



© О. А. Вальгер, И. А. Везнер

DOI: [10.15293/2226-3365.1704.09](https://doi.org/10.15293/2226-3365.1704.09)

УДК 101 + 316.34 + 81'38

ОБНОВЛЯЕМЫЕ СТАТЬИ И НАЦИОНАЛЬНАЯ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТЬ: ОБРАЗЫ АКТУАЛЬНОГО ПОЛЯ

О. А. Вальгер, И. А. Везнер (Новосибирск, Россия)

Проблема и цель. Статья посвящена проблеме практик национальной идентичности в информационной среде обновляемых статей – новой формы электронных новостей, ныне широко применяемой ведущими мировыми изданиями, описанию и анализу этих практик. Статья ставит целью объяснить лингвистическую сторону нарративов национальной идентичности, воспроизводимых в этой жанровой форме.

Методология. Методы исследования включают тематическое исследование и контент-анализ репрезентативной выборки из сорока примеров обновляемых статей, читательских отзывов и их редакторских метрик. Междисциплинарный подход позволяет авторам выделить жанрово-стилистические особенности обновляемых статей и интерпретировать их социальный эффект в практике национальной идентичности.

Результаты. «Обновляемая статья» как разновидность электронной статьи освещает разворачивающееся событие в прямом эфире путём соединения отдельных новостных (текстовых и аудиовизуальных) элементов в обратном хронологическом порядке. Авторы предполагают, что обновляемые статьи обращаются к групповой идентичности и актуализируют её через ряд эффектов восприятия, создаваемых стилистическими средствами.

Заключение. Авторы выделяют четыре аспекта возможного эффекта изучаемых текстов в практике национальной идентичности: актуальное поле групповой солидарности, разворачивающаяся событийность, идентификация с лидерами мнений, подчеркнутая важность события для существования группы. Устойчиво повторяющиеся в пределах выборки жанрово-стилистические особенности данного новостного формата включают разделение на самостоятельные новостные элементы с заголовками и указанием авторства, включение профессиональных и любительских графических элементов, короткие абзацы, эмоциональную нейтральность редакторских ремарок и инвентарь языковых особенностей, характерных для публицистического стиля в газетной разновидности.

Ключевые слова: национальная идентичность; гражданская нация; практика идентификации; обновляемая статья; событийность; групповая солидарность; новостной текст; средства массовой информации; социальные агенты.

Вальгер Олеся Алексеевна – старший преподаватель, кафедра английского языка, факультет иностранных языков, Новосибирский государственный педагогический университет.

E-mail: olesyavalger@gmail.com

Везнер Ирина Анатольевна – кандидат филологических наук, доцент, кафедра английского языка, факультет иностранных языков, Новосибирский государственный педагогический университет.

E-mail: vezneru@mail.ru



СПИСОК ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ

1. **Ardèvol-Abreu A., Barnidge M., de Zúñiga H. G.** Communicative Antecedents of Political Persuasion: Political Discussion, Citizen News Creation, and the Moderating Role of Strength of Partisanship // *Mass Communication and Society*. – 2017. – Vol. 2, № 2. – P. 169–191. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2016.1244855>
2. **Aronczyk M.** Branding the nation: The global business of national identity. – Oxford University Press, 2013. – 225 p. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199752164.001.0001>
3. **Appadurai A.** Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization // *The International Migration Review*. – 1998. – Vol. 32, № 4. – P. 1073–1074. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2547675>
4. **Ebner M.** Introducing live microblogging: how single presentations can be enhanced by the mass // *Journal of research in innovative teaching*. – 2009. – Vol. 2, № 1. – P. 91–100. https://www.nu.edu/assets/resources/pageResources/7638_JournalofResearch09.pdf
5. **Campbell V.** Theorizing citizenship in citizen journalism // *Digital Journalism*. – 2015. – Vol. 3, Issue 5. – P. 704–719. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.937150>
6. **Carelli P.** Media systems beyond national boundaries: Towards a new paradigm? // *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*. – 2014. – Vol. 6 (6). – P. 85–91. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5897/jmcs2014.0389>
7. **Chouliaraki L.** ‘Improper distance’: Towards a critical account of solidarity as irony // *International journal of cultural studies*. – 2011. – Vol. 14, Issue 4. – P. 363–381. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1367877911403247>
8. **Dart J. J.** Blogging the 2006 FIFA world cup finals. *Sociology of Sport Journal*. – 2009. – Vol. 26, Issue 1. – P. 107–126. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1123/ssj.26.1.107>
9. **Harcup T.** Alternative journalism as monitorial citizenship? A case study of a local news blog // *Digital Journalism*. – 2016. – Vol. 4, № 5. – P. 639–657. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2015.1063077>
10. **Harcup T.** Asking the readers: Audience research into alternative journalism // *Journalism Practice*. – 2016. – Vol. 10, № 6. – P. 680–696. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2015.1054416>
11. **Hedman U.** J-Tweeters: Pointing towards a new set of professional practices and norms in journalism // *Digital Journalism*. – 2015. – Vol. 3, № 2. – P. 279–297. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.897833>
12. **Sefchovich S. Fredric Jameson.** The political unconscious: Narrative as a socially symbolic act // *Acta Poética*. – 1981. – Vol. 4, № 1-2. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.19130/iifl.ap.1981.1-2.605>
13. **Karlsen R.** Followers are opinion leaders: The role of people in the flow of political communication on and beyond social networking sites // *European Journal of Communication*. – 2015. – Vol. 30, № 3. – P. 301–318. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323115577305>
14. **Lister A. L., Datta R. S., Hofmann O., Krause R., Kuhn M., Roth B., Schneider R.** Live coverage of scientific conferences using web technologies // *PLoS Comput Biol*. – 2010. – Vol. 6, № 1. – P. e1000563. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1000563>
15. **Matheson D.** Digital Media and Reporting Conflict: blogging and the BBC’s coverage of war and terrorism // *Digital Journalism*. – 2014. – Vol. 2, № 4. – P. 621–623. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.899766>
16. **McGannon K. R., Berry T. R., Rodgers W. M., Spence J. C.** Breast cancer representations in Canadian news media: a critical discourse analysis of meanings and the implications for identity //



