

A Descriptive Analysis of the Website Video Representation of Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University

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The presence of the website at the University is an indispensable condition of its existence in the era of information technology development. Website plays an important role in drawing the attention of the audience to the University, provides it with a certain reputation and attractiveness, demonstrates its professional, innovative and creative potential. This study exposes a critical analysis of the section "Video", posted on the official website of Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University (Russia). The main purpose of this study is to understand how the University uses the section "Video" to represent itself on its institutional website. To achieve the set goals, the author applies the method of textual and visual analysis of the web-resource materials. Textual analysis has allowed examining the content of web pages. Visual analysis was concentrated on the study of the quality of journalistic work, in particular, the ways of presenting news. The article presents the strengths and weaknesses in the work of web pages from the position of its structural elements, textual and visual information, and navigation. The analysis showed the section, "Video of Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University" does not provide the ability to comment on stories, assess them; there is no guestbook, feedback, contact information.

Key words: University Website; Website Video Representation; Descriptive Analysis; Web-Based Content; Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University; Russia.

The important element of any modern University higher education institution becomes the presence of its official website in the terms of active dissemination of information technologies in the educational environment. The website is created to solve the whole complex of strategic objectives, specifically:

1. Website plays an important role in drawing the attention of the audience (both internal - students, teaching staff, and external - prospective students, donors, and alumni) to the activities of a University. According to Ritter *et al.* (2002) "users visiting these sites expect to find particular pieces of information, perhaps most notably contact information for various people within the

department, but also a wide range of information."

2. Official site of the university creates a certain reputation through the event-content, which, first all, may include news programs; performance of the Management of a University, leading experts in their field; broadcast of important events of the university, telling the history of the university, its structure and separate divisions, etc.
3. The website helps to show professional, innovative and creative potential, competitiveness and appeal of a University (Anufrienko, 2013).

The general analysis of university websites is mentioned in scientific proceedings by Mechitov (2001), Middleton & McConnell (1999), Schneider & Bruton (2004). Saichaie (2010) explores that "the texts and visuals in an effort to

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understand how colleges and universities use language and what types of messages institutions communicate on their institutional websites". The subject of Pechnikov&Nwohiri's research (2012) becomes the web metric analysis of Nigerian university websites. Hana *et al.* (2013) analyses "the navigation path of the university's website in order to increase its usability and comfort level based on a process mining technique".

Objectives of the Study

The main purposes of this study are:

- to understand how Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University (Russia) employs the section "Video" to represent itself on its institutional website;
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the section "Video" in terms of building its structural elements, textual and visual information, navigation;
- To give some recommendations how to improve the work of web pages on the basis of critical analysis.

Methodology of this research

We explored all the textual and visual information in the section "Video", which has been presented on the official website of Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University since 2009 till July 2014. Textual analysis includes the research of the names of subsections to their accordance of the content they contain.

Visual analysis was focused on the research of the quality of journalism, in particular, the ways of presenting news content. Particular

attention was paid to the analysis of University news program "Informat". Nearly 50 newscasts since 2012th till May 2014th have been examined.

During the research of the internet site of the examined High School we used the methodological works by Bauer&Scharl(2000), Kim&Kuljis (2010), Koehler (1999), Mcmillan& Lin (2000), Weare (2002).

Analysis and recommendations

Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University (PSLU) is located in Russia, Stavropol Region, in a town with a population of over 200,000 people. The university was founded exactly 75 years ago. Its specialty is teaching foreign languages. The university is positioning itself on the official website as a major innovative, educational, research and humanities center of South Russia, widely known throughout the country and abroad (About the University, 2014). Its slogan is: "University that Opens and Transforms the World".

It is impossible to achieve the announced ambitious plans of the university without using of an Internet resource. The University owns an official site - (<http://www.pglu.ru>), inside which in this study we are interested in the section of the site - "Video PSLU" (<http://www.pglu.ru/video>).

The structure of the content in the section "Video of PSLU" consists of the following main large blocks: "News of PSLU", "Subdivisions", "Chancellor", "Scientific life", "VIP-guests", "Foreign language films", "To our Graduates". Let's examine each element in detail.

