

## **Situational Centers of the Republic Of Tatarstan and Analysis of Social Networks (Instagram)**

**By**

**Liya E. Bushkanets**

Doctor of Sciences (Philology), Professor, Department of Foreign Languages in the Sphere of International Relations Institute of International Relations, Kazan Federal University, E-mail: [lika\\_kzn@mail.ru](mailto:lika_kzn@mail.ru),

**Shigin Leonid Borisovich**

Candidate of Technical Sciences, Deputy Director, E-mail: [leonidshigin@gmail.com](mailto:leonidshigin@gmail.com)

**Ramil Ravilovich Khairutdinov**

Candidate of Historical Sciences, Director of the Institute of International Relations, E-mail [ramilh64@mail.ru](mailto:ramilh64@mail.ru),

**Minnikhanov Rifkat Nurgalieovich**

Doctor of Technical Sciences (2000), Professor (2004), Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan (2016). Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia? 18 Kremyovskaya Str, 420008 Kazan, Russia

### **Abstract**

In the modern information society, the speed of response to changes plays a huge role. Situational centers are being created to solve these problems. The success of their activities is based on complete, comprehensive, up-to-date information. Such situational centers are being created in the Republic of Tatarstan, an important region of Russia. However, among the directions of their activity there is a direction that has not been developed enough yet, this is a fundamentally new task – a comprehensive and holistic analysis of the socio-political text as a source of information about the value orientations of society, including for the prevention of certain dangerous actions. Most of the existing methodologies focus on analyzing only one or several aspects of the text that are out of context, which narrows, restricts and distorts the analyzed situation. The article discusses the concept of a holistic structure of the socio-political text in the Instagram network, focused on the methodology of its analysis, the application of computer technology and the areas in which the work of an analyst is needed. These studies will form the basis of a special laboratory for the analysis of socio-political texts in social networks at Kazan University. The purpose of the study is to determine the methodology for the analytical work of situational centers. The research has theoretical, methodological and practical significance.

**Key words:** situation center, political linguistics, text, students, digital diplomacy.

### **Introduction**

In 2002, in Russia started the Target program "Electronic Russia" («O federalnoy tselevoy programme «Elektronnaya Rossiya (2002 - 2010 gody)), and in 2010 and 2014 the state program "Information Society" was approved («Ob utverzhdenii gosudarstvennoy programmy Rossiyskoy Federatsii»). These documents formalized the trend towards the creation of a system of situational centers in the country – decision-making centers. The very concept of the situation center was put forward by Stafford Beer (Great Britain) in the 70s of the twentieth century.

In English, there are two different concepts – "situation center" and "situation room",

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in Russia we operate with one concept of "situation center".

According to the tasks being solved, the following classes of situational centers are distinguished:

- 1 Operational dispatch centers that solve real-time tasks of operational management of complex organizational and technological processes with numerous information flows;
- 2 Situational crisis analysis and management centers; such Centers allow you to visualize information and maintain operational communication, including video communication, with a large number of performers.
- 3 Information and analytical situational centers. Existing information and analytical situational centers are more often designed to analyze the available heterogeneous statistical and economic information. The problem of analyzing text content: social networks, mass media, socio-political texts, etc. is often solved only by mathematical methods without taking into account the necessary multidisciplinary approach in this case.

## **Methods**

Some problems of creating situational centers for the requirements of public administration were discussed at the conference "Modern problems of life safety: intelligent transport systems and situational centers" (Kazan, Kazan, February 27-28, 2018). E.V.Biryaltsev, R.N. Minnikhanov in the article "The Situational Center of the Head of the Region of the Russian Federation in the Digital Economy Paradigm" wrote, that "an approach to the creation and development of the information system of the Situational Center based on the principles of digital economy is proposed. The situation center is considered as a tool for solving unforeseen management tasks in various subject areas, which requires urgent software development with the involvement of a wide range of specialists. The development of the information system of the situational center to fulfill this requirement is proposed to base on the principles of microservice software architecture, access to the information system based on an Internet platform and open licenses for software and information components" (Biryaltsev et al., 2018). R.N.Minnikhanov, L.B.Shigin, I.R. Farakhov stated in the article: "The Situation Center of the President of the Republic of Tatarstan" that at present in the Republic there are separate situation centers and information and analytical units in the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Ministry of Energy, large cellular operators, etc. They currently do not provide information and analytical support, not develop the scenarios for modeling the situation and identifying hidden threats (Minnikhanov et al., 2018).

