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Content Analysis of the Functioning of Media in Society and Media Texts on Media Education Classes in the Student Audience

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Abstract

The author define the content analysis as a quantitative analysis of media texts (the definition of the category of media text, organize facts, conclusions about the types of narratives, symbols, languages, forms, etc.; how often appear certain factors such as stereotypes plot). This also connected with the analysis of media agencies work (volume of transmitted information, selectivity information and so on.). The author substantiates the technology content analysis of media and media texts in the student audience. The article also provides examples of creative tasks and issues related to content analysis of media & media texts.

Keywords: media, content analysis, media text, media literacy education, media violence, media studies, media culture, students.

Introduction

Content analysis - a quantitative analysis of media texts (the definition of the category of media text, organize facts, conclusions about the types of narratives, symbols, languages, forms, etc.; how often appear certain factors such as stereotypes plot). Is also applicable to the analysis of media agencies work (volume of transmitted information, selectivity information and so on.).

British media educator Julian Bowker draws attention to the fact that content analysis - a quantitative method of study, leading to the evaluation of the formal aspects of art or media. For example, students can compare the amount of paper that is dedicated to the illustrations, and the amount provided for the text; students can also count the number of promotional materials compared to the number of subjects of news. This should take into account the types of paper (regional, national, etc.). Other exercises include reference to characterize the attitude of the magazine for women, count the number of illustrations, where women play a passive role, compared to those where they are active, or count the number of frames in the passage of the television news program [Bowker, 1995, p.7].

In relation to the functioning of the media in society and media texts content analysis "may include both analytical analysis of all content-formal consideration of the complex media, analysis of problem-specific clusters of content, information campaigns, genre forms and media analysis of selected works. The purpose of the analysis may be the definition of relevant content, internal structure and formal style characteristics of media works of the conceptual model and format media, revealing the dominant ideological complex, reflected in the aggregate publications. ... Analysis of the content can be carried out by different categories: on the subject of messages; by forms of supply; genre characteristics of media works; on the composition and characteristics of the characters appearing in them; frequency reference to specific topics and subjects; on the degree of systematic and timeliness of the material reproduced in media texts"[Korochensky, 2003, p.63-64]. Categories of content analysis can be, for example, political symbols and language reflected in media texts, and the unit of analysis - the word. Then the unit of account will mention a single word from the political vocabulary in a variety of media texts.

Materials and methods

It is known that the main types of media today - print, press, cinema, radio, television, video and the Internet. Regardless of the type of communication media can identify the main indicators for media typology: periodicity, target orientation, object-thematic, genre orientation, a typology of the characters and the audience [Gripsrud, 1999; Limburg, 1988; Nazarov, 2004].

For example, American researchers P. Babitsky and J. Rimberg made the content analysis of Soviet feature films from 1923 to 1950, and they found that the characters are villains in these media texts were distributed according to the following ethnic lines: the class enemies of Russian nationality (31%), Germans (21%), British (7%), Americans (6%) [Babitsky, Rimberg, 1955, p.223]. As for the motives of their crimes, they were mostly political (72%) and economic (16%), while all other motives (household, love, family, etc.) together accounted for only 12% [Babitsky, Rimberg 1955, p. 233]. According to the results of the same content analysis, age ranges of positive character of Soviet films period 1923-1950 years were as follows: 46% of active heroes were young in age from 20 to 29 years, children and young people up to 20 years were three times less – 14 %, characters retirement age was 4% marginal niche) [Babitsky, Rimberg, 1955, p. 230].

More detail classification parameters are defined by the media category of objects in terms of application and learning experiences for the philosophical basis for the orientation to areas of personal development, the nature of the content and structure, by type of social and educational activities, the type of management of public processes, organizational forms, methods, tools, etc.