- Qualitative Research in Psychology. – 2016. – Vol. 13, № 2. – P. 188–207. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2016.1145774>
17. **Norris P., Curtis J.** Getting the message out: A two-step model of the role of the Internet in campaign communication flows during the 2005 British general election // Journal of Information Technology and Politics. – 2007. – Vol. 4, № 4. – P. 3–13. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19331680801975359>
18. **Paasi A.** Nationalizing everyday life: individual and collective identities as practice and discourse // Geography Research. – 1999. – Vol. 19. – P. 4–21. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822377474-009>
19. **Poster M.** Postmodern virtualities // Theory, Culture & Society: Cyberspace/cyberbodies/cyberpunk: Cultures of technological embodiment / Eds. M. Featherstone & R. Burrows. – London: SAGE, 1995. – P. 79–96. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446250198.n5>
20. **Collins R.** Book Review: Philip Schlesinger, Media, State and Nation: Political Violence and Collective Identities // Critique of Anthropology. – 1992. – Vol. 12, № 2. – P. 215–220. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275x9201200208>
21. **Thurman N., Newman N.** The Future of Breaking News Online? A study of live blogs through surveys of their consumption, and of readers' attitudes and participation // Journalism Studies. – 2014. – Vol. 15, № 5. – P. 655–667. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2014.882080>
22. **Thurman N., Walters A.** Live blogging–digital journalism's pivotal platform? A case study of the production, consumption, and form of live blogs at Guardian.co.uk // Digital Journalism. – 2013. – Vol. 1, № 1. – P. 82–101. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2012.714935>
23. **Tyler W., Lounsbury M., Glynn M. A.** Legitimizing Nascent Collective Identities: Coordinating Cultural Entrepreneurship // Organization Science. – 2011. – Vol. 22, № 2. – P. 449–463. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1100.0613>
24. **Van Dijk Teun A.** News analysis: Case studies of international and national news in the press. – Hillsdale, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1988. <http://www.discourses.org/OldBooks/Teun%20A%20van%20Dijk%20-%20News%20Analysis.pdf>
25. **Vis F.** Twitter as a reporting tool for breaking news: Journalists tweeting the 2011 UK riots // Digital journalism. – 2013. – Vol. 1, № 1. – P. 27–47. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2012.741316>
26. **Warschauer M., Zheng B., Park Y.** New ways of connecting reading and writing // TESOL Quarterly. – 2013. – Vol. 47, № 4. – P. 825–830. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/tesq.131>



DOI: [10.15293/2226-3365.1704.09](https://doi.org/10.15293/2226-3365.1704.09)

Olesya Alekseevna Valger, Senior Lecturer, English Department,
Faculty of Foreign Languages, Novosibirsk State Pedagogical
University, Novosibirsk, Russian Federation.

ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3379-4519>

E-mail: olesyavalger@gmail.com

Irina Anatolyevna Vezner, Associate Professor, English Department,
Faculty of Foreign Languages, Novosibirsk State Pedagogical
University, Novosibirsk, Russian Federation.

ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1281-1236>

E-mail: vezneru@mail.ru

Live blogging and national identity: Images of now and here

Abstract

Introduction. *The authors describe and analyse practices of national identity in the medium created in live blogging, a new form of online news now employed by the world's leading news editions. The purpose of the article is to explain the linguistic aspect of the narratives constructed in this genre.*

Materials and methods. *Materials and methods include exploratory case study and content analysis of a sample of forty randomly selected live blogs, their readers' feedback and their audience measurement. The interdisciplinary approach allows the authors to pinpoint the stylistic peculiarities of the new genre and interpret the effect in terms of social philosophy.*

Results. *The study has shown that live blogging as a digital article covers a developing situation live by arranging small pieces of text or visual content in reverse chronological order. The authors suggest that live blogging brings forward group identities and actualizes them through a set of perception effects determined by the stylistic features of the form.*

Conclusion. *The authors state that the possible effects of such texts on the practices of national identity include four aspects: shared group solidarity, unfolding simultaneousness of the event, identification with opinion leaders, accentuated importance of the event for group existence. The consistent characteristics of live blogging include division into lead parts in reverse chronological order with separate headlines and bylines, employing both reader-produced and professional graphic content, short paragraphs, emotional neutrality of the editor's contribution and a set of linguistic features characteristic of publicist style in its newspaper variety.*

Keywords

National identity; Civic nation; Identification practice; Live blogging; Unfolding event; Group solidarity; News text; Mass media; Social agents.

Introduction

The theory of nations and nationalism has brought forward a number of approaches to address the value and the role of national and international mass media in making and developing political identities. The range varies from the groundbreaking book of Philip

Schlesinger that stated an opportunity for predictable and controlled production of political identities via media [20] to a more sophisticated "global now" examined by Arjun Appadurai as a medium of practiced modernity [3]. We hold the view that identities at large and national identities in particular are born on the borderline between



the environment full of available national identity markers (produced and supported by political or cultural elites, opinion leaders and any other agents with high social status and influence) and the stream of a conscious self that struggles to find a place in the world of collective identities. A developed identity is a dynamic process of practice and narration.

Construction of social communities and their limits of exclusion and inclusion occurs through narratives [18, p. 6]. These narratives are developed by central members of communities that are often called “elites”; they are nuclear members of a group that have a strong personal attachment to its values, practices and public image. Such nuclear members supposedly bear an intense, actualized group identity that determines their social behavior to a visible degree. They aspire both to incorporate new members into the group and to increase group loyalty and group legitimacy. In organizational theory, this legitimacy is more likely to be achieved when members articulate a clear defining collective identity story that identifies the group's orienting purpose and core practices [2]. These collective identity stories, or narratives, are typically distributed with the means of national education system, national mass media and through individual practices of socialization (family, micro-group, role models, etc.)

The national media channel of distributing national identity narratives included first newspaper industry, and then radio and television. The 21st century brought broad, massive changes in communication that Mark Poster called “information superhighways” – channels that enable a vast increase in the flow of communications [19, p. 535]. Internet for a short time seemed to be building a totally alternative

universe of information practices where the majority of information was user-produced, amateur-edited, uncontrolled by states and organizations, unaccountable for the public and generally positioned outside national legal frameworks. The growth of its accessibility empowered self-reproducing individual practices of socialization and then attracted attention of professional publishing houses and journalists. According to NRS Readership Report of 2016 now the majority of readers view newspapers online and it is true for every British newspaper out of the major 40 under analysis. For example, the monthly audience of the Guardian was estimated as 4,037 million people for the print edition and 6,972 million people for the digital edition¹. These numbers do not only prove that traditional media lose the competition with online channels, but also suggest that the competition between professional news-making corporations and grassroots news is now going on online, too. With the main audiences increasingly moving online, and the digital medium enabling higher speed of communicating news to the public, it is no wonder that digital versions of newspapers have had to adapt their format to the challenges that Internet provides and to embrace new forms equivalent to the traditional forms of front-page articles, “hard” news, “breaking news”, editorials and columns.

One of these new equivalent forms is live blogging that we define as “a digital article that covers a developing situation live by arranging small pieces of text, sound or visual content in reverse chronological order”. It challenges the idea of live coverage and brings together amateur journalism of wide audiences and professional guidance of an educated specialist. Live blogging incorporates first-hand accounts of witnesses,

¹ NRS Readership Report: Print / PC Newsbrands: October 2015 – September 2016. URL: http://www.nrs.co.uk/downloads/padd-files/pdf/nrs_padd_oct15_sept16_newsbrands.pdf

[nrs.co.uk/downloads/padd-files/pdf/nrs_padd_oct15_sept16_newsbrands.pdf](http://www.nrs.co.uk/downloads/padd-files/pdf/nrs_padd_oct15_sept16_newsbrands.pdf) (Accessed: 28.01.2017).



official statements, domestic and international reaction, expert inputs and professional journalist commentary on a developing situation in a way that gives the information substantial credibility and sparks enough interest of the readers for them to stay tuned to one online source for a long time.