State security issues are related to the availability of an Information System for analyzing media materials and social networks. This is a new generation system that combines advanced Internet search capabilities (based on its own family of search robots) and automated dossier management tools, with the capabilities of intelligent analytical processing and identification of essential facts. This is possible based on big data. For this purpose, a Laboratory of expert systems, processing of language constructions and vibroacoustics is being created at Kazan University, within the framework of which specialists in the field of analysis of media texts, including texts of social networks, and in the future – texts of other types will cooperate. As a part of the computer analysis of texts, a multidimensional analysis of the tonality of texts is assumed, the identification of

extremist texts – not based on a single word, but as a result of a comprehensive analysis; based on computer analysis of texts, the neural network will offer experts the texts identified by it to prepare a forecast about possible future actions of the subject – the author of the text.

Almost all states use social networks to influence foreign audiences, big data and data diplomacy, global Internet governance and digital election technologies (Benoit et al., 2009; Cook & Stefanski, 1994; Grimmer & Stewart, 2013; Lauderdale & Herzog, 2016; Proksch et al., 2018; Young et al., 2012).

## Results

But before you start training neural networks, you need to build analysis algorithms. Let's show this on the example of one of the popular social networks – Instagram. Instagram of international organizations and Instagram of political figures is the subject of attention of those who are engaged in statistics on the Internet, the possibilities of this social network in application to political activity have only recently become the subject of research (Frier Sarah, 2020; Hoffman, 1969; Goroshko & Polyakova, 2019) as a subject of digital diplomacy (Zaemskij & Karpovich, 2021; Smirnov, 2015; Surma, 2015). Let's turn only to the analysis of the Instagram of a political figure.

In the modern world, a policy account is mandatory. This is confirmed by the report on world leaders on Instagram, published by Twiplomacy, a project of the American communication agency Burson Cohn & Wolfe (Electronic resource. <https://medium.com/clouddiplomacy/мировые-лидеры-в-instagram-2018-a7cc37d4608>, checked 01.09.2021). The pioneer is Barack Obama, who registered on this social network in January 2012. German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas has started a personal page in front of the UN General Assembly. All the leaders of the G7 and G20 have Instagram accounts, with the exception of Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping. However, the activities of the Russian leader are covered by @Photogovernment, and there is an account for the Chinese leader — @chinascio. Of the 426 accounts included in the review, 120 belong to heads of state, which is 2/3 of the UN members. These figures clearly show that attention to one's image on social networks and to issues of digital diplomacy is becoming almost an obligatory attribute of a leader (Electronic resource. <https://style.rbc.ru/impressions/5cd1b9499a7947f9db30bf06>, checked 01.09.2021, electronic resource. <https://tjournal.ru/flood/49132-heads-of-state>, checked 01.09.2021).

Every appearance of a political leader in the Internet space is a "political message", carries a political content, and therefore cannot be a private or neutral message, even if it seems so to an inexperienced eye. That is why the photos of one of the Asian leaders on a white horse "blew up" social networks: they were not just artistically made pictures, but symbolic messages sent to the national and international user (Electronic resource. <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4127347#id1020302>, checked 1.09.2021, Electronic resource. <https://freedom.livejournal.com/2189334.html>, checked 1.09.2021).

World leaders are increasingly using social media in order to 1. convey their point of view in a not very official context, in order to get with political content into the field of view of youth and other audiences under the guise of "entertainment", 2. to create their personal brand or the brand of the organization they head, 3. To win during the election campaign, 4. to make the work of their government more accessible to the general public.

Every year social networks become an increasingly important PR tool. And PR is built according to the same laws, which are determined not by who creates the account, but by who is its consumer.

Instagram has its own specifics. Instagram is the fastest growing social network, right after Twitter and Facebook. Modern culture is visual, Instagram is primarily photos that should attract attention when scrolling it. Therefore, photographs must be of high quality, professional, it is photographs that create meanings that are consciously and/or unconsciously perceived by recipients. Instagram is reformatting the world to make it look more attractive in photos. It is no accident that the word *instagrammable* ("suitable for Instagram aesthetics") appeared and there is no *"facebookability"*. And, most importantly, it is the youth who are the target audience of Instagram, politicians should take into account that the modern world is juvenile.

