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BASIC CONCEPTS OF MEDIA TEXT ON TWITTER

***Abstract:** The article is dedicated to the outstanding phenomenon of media text which is interwoven with all the spheres of our everyday lives. Although such a term can be applied to any single type of mass media, Internet-media seem to be the most powerful as they represent an amalgamation of hallmarks characteristic of radiobroadcast, television and newspapers. Twitter is chosen to be one of the brightest examples of media text as it may be used as a news portal, a blog and a perfect advertising platform: employing specific stylistic and non-stylistic devices, it manages to stand out and attract public attention.*

***Keywords:** Mass Media, Internet, Information, Social Networks, Twitter.*

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ТВИТТЕР КАК МЕДИАТЕКСТ: ОСНОВНЫЕ ПОНЯТИЯ И ОТЛИЧИЯ

***Аннотация:** Статья посвящена феномену медиатекста, который тесно связан с повседневной жизнью людей. Несмотря на то, что данный термин может быть применен к любому проявлению средств массовой информации, Интернет-СМИ проявляют себя как наиболее активные и новаторские,*

поскольку содержат в себе целый комплект особенностей, характерных как для радиопередач и телевидения, так и для газет. Твиттер выбран в качестве наиболее яркого примера медиатек-ста, т.к. он может использоваться как новостной портал, блог и рекламная платформа.

Ключевые слова: *средства массовой информации, интернет, информация, социальные сети, твиттер.*

Considering modern conditions of information society, we cannot ignore the influence mass media exerts over our everyday lives. Before being brought to the consumer, information undergoes certain changes and may be dreadfully distorted. According to Luhmann, German sociologist, mass media normally construct reality, as almost everything we learn about the world around us, we find on the Internet, on TV or in newspapers, no matter how significant or insignificant this knowledge may be: political news spill on us from various social networks even though we might not seek them; interesting facts may be printed on the back of a journal we have accidentally noticed while on the subway, or some gossip may be pique our curiosity as we come across a bright headline. Thus, mass media turn into an intermediary between the sender and the receiver creating a specific worldview while conveying a message.

Naturally, media streams cannot be examined as a whole: it should be subdivided into smaller parts which are to be observed gradually, step by step, forming connections and systems. To simplify the approach, scientists came up with a term **media text** which combines eclectic concepts: here we mention radiobroadcast, television, Internet commercials, and even newspaper articles. The term itself is relatively new; it first appeared in the 1990s, and it quickly spread in the academic world, thus stirring up an interest in media speech as well as in hallmarks a language may gain in the sphere of mass communications.

The variation of the media text we see on the Internet is different from those that we spot in newspapers or on TV, and its existence within the cyberspace explains the set of traits Internet mass media possesses. The first one is definitely its **interactivity**. It means that there is a possibility to get a feedback and to take part in communication in general. Normally interactivity is represented by the section for comments below the

original post, the option to create a poll, to mention the author or any other member of the conversation etc.

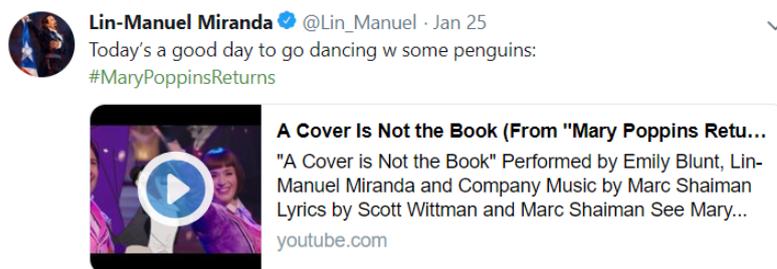
Another standout feature of the Internet media is its **nonlinear nature**, when a user can choose the best option possible. For example, Video On Demand when movies or programs are broadcast at a fixed time and the viewer cannot change the date, are mostly replaced by the modern applications or services: a wide variety of popular channels have their sites where people can watch or download their favorite movie whenever they are most comfortable, so they do not need to wait till midnight in order to get a glimpse of the smash-hit they have been dreaming to watch.

