ТЕОРИЯ ЯЗЫКА

SIMULACRUM IN STATIC-DYNAMIC SCOPE OF THE SCREEN
(a case study of polycode-multimodal texts of the Internet)

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Abstract. With onset of the computer and electronic revolution, with the expansion of the Internet the modern world culture is based not on the bookish, but on the screen form of the text existence. Heterogeneous texts have replace homogeneous texts. The most formed representatives of which are the movies and the television, that initiated the appearance of text with the unique structure, contaminating oral and written linguistic sense medium with the non-linguistic and which, having been digitized, are predominating in the Internet today. The spectator expects from these texts such stylistic features as authenticity and factual accuracy. These particular expectations are employed by the authors of such videos in order to manipulate the viewer and to create the impression, that the objects and phenomena on the screen possess the denotation in the real world, thus making the recipient believe into the modelled pattern of a real life and generating simulacra. This article is devoted to the analysis of peculiarities of the simulacra design in polycode-multimodal texts representing complex semiotic unity of verbal, iconic and acoustic components. Also it is examined how a real-life simulation is created in the case of three polycode-multimodal texts that describe the military actions in Syria. The analysis is carried out in the static and dynamic scope of the screen% at the visual (screenshots), verbal and acoustic levels. During the research lingual-semiotic peculiarities of the simulacra generation in the static scope of the screen are singled out and the instruments used to construct simulacra in the dynamic scope of the screen.

Key words: the screen, polycode-multimodal text, simulacrum, verbal, iconic, sign, sign behavior, semiosis

1. INTRODUCTION

New means of communication, globalization and progressing expansion of the Internet lead to the situation, in which a homogeneous printed text is not the main data migration facility anymore. The volume and quality of the information circulating in the noosphere is increasing which asks for the usage of more succinct means of its processing, recording and transmission involving less effort in decoding and perception. New communicative situation in the modern world has asked for appearance of different contaminated types of information representation often with the minimal amount of a verbal text, intelligible for the majority of the people, the same as, formerly, the invention of the printing-press accelerated and "blew up" the concise manuscript, having split

it into more simple fragments [1]. In the modern "networked world" the leading role is played by the visualized texts, located on the digital medium and reproduced on the screen in the form of digital production. As a result, we are transforming out of an epistolary into screen civilization — "image-oriented", as U. Eco once mentioned [2]. Traditional, linear way of thinking intrinsic to the writing is replaced by the perception through electronic software — hyperception — utterly processed by the patched TV-image [1].

Proportions of verbal and visual (iconic) is one of the most important questions the answer to which is being searched for by the modern linguists. Scientific community did not come to the common point of view on what term to utilize to nominate such kind of a text, in which there are signs of a natural language along with the signs if a different nature — *creolized* [3—5], *polycode* [6—11], *videoverbal* [12] etc. In this article the heterogeneous text is understood as techno-sensorial unity, able to be perceptually embraced with the help of different modalities (channels of information perceiving), contaminating audial and visual semiotic means and transferred by a projection on the screen. In such type of the text one can find the syncretic unity of several components: moving image, phonetic elements (speech, noise, music) and verbal elements (credits, subtitles etc.).

The first and the most simple print media enclosing verbal and iconic components are thought to be a purpose novel and a pictorial magazine characterized by the fact that they are different in their semiotic nature but are designed to be perceived visually alone. The foregoing development of the means of communication utilizing the principle of contaminated texts, "comprising apart from verbal and iconic an audio component, led to the appearance of such type of the texts, firstly, on the motion pictures and television screen, mostly in the commercials, and then, in the Internet" (*here and forth the translation is ours — Yu.E.*) [8. C. 96].

The Internet as multimodal hypertext structure is being enriched with polycode-multimodal texts (video reports play-by-play), that belong to the genre of documentary filmmaking, which are expected to possess such features of the style as authenticity and factual accuracy by the viewer. This particular expectancy is aggressively being used by the authors of such type of the videos with the aim to manipulate the viewer in order to create an impression that the demonstrated objects and phenomena have denotation in the real world making the recipient believe in created model of reality, thus generating simulacrum.