Literature review of the existing publications on live blogging suggests that this new and authentic form of news articles has not received enough attention so far. Live blogging as a genre has been researched recently in a certain number of studies (such as by N. Thurman, M. Ebner, F. Vis et al) [4; 8; 16; 22; 25], but has not been interpreted in terms of national identity before. The studies of N. Thurman and a group of authors associated with him mainly focus on the qualitative research of readers' apprehension of live blogging texts and highlight the impact of reader-introduced content on the general quality of a live blog [21; 22]. T. Harcup introduces the wider term of "alternative journalism" [9] which embraces amateur blogging as well as professionally created content in large news media and states that hyperlocal and local blogs are helping to address society's "democratic deficit" by subjecting the actions of the powerful to increased public scrutiny, in a process that has been described as "monitorial citizenship" [10]. This idea is developed in the works on communicative antecedents of political persuasion where a group of authors (A. Ardèvol-Abreu et al.) argues that online content creation works alongside other communicative behaviors [1; 5], such as news use and political discussion, to affect attempted political persuasion. Warschauer et al. bring forward the educational value of live blogging as a possible way of connecting reading and writing with increased participation [26].

Live blogging is not limited to English mass media only, but English mass media are of primary interest in the research of national

identities and are in the focus of the majority of the existing publications on live blogging [4; 5; 9; 15; 16; 21; 22]. Several researchers argue that the rise of digital journalism, citizen journalism and live blogging has led to a significant change of norms and journalism practices in the modern world [6; 11; 24] and this may lead us to a fresh perspective on national identities and nation states in the modernity.

The emergence of nation states is necessarily interwoven with the emergence of national languages, or more precisely, national dialects improved and polished by cultural elites. While globalization has challenged all local and national identities, as the new communication technologies challenged the binding power of national media, national languages still represent a strong barrier between nation states, especially in the countries where second language competence is low. P. Carelli argues that there is a tendency towards supranational media that can be observed in growing international ownership of media and shift in legal regulation that enables such ownership [6, p. 90]. This may be true for media in English, but language barriers for native speakers of the majority of other languages in the world are not so easily overcome, and English so far is the only language that successfully moves through national media boundaries. This is why it is especially important to research the internationalized media which audience is significantly larger than their national audience and they have both national and international editions at the same webpage. They give us an opportunity to compare the agenda, expressive means and article structures aimed at the domestic audiences with those aimed at the international audiences by the same editing teams.

The nation-building power of news coverage lies in the social actors that are group members at the same time. We may link news texts to legitimation practices through their



productive and interpreting activities in the news communication context [24, p. 19]. These social actors (journalists, editors, reporters) are not deliberate promoters of some sort of information order, but we should look at them as at central members of large national groups with high motivation that practice their own national identity in the process of news coverage. The narrative supported by their practice is further replicated by other members of the group that connect to the news texts emotionally because their own identities are actualized in the process of news consumption. This narrative is further reinforced by micro-socializing processes when people in the immediate circle of an individual share professionally-produced articles with their immediate social network, online or orally.

We suggest that live blogging brings forward group identities and actualizes them in a way that is similar to breaking news live coverage on TV and also has characteristic effects that are specific for this form. The traditional breaking news coverage is powerful through its informing us of developing events simultaneously with the developments and thus the viewers have increased awareness of some place in the nation state. Live blogging brings this to a new level, where the readers are aware both of the event and of the awareness of the large audience, and this effect may be of interest in nations and nationalism research.

The problem addressed in the article is the influence of the medium created in live blogging on practices of national identity.

The purpose of the article is to explain the linguistic aspect of the narratives constructed in this genre of news texts.

Materials and Methods

This study attempted to address both the practices of identity in live blogging production and the possible effects of the ready product on national identity narratives. We selected exploratory case study approach to do this and focused on detailed analysis of texts in a range of randomly selected live blogs, their readers' feedback and their audience measurement.

We selected large news websites out of fifteen most popular news websites in the world as of 2017 according to eBizMBA Rank² that have both domestic and international editions at the same webpage where the edition is chosen automatically based on the reader's location. Four of the fifteen most popular news websites satisfied our requirements: theguardian.com, bbc.com/news, cnn.com and nytimes.com. Two of the websites represented British news media, and two websites represented American news which allowed us to escape the limitation of language variants, where characteristic features of a live blog could have been attributed to local tradition of language use. We then kept track of live blogs over the period published in the four websites between February 2016 and January 2017 and collected the links in a list further uploaded to randomizer service software www.random.org/lists. We added a few limitations on the database: 1) we only included the live blogs that were advertised on the main pages of the news websites as we were interested in the effect of live blogging on national identities and not regional or local ones; 2) we excluded sports coverage from the data base as sports stories are a rather specific type of coverage with distinct traditional characteristics. During the measured period 129 articles from the four sources satisfied the set conditions.

² eBizMBA Rank: Top 15 Most Popular News Sites. URL: <http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/news-websites> (Accessed 28.01.2017).

Approximately one third of all the live blogs was published in the Guardian (43 live blogs), the CNN followed with 31 live blogs, the NY Times published 29, and the BBC 26. Out of these 129 we randomly selected forty live blogs, ten from each website. They formed the sample of the study.

