

## Methods and Ways of News Reports Rewriting: Comparative Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to carry out a comparative analysis of methods and ways of rewriting news reports, including their specific features. The study disclosed the essence of rewriting, its functional types, characterized its methods and techniques, provided their comparative analysis highlighted the most effective methods and techniques. There are two methods of rewriting: simple (technical), which is carried out through replacement of words in the text with their synonyms and transfer of text parts; complex (deep) rewriting, which is done for more demanding news agencies and publications, it is close to copywriting. Deep text processing involves analysis and synthesis. The task of a rewriter is to make a source text unique, which could be found nowhere by a combination of words. Text rewriting implies using synonymous words, parenthetical structures; permutation of words; changing speech patterns; adding original components; transposition, changes in the text structure; transfer of direct speech into the indirect one; simplifying the text by removing phrases that do not convey any meanings. The most effective way of rewriting news reports items implies a combination of changes in the grammatical structure of sentences and adding original components (deep rewriting), the use of synonymous words (technical rewriting). These methods can be regarded as the main ways of changing texts by means of rewriting, which can be further modified in order to improve perception of information through text using other rewriting methods. Using rewriting methods provides the possibility to bring the text of a news report to an acceptable level of uniqueness.

### KEYWORDS

Information rewriting; news report; development of journalism; plagiarism, text uniqueness of the text

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## Introduction

News as a key component of informational journalism and the entire socio-communicative system in the world presents a structural worldview element of modern personality. The quantity and quality of news, determined by professional participants in the communication process, form human information competence, which affect the decision-making processes

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(Grubenmann & Meckel, 2015; Vasilieva, 2002). The development of information and communication technologies, in particular the so-called new media (i.e., media communications, based on using the Internet and other digital technology) determine the need to study the attributes of traditional and modern journalism in terms of creation, distribution and consumption of global information content. In this context, special importance is attached to the analysis of methods and techniques used in creating news reports. Rewriting is one of these methods.

Almost every author of news reports, as the author of other works to a certain extent borrows the existing text in order to create a new one, in other words, the so-called "plagiarism" is used, albeit on a "self-plagiarism" level. Therefore, dealing with this research problem, one should consider the following: rapid development of the Internet (as the "nobody's" territory, or, on the contrary, the "all for all" territory) and the new text tools (in particular, development of rewriting (seo-rewriting) copy-paste, reposting, raises the question of positive or negative impact of this trend.

In this sense, it is advisable to classify text creating tools, in particular – news reports rewriting, depending on the purpose of their production (Kim, 2011). In some cases, the creator of the message, or a news agency, seeks a new way of presenting his/her ideas, the perception of the situation, its development, etc. and this demands rewriting (Kolesnichenko, 2008). Other situations imply borrowing different texts due to the availability of huge amounts of data (content consumption and production), which laid new emphasis on the borrowing problem in all spheres of human activity in general, and in the media in particular.

Therefore, this implies the need to carry out a comprehensive study of rewriting tools, its essence, history, characteristics and forms, types of manifestations in social and communicative dimension with the view of finding effective and legitimate instruments of its application.

### **Background Paper**

Having emerged and formed in the conceptual apparatus of the humanities, news reports creation became the research object of social communication, which is seen as a process with a layered structure, implemented in linguistic components, characterized by the involvement of both social and cognitive processes during the interaction of news creators and consumers (Harrower, 2008; Lazutina, 2001).

News items present knowledge, which is perceived in the socio-cultural and communicative contexts (Harrower, 2010) and thus embody value orientations of communicators. The content of news reports is largely influenced by interpretation of the information processes by people involved in the collection, production and dissemination of news (Kachkaeva et al., 2010; Gradyushko, 2008). Organizational, social and communicative factors influence the selection criteria of news reports, resulting in simulated events, actually constructed and interpreted reality; these factors manipulate the reality through the news content and form (Bruns, 2012).

The analysis of recent scientific literature on the formation of news reports showed that in scientific terms the problem of modern understanding the

specifics of purposeful formation of high-quality and interesting consumer news messages using non-intuitive situational tools (Bartels, 2004; Picard, 2015; Phillips, 2015) and clearly defined rewriting methods and techniques remained little studied. A number of ethical, mental, psychological, legal and technological aspects of news reports rewriting that significantly affect the presentation and quality of news have not been studied. In addition, there are no research papers dedicated to the analysis of plagiarism and ways to overcome this problem in terms of using rewriting in social communications.

