up and get widespread

use in the computer networks with digital components. According to Castells, M. “the real virtuality” is “the system, in which the reality itself (i.e. physical/symbolical being of people) is completely caught, fully immersed into the virtual images, into the make-believe world, the world, in which the external reflections aren’t found only on the screen, through which the experience gets transferred, but they become experience themselves. All messages are enclosed in the mean, because the mean became in so far comprehensive, in so far diverse, in so far obedient, as it absorbs the entirety of human experience in one and the same multimedia text [Castells, 2000, p. 351-352].

The vlog represents the organization of multimedia text, which combines in it the fragments from a film, sound, static images and speech, and, sometimes, text. It is multimodal, because it is oriented to the various channels of perception of the users and influences on their emotional and user/consumer involvement, which depends on the number of factors:

- Attractiveness of the image of the author or author’s collective,
- Suggested topics,
- Regular publication of the video records with the duration from 2 to 20 minutes on one video hosting platform (the most popular one is YouTube),
- Maintenance of feed-back with the subscribers,
- Means of new audience attraction,
- Use of “features”, increasing vlog rating,
- Resource potential of the contents of vlog or its separate episodes, which may be used, for example, for the educational purposes.

Which tasks does reference to the art vlogs allow to solve?

First of all, it is experience, and through mastering it, the learners don’t just get familiar with the material and the mean of its representation, but they also engage into its comprehension. Secondly, it is the technological component (how is it done?), which is studied by a teacher and by the learners, and applied in practice in the future. Thirdly, it is the motivation to “studying with enthusiasm”: independent or collective making of a vlog under the studied discipline is an efficient practice activity, thanks to which many education tasks may be resolved within the institution or communities. Fourthly, the subject-matter of art is considerably wide and has different directions, which allows to hold learners’ attention and work with the contexts, extending their representations and knowledges of reality. Fifthly, an art vlog has the property of integration: in the process of its production the author refers to the contents of different discipline areas.

As an example, we would like to introduce two vlogs, dedicated to the art and differing against each other at the level of topics, means of the content narration, author’s image, targeted audience, number of subscribers, frequency of new episodes publication and their up-to-dateness (vlog’s feasibility from the moment of its production to the present time).

In July 2015, the Center of Historic Expert Evaluation and State Forecasting RUDN [Forecast and Perspective: new vlog, 2015] launched the vlog, entitled “Lectures on Culture with Iakimenko, Boris”, continuing traditions of Likhachev, D.S. and Lotman, Yu.M., related to the popularization of the Russian culture. Each topic is unfolded, in average, within 30 minutes. Generally, their contents are connected to the national history and culture (“Heathendom of Ancient Rus”, “Icon-painting of Ancient and Medieval Rus”, “Architecture of Ancient and Medieval Rus”, “Literature of Ancient and Medieval Rus”, “Culture of Russian Manor House”, etc.). But there are also other episodes, as, for example: “Sanctuaries and their Role and Significance in the Human’s Life”, “Phenomenon of ISIL in the Contemporary World Politics”, etc. The vlog materials were actively published in the network in 2015-2016. The last episode “Russian Monks. Particularities” (eighth) dates from 1 August 2016 and terminates blogging on this topic. The number of appearing questions is obvious, and, in for the most part, they bear rhetorical nature. The movement appears in that moment, when there is audience interest, demands and comments, when the dialogue between vloggers and subscribers arises. This consistent pattern extends to the multimedia text, which, along with its author, is in condition of continuous transformations. The suggested topics on culture are traditional in its set and differ by the author’s point of view and vlogger’s position.

This vlog is oriented to audio-visual perception, although, in most cases relatively static image is offered to a spectator – the author against the background of bookcases. The narrator, history specialist (he shall be rather called like that) feels comfortable and conveniently in this space, customary for him, thanks to which the atmosphere of academism and scientific character are created. The target audience of the vlog contains all those, who are interested in the history and culture of Russia. Since 2015, the adjustments of vlogger image and format of the materials, being published by him/her, have been made. Today, a vlog author shall continuously “heighten” the audience interest. The given example is the result of synthesis of the science fiction and mass culture tendencies. In 2018, it is hard to hold contemporary spectator’s attention for a vlogger. The dynamics, visual image flow, “jumping picture” and time specifications – not over 10 minutes, are required.

