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FEATURES OF AVIATION CONTENT IN UKRAINIAN ONLINE JOURNALISM

The article analyses the peculiarities of aviation-related content in Ukrainian online media during the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war of 2022 and 2023. The authors reviewed the scientific work of foreign researchers on the topic of aviation coverage in journalism. One of the current topics of researchers is the coverage of the problem of drones and their use by the media to collect data. Ukrainian researchers are studying the news in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

The relevance of the study is to identify the peculiarities of online coverage of aviation topics during the Russian-Ukrainian war. The changes in the content of news and meanings in information materials are traced. Examples of analytical articles using the OSINT tool are also considered. One of the topics is the destruction and recovery of the Ukrainian civilian Antonov An-225 Mriya aircraft.

The news articles were analysed using content analysis. In March 2022, the news contained information about the number of downed Russian planes, helicopters, and drones, as well as information about the transfer of foreign aircraft to Ukraine. In March 2023, a change in content and meanings could be observed. The main topics covered included the provision of F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, the destruction of Russian bombers, reconnaissance operations by drones in international airspace over the Black Sea, and training of Ukrainian pilots in European countries.

Artistic and journalistic techniques on aviation were used in documentaries. Eight documentaries about military and civil aviation in Ukraine were reviewed and analysed. Attention was also paid to documented aerial bombardments by Russians in Mariupol. The documentaries covered the activities of Ukrainian military units and special operations involving pilots, military personnel and other aviation professionals. Factual accuracy, documentary footage, vivid images of the characters, clear architectonics and a coherent plot are inherent in the documentaries under review.

Key words: content, meanings, aviation journalism, aviation topics, online media, documentary.

Problem statement. Aviation journalism is relevant and in demand, in particular during the development of society and the state, as well as during wars. Journalists have to explain to the audience not only the content of news from the aerospace industry, but also bring facts and events, characters and heroes of news stories, journalistic and documentary films closer to the mass audience.

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Ukrainian media have begun to draw more attention to aviation topics, in particular by referring to expert opinion or professional military personnel. There was a need to explain to the audience the role of aviation and drones in modern warfare. The content of the journalistic messages changed from February 2022 to May 2023 as follows:

the destruction of the Ukrainian Mriya aircraft by the Russians, hostile air bombardment of Ukrainian cities, the need for protection from Russian air raids, attacks by various types of drones, and Ukraine's need for strategic aviation, in particular F-16 aircraft. Aviation topics are related to the military and international context. However, journalistic materials about the development of civil aviation in the post-war period or the resumption of flights before the end of the war are found in online media during the war. Therefore, it is important for journalists to understand the aviation industry, know modern aircraft models, analyse changes in the use of kamikaze drones, etc.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Let's consider aviation topics in journalism by different groups of genres: informational, analytical,

artistic and journalistic. C. Dowd considers the protection of journalists when working with digital media and the preservation of information to be an important issue: “By contrast, data visualisations and real-time field reporting with short-form mobile media and civilian drones have set new standards during the European asylum seeker crisis. Aerial filming with drones also adds to the ontological base of journalism. An ontology for journalism and intersecting ontologies can inform the design of new semantic learning systems” [1].

In the modern world, there is a need to interpret the real world. News journalism should be presented in parallel with journalistic materials that interpret phenomena, events, and facts. Therefore, there is a need for competent interpretation, forecasting, and analysis of the news discourse in the aerospace industry. Publicists or popular columnists in Western countries perform the function of shaping public opinion, influencing the human value system, encouraging action, etc. They interpret not only the news, but also support ideas in a particular group audience.

Journalism and documentaries help to interpret acute social and political issues in order to directly influence public opinion [2].

A journalist covering aviation topics must be erudite, have logical thinking, be able to persuade, and adhere to professional ethics and journalistic standards.

Journalists can influence decision-making by government, business and cultural elites. Therefore, there is a need for social communications, public administration and public figures to have the competencies of a publicist. The ability to write or speak convincingly, to possess erudition, “emotional intelligence”, and to know ethical, legal and human norms and principles are the basis for a journalist and documentary filmmaker.

A publicist is an opinion leader, a role model and a reference point for the mass audience, so the skills to absorb new knowledge, “learn throughout life”, and process large amounts of new information form a modern competent specialist.

The aim of the study is to determine the peculiarities of aviation-related content in Ukrainian online media for the period of March 2022 and March 2023.