The media can be classified by the type of:

- property and equipment (press, radio, film, television, video, computer networks and others.),
- the channel of perception (audio, video, audio-visual, symbolic - text, graphics),
- the place of use (individual, group, mass, home, work, transport, etc.),
- the content of the information transmitted to socialization (ideological, political, moral, educational, informative, educational, aesthetic, ecological, economic),
- the functions and purposes of use (informational, educational, educational, communicative, social and cultural, social, entertainment, recreational, relaxation, compensatory, ethical, aesthetic, and others.),
- the results of the impact on the individual (development outlook, self-knowledge, self-education, self-learning, self-assertion, self-regulation of the state, socialization, marginalization and so forth.),
- on the media typological structure affects function and other activities: production, advertising, information and others.

Media differentiated according to the intended purpose, taking into account the nature of their participation in the political and economic functions, in support of various ideological, political, religious and other movements. Owners, founders of media can be public, commercial and non-profit organizations, political parties, trade unions, churches, etc. Media can be included in holdings, corporations, or loyal opposition to the authorities having different party, ideological orientation.

Study different aspects of the functioning of media in society helps to know the social processes, mindsets audience focus of its interests, etc. The type of information is also important

for the formation of different typological groups of media. Publications / TV / radio / Internet portals / sites (international, all-Russian, regional, women's, men's, sports, science, etc.). Media texts addressed a specific audience, can be universal themes, or reflect several topics of interest to this audience group, but they are monothematic (fashion, medicine, hunting, fishing, mathematics, chemistry, etc.).

Media texts intended for differentiated according to various indicators of the public: mass and elite, global and local, multinational / ethnic and mono-national / ethnic, urban and rural, male and female, child / adolescent and adult, atheist and religious, corporate, etc.

However, despite the heterogeneity of the audience around the globe overwhelming part prefers mass media pop culture, the reasons for the success of which can be found in the folklore basis, entertainment genre orientation in the use of "emotional swings," compensation functions, recreation, intuition of the author and others.).

Media educators have successfully used the one of the key aspects of media education – *category* – in the works related to content analysis.

There are several ways to determine the category of *media text*. For example, it may be species (documentaries, fiction, non-fiction works, etc.) or media text genre category (reportage, portrait, interviews, comedy, drama, etc.). Separation of *media texts* by category can be so by the development of ideas of students on how to understand the text and how (and why) they are created [Bazalgette, 1995, p.23-25].

For example, the popular American TV series *Star Wars* is different from other American TV series *Star Track* on the subject, the composition of the crew, the level of special effects and so on, but they both belong to the same category - the game fiction cinema. Students also can analyze the process of interpenetration, synthesis of forms and genres that violate clarity the definition of *category* (for example, the famous film by American director R.Zemekis *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* (1988) synthesized gaming and animation kinds of cinema, and *Sin City* (2005) by Robert Rodriguez brilliantly combined detective, thriller and gangster drama with stylized classic comics).

The term *category* is linked to other key concepts of media literacy education, such as *agency* and *audience*.

For the purposes of media education students need to demonstrate their content analysis tools, as need to know how they were obtained, or other results. If we imagine a particular situation when a student begins a content analysis of media texts, tracking them certain characteristics, it is necessary to fix the document observations. This fixation can occur in one of three ways: the first one is "likened to work with bibliographic cards: a blank on the name entered characteristics or numeric numbering of the code, these forms are accumulated and then as needed summed frequency of occurrence of a particular characteristic; the second method consists in the fact that previously procured array forms with names printed on them characteristics. Encoder is the right place to enter it finds characteristic; third way - the most economical, but is only possible to solve problems when researchers interested in the characteristics mentioned, but not the volume of the text where these characteristics are found, - when the card is a continuous series of numbers (which coincides with the total number of codes), and the encoder circling only codes that correspond to the characteristics encountered in the text. Counting the frequency of occurrence of each characteristic in the whole array will be the result of the primary analysis of a selected set of texts" [Fedotova, 2001, p.99-100].