It is important that the subject of analysis should not be a separate post, but the entire account as a single text. If most of the ordinary subscribers consider the post as independent, scrolling through the tape in which it "flashed", then the analyst's task is to see the account as a whole, "read" the "message" that this account contains.

Let's start with the analysis of "avatars". This is an epigraph to the text, a declaration. The avatar of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is like a statement that he is "one of the others" among his voters, equal to them. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi appears as a kind, strong and intelligent man looking into the distance, which means that he is a reliable person. The rare variant is French President Emmanuel Macron. He is showed not in a full face, but in profile, as usual the look of a politician turned to the viewer should inspire confidence. This choice is not clear if you do not recall the "precedent texts" – ancient Roman coins with the image of the emperor, and, of course, the Gascony profile of General Charles de Gaulle, who led France in its most difficult days. This is the profile of an intellectual, strong leader, but, unlike Justin Trudeau, not "one of us." The official account is the result of the work of a large number of image makers, political strategists and the choice of the image cannot be random.

At the next stage, it is important to analyze a separate post. Because a politician is the bearer of power, symbols of power play a big role. For example, the index finger or its replacement (the President of Brazil points with a pen), while the "student" may even be the president of another country. For example, in one of the photos, Narendra Modi seems to be teaching Vladimir Putin, while the photographer of the other country took the opposite shot and both politicians appeared on equal terms. A politician should be friendly: he is always happy to shake hands, with an open smile that inspires confidence, a politician lives for the sake of his constituents and the interests of the state. Therefore, the range of emotions is quite rigidly fixed: concern about the issues under discussion, attention, sympathy. The gaze is directed either at the interlocutor in the photo, or at the audience. The skill of the photographer is that the politician and his voter are not separated by the screen, the person from the photo seems to cross the border of the screen and enters "my" life, solves "my" problems. A very important frame is "a politician looking into the distance and up, looking into the future". This image is stated on archetypes. In rare cases, the politician himself or his image makers decide to create a different image. So, Silvio Berlusconi, who held the post of chairman of the Council of Ministers of Italy four times, narcissistically enjoyed himself on his account, his business card were a southern tan, a constant smile, perfectly fitting expensive suits. This image is at the same time designed for the Italian mentality and demonstrates the indifference of the multi-

billionaire to the rules prevailing in the international community. An important role is played by the mise-en-scenes set by the image maker. Most often there are the following plot situations: “a politician is immersed in thinking about the country and the world”, “a politician works hard”, “a politician meets with another politician”, “a politician meets with the people of his country”. There may be photos of “a politician arriving at the crash site”, “a politician with his family”. It is important for the ideal politician to be fond of animals and think about ecology. Among the population groups represented, there are necessarily old people, a classic of any political advertising is “a child's pen in an adult's hand”. This is the past and the future, and in between the politician as our support. Another social stratum that should know about its importance for the country is the military. But taking pictures with beautiful women in modern conditions, when there is an active offensive of feminism, is dangerous for reputation. There are still important some additional plots. For example, “a politician walks alone in thought”. He should be at least a little understandable as a person: Justin Trudeau watches TV with his family, drinks beer with Barack Obama and is proud of his socks. The politician personally "makes the world a better place": Angela Merkel goes to Auschwitz to ask for forgiveness on behalf of all Germans, Narendra Modi in India, where there is a huge amount of garbage on the streets, cleans the beach himself.

It is interesting to pay attention to the color of politics. It's blue, the color is neutral and authoritative at the same time. If we analyze the gallery in most accounts, then blue is about 40% of all the colors that are on the images.

All these are standard features of the images created in the accounts of a politician, and they are not accidental. They rely on the archetypes of our consciousness, on the universal characteristics of the psyche, on the social stereotypes of a certain time (tolerance, the demands of growing feminism, etc.). In fact, the account seems to return to us, its subscribers, our expectations and ideas about the ideal politician, it is we who are touched when we look at children and old people, at animals, admire stately handsome marines. And a rare politician will decide to resist these demands publicly, regardless of what kind of policy he actually pursues.