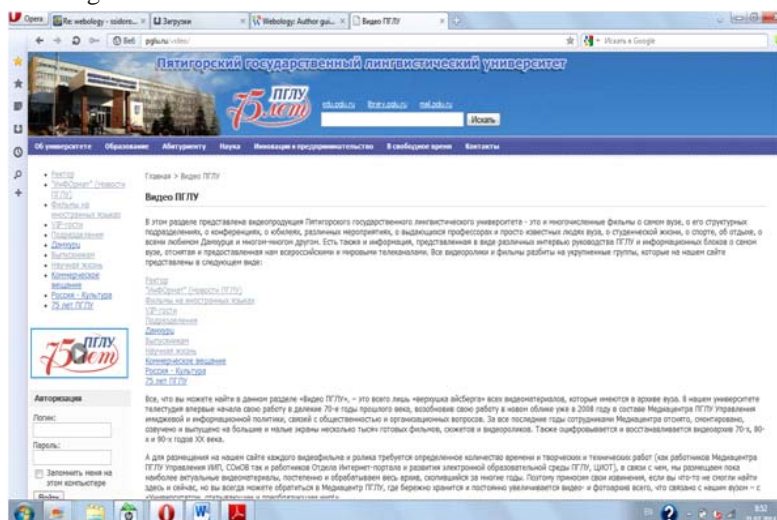


Fig. 1. Screenshot of page "Video of PSLU"

The video block “News of PSLU” is mandatory and the most representative (“Informat” (News of PSLU), 2014). It goes through a monthly program “informative”, which aims to highlight the

socio-political, cultural and scientific activities of the university. This program has been aired since 2012 and has 50 editions.

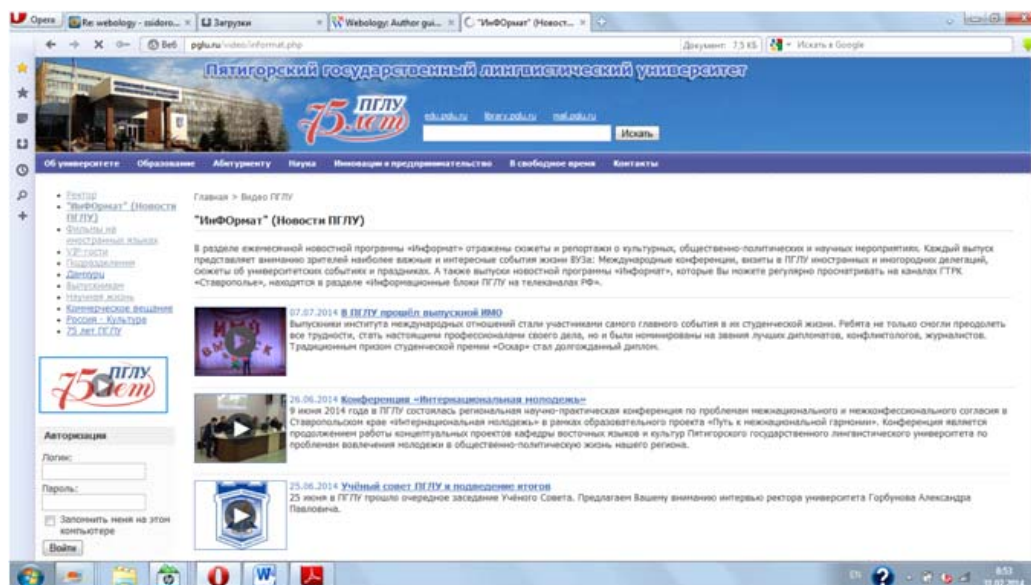


Fig. 2. Screenshot of page “News of PSLU”

News of the program “Informat” in the majority have the following topics: conferences, festivals, exhibitions, concerts and other events that are held on the basis of the University, its institutions and high schools; celebrating anniversaries, government, corporate and other events, the organization of social, educational and other projects, creative competitions involving students and teachers of PSLU.

