

Multimodality in internet news media

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Abstract

This article examines the role of multimodality in internet news media, highlighting the integration of text, images, audio, and video in news storytelling. It explores the evolution of news media from traditional print to digital platforms, emphasizing the impact of digital technology on journalistic practices. Through case studies of leading news websites, the article illustrates how multimodal elements enhance audience engagement and interaction. It discusses the challenges and opportunities presented by multimodality, including technical complexities and the potential for future advancements. The findings suggest that multimodality has fundamentally transformed news media, offering a more dynamic, interactive, and engaging experience for audiences. This shift underscores the importance of understanding and adapting to multimodal communication strategies in the digital age.

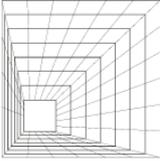
Keywords: multimodality, internet news media, digital journalism, audience engagement, multimedia storytelling, technological advancements, interactive news.

The advent of the internet has ushered in a transformative era for news dissemination, characterized predominantly by the integration of multimodality in content delivery. This phenomenon, where multiple modes of communication – text, images, audio, and video – are synergistically combined, has redefined the parameters of news media, offering a more dynamic, interactive, and engaging user experience. The purpose of this article is to explore the depths of multimodality in internet news media, examining its evolution, implementation, and impact on both the audience and journalistic practices.

The concept of multimodality is not new; however, its application in the digital news realm has gained unprecedented momentum in the 21st century. Traditional print media primarily relied on textual and visual elements, but the digital era has expanded this spectrum to include audio and video, thereby enriching the sensory experience of news consumption. This shift is not merely a technological advancement but also a response to changing audience preferences and consumption patterns in the information age.

The theoretical underpinnings of multimodality in media can be traced back to the works of scholars like Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, who emphasized the importance of understanding how different modes of communication interact and complement each other in conveying messages (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). In the context of internet news media, this interplay of modalities is not just additive but transformative, creating a new language of digital journalism that resonates with a global audience. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, understanding the role and impact of multimodality in internet news media becomes crucial for both media professionals and consumers alike.

Multimodality in communication refers to the use of multiple semiotic modes, or forms of expression and interpretation, to convey a message. In the context of internet news media, these modes encompass textual, visual (images and infographics), auditory (such as podcasts and audio clips), and video elements (Rahman, 2023). The integration of these diverse modes enhances the



richness and depth of news storytelling, offering a more immersive and engaging experience for the audience (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). The theoretical foundation of multimodality in digital media is rooted in the works of scholars like Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen, and Lev Manovich. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) emphasize the significance of understanding how different modes interact in communication, arguing that each mode has its own grammar and potential for meaning-making. Lev Manovich's work on new media further complements this by highlighting the convergence of traditional media forms and digital technology, leading to new forms of media representation and interaction (Manovich, 2001).

The evolution of multimodal communication in news media can be traced from the early days of print journalism to the current digital age. The transition from solely text-based news to the inclusion of photographs and illustrations marked the initial phase of multimodality (Marron, 2016). With the advent of the internet and digital technology, this evolution accelerated, incorporating audio and video elements. This section will chronicle the historical progression of multimodality in news media, emphasizing the technological advancements that facilitated this transformation. Digital technology has been a pivotal factor in the advancement of multimodality in news media. The capabilities of digital platforms, such as interactivity, hypermedia, and multimedia, have allowed news outlets to create more engaging and comprehensive news stories. This part of the article will delve into how digital technology has enabled the seamless integration of various modalities, transforming the way news is produced, distributed, and consumed.

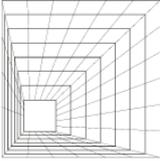
The evolution of news media from traditional print to digital platforms marks a significant shift in how information is disseminated and consumed. Initially, print media's reliance on text and static images offered limited engagement. The digital era, however, ushered in a paradigm shift with the introduction of multimedia elements, interactivity, and hyperlinks, fundamentally altering the news narrative structure. This section will explore the chronological progression of news media, highlighting key milestones in the transition to digital formats and the consequent rise of multimodality.

Multimodal news combines various elements to enhance storytelling and information delivery, including:

- **Textual Content:** The backbone of news storytelling, offering depth and context.
- **Visual Elements:** Images, infographics, and graphical representations that provide visual context and appeal.
- **Audio:** Podcasts, interviews, and background sounds that add an auditory layer to news, enriching the narrative.
- **Video:** Live footage, documentaries, and animated explanations that offer a dynamic and immersive experience.

Each component's role and effectiveness in conveying news will be analyzed, emphasizing how their integration creates a more comprehensive and engaging news experience. The impact of multimodality on audience interaction and engagement is profound. This part will explore how different modalities cater to diverse user preferences, enhance understanding, and encourage deeper engagement with the content. It will also discuss how multimodality has changed the way audiences consume news, shifting from passive consumption to active interaction.

The exploration of multimodality in internet news media reveals a significant transformation in how news is crafted and consumed. The integration of text, images, audio, and video has not only enhanced the sensory experience of news consumption but also revolutionized journalistic



storytelling. This multimodal approach caters to diverse audience preferences, facilitating deeper engagement and understanding. However, it also presents challenges, including the need for technical expertise and resource allocation. As digital technology continues to evolve, the future of news media will likely see further advancements in multimodality, potentially incorporating emerging technologies like augmented reality and AI-driven content creation. The key takeaway is that multimodality in internet news media is not just a trend but a fundamental shift in the landscape of journalism and media consumption.

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