Thus, the accounts of politicians become similar to each other. Political strategists have no other way out – the politician must be trusted. The subscriber still looks through these accounts – to be aware of political events, to support or condemn this or that figure. But the downside of a politician's account is boredom. Which posts arouse the greatest interest of the audience. The data of the above-mentioned review is based on an analysis of 426 accounts for the year (October 1, 2017-1, 2018), they were read by more than 98 million subscribers during the year, almost 100 thousand posts were published and 860 million likes and comments appeared.

Which photos get the most likes?

- family photos. There are politicians who share moments of their personal lives: the Prime Minister of New Zealand posted a photo with her newborn baby, Bashar al-Assad shared a photo from the hospital with his wife, who was diagnosed with cancer. The Prime Minister of Luxembourg wrote under the photo with his partner: "In more than 70 countries, I wouldn't be able to celebrate my third wedding anniversary because I'd be in jail or worse."

- photos from sports events. So, during the 2018 FIFA World Cup, the world saw the Iranian president watching football on TV at home in a national team T-shirt, the Albanian Prime



Minister and the Croatian president celebrating Croatia's entry into the final.

The most commented posts were (Electronic resource, <https://mir24.tv/articles/16271107/pyat-politikov-kotorye-udivili-nas-v-instagram>, checked 09.09.2021):

- selfie of the Indonesian president from a football game (876,239 comments). It is significant that many politicians do not consider selfies to correspond to the image of a political leader, however, the need to keep up with the youth leads to the fact that selfies appear more and more often in the accounts of politicians and emphasize their personal participation in maintaining the account. Colombian President Ivan Duque even had a selfie stick, and the President of Switzerland took a selfie with a team of sumo wrestlers during a visit to Japan.

- Trump's post (October 13, 2017), in which he announces the cancellation of the nuclear deal with Iran (4,129,144 comments);

- The Prime Minister of Norway reproduced the most famous Norwegian painting "The Scream" and drew attention to the exhibition of Edvard Munch in Japan.

Videos usually get more likes than photo content and 3 times more comments.

Thus, we see an unexpected result: political posts are not popular. Instagram screenshots of tweets (as Donald Trump or Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte did), screenshots of press releases are extremely unfortunate for Instagram, because large texts are inconvenient to read; boring protocol photo reports about ordinary political meetings and events. In a British way, the restrained Theresa May also looks quite monotonous in many photos.

A politician on Instagram is interesting as a person. Justin Trudeau's socks and the way they decorate the Christmas tree as a family are more interesting than his political speeches. It's no coincidence that Instagram is a peeping at private life through the keyhole. The same "peeping" of political events, a non-standard angle would bring success to photos from official events in real time.

But it is not so easy to recommend political strategists to show a politician as a person more. There are national traditions: a politician in Italy is more relaxed than a politician in the UK who graduated from a closed elite school, there are certain traditions of creating the image of a politician in a particular country... A country that does not play a big role in world politics can afford to represent its leader as a private person, unlike a major power.

Instagram's competitor for the attention of young subscribers is Instagram of famous bloggers, show business figures, etc., their main tool in attracting attention is scandal. The politician finds himself between Scylla and Charybdis: scandal and respect for the reputation of a public figure. That is why (unpredictability, violation of all rules, playing with readers) Donald Trump's social networks are closely monitored. The Instagram of British Minister Boris Johnson is interesting – it is a type of English eccentric, sung by Charles Dickens. Instagram is not the most politicized social network, publications on social networks are still not an official statement of the state, but the press service staff are understandably cautious.

One of the most important issues for an analyst is the interaction of the reality of the Internet and reality. The markers are likes and comments. However, there remain several important questions related to whether there is a relationship between the presence of a politician on the Internet and his real influence. The number of subscribers does not correlate with the total number of interactions per post: D. Trump received 200 million interactions in 2018, however, taking into account the large number of posts, Narendra Modi has a higher level of interactions, since each of his posts received an average of 873,302 interactions. But the influence of D. Trump's posts in the world was higher. The data show that if successful work with social media determined the success of a politician in reality, everything would be simple. The most active leaders on Instagram, the most popular, based on the number of subscribers and the number of interactions, are not always the most influential on the world stage. Moreover, popularity on the Internet does not always correlate with the results of elections: there are different principles in the Internet space and reality, despite the fact that politicians are trying to subdue the Internet (including bans, etc.), and the Internet seeks to extend the principles of "show thinking" to non-Internet life. The ambiguous interaction of the Internet reality and the reality of life should be the subject of the work of analysts.