The first mention of simulacrum is referred to the works of Plato, according to which eidos (the ideal original) can have copies either identical with it (so called true imitations) or different from it (false imitations). In the period of medieval and modern times simulacrum was understood as an image of the thing far from resemblance and bearing inextricable connection with the original. In the 20th century post-modern representatives [13—17] demarcated the original, its copy and simulacrum thinking that the simulation of a reality was grounded on the generating of formless impressions and images, not on the depicting of something particular, external. In the theory of post-modernism the notion "simulacrum" is filled with different meaning. The principle of natural bond between the image and what is the depicted, the image and the meaning,

the sign and the referent is not the main anymore. The connection is terminated, eidos (the original) disappears but its copy continues to exist.

By and large the modern linguists understand simulacrum as the following: 1) as sign with an "empty" signified, which lost the reference with the reality, 2) as artificially designed reality which engages into connection with the real space, 3) as something without original, 4) as the secondary copy of the original, self-referential sign (the image of non-existent reality), substituting the symbol which is transmitted by the word and its conventional meanings. Thus, simulacrum is the mask which is hiding the absence of reality and at the same time creating the apparition of its presence. In the process of simulation something which does not exist is being represented as really existing, creating the patterns which are in the complete accord with the reality.

This work has the aim to characterize lingual-semiotic peculiarities of constructing simulacrum in the aspect of the static-dynamic organization of the scope of the screen of a polycode-multimodal text.

2. SIMULACRUM CONSTRUCTION IN A POLYCODE-MULTIMODAL TEXT

2.1. Summary of the material and the methods of research

The polycode-multimodal texts, created in genre of video report from the "flash points", especially in Syria, can serve as an example of conscious generating and usage of simulacrum. The material filmed and presented to the wide audience by the organization "White Helmets" is particularly interesting because the most of the spectators automatically consider them to be a real life story line, i.e. visible reality of the screenshot is identified with the real world. This piece of writing studies how a verisimilar pattern of reality is constructed as in the case of three polycode-multimodal texts depicting military actions in Syria and their consequences. All three texts are taken from YouTube, channels United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Guardian News.

For internal organization and regulation of the process of the research and interpretation of the received results the following methods were utilized: philosophical-logical, general scientific, and disciplinary. Philosophical-logical methods and techniques used in this work are abduction, idealization, abstraction analysis, synthesis, argumentation, empirical evidence, objectivation and verification, induction, generalization, and explanation. General empirical methods used in the research are description and examination. Among the disciplinary methods employed are paralinguistic techniques in order to identify the type of information brought by paralinguistic means and the ways of their contamination and correlation with the verbal component; also descriptive techniques were utilized such as: examination, generalization, interpretation of the results, classification, analysis, synthesis, comparison, contrast, contextual analysis in order to expose verbally unexpressed implicit meanings.

2.2. Lingual-semiotic analysis of the static-dynamic organization of the scope of the screen

Video report "White Helmets Rescue Mission — February 2018", published on March 23rd this year, and "Aftermath of suspected chemical attack in rebel-held Douma in Syria", published April the 9th this year, demonstrate the rescue mission of White

helmets. Throughout the research we are going to analyze the following levels of these polycode-multimodal texts: visual (shots), verbal and acoustic.

"White Helmets Rescue Mission — February 2018" is the train of shots which fuse at the demonstration into iconic picture of wrecks, dust and backs of running people. The space is limited by the part of the ruined building in which several people in non-military garment and in the white helmets are clearing the rubbles of the bomb attack and saving children. The camera is twitching, jumping and shaking but there are some close up shots [18].

The setting in the second polycode text "Aftermath of suspected chemical attack in rebel-held Douma in Syria" is located in the building of inexplicable function, outside which it is supposed to be the town of Douma after the chemical attack (this information the spectator receives out of the title). Shots are going one by one on the background of unstoppable noise, boom and fuss, and fix what is happening inside the building: among the crowd of grown-ups there are small children which are being showered out of the hose pipe and pulverized with the unknown liquid into the mouth. The rest of the shots fix the same actions. In the last short a child appears again who is being showered out of the hose pipe and who is put onto the coach next to the other children. This particular screenshot is very interesting because these particular children have been already sitting at this very coach at the beginning of the video but at that time another child has been put onto it, i.e. the events are demonstrated not in the chronological order which makes us think that they are put together they together not on the principle of natural order. Probably, this video was edited which allows us not to take its authenticity for granted [19].