Currently, one of the central debates taking place among scientists and journalists is devoted to identifying whether copywriting or rewriting could be considered the most productive approach to the creation of news reports (Kostenko, 2014). At first glance, this debate seems too simplistic and even more flawed from the standpoint of journalistic ethics, because a man who performs only the mechanical function of rewriting texts can hardly be called a journalist. In addition, copy-paste, which is made by man, does not make profit for editors, because it could be perfectly replaced, for example, by the RSS-exports function, which is carried out automatically without any human effort.

At the same time, the "copywriting or rewriting" discussion shows important trends in the development of modern journalism (Coleman, 2013). Primarily, these include development of various methods used in "manufacturing" news reports; secondly, this evidences the expansion of the source base for news writing (Baader & Nipkow, 1998; Vivo, 2013). Previously, no one had any doubt that journalistic work presented a unique creative process (Grubenmann & Meckel, 2015); however, the present application of rewriting methods by journalists becomes their common working tool along with the ability to produce exclusive (original) news.

In fact, the deep essence of this debate is reduced to the question whether to accept the interpreted news products as a result of journalistic work or not. What is more – the discussion itself reflects important changes in the technology of news preparation, in particular – the development of news reports rewriting.

The purpose of this paper is to carry out a comparative analysis of methods and ways of rewriting news reports.

## Methods

During the study the following methods were used: system analysis – to address system links between journalism and rewriting, synthesis – to study interaction between journalism and rewriting, generalization – to consider journalism and rewriting in their unity. This paper was also based on theoretical analysis of philosophical, pedagogical, scientific, methodical and technical literature on the research problem provided by foreign and domestic scientists with the view of determining specific features of rewriting and its relationship to journalism in the information age.

## Data, Analysis and Results

Modern researchers use several approaches to interpreting the concepts "information" and "news", because of their versatility and multidimensional character. The news discourse has its own structure and specific features. News items present a selective phenomenon, which depends on a huge number of

factors: news value criteria, attitudes of media organizations and cognitive characteristics of the audience.

The concept of information has two definitions: a collection of information, data (numeric, symbolic, iconic, figurative, etc.) and a set of knowledge being the result of cognition. News items present a separate type of mass media and related social information.

News events present the linguistic units of a mass-communication process, varieties of texts, signs, and codes. The sociological concept considers this concept as an element of social and cultural processes related to the objective and historical social development (Gradyushko, 2008).

The main concepts used in this article could be presented as follows. Rewriting – translation of someone's text in one's own words with the exact preservation of the original content. The term "rewriting" is derived from the English language (Baader & Nipkow, 1998). Interpretation of this term can be literal – one's own rewriting, reworking the text preserving its meaning. Any rewriter of news reports should be highly literate and should have a sense of style. Rich vocabulary of the author provides the best rewriting of the source text.

Specialists in the field of lexical changes of original texts are called rewriters. Rewriting is required when it is necessary to rewrite an existing news item or any text in a different way, to outline the text in one's own words with the view of obtaining the unique end product. But in contrast to outlining, rewriting has its own regularities, principles, methods and techniques. As a result, rewriting should not lead to (Clavel et al., 2007.)

- Factual errors;
- Rewriter's fiction and speculation;
- Rewriter's comments;
- Rewriter's personal opinion;
- Information, which was not present in the source text.

It is necessary to deal very carefully with quotations, statements made by politicians, economists and experts (Makeyenko, 2004). It is not advisable to use direct speech during rewriting, sometimes customers asked to delete citations, references to any sources of information. Therefore, if possible, direct speech and quotations should be rendered in the indirect form.

Copy and paste presents a computer edit function that allows transferring a piece of text (images, audio) to another location. Copyright in this case indicates the original, exclusive information (Makeyenko, 2004).

The monitoring news journalism should be understood as the original news journalism, which does not require mandatory participation of a journalist in the event; it is based on a critical analysis of information and other sources being at the disposal of a journalist (Kolesnichenko, 2008).