The third trait that should be mentioned is **digitalism**. The Internet tends to employ all possible digital formats in one message: for example, when you send a funny picture (.jpeg) to your friend, they react to this by an animation (.gif), and can reply with a video (.avi) to make you remember a text (.docx) you've recently shared. Such diversity generates the **modular design** which rearranges miscellaneous elements within the same semantic area. Such elements are no longer unusual to us, as we consider them to be integral parts of the Internet: various filters, search bars, online payment services, notifications, feedback etc. All those tiny details result in **time-space compression** as the Internet accentuates momentary communication. Unlike paper letters, modern message applications somewhat reduce distance and speed up time between the users. Friends or partners can be in the different parts of the world but at the same time they will be able to maintain a conversation about fashion or business without issue. The aforementioned peculiarities build up a pattern that consists of the press, television and radio – the amalgamation of all the components of the Mass Media System. This is another quality of the Internet, **media convergence**, which guarantees that the information will be delivered to the consumer by any of the means.

All online media do adopt the same hallmarks, but there is a website which evinces them brightly. Twitter, a social network with a text unit named tweet, only allows messages of 280 or even less, is quite popular these days. It declares to work in real-time mode, and probably due to this, it has been acclaimed: everybody has a Twitter account, whether it is Barack Obama (the US ex-President), Lin-Manuel

Miranda (American composer, singer, actor, producer), John Meacham (writer), Sergey Lavrov (Russian diplomat) etc. But are tweets different from posts on other social networks? Let us see.

Lin-Manuel Miranda, American composer and a playwright, is an amazing example to explore. He is most famous for his production *Hamilton: An American Musical*, and although he does not seem to post anything related to his past experiences, his account is still peculiar enough. For instance, he demonstrates all the abilities Twitter can offer to someone eager to convey a message.



Pic. 1 Commercial tweet



Pic. 2 'Blog' tweet

In these two tweets certain traits have been illustrated. In the first place, the author of the tweets uses *w* (acronym for «with») which is increasingly typical for short texts and then employs a hashtag (#) that will give his readers the opportunity to find all the information about the movie he has played part in. Moreover, this is not a simple message, quite on the contrary, it has an integrated video in it. Then, you can see a mention of a person, a friend or an acquaintance as we can judge by the picture and the contraction (the verb *have*) he uses. Apart from this, Lin explains that the photo is not taken by him, but he does not even have to type anything – instead of letters, he leaves

a camera emoji. Although this is not the form or shape of the message we are used to, we easily understand what he is meaning by the tweet.

Another interesting example is Jimmy Kimmel's show during which invited celebrities read Mean Tweets about themselves. For example, there are plenty of onomatopoeia cases (bruh) as well as contractions and/or abbreviations (imma = I'm going to; ASAP = as soon as possible) that are not common on other networks. Also people do not often use punctuation at all, although other grammatical rules are followed.

@wearethtre: I swear on Crip, if I see Michael B Jordan imma slap that mini feather duster he call a mustache off his lip bruh

@djdresden: Ashton Kutcher needs to get hit by a bus asap

Puns are widely used among users as well:

@Adaripp: I would let Marie Kondo reorganize the organs in my body

@aparnapkin: I once dated an apostrophe. Too possessive.

On a side note, about apostrophes: on the English-speaking segment of Twitter, people tend to ignore apostrophes (didnt, ive, couldntve) or replace the words by their colloquial variant (shoul da coulda woulda instead should have, could have, would have, which can be easily found on Ellen DeGeneres' account).

Actually, Twitter can be examined from different points of view: it is a news and information portal which employs video fragments and hashtags, it is also a nice example of entertainment services, a diary where people express their thoughts and opinions and a perfect advertising platform. Lin-Manuel Miranda managed to promote his movie using digitalism, media convergence and nonlinear nature to his advantage and at the same time it served him as a blog where he shared his emotions about the picture. In this regard, Twitter is not only famous for its 280 character messages, but for its representation of information also: graphical icons, emojis, are used to express emotions; hashtags let people go back in time to sum up the material and to see the whole set of news related to this or that event, communication is turning into a mixture of pictures, video fragments and animations, while texts suffer from lack of punctuation.

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