There are always two hosts in the studio - male and female. Often, they are the main part of the correspondents' newscast. Next stands spiegel (announcement) on the musical substrate with voiceovers. The newscast duration usually lasts 30-35 minutes. It includes from 8-to 12 video reports, lasting from 2 to 10 minutes.

Having analyzed the whole archive of the news program, it would be desirable to state the following remarks and recommendations about the structure of the program and to separate the elements of reporting.

1. As far as spiegel is concerned, it is possible to suggest using not only the announcement with the off-screen comment, but also synchronies that will increase

professional quality of the news release. We consider it inexpedient to represent almost all news material of the current program in spiegel. It is necessary to allocate no more than 3 or 4 the most significant actions as it is done by all federal news programs.

2. Employment of synchronies in the reports happens to be out of place. The journalist has to be able to select that information which he can read himself off-screen and that information which demands synchrony introduction. The excessive quantity of synchronies turns the reporting into a regular survey.
3. Correspondents of the “Informat” program should strengthen the position of stand-up in their reports. First of all, it is rarely used nowadays. Secondly, if the stand-up is present in the material, the correspondent frequently uses it only in the beginning of the report. Third, it is necessary to choose the background for the stand-up creatively. If a journalist appears in the frame, he should explain his presence here, for example, with the help of an action in which he also participates. It is necessary to exclude from the options of stand-up the stand-up

against a background wall and the name of the event. All this is not a legitimate reason for the appearance of a correspondent in the frame. Also you shouldn't forget that the stand-up can be equally interesting, both in the middle of the reporting, and in its end.

4. Also there is no accurate schedule for a release of the program in air. Releases are dated, either in the beginning, the middle, and sometimes and in the end of a month. Such unsystematic character and unstructured way of presenting the material belittles program's advantages.

The second block of "Subdivisions" tells about the work of Departments, Schools and Institutions of PSLU (Subdivisions, 2014). In this section there are 27 scenes and commercials, which have appeared since 2009. The promotion of this unit began in 2013 and can be observed in 2014. This unit is considered by us primarily to be advertising and informative, because it contains interviews with the Heads of the departments, or the same type of reports about the festive arrangements held by these departments.



Fig. 3. Screenshot of page "Subdivisions"

The third block is presented by informational materials where the main participant of the events is the Chancellor of PGLU Alexander Pavlovich Gorbunov (interview, congratulations on holidays and important dates for the University, the Chancellor in the university news stories, etc.)

The moneybox of this block contains 23 plots dated considerably by 2013-2014 (Chancellor of PSLU, 2014). There are only two plots that have been written down in 2012 and one has been made in 2009.

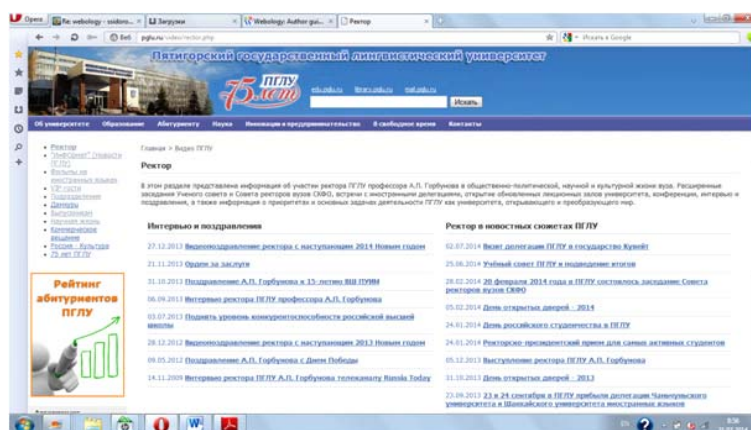


Fig. 4. Screenshot of page Chancellor of PSLU

These video records are presented in two genres - performance in the frame and the reporting, where one of the participants is the Chancellor. It is necessary to recommend the following ideas:

There are practically no interviews with the rector though it is one of those genres which arise in such section. In our opinion, interview allows management to convey the basic ideas, principles, and trends - any information that is necessary to emphasize, explain and discuss. Exactly interview is able to create a positive image of the Chancellor, as it helps to represent him as thinking and analyzing person who is not afraid to respond to problematic issues. Also interview makes the Chancellor more approachable to faculty and students.