At the beginning of the XXI century, no one had any doubt that news items (including online publications) were supplied mainly by reporters (Coleman, 2013), who attended various events, including press conferences, provided comments, independently gathered information in the state and other structures, if required. Today, the reporter's work is just one and not the main way of getting exclusive information, and some online news media do not require

reporters (Vasilieva, 2002). The source of news in this case is the information provided by various news agencies, printed issues and other publications (Kachkaeva et al., 2010). Journalists providing such publications process, analyze and systematize information with the view of obtaining the actual original information product (Kim, 2011).

In fact, today's journalist is not "running to get the news", the news items actually come to him. After all, every large organization always has press-service departments in its structure, which do not wait for journalists; they massively supply their messages to various media, post information about their activity using their own information assets, carry out various activities, etc., since they are aware that social perception really matters (Phillips, 2015).

Another important point, which explains the fact that reporters are losing their relevance in the news-related media, – is the development of technical communication means. Today, a journalist can communicate with different people, even from abroad, participating in the Skype conferences, reviews the important events in the video format or listens to their audio recording and finally talks with someone through social networks (Kachkaeva et al., 2010). Create a Newsletters can be created in most cases solely through monitoring of various information sources that are accessible for journalists and which number increases every day.

Monitoring news journalism occupies a large segment of time in the work of journalists when it comes to the preparation of news, while the event-driven (reporter's) journalism either changes in nature or loses its relevance at all.

This trend is obvious not only in the online media activities. For example, TV channels quite often send only one operator to cover the event, as they say, to "take the image"; the text in the form of a press release or in any other format comes to the editor from the event organizers and only requires processing (Kachkaeva et al., 2010).

Today, the very existence and development of the monitoring news journalism dictates new challenges and, as shown by experience, journalists are not always ready to respond to them.

Rewriting as the process of news reports transformation is a phenomenon that emerged foremost within the online journalism. Materials provided by the Internet should become the leaders of search queries, because a single news item is presented by many online publications. A single piece of information should be submitted to different media in different ways, while retaining its meaning.

It is known that even technical requirements of search engines on the Internet require minimal rewriting of a news item. These requirements are typical for the majority of online publications, which position themselves as the news portals. And even in the ads for employees, some of them mention the job position – "rewriter". But at the same time, news rewriters are not journalists. Rewriting or in other words – processing of news reports, created by other entities (a PR or a press office, or a remarkable news agency), cannot be the task of news journalism.

Total mass rewriting of online news publications has resulted in the fact that news feeds are currently filled with manipulative messages, the true content of which remains incomprehensible both to rewriters and editors, which put this kind of news on the web or on the air (Gradyushko, 2008).

The negative impact of rewriting is also evident in the fact that most news products (news feeds) are too much similar, like Siamese twins.

Rewriting causes another negative consequence: the respected online publications increasingly come across the so-called "phishing web news", because they do not follow the main news selection criteria: reliability, completeness and responsiveness, being guided solely by reader interest.

Rewriting should not be considered as the monitoring news journalism, because it implies interpretation without any critical analysis and systematization. However, modern online news agencies are usually bound to have journalists who almost do not attend any events, monitor various sources of information all day long and produce exclusive (original) news items by means of such monitoring, analysis and systematization of information. In this respect, the news produce by them do not present the aforesaid copy and paste or rewriting. The work of these news journalists is dominated by the analytical component. After all, as mentioned before, even a report provided by another news agency may serve as a source for writing the original, exclusive news. However, its production requires not only analytical work but also a full cycle of methodological procedures related to news production as a genre:

- search in databases,
- writing comments,
- writing unique text,
- creating backgrounds (Kachkaeva et al., 2010), etc.

These journalists today, along with reporters and copywriters are real copywriters in the news journalism, being engaged in making exclusive (copyright) news; although, as a rule, their names remain unknown to the public.

Paradoxically, despite the fact that the monitoring journalism became an important part of the online news journalism long ago, there is still no official definition of that direction or job position occupied by those journalists. Possibly, this is determined by the fact that changes being discussed in this article are more global by nature for the entire modern journalism.

The Internet publications, who are unable to compete with large news producers, developed a new kind of journalism based on working with foreign materials, which has no clear title. It refers to journalistic activities related to permanent news tracking, news selection and processing into their own exclusive content by rewriting, which value is determined not only by fresh information content, but also by the original interpretation of events, an interesting approach to news presentation, redistribution of meanings, etc.