I have conducted a content analysis on "Violence in the Russian screen", and I found that at the beginning of the XXI century the majority of Russian TV series did not differ variety of genres and was somehow related to the theme of crime and violence. Each of these series contained a number of scenes of violence (murder, shooting, violent fights, etc.). On average, the total duration of the demonstration data series on the four leading Russian channels was not less than 50 hours per week (about 7 hours daily).

The correctness of these results are confirmed by other studies. For example, K. Tarasov monitored six leading Russian TV channels, which found that "the total duration of the violence in a movie is in the range from less than one minute to 31 minutes" [Tarasov, 2003, p.121]. A similar content analysis was carried A. Korochensky: "the sun had not yet risen to the zenith, and we have witnessed a dozen murders and over 20 scenes of criminal violence: fights, brutal beatings, shootings, stabbings, assaults, torture and acts of terrorism. (...) Crime has become a topic number

one national television. (...) Crime is perceived as ordinary, mundane phenomenon" [Korochensky, 2002, p.11].

Of course, unlike television documentaries on the theme of crime, the violence in the game film seems not so terrible and shocking. For example, kids can always say: "Do not be afraid, it's only a movie! His uncle was killed for fun. He's not a gangster and a cop and an actor." However, the negative impact on the psyche of minors such views still have [among the many scientific publications confirming this, see: Stoughton, 2000, p.91].

I conducted a content analysis of television programs from leading Russian channels, and I have the conclusion that television often represents the world as a dangerous area, where the killing and cruelty - the usual case, successfully resolving any social conflict, and human death itself - a trifle. Hence, some students there is confidence that the killers and gangsters - a well-paid profession, worthy of respect and a desire to acquire them, together, of course, with a full set of "ethics" and functions [Fedorov, 2001; 2004].

A table structure, in my opinion, can be used effectively in teaching content analysis: students can investigate the plot, theme, genre, gender, ethnic, etc. of different media texts.

Content analysis of media texts implies a number of students of creative tasks. Each of these tasks include analysis of the key concepts of media literacy education (*media agencies, media categories, media language, media technologies, media representations, media audiences, etc.*).

Creative tasks on content analysis of media and media texts in the classroom at the student audience (some of this tasks are available at: BFI, 1990; Semali, 2000, pp.229-231, however, the cycle of tasks was supplemented and revised):

Media agencies:

- Content analysis aimed at clarifying the quantitative parameters of the genre and thematic orientation of specific media agencies;

Media / media text categories:

- Visit the library reading room and analysis exposed the press there in terms of its typology, category (functions aimed at a specific audience, genre priorities);

- Distribution of media texts on various topics by category;
Drawing up associative array to the categories "film", "romance", "broadcast", etc.

Media technologies:

- content analysis of the frequency of use of specific media technologies used to create media texts.

Media languages:

-content analysis aimed at determining the amount of specific characters, stereotypes (plot, gender, race and so on.) and forms that appeared in media texts and genres specific for a certain length of time/

Media representations:

- content analysis of key headlines on the front pages of various newspapers, conclusions about their political, classroom, genre orientation;

- content analysis of genre stereotypes (plot schemes, typical situations, characters, clothing, objects, scenes of action, etc.);

- content analysis of advertising media texts and a certain type of genre in order to count the number of direct display of the advertised product, the number of male and female characters, their age ranges, etc.;

- content analysis of audiovisual media texts for the number of facts hidden advertising (placement): alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, certain brands of cars, etc.

- content analysis of media texts relating to the specific facts and events that occurred during the day / week / month;

- content analysis aimed at determining the number of language units (eg, words or phrases) in media texts and genres specific for a certain length of time;

- content analysis aimed at determining the amount of transmitted information media agency, its selectivity, etc. in media texts and genres specific for a certain length of time.