At the verbal level "White Helmets Rescue Mission — February 2018" contains the introduction to the video:

WARNING: This video contains graphic content. This video footage was provided by the Syria Civil Defense (White Helmets) / It was filmed in the Douma area of Eastern Ghouta after Syrian government and Russian air strikes in February 2018 / The footage was captured by a camera on the helmet of a rescuer [18],

the same as "Aftermath of suspected chemical attack in rebel-held Douma in Syria":

"Warning. Some viewers may find the following footage distressing. Children are treated after a suspected chemical attack in rebel-held Douma, Syria" [18].

In the video reports the incomprehensible emotional Arabian speech is heard, it is possible to distinguish anxiety and fear, the firsts video contains the cries: "Allah Akbar!".

Acoustic level of these two texts is not fractured, it fully corresponds to the demonstrated screenshots and is represented by audio signs: rambling, booming, general background noise.

Verbal and acoustic levels of these two texts do not play any role but are the elements that follow the natural flow of the shots, all the sense tension is concentrated at the visual level. The viewfield of the described above polycode-multimodal texts is not constant: the filming is made out of fragments and is demonstrated not as a united shot. They are taken out of the flow of the events and it is not clear whether they were added into the narration in the chronological order or were edited in order to be organized

on the aesthetic principle. Both texts contain, intrinsically, the same content — rescue of the children (taking them out of the rubbles, showering them out of the hose pipe, pulverization with the medicine into the mouth. Apart from actions, the screenshots contain iconic signs, fixing the objects of the real world: the children, and in the second text the hosepipe and the inhaler. Visually, they are semiotically marked; some qualities of the objects are utilized to highlight them with the help of the surroundings: the children on the background of the crowd of the adults are small; the hose pipe on the background of the grey walls and dark clothes is red and inhaler is blue. Thus, the spectators' attention is artificially fixed on the these actions and objects of the demonstrated reality, and the bomb attacks, rubbles and people in non-military garment, the space of the screenshot itself are just the background employed to more protruding allocation of the necessary meanings to speculate with the children and the statement: "children are our future that we are saving".

The third polycode-multimodal text "Syria's White Helmets: Saving Humanity", published on YouTube December 13th in 2016, is the edited screenshots filmed by the amateur camera and is an especially interesting video report as it is comprised by the documentary shots in which the representatives of the White helmets describe their mission, themselves and the operations accomplished. We also focus on three levels of this video report: visual (screenshots), verbal and acoustic.

"Syria's White Helmets: Saving Humanity" opens with the shots of the town, the quite morning is disturbed by the bombs, then the running people are shown and sporadic fire. The camera is twitching and jumping, the shot are going at a very high speed. The rest of the screen shots demonstrate people in the white helmets and in the non-military garment, they are performing the same actions of rescuing others throughout the whole video. In the middle of the text there are screenshots with the first speaker (Farouq Habib, Program Director, Mayday Rescue), and the second one (Raed Saleh, Head of the Syrian defence force (White helmets), both are depicted on the black background, in the black suits [19].

The viewfield in the third test is not constant, the visual level is fully constructed out of the train of screenshots which are quickly and abruptly follow each other. They contain the signs, depicting real life objects with the help of visual (icons) and indicative (index) and associative techniques. At the beginning of the video report cityscape is changed with the screenshots of what is happening inside the town without any transition. We see different people in white helmets and in non-military garment, putting the bodies in blood onto the stretcher. The shots are obviously arranged on the principle of aesthetic co-occurrence (in order to demonstrate the viewer the whole palette of the good deeds of the White helmets).

The verbal level of the video report "Syria's White Helmets: Saving Humanity" is represented by the initial screen shots that contain the following warning:

> *"WARNING: This video contains graphic content / The Syrian government has waged a brutal campaign of atrocities against its own people for more than five years. More than 11 million Syrians have been driven from their homes. More than 400,000 Syrians have died."*

This text state the already performed action as a fact and contains the statistic figures, and to intensify and support the information it is given on the background of the ruined town. Then the speech of speaker the begins and it is accompanied by the subtitles:

> *"Our motto is, 'To save one life is to save all of mankind / The White helmets or rescue workers / who are committed to / help areas who suffer / *** of Syria / And can't stop / because killing do not stop in Syria, bombing do not stop in Syria"* [19].