To achieve this goal, the following **tasks** are necessary:

- 1) to study the current Ukrainian and foreign scientific literature on the research topic;
- 2) to analyse the topics, presentation and genres of publications about aviation in online media;
- 3) to study changes and trends in aviation-related content in the online media news discourse in March 2022 and March 2023;

4) to analyse analytical texts and feature and documentary films in 2022 and 2023.

The theoretical method, observation method, content analysis method, and comparative research method were used to conduct the study.

Aviation journalism was thoroughly studied by researchers in 1760–1970. For example, in 1974, Oliver Stewart published an article entitled “Aviation Journalism”, which addressed the issue of aircraft construction, production in the aviation industry and the merger of independent publications [3]. From 2010 to the present, the topic of unmanned aerial vehicles used by journalists to gather information has been attracting the attention of scientists. The issue of regulating drones and civil aviation is being raised in many countries. Journalists use unmanned aerial vehicles to capture and disseminate breaking news. At the same time, researchers are studying privacy and ethical issues related to drones [4]. Other researchers study public opinion on attitudes towards drones. Charles M Rowling and Joan M Blauwkamp conducted an experimental survey to find out whether variations in the formulation of US drone policy affect public support for it, in particular, they investigated the decline in American support for drone warfare [5]. In his turn, M. Richardson explores the role of drones in violent mediation and remote warfare “If drone systems can be understood as media assemblages that produce violence within and through their mediation processes, then the question is how their medial dynamics (sensing, storing, transmitting, analysing, interacting, and so on) shape the traumas produced through those systems” [6]. Researchers are studying how the media use unmanned aerial vehicles to wage information warfare [7].

Ukrainian researchers have been studying the media during the Russian-Ukrainian war in several aspects. For example, the peculiarities of news reporting by news agencies. A. Shulzhenko and N. Rula study the architectonics of news agency messages, in particular, the mandatory and optional components of a news message [8]. They also study the topic of propaganda narratives used by pro-Russian media during the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war [9]. The role of aviation in the current full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war is significant. That is way the study of coverage of aviation topics in online media is relevant.

We tried to study the aviation topic in different genres of journalism in the context of the current full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war. We analysed popular online media, pages of news agencies and government institutions. We studied the aviation topic in informational, analytical, fiction and journalistic genres, including documentaries in online media.

Aviation is a frequent topic in news journalism on the websites of news agencies. Using the website of the news agency www.ukrinform.ua, we analysed 73 news items for March 2022 and 62 news items for March 2023. In particular, in March 2022, there were news about the transfer of 70 MiG-29 and Su-25 aircraft to Ukraine from partner countries; news about the downing of enemy aircraft and helicopters at the front; news about the destruction of drones; news about the detention of enemy pilots; news about Ukraine's agreement with the United States to provide fighter jets; news about the closure of the sky for Russian aircraft in some countries; news about the world's largest lessor, which filed a lawsuit against Russia for the seizure of more than 100 aircraft. Thus, the main news contained statistics on downed enemy aircraft, helicopters, and drones.

In March 2023, the website of the news agency www.ukrinform.ua news agency covered the following topics: 1) Ukraine needs F-16 fighter jets (appeals by Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Valeriy Zaluzhnyy, Yuriy Ihnat); 2) Ukrainian counter-offensive began without combat aircraft (statement by Oleksiy Reznikov); 3) destruction of the Russian Su-24M bomber; 4) MiG-29 aircraft provided to Ukraine cannot carry modern missiles; 5) US unmanned aerial vehicles continue to conduct reconnaissance operations in international airspace over the Black Sea; 6) drone bombings in the occupied territories; 7) fighter jets and drones over the Black Sea; 8) enemy tactical aircraft destroying the infrastructure of southern Ukrainian cities; 9) agreements on pilot training in European countries. All materials were published in the genre of journalism – an opinion piece. However, other information genres can be observed, for example, on the website [Suspilne](http://Suspilne.com). News website published a report on 28 March 2023 entitled “Air is forged on the ground. How the army aviation works in Donetsk region” [10]. The journalists describe how the 18th and 16th Army Aviation Brigades are armed with Mi-8 and Mi-24 helicopters. The pilots carried out combat missions to the positions of the Russian military two to three times a day, depending on the weather. Such journalistic materials bring the reader closer to the topic and make them interested in aviation.