We then applied content analysis to the randomly selected materials to assess if the individual publishing house styles are more or less divergent than the differences between live blogs from the same edition. Primary data sources also included quantitative internet audience measurement using the inbuilt web metrics and analysis of the readers' responses. After the data collection stage seven of the blogs were discussed with 42 Advanced and Upper-Intermediate ESL students during practical classes in Language in the Press at Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University in order to confirm or contradict the author's observations on the stylistic peculiarities of live blogging.

In the content analysis of live blogs we examined their stylistic, visual, textual and hypertextual elements and selected the features that showed considerable consistency across the sample. The unit of analysis was a live blog article showed on a separate page, including the hypertextual and widget elements, the summary part, the headline and the subhead as shown after the completion of the live blog.

Results

Content analysis has shown that the average length of the live blogs under study was 46 lead parts. Direct in-built borrowings of visual content from social networks averaged 21 cases in a live blog. The divergence of word count was so high that we suggested that this parameter is not a credible average, as the word count differed depending on content rather than characterized a typical feature of live blogs. In one case, two live blogs from two different websites covered the

same event – presidential elections in the USA, more particularly, the election day; both of them had characteristics similar enough to conclude that they were conditioned by the topic rather than the house style, and the word count was 2360 and 2672. This allowed us to suggest that the word count is determined by the topic in a larger degree than by the house style.

The analysis of stylistic, visual, textual and hypertextual elements proved that the following characteristic features show considerable consistency throughout the sample. We have defined the following features of live blogging:

1. A live blog consists of **“lead parts”** – relatively independent parts which style is very similar to lead paragraphs in traditional hard news and contains a short detailed account of the most recent development in the topic under coverage. The lead paragraphs are based on the 5-wh structure (who, what, where, when, why). This feature highlights the importance of the news piece and lends a matter-of-fact tone to the articles.

2. Most of the parts have a **separate headline** that follows all the rules for traditional articles headlines, but more often indicates the source of information. The headlines tend to be dynamic, they are either written in the Present Indefinite Tense in the meaning of historic present (e.g. *“Schumer releases statement”*, *“Hillary Clinton concedes with emotional speech”*) or are composed as noun strings (e.g. *“At the White House today, a mix of tears and resilience”*, *“The 2016 voter breakdown”*, *“Trump's challenges: From the Middle East, to the European Union”*). The headlines are often heavily laden with drama and emphasis, increasing the tension with the use of colon, the Future Indefinite Tense or the Present Continuous Tense (e.g. *“ Watch: Obama on patriotism”*, *“The front pages America is waking up to this morning”*, *“Protesters: 'Not our president'”*). Direct in-built borrowings from Twitter and Instagram are often unentitled as they



already look like a complete piece with the name of the profile serving as a headline. The stylistic effect of this feature is clarity and built-up tension. It also serves purely pragmatic purpose of easier navigation. Entitled parts look more visually complete when shared on social networks by the readers of a live blog.

3. The individual parts most often have a **byline** in cases of domestic and international news coverage, for instance in the live blogs on US presidential debates from CNN, on Women's March from the Guardian, on Syria crisis from the New York Times. We suggest that bylines produce the effect of objectivity and completeness of coverage in a way that leads the audience to think that all the necessary information is included on this page and there is no need to seek for more information from other sources.

4. Almost every part is supported with **both reader-produced and professionally-produced graphic content** – photographs, infographics, tables, diagrams, videos. In the blogs that were randomly selected for the study there were no cases of sound or music borrowed for live blogging without supporting video content. Abundant graphic content breaks the text and leads the readers to perceive the text as a shorter one. Inclusion of reader-produced content produces a powerful effect of simultaneousness of responses throughout the nation.

5. We observe **reverse chronological order of parts** in live blogs, and every part has a clear indication of the time of publication. Older parts are at the bottom of the page, newer parts are at the top. In all of the live blogs under study the page showed only the newest posts, and older posts could be seen on a click. This order contributes to the effect that the represented information is fresh and urgent. The CNN and the Guardian often apply extra visual instruments to intensify this effect, such as an animated timeline, a pulsing red point next to the freshest piece, bold

type for the newest part, or graphic separation of the summary paragraph.

6. **The first part is always the summary of the whole topic**, and it is the only part that is changed during the process. The updates are posted right in the part, and instead of the publication time the updating time is indicated. In case of the CNN, which is also a TV channel, the summary post is a short video. Other news websites prefer a text version of the summary, including the BBC that employs the form of a list to sum up the main points of the event. This feature contributes to the effect of underlined importance of the event. The summary part often serves as a hook for the reader who sees the live blog for the first time. For the readers who have been at the page for some time the summary provides the confirmation of their impressions built up by the lead parts in the reverse chronological order.