- content analysis of a media (newspapers, TV), dedicated to the image (photographs, drawings, etc.), or promotional materials, and volume for verbal texts (articles, dialogs, etc.); subsequent determination of the type of media text (type, genre, method and region distribution and so on.);

Media audiences:

- content analysis typology of media audiences. As a result, performance of tasks related to content analysis, contribute to the development of students' cognitive interests, associative critical thinking, media competence.

Questions to the study of the characteristics of media content analysis in the student audience [Silverblatt, 2001, pp.42-43; Fedorov, 2001, p.86; Nazarov, 2004; Fedorov, et al 2005]:

Media agencies:

How often (year, month, week or day) produces a particular media agency / shows / sells certain genres?

How often (year, month, week or day) produces a particular media agency / shows / sells certain subjects?

Media / media text categories:

What is a system of media texts (photographic, cinematographic, radio / video / TV)? What are the dominant features are the basis of their classification? What are the characteristics of each of these types of media texts? Is there any other ways of classifying media texts, except genre? If so, what is it? (Eg, thematic, generic, style);

How often specific genre stereotypes used in a particular media text?

Media technologies:

What is the frequency of the use of specific media technologies in a particular media text?

Media languages:

How often manifest visual symbols, stereotypes (gender, race, etc.) in media texts for a certain length of time?

Media representations:

Is there a difference between the numbers of daily and weekly newspapers (subject, in the genres of the material, etc.)? If yes, what is it?

Where do you see the difference between newspapers and magazines?

What documentary media text different from scientific, popular science, gaming, animation?

What is the difference between the game (fictional) and documentary media texts?

What are the similarities and differences between different media (press, radio, TV, Internet sites) with respect to their coverage of sensational crimes, acts of violence and terror?

How and in what percentage of a given time period portrayed in popular media texts of different genres and countries: family, class, gender, race, life in other countries, the police, etc.?

As human values displayed in the your country's media texts a certain time period, different from the values appearing in the media texts of other countries in the same period?

What are the similarities and differences (and on what parameters) moral principles contained in the propaganda media texts of Nazi and Communist regimes?

How can you prove that a particular media text pursues subversive in relation to this or that state goals as reliably determine whether it has propagandistic content or not?

What are the characteristics of a famous person (candidate in the elections, sportsmen, show business, etc.), the most frequently mentioned in media texts specific channel / publication?

In some episodes reveal conflicts in media texts? How appears the image of the conflicting parties in media texts of different agencies?

What are the typical content of advertising products domestic producers? How is this different from the imported advertising?

If you are asked to select ten of media texts that could tell about Russian aliens (or foreigners), which would you choose? Why these media texts?

Media audiences:

On what parameters need to evaluate media messages (political, social, moral, philosophical, artistic, etc.)?

What factors are primarily attracted an audience of media texts?

What are the values of the individual usually appealing advertising media texts, whether to change their character?

What is the typology of the media audience?

What are the typical indicators of media preferences can be differentiated audience?

Conclusions

Thus, we concluded that the technology of content analysis can be successfully applied in the students' classroom in the humanities faculties. The basis of these studies, in our opinion, may be based on a variety of creative tasks associated with the key concepts of media education (media agencies, media categories, media language, media technologies, media representations, media audiences, etc.).

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УДК 37

Контент-анализ функционирования медиа в обществе и медиатекстов на медиаобразовательных занятиях в студенческой аудитории

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Аннотация. Автор определяет контент-анализ как количественный анализ медиатекстов (определение категории медиатекста, выводов о типах повествования,

символах, языках, формах и т.д.; как часто появляются определенные факторы, такие, как стереотипы, например). Это также применяется к анализу работы медийного агентства (объем передаваемой информации, сведения об отборе информации и др.). Автор обосновывает контент-анализ технологии медиа и медиатекстов в студенческой аудитории. В статье также приводятся примеры творческих задач и вопросов, связанных с контент-анализом медиа и медиатекстов.

Ключевые слова: медиа, контент-анализ, медиатекст, медиаграмотность, медиаобразование, медиакультура, студенты.