The change in the narrative about the Ukrainian Antonov An-225 Mriya aircraft in March 2022 and March 2023 is worth highlighting. In 2022, there were news about the destruction of the aircraft, for example, the headline “‘Mriya’ as a victim of war: how to return the legendary aircraft” [11]. In 2023, the following headlines about the aircraft appeared: “Mriya will rise over a free Ukraine. How is the restoration of the lar-

gest transport aircraft progressing?” [12], “Returning the Mriya. How Ukraine can rebuild the world's largest aircraft” on the Ukrainska Pravda website [13]. The topic changed from “destruction” to “restoration” of the aircraft as a symbol of Ukrainian civil aviation. The texts were written in the genre of an analytical article.

Other analytical articles include the publication “The sky is a witness” on lb.ua, texty.org.ua, khp.org, where investigative journalists described the search for the plane that dropped bombs on Mykolaiv on 21.03.2022. The material was adapted from the Truth Hounds team. The publication describes how, based on the information gathered at the scene of the incident during documentation, OSINT intelligence, additional information from the investigation and the results of their own investigation, the journalists found that the attack bore signs of a war crime and identified its perpetrators. By using a map, testimonies and the facts of the destruction of civilian objects (for example, a hotel and a psychiatric hospital), the authors proved the war crime of the Russians [14].

Attention should be paid to journalistic works and documentaries on aviation. Aviation during war is a topic that always attracts the attention of journalists and documentary filmmakers. In modern documentaries about war, aviation often plays an important role, providing an additional objective view of the events and helping to highlight various aspects of military conflict. Aviation is featured in many war documentaries.

In more contemporary war documentaries, aviation is often portrayed as a key tool in the fight against terrorism. These films show how military aircraft and helicopters provide support for ground operations, transport troops and supplies, and carry out bombing missions. In short, aviation is an integral part of warfare, and documentaries are an important means of visually representing the role of aviation on behalf of military and civilian pilots, mechanics and other professionals. They show how aviation helps to ensure the safety and effectiveness of military operations, as well as how it is used to fight terrorists or occupiers.

Aviation in Ukraine faces a number of challenges that are reflected in the media. The main issues frequently discussed include safety, the state of the aviation infrastructure and the efficiency of the airlines. One of the most serious problems is safety. Following the tragedy of MH17 flight downing over the Donetsk region of Ukraine in 2014, the government and aviation organisations have been working to improve airspace safety. The topic of aviation is reflected in many journalistic and documentary films, which allows viewers to better understand the development of aviation and to feel passionate about this industry.

On 8 March 2023, the film “Air Breakthrough to Azovstal. The Sky” was premiered on Ukrainian television. This is the first film in Artem Shevchenko’s documentary trilogy *Military Intelligence of Ukraine: At Sea, in the Sky, on the Ground*. The film reveals unknown details of a unique airborne special operation by the Defence Intelligence of Ukraine in enemy-held Mariupol. Seven combat missions to the city, which was surrounded. The film creates a journalistic image of the heroes, using artistic techniques to emphasise the importance of victory for the Ukrainian military, risks, symbols of wisdom, love for the sky and Ukraine.

Also in spring 2023, the documentary film “Warriors of the Sky” was released, which tells the story of the work of the Seventh Tactical Aviation Brigade of the Petro Franko Air Force. From the first days of the war, the pilots of the Starokostiantyniv unit carried out military operations during the Russian full-scale invasion. The film combines the stories of heroes and facts, including the stories of the commander Yevhen Bulatsyk, as well as memories of the fallen aviators from colleagues, family and friends. The documentary creates a strong journalistic image of pilots, for example, “pilots do not die, they take off and never return”. The director of the film creates tension on the topic of risk during the bombers’ flight. The film documents how Su-24 aircraft destroyed the occupiers’ convoys near Gostomel and Brovary, how the Ukrainian military fought for Kherson and Zmiinyi Island, helped to regain the Kharkiv region and deter the enemy in southern Ukraine.

The topic of Russian aircraft bombing Mariupol is covered in the documentary *20 Days in Mariupol*. The authors were under siege in the city and documented the consequences of the bombing. Russia’s aggression has caused one of the biggest humanitarian disasters in Mariupol. The city is almost 90% destroyed as a result of enemy shelling, including damaged and destroyed residential buildings, hospitals, schools, kindergartens and other infrastructure.

Roman Liubiyi’s documentary *Iron Butterflies* tells the audience about the downing of the MH17 passenger plane. It uses elements of fiction and animation. The documentary used the proprietary materials of the Babylon 13 film association, the joint investigation team investigating the downing of the passenger plane, the trial, and materials from open sources. The Malaysia Airlines Boeing-777 passenger plane, flying MH17 from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, crashed over the temporarily occupied part of Donetsk region on 17 July 2014.