7. In some cases, the live blog is **divided into several categories**. For example, the CNN live blog "Presidential debate live" from October, 9, 2016 was divided into four sections: "Live Blog", "Fact Check", "Top Republicans", "Top Democrats" that enabled the edition to focus on more editorial content in the first section and separate the streams of the reactions of the two opposing parties and their supporters. Live blogging has been criticized for causing information overload [22, p. 89], and in some cases when a whole country is eager to have a say on the event, one stream of live blogging is too confusing for the readers to follow. Two of the blogs under study ("Live election results and coverage" from the CNN and "European Union referendum polling day" from the Guardian) have enough information to read for at least a day and include multiple cross-links to extra traditional publications at the same website. The Guardian tends to divide longer events into several live blogs while the CNN can update the same live



blog a month later. Besides its pragmatic function to systematize a broad stream of information, this feature has a powerful effect of underlining the nationwide importance of the event.

8. Unlike in traditional articles, in all the four editions under study live blogs **easily refer to competing websites** and may include direct links to the competitor's content. The consumption patterns of live blogging are so different from the traditional newspaper format that editors seek to provide an impression that nothing that happens is left uncovered by the live blog, and reference to other sources help the readers stay in the same page and not look for alternative media. Judging by the students' responses we may suggest that a live blog creates high personal involvement in the unfolding event. 12 of the 42 students mentioned that in several cases they have been so engaged in the live coverage that they stopped other activities for the day and kept updating the page every several minutes. To satisfy this kind of need for more details editors need to borrow content from all the available sources.

9. Live blogging in professional media is almost always **done in collaboration**. None of the blogs under study was delivered by one person, and in some cases teams of more than 10 journalists worked on one live blog, sharing the responsibilities of surfing social networks, keeping track of the event in person and reporting the new development on site, monitoring or asking for official reactions from public figures and governments. Monitoring social networks for responses of public figures has been made easier with the introductions of hashtags, short key words that many people include in their messages to share them with general public. Although not all people do it, live blogging teams typically have a list of personal pages that can generate extra news. For example, in the CNN live blog on a presidential debate a response from Joanne

Rowling, the world-famous author of "Harry Potter" series was listed 20 seconds after its publication, despite the fact that the authentic post contained no hashtag. Collaboration in live blog production enables delivering new lead parts regularly and fast, that effectively accentuates how up-to-date and fresh the live blog is.

10. Paragraphs **inside individual parts are much shorter than in traditional articles** and contain only one or two sentences, with two to four paragraphs in a lead-like part, for example, in this extract from the Guardian's "European Union referendum polling day":

24 Jun 2016 18:30

Voters stuck at Waterloo station

The storms have brought Waterloo station to a standstill, potentially affecting thousands of passengers who may not have voted.

The station is a major hub for people commuting from outside London many of whom would likely have left in the morning too early to vote.

Many people have taken to social media to express concern that they will miss the 10pm deadline.

This model of news deliverance is characteristic of internet news format and breaks the information into short bite-size pieces. The produced effect is the seeming easiness of reading a live blog.

11. Journalists' inputs in a live blog tend to be **neutral in emotional tone**, matter-of-fact and aim at the impression that the coverage is objective and does not impose any point of view. It is not necessarily true because the very choice of reader-produced content may be suggestive of the edition's political preferences. But the overall neutrality of the edition-produced parts of live blogs may be a key component of their wide spread, as media neutrality is in high demand, and news consumers stress that. For example, in a Pew poll in 2010 "about six-in-ten (62%) say they



prefer getting political news from sources that do not have a particular point of view”³.

12. The complex of linguistic peculiarities of live blog texts suggests that this genre belongs to **publicist style in its newspaper variety**. Live blogging employs coherent and logical sentence composition, modest use of stylistic devices, predominance of narration, brevity of expression, characteristic combination of emotional appeal and argumentation, the use of terminology and abbreviation. These features lend the effect of credibility and inspire trust of the readers.

13. Live blogging inspires a higher degree of participation from the readers. According to

N. Thurman and A. Walters the medium is able to match the brief, repeated visits readers make to news sites [22, p. 97]. The consumption pattern of live blogs Live blogging also enables the readers to share individual news pieces on the topic under coverage and comment on parts of the articles text rather than on the whole topic.

This kind of effect may be produced on the audience when several specific types of events are unfolding. We have attempted to make an inventory of events covered in live blogs in the four news websites under study. The list comprises the events given in Table 1.

Table 1

Types of events covered by means of live blogging

News of national importance:	News with high emotional involvement:	News meaningful for a non-geographic community:
1) elections and referendums, candidate nominations, political debates; 2) new laws, parliamentary proceedings; 3) protests, meetings, campaigns; 4) armed conflicts, military operations, air bombings; 5) international political and humanitarian crises.	1) criminal cases, legal issues, court hearings; 2) sports games, matches, championships, cups and tournaments; 3) natural disasters, catastrophes, terror attacks, extreme weather; 4) weddings, funerals, graduation ceremonies, any ceremonies of public character.	1) awards and awarding ceremonies; 2) conferences, panel discussions, seminars and schools, UN sessions.