From 23 plots of this section the Chancellor performs in only 8. It is necessary to increase the number of video records about the Rector at the expense of other genres and forms of television journalism - interview, the comment, a

round table, discussions, exit reporting with his participation. As for performances in a shot, the camerawork in certain cases leaves much to be desired. The monotonous zone plan, boring "wall-paper" (as a rule, a wall of a study of the rector, corridors or the university's hall) shows platitudes and constructive approach to such sorts of video records. It is possible to suggest shooting the Chancellor in movement more often that will help to emphasize his vigorous activity which is actually present at his work.

It is necessary to reconsider the block "Rector in News Plots of Higher Educational Institution" attentively. Not everywhere the audience can see his presence, as, for example, in the reporting about the celebration of Day of the Russian students in PSLU of January 24, 2014 (http://pglu.ru/video/news_detail.php?ID=32398) and in information about the Open Day-2014 (http://pglu.ru/video/news_detail.php?ID=32399), which was placed in the section "Chancellor".



Fig. 5. Screenshot of page "Scientific Life"

The fourth block "Scientific Life" has the purpose to publicize the scientific activity of PSLU (Scientific Life, 2014). However the small number of reporting - only 7, are present at this block, does not speak in favor of the University science.

The analysis of this block revealed lack of information about student's scientific life. Practically all information touches upon scientific

activity of teachers or graduate students. In our opinion, this video unit should be equally oriented to the student community in order to arouse interest among the youth to engage them in research activities.

The fifth block is called "VIP-guests". It posted 10 interviews, but not reports and as it was written on the site, taken from famous people -

scientists, journalists, leaders of large organizations, teachers, etc. It should be noted that students do not always act as interviewers

VIP-guests (VIP-guests, 2014). Teachers of PSLU also try themselves in this role quite successfully.



Fig. 6. Screenshot of page “VIP-guests”

It would be desirable to see in these block video lectures, master classes, trainings, round tables, discussions which are held by the coming guests with students of higher educational institution. After all such material can serve as effective educational remedy, and, exactly, be used when lecturing by teachers of PSLU and by the students when preparing for seminars. In addition we consider that it is worth making active this block at the expense of increase of interviews with coming guests. As 10 video records for 4 years (from 2009 to 2013) and total absence of interview to VIP-guests current 2014 creates an ambiguous impression. On the one hand, this block shows that famous people often come to the

university, and on the other hand, we can see that these visits happen very seldom. It doesn't correspond to the real situation and harms to the image of the University.

The name of the sixth block is “Foreign language films”. It links the expectation of the user to the presence of the University film library (Foreign language films, 2014). However, when opening this block we see a presentation film advertisements in 6 foreign languages, devoted to the activities of the University. Of course, such products must be present at the Linguistic University. However, it must be located either in another section, or under a different name (for example, “Films about the University in foreign languages”).

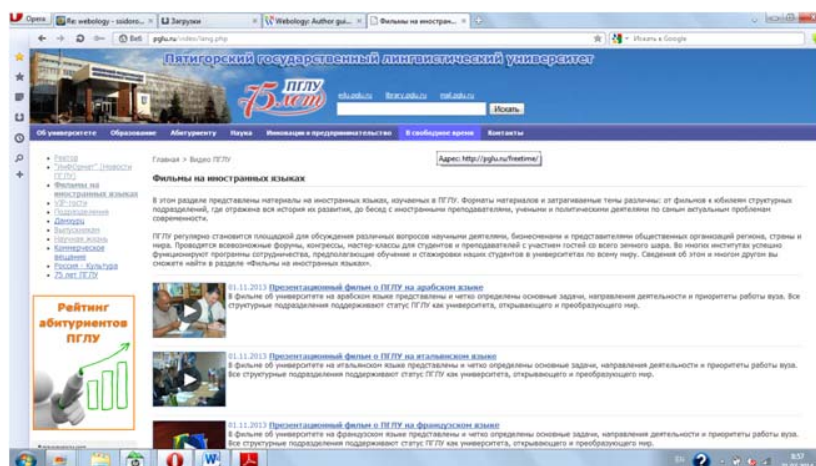


Fig. 7. Screenshot of page “Foreign language films”

In general, this block, in our opinion, is not developed properly. Most likely, a presentation film appeared first, and then there was a necessity to place it in the division “Video of Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University”. We therefore assume that this block is unlikely to get another development in the near future.

