Term systems of new emerging scientific disciplines are a conventional subject for linguistic studies. The term system is in no way synonymous with terminology which is rarely considered as a systemic whole, since it represents a set of both terms per se, terminoids and terminological nonce words. In a strict sense, the term, as popularly assumed, does not enter synonymy, polysemy and homonymy; it is unequivocal, deliberately regulated and stylistically neutral unit. Being a part of the term system it is also marked with a specific lexicographical field label.

In the modern context terminology accomplishes a crucial function – communicative – since it provides specialists with (mainly) special methods of accumulation, fixation as well as of professional thinking development and scientific knowledge stimulation.

As a dynamic linguistic unit, the term represents the result of the human cognitive activity; however, in recent decades, our conceptualization and categorization of the real environment have drastically been changed.

This article contains an observation on some dynamic processes occurring in the terminology of such knowledge as PR-logy, i.e. the study of public relations. The history of foreign and national PR in general has already been addressed in a separate monograph [1].

Owing to an applied nature of this discipline, initially based on an external professional usage imposed by domestic technological developments and on growing public practice, the terminology of scientific reflection of PR-activity has constantly been at bifurcation for almost two decades of its existence. The term framework of public relations is obviously an open system. While in 1990s the term “public relations” per se was being actively discussed and criticized, soon enough it was no longer a nonce word or a part of professional jargon.

Originally, due to interdisciplinarity of the most social phenomenon the problem of PR term system formation was the focus of various socio-humanistic sciences: philology, sociology, philosophy, advertising studies, the theory of mass communications and journalism. New terms “communication product” and “media product” are introduced into the scientific framework. It is noted that the emergence of new media leads to the formation of new terms that denote the actors of modern public online communications, carriers and textual results of their activities.

Keywords: nonce word, terminology, mass communications, media product, communication product.

Abstract

The article addresses some dynamic processes in the terminology of such knowledge as PR-studies, or the science of public relations. The terminology of public relations is an open system. The formation of the public relations terminology system has been focused by various social and humanistic sciences: philology, sociology, philosophy, advertising studies, the theory of mass communications and journalism. New terms “communication product” and “media product” are introduced into the scientific framework. It is noted that the emergence of new media leads to the formation of new terms that denote the actors of modern public online communications, carriers and textual results of their activities.

Keywords: nonce word, terminology, mass communications, media product, communication product.

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Undoubtedly, new technologies and realia should be the subject of professional discussion and implementation in didactics. Thus, in 2016 a new draft-project of “Model Principle Educational Program in the Field of “Advertising and PR”, initiated by Saint-Petersburg State University, was considered. This discussion articulated competences and their descriptions which further, as a matter of course, should be put into the practice through the competences achievement rate at the level of certain academic disciplines.

During the debate on the basic competence with the Federal Academic Methodological Association “Mass Media and Information-Library Service” (Lomonosov Moscow State University) the basic general professional competence was introduced as: media text / media product /communication product. The statement reads as follows: “make <student> able to create communication products demanded in the sphere of public relations and advertising in accordance with the standards of the Russian language, foreign languages and other sign systems” [Project Script]. In fact, (mainly) the didactic operationalizing practice admits such terms which have not been explicitly treated yet (media text) and – shall we say – didactic nonce words – media product / communication product. While the media includes hypothetical performance of today’s journalists who can work in a convergent environment, the result of PR or advertising specialist’s activity is hardly to be considered as the media product. Thus, a suggestion was made to note it as “communication product”. Following the discussion, the experts at Academic Methodological Association in the Field of “Public Relations” (L.V. Azarova, Associate Professor; V.A. Achkasova, Professor; E. M. Glinternik, Professor; and A.D. Krivonosov, Professor) suggested that this term should be read as: “Communication product means the result of professional activity in the sphere of public and mass communications aimed at media-, event-, ad- and PR-products making”.

As it is commonly noted, “communicating or being an observer and carrier of the experience and knowledge the human choose linguistic means of expression accepted by the speech community” [2]. Still, today we face such a situation when a launch of the term into the didactic practice becomes a foresight in the communication activity.

As we see it, to interpret this term it is important to outline that the product means the result of professional activity which is obviously performed within a certain professional area. It seems appropriate to clarify that the media product summarizes the activity of specialists employed at the media sphere.