We may outline the similar characteristics of these events that make them suitable for live blogging coverage. Such events last for at least several hours, inspire public interest and spontaneous comment from the audience, involve a considerable number of people directly, are likely to have an effect on the future events in other spheres, happen in countries with on-site presence of reporters and large domestic media, are broadcast on TV or have multiple witnesses.

These features contribute to the success of live blogs among the audience interested in the event, and make the costly live blogging worthwhile.

Conclusion and Discussion

While national identities are practiced through narratives, live blogging may be seen as a perfect type of delivering such narratives to the general public in an attractive and engaging form. The inventory of stylistic peculiarities of live

³ Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. *Ideological News Sources: Who Watches and Why*. 2010.

URL: <http://www.people-press.org/2010/09/12 /section-3-news-attitudes-and-habits/> (Accessed 22.01.2017).



blogging articulates a world picture where a large, extensive audience throughout the country is following the unfolding event simultaneously with the reader. Numerous inclusions of reader-produced content such as videos, twitter comments, on-site photographs and the opportunity to access many more responses on the event instantly build up the image of grassroots coverage of the event, where numerous people “like you” experience similar feelings and emotions. This contributes to group solidarity and the sense of belonging. An individual who repeatedly returns to a live blog embraces a ready set of background knowledge that is indirectly stated in the earlier lead parts of a live blog and then is reinforced and relied upon in the fresher parts. For instance, the reader who follows a live blog on an awarding ceremony may not know in the beginning who the nominees are, but after some time returns to the live blog with formed expectations about the winner based on the already-acquired knowledge and feels joy or disappointment measured relatively to these expectations. In a traditional article where the reader learns about the nominees after the lead paragraph with the name of the winner the response is likely to be less emotional. In a similar way every live blog gives the setting for the event and then, as the event unfolds, refers to the previously given information as to the already accepted background. This creates an image of shared ground with millions of other people who follow the same event.

Several of the characteristic features mentioned in the results, particularly the fourth, the fifth and the seventh, contribute to the effect of simultaneousness that we would name “the image of now and here”. The imagined community that is currently united in its awareness of the event acquires a symbolic representation in a live blog through the metrics of viewers, comments and shares displayed on the page of the live blog.

Reverse chronological order helps to bind the preceding events with the current moment, whereas timelines and graphic visualization accentuate this connection between the past and the present developments in the event.

The role of opinion leaders in forging and developing narratives of national identity was underlined in a number of political science and social philosophy studies [12–14; 23]. In the traditional two-step model opinion leaders occupy nodes in the structure of political communication in the society [17]. They are more active news consumers and educate more passive members of the society about the trending narratives [18, p. 5]. In the world of virtual social ties opinion leaders serve as messengers and content-producers rather than mere intermediaries, and live blogging illustratively reflects this role of opinion leader. Opinions are now in the news as much as the events themselves, and incorporation of short messages from opinion leaders of a national community may be the key to live blogging success. Politicians, pop stars, fashion icons, athletes, cinema stars, writers, academic community members, local activists, heads of NGOs form the pool of social actors whose response to the event under coverage is of high interest to the mass media. Identification with figures of importance that express concern about the situation is a powerful driver of group solidarity [7].

We consider the effect of relative importance as the last but not least effect of live blogging as a genre on national identity practices. Such characteristic features as division into lead parts and summary, division into several categories, assigning a team of journalists to work on the event coverage and the visual representation of it in live blogs contribute to the impression of high importance of the event. Media coverage of an event that employs live blogging as a form heightens the tension and the suspense around the event. Further research may answer the question if only events of national importance are



chosen for coverage with the help of live blogging or the events chosen for such coverage are events of national importance per se. We also consider the spread of live blogging in local news as an interesting phenomenon. For instance, in 2016 Novosibirsk news website ngs.ru started to employ

live blogging with all the mentioned characteristics to cover days of severe weather, catastrophes like a roof collapse at a horse club or potential bomb call to the police and city celebrations. The effect of these articles on regional identity might be a promising direction of research.

