Abstract

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Gamification redefines news reading activity by turning it into a playful experience. The shift from a reading mode to a playing mode marks a shift in news semogenesis strategies that need to be investigated to provide a better understanding of the emerging genres of news gamification and to build some reflections on the ongoing changes in journalistic practices and news values. This article takes a case study of the Al Jazeera gamified news, #Hacked-Syria's Electronic Armies. The article aims to account for the semogenic resources employed by #Hacked and the resulting aesthetic and immersive experience of interactivity. It is found that #Hacked makes sense through the medium of aesthetics of interactivity. Studied through the lens of systemic functional linguistics, aesthetics in the context of the current study is not reduced to a mere attention to style rather it describes a different and unique digital process of meaning making based on the participant's immersive interactivity and choices. It is the semogenic power of choice and the immersive aesthetics of interactivity that mainly create #Hacked news value. The analysis yields that #Hacked reconfigures traditional notions of readers, news, and news values.