At the present time we comprehend the media sphere phenomenon in a new way, i.e. “The modern media sphere is understood as an intensity of the information flow (mainly, of the audiovisual one, e.g. TV, cinema, computer graphics, the Internet); as the system of human integrated exploration of the environment within its social, moral, psychological, artistic and intellectual aspects [1, P. 19]. The media sphere shapes a particular media system and involves (mainly) expert performance followed by “ordinary” actors entering the communication. Due to dynamic transformations of the media sphere the notion of media system per se is also approached in a new, extended sense. Citing Ye. L. Vartanova, Professor and Dean of Journalism at Lomonosov Moscow State University: “As the mass media is developing and as contemporary technological platforms such as radio and TV is appearing, broadcast media start to integrate a non-journalistic content as well, i.e. music, theater performance, cinema and etc. The media sphere has also involved those spheres which previously were the part of cultural (and commonly mass-cultural) production. Since the second half of the 20th century the majority of analysts have come to consider the following segments of the media sphere as new ones:

1. The system of popular music and sound recording; cinema industry;
2. Radio- and TV-companies or production companies.

Alongside with the development of basic segments producing news and entertaining mass media content, there has been a growth in the enterprises which promote mutual interests between the market and mass media, i.e. ads and communicative agencies. The system of public relations, which started to get closer to the mass media as well, has also become independent in the context of strategic business communication and society. The end of the 20th century is also marked by the start of media-and-publishing business integration” [9, P. 10-11].

As it has been mentioned before, the results of activity made by the whole team of experts in the area of mass and public communications are being integrated into the media sphere. Thus, the notion of communication product combines with the notion of media product since the experts in communication can use similar media carriers. The media sphere determines the nature of media communications. In our observation, the media communications are understood as the process of information creation, proceeding and broadcasting as well as exchanging in a personal, group or mass format via different communication channels: verbal/non-verbal; audio, audiovisual and visual. Note that the term “media communications” has not yet been precisely described [12], [11].

However, to our mind, the term “communication product” implies its own connotations, since the result of PR- and ads specialist’s performance are often those phenomena which are not supposed to be mediated on a mass scale (not publically).

Undoubtedly, certain difficulties in the dichotomy between “media product” and “communication product” are brought by active digital tools: the mass media now do not dominate the public sphere as an organizer, activator and medium of the public opinion – they are now represented by the Internet users. New media change the number and quality of communication between their members. All this leads to the formation of new terms to nominate, for example, both the actors of modern public online-communications [10] as well as carriers and text results of their activity.

The development of new media has caused the emergence of new communication products, new types of texts existing in the Net. Building new genres of the Internet-text, we generate new research area – the Internet genre studies [3]. The scientific framework consider Insta and Pint as the genres of media text within the Internet communication; some works contain their discourse characteristics [4, 5]. In particular, if we project the system of genre forming characteristics onto Instagram or Pinterest contents, then we are likely to consider Insta and Pint as the genres of media text within the class of news genre as well as of reasonable and emotional journalism. As the news genre Insta and Pint can be called because they record the event (subject) as a picture and text description, meet the requirements on objectivizing the event (method) and speak about the event showing its details (function). It is also possible to consider Insta and Pint as the genres of reasonable journalism given that they contain infographics. Thus, they show the link between different events as well as their causes.
and possible results (subject); analyze the event or phenomenon (method); and insert the event into the context (function). Finally, Insta and Pin also represent themselves as emotional journalism genres by the fact that they can include a person (subject) – the image which includes a certain emotionally charged moment of their life (method) and cause emotional reaction of the network user (function).

Another communication product engaged into the social networks is selfie. Today almost all the holders of smart phones with different social networks applications (Instagram, in particular) are the selfie-authors.

We understand selfie as a form of such media text as Insta. The person capturing themselves for the selfie can be both a public figure as well as ordinary people. As a basic image genre the selfie can be described as an image media text aimed at building and grabbing the publicity capital for the PR basic actor (public figure) expanded in the social networks. We also consider the selfie as a related image text, i.e. the media text which is characterized by publicity, but is not designed to form or grab the publicity capital, since the PR basic actor is not a public figure [6].

In conclusion, we assume that the emerging and constantly developing term system of PR knowledge includes such subsystems the elements of which form certain areas inside. This system offers such properties as emergence, synergy and multiplicity. Its evolution is determined mainly by extra-linguistic factors, which, even in the case of such an applied scientific discipline can be sourced from a pedagogic communication that primarily serves as a foresight for the term-practice and later as its driver.

Список литературы / References


Список литературы на английском / References in English