REFERENCES

1. Ardèvol-Abreu A., Barnidge M., de Zúñiga H. G. Communicative antecedents of political persuasion: Political discussion, citizen news creation, and the moderating role of strength of partisanship. *Mass Communication and Society*, 2017, vol. 2, issue 2, pp. 169–191. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2016.1244855>
2. Aronczyk M. *Branding the nation: The global business of national identity*. Oxford University Press Publ., 2013, 225 p. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199752164.001.0001>
3. Appadurai A. Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization. *The International Migration Review*, 1998, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 1073–1074. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2547675>
4. Ebner M. Introducing live microblogging: how single presentations can be enhanced by the mass. *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching*, 2009, vol. 1, pp. 91–100. URL: https://www.nu.edu/assets/resources/pageResources/7638_JournalofResearch09.pdf
5. Campbell V. Theorizing citizenship in citizen journalism. *Digital Journalism*, 2015, vol. 3, issue 5, pp. 704–719. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.937150>
6. Carelli P. Media systems beyond national boundaries: Towards a new paradigm? *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 2014, vol. 6 (6), pp. 85–91. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5897/jmcs2014.0389>
7. Chouliaraki L. ‘Improper distance’: Towards a critical account of solidarity as irony. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2011, vol. 14, issue 4, pp. 363–381. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1367877911403247>
8. Dart J. J. Blogging the 2006 FIFA world cup finals. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 2009, vol. 26, issue 1, pp. 107–126. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1123/ssj.26.1.107>
9. Harcup T. Alternative journalism as monitorial citizenship? A case study of a local news blog. *Digital Journalism*, 2016, vol. 4, issue 5, pp. 639–657. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2015.1063077>
10. Harcup T. Asking the readers: Audience research into alternative journalism. *Journalism Practice*, 2016, vol. 10, issue 6, pp. 680–696. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2015.1054416>
11. Hedman U. J-Tweeters: Pointing towards a new set of professional practices and norms in journalism. *Digital Journalism*, 2015, vol. 3, issue 2, pp. 279–297. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.897833>
12. Sefchovich S. Fredric Jameson. The political unconscious: Narrative as a socially symbolic act. *Acta Poética*, 1981, vol. 4, no. 1-2. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.19130/iifl.ap.1981.1-2.605>
13. Karlsen R. Followers are opinion leaders: The role of people in the flow of political communication on and beyond social networking sites. *European Journal of Communication*, 2015, vol. 30, issue 3, pp. 301–318. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323115577305> Lister A. L., Datta R. S., Hofmann O., Krause R., Kuhn M., Roth B., Schneider R. Live coverage of scientific conferences using web technologies. *PLoS Comput Biol.*, 2010, vol. 6, issue 1, pp. e1000563. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1000563>



14. Matheson D. Digital media and reporting conflict: blogging and the BBC's coverage of war and terrorism. *Digital Journalism*, 2014, vol. 2, issue 4, pp. 621–623. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2014.899766>
15. McGannon K. R., Berry T. R., Rodgers W. M., Spence J. C. Breast cancer representations in Canadian news media: a critical discourse analysis of meanings and the implications for identity. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2016, vol. 13, issue 2, pp. 188–207. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2016.1145774>
16. Norris P., Curtis J. Getting the message out: A two-step model of the role of the Internet in campaign communication flows during the 2005 British general election. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, 2007, vol. 4, issue 4, pp. 3–13. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19331680801975359>
17. Paasi A. Nationalizing everyday life: individual and collective identities as practice and discourse. *Geography Research*, 1999, vol. 19, pp. 4–21. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822377474-009>
18. Poster M. Postmodern virtualities. In M. Featherstone & R. Burrows (Eds.) *Theory, Culture & Society: Cyberspace/cyberbodies/cyberpunk: Cultures of technological embodiment*. London, SAGE Publ., 1995, pp. 79–96. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446250198.n5>
19. Collins R. Book Review: Philip Schlesinger, media, state and nation: Political violence and collective identities. *Critique of Anthropology*, 1992, vol. 12, issue 2, pp. 215–220. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275x9201200208>
20. Thurman N., Newman N. The future of breaking news online? A study of live blogs through surveys of their consumption, and of readers' attitudes and participation. *Journalism Studies*, 2014, vol. 15, issue 5, pp. 655–667. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2014.882080>
21. Thurman N., Walters A. Live blogging—digital journalism's pivotal platform? A case study of the production, consumption, and form of live blogs at Guardian.co.uk. *Digital Journalism*, 2013, vol. 1, issue 1, pp. 82–101. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2012.714935>
22. Tyler W., Lounsbury M., Glynn M. A. Legitimizing nascent collective identities: Coordinating cultural entrepreneurship. *Organization Science*, 2011, vol. 22, issue 2, pp. 449–463. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1100.0613>
23. Van Dijk Teun A. *News analysis: Case studies of international and national news in the press*. Hillsdale, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1988. URL: <http://www.discourses.org/OldBooks/Teun%20A%20van%20Dijk%20-%20News%20Analysis.pdf>
24. Vis F. Twitter as a reporting tool for breaking news: Journalists tweeting the 2011 UK riots. *Digital Journalism*, 2013, vol. 1, issue 1, pp. 27–47. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2012.741316>
25. Warschauer M., Zheng B., Park Y. New ways of connecting reading and writing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 2013, vol. 47, issue 4, pp. 825–830. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/tesq.131>

Submitted: 28 February 2017 Accepted: 03 July 2017 Published: 31 August 2017



This is an open access article distributed under the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. (CC BY 4.0).