The topic of civil aviation is covered in the documentary films “The Year of the Hardest Tests. How the War Changed Ukrainian Civil Aviation, How Ukrainian Airlines Earn and Decline During the War, Will There Be Anyone to Fly Ukrainian Planes After the War, and Ukrainian Civil Aviation Found a Way to Survive and Take to the Skies”. Thus, we can observe the rapid development and release of documentaries about aviation, including those documenting the war crimes of the Russian Federation.

Conclusions. Analysis of academic publications allows us to conclude that aviation journalism is popular in the world. In Ukraine, the field of aviation journalism is under-researched and has good prospects.

Thus, we have identified the main themes and meanings in the journalistic materials on aviation during the period under study, including the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war. The main materials were written in the informational genres of journalism, but we can observe the rapid development of documentaries about the aviation industry. In March 2022, the news mainly contained information about the number of downed Russian planes, helicopters, and drones, as well as information about the transfer of foreign aircraft to Ukraine. In March 2023, the news narratives changed. The main topics covered were the provision of F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, the destruction of Russian bombers, reconnaissance operations by drones in international airspace over the Black Sea, training of Ukrainian pilots in European countries, etc.

Analytical articles using the OSINT tool covered the shelling of southern Ukrainian cities by Russian aircraft and proved war crimes. The topic of the destruction and recovery of the Ukrainian civilian Antonov An-225 Mriya aircraft was covered in analytical articles in March 2023.

Aviation-related journalistic techniques were used in documentaries. On the one hand, journalists documented the bombing of Mariupol by Russian aircraft, and on the other hand, they paid attention to individual military units and special operations involving Ukrainian pilots, military and other aviation professionals. Factual accuracy, documentary footage, vivid images of the characters, clear architectonics and a coherent plot are inherent in the documentaries under review. The main meanings changed as follows: in March 2022, the news reported on the loss or destruction of enemy equipment (planes, helicopters, drones) and the capture of Russian pilots, while in 2023, the main meanings were Ukraine’s need for assistance in supplying aircraft and successful Ukrainian military operations in the sky with the help of unmanned aerial vehicles.

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Мельникова-Курганова О. С., Васильченко В. М., Лашкіна М. Г. ОСОБЛИВОСТІ КОНТЕНТУ З АВІАЦІЙНОЇ ТЕМАТИКИ В УКРАЇНСЬКІЙ ОНЛАЙН ЖУРНАЛІСТИЦІ

У статті проаналізовано особливості контенту з авіаційної тематики в українських онлайн медіа за період повномасштабної російсько-української війни 2022 та 2023 рр. Авторами було розглянуто науковий доробок закордонних дослідників щодо висвітлення авіаційної тематики в журналістиці. Однією з актуальних тем дослідників є висвітлення проблеми дронів та їх використання мас медіа для збору даних. Українські дослідники вивчають новини в контексті російсько-української війни.

Актуальність дослідження полягає у виявленні особливостей висвітлення в онлайн авіаційної тематики під час російсько-української війни. Прослідковано за зміною контенту новин та смислів в інформаційних матеріалах. Розглянуто приклади аналітичних статей з використанням інструменту OSINT. Однією з тем є знищення та відновлення українського цивільного літака Антонов Ан-225 Мрія.

Інформаційні матеріали було проаналізовано за допомогою методу контент-аналізу. У березні 2022 року новини містили інформацію про кількість збитих російських літаків, гелікоптерів, безпілотників, а також інформацію про передачу Україні закордонних літаків. У березні 2023 року можна було спостерігати зміну контенту і смислів. Основні теми висвітлювали питання надання Україні літаків-винищувачів F-16, знищення російських бомбардувальників, розвідувальні операції дронами в міжнародному авіапросторі над Чорним морем; тренування українських пілотів в європейських країнах.

Художньо-публіцистичні прийоми на авіаційну тему було використано в документальних фільмах. Розглянуто та проаналізовано вісім документальних фільмів про воєнну та цивільну авіацію

в Україні. Також приділено увагу задокументованим авіабомбардуванням з боку росіян в Маріуполі. Документальні фільми висвітлювали діяльність українських воєнних підрозділів та спеціальні операції, в яких було задіяно пілотів, військових та інших фахівців з авіаційної галузі. Фактологічна точність, документальні кадри, яскраво виражені образи героїв, чітка архітектоніка і вибудований сюжет притаманні розглянутим документальним фільмам.

Ключові слова: контент, смисли, авіаційна журналістика, авіаційна тематика, онлайн медіа, документалістика.