## Summary

What are the capabilities of Internet analytics in situation centers? So, the analysis showed that there is a certain ideal model of a politician's Instagram account, built according to the rules: a certain type of photo, poses, gestures, mise en scene. Interest is aroused by deviations from the model in which reality "breaks through", this is a kind of "negative technique", here the specifics of the political course, the individuality of the politician are manifested. It is no coincidence that the appearance of Donald Trump on social networks, who violated all the rules, attracted huge attention. So, the appearance of photos of some type, more frequent against the background of the standard model, should attract attention, especially if these are photos with the military. Or, on the contrary, the disappearance of a certain type of mise en scene is also indicative. The appearance of unexpected partners in the photos may indicate the search for new partners in the political arena. The Bulgarian Prime Minister posted in Stories how he is sitting at the UN General Assembly, hugging the South Korean president. This is a public, world-oriented statement about good relations between countries. Instagram is not the most politicized social network (unlike Twitter), official statements are not made on its pages, but serious "messages" can be hidden behind a humorous tone and its analysis can tell a lot to an attentive analyst, therefore the word Instaplomacy did not appear by chance. The unexpected violation of the rules of diplomatic protocol in communication is also indicative: such posts can include a photo of Sergey Lavrov with the Russian flag on Instagram of the Russian Foreign Ministry, under which there was a caption: "Photo healing. Apply to sore spots on the planet. In a number of geographical locations, it can cause the effect of exorcism." The dynamics of a politician's image is also important, even changes in the color of clothes (from blue to red).

## Conclusions

Such dynamics, i.e. changes against the background of an abstract model of a "correct" page in social networks, can predict in advance the directions of future policy changes, which, in fact, is what situational centers should do.

Studying the dynamics of changes: the appearance of a new type of images, new

characters, the dynamics of changes in comments, etc – all this is possible thanks to big data as part of the work of the situation center.

And the results will become necessary data for the formation of political strategies of the Republic of Tatarstan.

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**Liya E. Bushkanets** graduated from the Kazan State University in 1987. Professor, Head of the Department of Foreign Languages in the Sphere of International Relations, Institute of International Relations, Kazan Federal University, Russia. Member of the Chekhov Society (Russian Academy of Sciences), Member of the Guild of Literature Scholarships (Moscow). Research interests include: international relations, linguistic analysis of the text, political linguistics, Russian literature. Author of more than 150 articles and 3 scientific books.

**Shigin Leonid Borisovich.** Graduated from Kazan Aviation Institute in 1988. Candidate of Technical Sciences. Lieutenant Colonel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Specialist in the field of video recording and digitalization of traffic police, situation centers, road safety.

**Ramil Ravilovich Khairutdinov.** From a family of rural teachers. In 1986 he graduated from Kazan State University . Chairman of the Council of the Kazan branch of the Russian Historical Society. In 2002, Chairman of the Heraldic Council under the President of the Republic of Tatarstan. In 2007 - 2012, Director of the State Historical, Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve "Kazan Kremlin", In 2011 he was appointed director of the Institute of International Relations of the KFU, Specializes in the history of regional culture, local government in the territory of modern Tatarstan, historical and cultural heritage and social structure of the Tatar people, problems of preservation of UNESCO cultural heritage sites in Russia and abroad. He is the author of more than 130 scientific publications, including 15 books and collective monographs.

**Minnikhanov Rifkat Nurgalievich** Graduated in 1977 from the Kazan Higher Military Engineering School named after Marshal of Artillery M.N. Chistyakov. In 1982 - 1992 lecturer

of the Department of Power Supply of the Kazan Higher Military Command and Engineering School named after Marshal of Artillery M.N. Chistyakov. In 1997-2016, Head of the State Traffic Inspectorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tatarstan. since 2016, Director of GBU "Road Safety". More than 200 scientific publications; 4 copyright certificates for discoveries. Order of Courage (1996), Order of Friendship (2011), Order of Merit for the Republic of Tatarstan (2013).