We shall mention, that the Center’s material is represented also in the blog of Iakimenko, Boris on YouTube “Perspectives Depend on Us” [Iakimenko], which has 267 subscribers as of 1 October 2018. 4 playlists are represented on the author’s page: lectures on culture, up-to-date issues of the modern times, TV-shows and Center’s Programs. Besides, in the course of 2017-2018 the author has been publishing a number of notes and comments with the duration from 2 to 10 minutes, related to absolutely different topics: on terrorism, on liberty, on crisis of professionalism, on money, on presentation, on sport, etc. The episodes differ by regularity and laconism. In the course of last months, Iakimenko, B. has

continued to publish lectures on culture, which have traditional format and have sufficient number of reviews. Generally, running a professional videoblog, dedicated to the culture and art, is a time-consuming and cost-based activity, oriented not only to studying informational technologies, but also requiring the competent solution in content and comments to it. The videoblog, stated at first, terminated its activity. The author turned to another type of virtual reality, attracting attention to himself and maintaining subscribers' interest.

Let's give another example of videoblogging – "School of Popular Art OP POP ART", which was run by Postrigay, Anastasiia. Thematically, the material reflects main issues, connected to the theory of art and practices of its studying: "How did the art generate?" "Top-10 best books on art for children", "Main producer of the 20th century", "How to study the art in trips. Quests", "Top-15 films on the art", "Art campaign against illiteracy in architecture", "Contemporary art guide", etc. the style of material narration is defined with the hashtag #iskusstvovmassy (art to the mass). The blog contains 44 videos, the last update dates from 29 November 2017; it has 14136 subscribers. The plots are organized properly, solved professionally in regards to the technical part, and justified in relation to the contents. The author's speech is dynamic and easily perceptible. Postrigay, A. narrates about the art in a comprehensible and understandable language.

The shooting angle of the videoblogger's figure "switches" the users' static perception (to watch and be

stationary together with the author) to the dynamical one - to become "a mirror" of the videoblogger, i.e. to follow her quickly, rhythmically, without superfluous movements and distraction and learn that information flow, which is offered at the level of speech, visual images, illustrative material, camera movements and changing of shots. The author looks extravagant and stylish, which gets caught by the subscribers at the level of discussions and get reflected in "likes".

Since 24 November 2015 the videoblog has been regularly updated (almost every week) and filled with the materials of all types of contents: book review, personalities of artists, pictures, detailed interpretation of the plot of piece of art, etc. And as early as since 2018 the author and the narrator of the videoblog "School of Popular Art OP POP ART" [School of Popular Art] has transferred to another format of communication with her audience, acquiring the special status and academism. In 2018 "OP-POP-ART Academy. History of Art in Online Environments" appeared, which founder was Postrigay, A.: "Establishing On Pop Art, I was dreaming of organization of the Academy of Culture and Art, available for everybody. Now, everybody can study history of art in the format, convenient for him/her. The Complete Course program is built in such way, that, at first, you get the fundamentals of knowledges, and only after that you begin to study more complicated topics" [OP-POP-ART Academy].

4. CONCLUSION

How long is a videoblog's life? It is impossible to answer this question with accuracy and determine the time of its popularity. It will be requested until it has its spectator-reader. When the interest will weaken, an author-videoblogger will search for the new forms of communication, keeping the senses, close and understandable for a consumer, up-to-date. It may appear, that the practice of videoblog running in the Internet environment will be outdated over time. While this experience is requested in the education and teaching environment. The generation of 2000s perceives and comprehends the reality in the way, different from their parents' one. The reason is as follows: the information quality and quantity, and the means and technologies of its studying, developed in the culture. The clip thinking (as the fact of life, immunity to which doesn't depend on age) becomes the principle of reflexive attitude to the reality. It takes on the role of the one, which helps to organize the entirety of image perception, in a role of a constructor. If we see reality in such way (in clips), then, we shall do it so, as its image would shape up to a single image from many puzzles in our head – this solution is natural and favours the production and distribution of the multimodal media forms, easy and comfortable for perception. To learn how to produce texts, similar to the culture and art videoblogs, means to acquire technical skills, technologies

of such product creation, and competences of announcing of the required information in the representative "cover" to the suspected talker. An author and a consumer are made liable for the transmitted material: they exist in the unity. The one shall meet reader's expectations, the second one shall not be cheated and get to the charm of videoblogger's image and fake information – to be a critic.

The text itself serves as the incitement, determining the further continuation of the virtual talk.

That's clear, that the multimedia text is an inalienable attendant of a human of the beginning of the XXI century. And, as of today, there are various forms and means of its transmission. A videoblog, being one of the options of such text, is attractive by its visuality and comprehensibility. The studying of this practice is efficient and reasonable in the context of implementation of the main educational tasks. The reference to the experience of running videoblogs, existing already, allows to build the proper, personally significant trajectories in the social media

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