Then the second speaker starts to talk, he is giving the speech in Arabian, his words are given with the subtitles:

> *"These words give us hope and inspiration, to fight back and continue our work / Life is tragedy in Syria / People sacrifice in times of crisis / as each person has his own or her own different reasons / And the only thing we have in common is humanity / and the love of helping others / This great work, the saving of human life, is the same as saving all of mankind"* [19].

As it is demonstrated in the above examples, the verbal level of this text is filled with such sign-symbols as: *save*, *be committed to*, *help*, *suffer*, *killing/bombing don't stop*, *fight back*, *continue*, *mankind*, *hope*, *inspiration*, *life*, *tragedy*, *sacrifice*, *crisis*, *humanity*, *love*. These words focus the spectators' attention on what the White helmets do, and then on what they are, what moral values they are oriented to during their work.

Acoustic level "Syria's White Helmets: Saving Humanity" is represented with the audial signs, moved towards their source, which gives the polycode-multimodal text the volume: straight after the sound of the bombs the spectator hear the story of the speaker, accompanied by the music (tragic melody).

The contamination of the visual, verbal and acoustic levels constructs the image of the White helmets. In both parts of this video report the screenshots of the ruined town, rubbles, anxiety and pain are accompanied by the melancholic melody — the tragedy is shown (*Life is tragedy in Syria*). The speakers words are sown into the image and music, accompanied by the subtitles, and thus the every shot acquires new conceptual strain. It is not the screenshot of the chaos, caused by the military actions, unstoppable bombing and killings, anymore (*killing do not stop in Syria, bombing do not stop in Syria*), it is a battlefield of the White helmets, where they are acting, rescuing (*to save all of mankind*), struggling (*fight back and continue our work*), helping (*help areas who suffer*). Each shot of the rescue, in which the main characters are people wearing white helmets, is accompanied by the spoken words and subtitles explaining why these acts of good deeds are performed. The White helmets are true friends (*are committed to*), ready to sacrifice (*sacrifice in times of crisis*) and above all they value the one thing — humanity (*And the only thing we have in common is humanity, saving all of mankind*). Melancholic and the tragic melody also transmits the information, initiating the semantic tension, influencing the depth of the unconscious. The spectator believes that the screen shots of this polycode-multimodal text is the compilation of the shots of a documentary film. The image created by the means of contaminating the components of different semantic levels is identified with the image of the real life.

In today's global situation polycode-multimodal text "Syria's White Helmets: Saving Humanity" acquires the new meaning and accumulates different sense. Now,

it is not the simple story of the charity organization and its aims and values, but a dynamic narration, authenticity of which may be doubted. The constructed image and its components become the pattern, simulation of the reality and the phrase "Saving Humanity" itself, given in the title, is transformed into an "empty" sign, simulacrum.

2.3. Interpretation of the results

Basing on the examples presented above, it is possible to single out the following lingual-semiotic peculiarities of the construction of the simulacrum in the **static** scope of the screen of a polycode-multimodal text:

1) conceptual displacement, the sign loses its original meaning;

2) division of the objects from the manifold of a real life is performed not with the verbal, but with the visual means, which are the specific system of codes;

3) the content of the sign stays the same, but it is highly polysemantic.

The instruments employed to generate simulacrum in the **dynamic** scope of the screen of a polycode-multimodal text are:

1. The viewfield is not constant. The size of the image is changing, despite the fact that the shots of all of the three texts were taken under the conditions of a military actions. Such technique is peculiar to the fiction filmmaking and is used to denote nonspatial meanings. In these video reports close-ups of wounded or of the children are used to demonstrate the fear, anxiety and despair. Thus, in the process of transferring the concentrated information in the form of intellectual and emotional structures, that fill the polycode-multimodal text (in this case it is the transforming the space of the ruined area and military actions into the screenshot), the objects and phenomena of a real life from its print, having been re-thought and "recycled" in order to manipulate the spectator, become the thing which never was — simulacrum.

2. The screenshots are organized on the principle not of the inherent, but a artistic co-occurrence, i.e. in order, which is necessary to the authors to make the viewer believe into the constructed non-existent image of White helmets.

3. The audial volume of the tact. The sound is taken away from its source, there is a music accompaniment, which is the technique of a fiction filmmaking not the documentary one and is employed to create complex in its content structure polycode-multimodal text which is unacceptable in the documentary video reports.