Such activity is somewhat similar to the preparation of traditional news reports. However, it has a number of specific features:

- requires good command of web and computer technology;
- provides configuration of meanings through skillful unification of multimedia formats, ensuring a certain context.

These characteristics provide a methodologically new journalism. Journalism of this kind has become common and demanded.

In a world where news production was churn out and presents a considerably automated and mechanized mass process, journalism is not dying out, being focused on other aspects. In circumstances when the general public has access to independent mass media activities, a journalist is often engaged in searching, selecting and processing message of various users, losing his/her inherent original features, being busy solely with editing. The "editorial journalism" performs a different function as compared with the traditional one: it is not so much about the "agenda"; it satisfies the individual cognitive tastes of the target audience, focusing on expectations of the latter. As a result, it appears that the "agenda" is formed by the audience.

One should note that the Internet contributed to these developments from the very beginning: the first journalistic web reports were presented as web reviews, which brought a secondary element, and determined a certain style. Their authors did not try to be objective, and presented their own position. This led to changes in the internal structure of web publications: the desired "angle" in each material was chosen by observers, not by editors.

Preparing news without going outside in a literal sense, by means of creating new images based on information processing of other ready-made information images has really become popular. Most of the personnel working in the present-day web news agencies are the so-called "editors". Their task is to constantly monitor the news websites, the e-mail and to keep track of, (in their opinion) the most interesting news events. Their work is limited only by the selection of information, minimal text and title editing (with the view of providing this news being indexed by Google as a new news item).

If a customer has the source, which could be used to create a new text, and the customer provides it to the executor – this certainly means rewriting. Moreover, this indicates elementary rewriting, albeit it requires certain skills. Sometimes a more complex rewriting is needed when several primary sources of information used with subsequent combination of all materials. The most common order implies independent search of information sources.

There are two main rewriting methods:

1) Simple (technical) rewriting. In this case, words in the original text are replaced with synonyms. In order to create such materials, one can install a synonymizing software, which accelerates rewriting. Search engines perceive such texts as unique, but the original text could be still recognized;

2) Complex or deep rewriting. Such rewriting is carried out for more demanding news agencies and publications, it is close to copywriting. However, the principle remains the same – the rewriter fully preserves the content of the text without inserting his/her opinion.

The task of a rewriter is to transform the source, Internet-popular text into a unique one, which was not met anywhere by the word combination. Therefore, text rewriting means to rewrite it in one's own words, keeping its content intact.

Text processing by means of rewriting implies the following methods:

- using synonymous words;
- using parenthetical constructions, epithets;
- permutation of words, phrases;
- changing speech patterns;

- adding original components;
- rearrangement of paragraphs and sentences, changing the text structure;
- transformation of direct speech into indirect;
- text simplification by deleting the words and phrases that do not make sense;
- changes in the grammar structure of sentences.

Redesigned text should have the same or a smaller amount of information as compared to the original source while maintaining compliance with the semantic content of the original. However, it may also include expert commentaries provided their arrangement as a separate part of the text.

Analyzing the advantages and setbacks of each method, one can assert that the only permutation of words, phrases, paragraphs and sentences and phrases along with adding epithets, introductory words and phrases does not provide uniqueness of the text, and could be easily detected by technical means.

Selection of synonyms presents a more effective way, but it becomes problematic provided the presence of a large number of scientific and professional terminology in the news related to specific, professional subjects.

Transformation of direct speech into the indirect, as well as text simplification by deleting the words and phrases that do not make sense are less effective in reaching text uniqueness, as compared with changing the grammar structure of sentences and adding original components, keeping in mind the fact that key phrases and structures during the above transformation are retained, in contrast to the grammar changes.

Thus, the most effective way of rewriting news items is a combination of changes in the grammar structure of sentences and the original component (deep rewriting) as well as the use of synonymous words (technical rewriting). These techniques can be identified as the main tools of text conversion during rewriting, which can be further modified in order to improve the perception of information through text using other rewriting methods. Using different rewriting methods to unqualize the text provides the possibility to bring the texts of news reports to an acceptable level of uniqueness.