The block “To our Graduates” looks unrepresentable, as it contains only three films, two of which date back to the year 2013 and one to the year 2014 (To our Graduates, 2014).

It would be desirable to note that Higher Educational Institution activity connected with the work with graduates has to be one of the priority

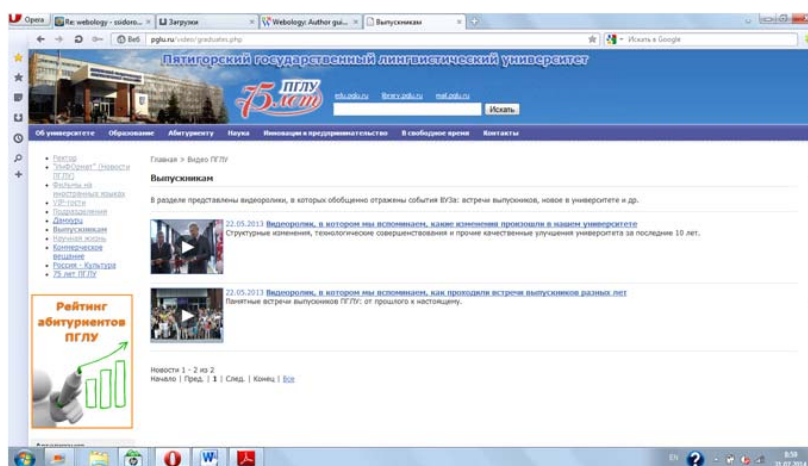


Fig. 8. Screenshot of page “To our Graduates”

directions as they (in particular, achieved success in the professional sphere) create favorable image to the University. This block has to cause graduates' desire not only to visit it once, but also look through its video records regularly, to leave the comments, to share the memories, etc. In this regard, it is necessary to provide the possibility to comment, estimate, and feedback. It will allow journalists to use information provided by graduates, for the reporting, television sketches, documentary films. It is also possible to interview graduates, for example, on Skype, and to place this material separately or to post it into a more complex program.

CONCLUSION

In General, the analysis of section “Video of PSLU” showed that rich journalistic material has been accumulating during the last three or four years. It would be desirable to advise the management of this Higher Educational Institution first of all to separate from this block the activity of television station of PGLU which is concerned

with the production of news, or to give the other name to this section (for example, “Television of PSLU”, “PGLU Television station”, etc.). It is connected with that fact that on the main page of the Higher Education Institution there is no block speaking about the existence of television at the university. In a modern informational society, in the conditions of the rigid competition for the entrant between different universities, this fact can have an undesirable impact on decision-making of entering the University. It concerns especially those entrants who want to choose the profession of journalism. Moreover, it can have a negative impact on the overall perception of the potential and the image of Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University. It would be desirable to see in the grid TV Studio of “PSLU” other programs, in addition to the news release of the program “Informat”. Also the students' potential in the activity of TV Studio “Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University” should be strengthened by issuing various youth programs, such as entertainment, music, humorous, photo - and video sketches and other.

The topics in “Video of Pyatigorsk State

Linguistic University” does not provide the ability to comment on stories, assess them, there is no guestbook. I would also like to see the information about the attendance of the section, i.e. the number of clicks on each video. The main forms of feedback should be such headings, such as “Contacts”, “Feedback”, containing the email addresses of journalists and leading news programs.

In the subsections “Video of PSLU” there is no opportunity to make comments on plots and to give them an assessment; there is no guest book there. Also it would be desirable to see information on attendance of this section, i.e. quantity of clicks on each video record. The main forms of feedback should be such units as “Contacts”, “Feedback”, because they contain e-mail addresses of journalists and hosts of the news programs.

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