The spectator being sure that what is depicted on the screen is the real life actions perceive the shots as the train of the signs of the real world in which it is not possible to distinguish any meaningful elements — for the spectators perceptions the whole text is a meaningful unity of screenshots contaminated on the principle of inherent co-occurrence. The spectator believes into what is happening on the screen as if it were a real life. Although, it, while being not the reality but its pattern, contains all the features of artistic emphasis of the shots, which, correlating with each other on the laws of fiction, manipulate the viewers consciousness.

3. CONCLUSION

In the texts that are transmitted through the screen the verbal component gives place to the non-verbal, which, from the subordinate transforms into an equal component, playing the same role as the words, due to which the information being transferred is

featured with the easiness of perception and with almost concrete interpretation for a common brain.

In the scope of the screen of a polycode-multimodal text the reality becomes a construct and, acquiring the "effect of the screen", is massively reproduced. Now, having actualized this or that text on the screen, it is possible to find out not only what is happening in the world, but also to get information on any topic in any necessary form, audial, visual, audiovisual. However, the quality of the gained knowledge, its correctness, completeness, objectivity и accuracy cannot be guaranteed. In other words the problem of authenticity of the transferring information appears. Such feature of the polycode-multimodal texts of the Internet gives them the possibility to create a "copy", isomorphic to the reality, modelling it, what is more the reproduced reality is the object and the pattern of that object at the same time. Multimodality of these texts enhances different channels of perception which initiates in the spectator apart from "engagement" also "participation effect". The ocular reality is identified with the real world, while being what the collective author of the text wants to show — the viewer can understand the irreality of the events but not the mediated nature of the text itself. In this situation it is very easy to manipulate and control the recipient, which has been done by the Internet for many years as it has come into almost each house and become an essential part of life of the society.

Talking about the videotext filmed by the White helmets it is possible to speak about the usage of the "illusion of the reality" effect. The spectators being sure that they are watching a video report from a real life events automatically consider things happening on the screen to be authentic shots which intricate real emotions. The semiotic situation is being created which aim is to perplex the viewers, to make them believe into what he sees and interpret the text in the sense which is needed to the authors and have "fake" emotions — perceive the objects and phenomena on the screen as the signs of the reality, which are empty and do not correspond to the real life, being, intrinsically, an imagination, — simulacrum.

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СИМУЛЯКР В В СТАТИКЕ И ДИНАМИКЕ ЭКРАННОГО ПРОСТРАНСТВА ТЕКСТА
(тематическое исследование поликодовых-мультимодальных текстов Интернета)

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С наступлением компьютерной, электронной революции, с распространением сети Интернет современная мировая культура имеет в своей основе уже не книжную, а экранную форму существования текста. На смену гомогенному печатному тексту пришли тексты гетерогенные, или аудиовизуальные, к наиболее сложившимся представителям которых можно отнести кино и телевидение, на базе которых сформировались тексты своеобразной структуры, принципиально совмещающей языковые устные и письменные носители смысла с неязыковыми, и которые, превратившись в «цифру», доминируют на сегодняшний день в сети Интернет, от которых зритель ожидает наличия

таких стилистических черт, как достоверность и фактологическая точность. Именно данное ожидание активно эксплуатируется авторами подобных видео с целью манипуляции зрителем для создания впечатления, что демонстрируемые объекты и явления имеют денотаты в реальном мире, заставляя реципиента поверить в созданную модель действительности, порождая, таким образом, симулякры. Данная статья посвящена анализу особенностей конструирования симулякров в поликодовых-полимодальных текстах как семиотически осложненных и представляющих собой сложный семиотический комплекс вербальных, иконических и акустических компонентов. Также рассматривается, каким образом создается правдоподобная модель действительности на примере трех поликодовых-полимодальных текстов, описывающих боевые действия в Сирии. Анализ производится в статике и динамике экранного пространства текста: на визуальном (кадры), вербальном и акустическом уровнях. В ходе исследования выделяются лингвосемиотические особенности порождения симулякров в статике экрана, а также перечисляются инструменты, используемые для конструирования симулякров в динамике экрана.

Ключевые слова: экран, поликодовый-полимодальный текст, симулякр, вербальный, иконический, знак, знаковое поведение, семиозис

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