There are several restrictions and recommendations in terms of using rewriting:

- Title also requires rewriting, unless otherwise is noted by the customer;
- Rewriting should not be made by means of consecutive changing verb forms. This is the easiest way to make any text unique, but this is the first indication of low-quality rewriting. By using this method, medium-size and long sentences become huge and are worse perceived.
- It is not necessary to do rewriting by replacing all (or almost all the original words) by synonyms. Some rewriters are afraid to change the structure of the proposed text, and try to achieve uniqueness by replacing the original words with synonyms. The structure of the source text may be and should be changed.
- If paragraphs of the original text do not present the permanent logical structure, their places may be changed.



- The meanings of all the words that are unfamiliar to the rewriter (or if he/she is not sure of their correct use) should be checked in the dictionary. Rewriter should know exactly what to write.
- It is necessary to check uniqueness of the written text. Customer requirements should be met.
- It is important to keep the volume, style and meaning of the original text, taking into account the essence of rewriting. One should not make stylistic mistakes in pursuit of uniqueness. During rewriting, one cannot invent any facts that are not present in the source text. One can only use facts and data of the source material.
- Rewriting is used in order to avoid accusations of copyright infringement by changing the source text to the level of the original text. The service is highly demanded in the context of numerous new web sites and providing relevant content of the existing sites.
- There is no consensus among the customers regarding the percentage of uniqueness valid for rewriting: some require at least 95-96%, others demand 80% and higher. In any case, the uniqueness below 80% does not satisfy the requirements of high-quality rewriting and any responsible rewriter should find means to achieve the highest possible uniqueness.
- It should be remembered that rewriting uniqueness largely depends on the text content. For example, text containing a large number of technical terms, often will be less unique than rewriting of a historical essay.
- Websites with non-unique content are filtered by search engines and, consequently, cannot be regarded as high-ranking products, which directly influences their popularity and traffic.

## Discussion

The widespread use of rewriting techniques is a characteristic feature of modern online journalism. Fighting for their target audience with a view to provide their own media product exclusivity, these journalists place the borrowed and processed news in a special semantic context, formed primarily by means of non-information materials. The original news background may in particular be created by means of online news stories, blogger's notes which often convey the individual attitudes of authors to the current (at the moment) events.

The main advantage of rewriting is its lower cost as compared with copywriting. A significant part of web content presents a certain form of rewriting.

Consequently, rewriting is an integral component of online journalism as a modern phenomenon. The authors of this paper analyzed the main methods and techniques of rewriting news reports, compared them and identified the most suitable for use. Together, these measures will not be able to fully provide text uniqueness. In this case, one can use deep rewriting, which is substantially similar to copywriting. This way of creating news texts implies their creation upon available materials, i.e., keeping the meaning, but expressing it using different words. It is obvious that the cost of this high-quality rewriting is close

to copywriting service along with appropriate feedback. This kind of content creation is widely and successfully used to provide news site contents.

Text rewriting is particularly relevant for complex technical web resources. It is virtually impossible to bring something new to the existing encyclopedic material, however, one can make them more unique, easy to understand and interesting through news reports rewriting carried out by true professionals.

## Conclusion

Globalization of communication space has led to inevitable changes in media technology and content. This is determined by two phenomena: progress in digital communications and geo-political and economic transformations.

The development of the Internet, mobile and media communications has led to the fact that news reports became the main content "filler" of the new media. Interactive specificity of virtual space requires a special approach to the creation and dissemination of news, which is characterized by particular efficiency, relevance, relevance and topicality.

The Internet contains a large amount of information, which is also of interest to users of many web sites. News portals cover similar events in the world of culture, politics, economy, etc. Rewriting presents the best solution in this respect. Moreover, specificity of many sites demands mainly rewritten materials. This background information provides dominance of a certain atmosphere in the media, which does not necessarily mean a conscious attempt to present the reality perversely or unilaterally, imposing certain views, but theoretically implies this option.

Thus, the most effective way of rewriting news items is a combination of changes in the grammar structure of sentences and the original component (deep rewriting) as well as the use of synonymous words (technical rewriting). These techniques can be identified as the main tools of text conversion during rewriting, which can be further modified in order to improve the perception of information through text using other rewriting methods. Using different rewriting methods to unqualize the text provides the possibility to bring the texts of news reports to an acceptable level of uniqueness. The article provided the analysis of limitations and recommendations in terms of using rewriting.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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