Some suggestions about the role of text information on video simulation (modelling)

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Abstract
In the initial project of our laboratory on video modelling it was not thought necessary to seek permission from the authors of the architectural designs discussed in the accompanying scenarios and scripts. We would like to propose that the authors participate in the presentation of the video work by commenting on their designs as they are shown on screen. The difficulty of presenting a commentary on work, improving the quality of design modelling and its presentation, depends on the thorough working-out and consistency of scripts and textual information. Our presentation will illustrate through video examples our present approach to the problems of video-modelling in this field.

Introduction
In this work I'd like to describe our approach to the role of textual information, accompanying video-rows in works on video-simulation of architectural designs. When considering the role of a scenario we know how complicated (in our field) the problem is, though at first sight it may appear very simple: it is enough to see-write-edit - that's all there is to it. This idea was present in our first works, which in fact reflected the chain ordered by the client: model - initial video-shooting - the same frames but with the model 'built' into them. There was no text accompanying the frame, as in such a simple situation the explanations were given by the clients themselves when they were demonstrating the video-material. This situation was due not to our lack of skill, but to the users' scant knowledge about the possibilities of video-simulation methods. Because of this, these possibilities were not exploited.

We notice that this problem also intrigues Mr. Ph. Thiel, Director of the Center for Experimental Notation, Seattle, USA(1), but the level of democratic development in our country today makes us approach problems in a somewhat different way (though it's just possible that at times they coincide). No doubt it would be useful for us to collaborate more closely and consistently with the Center at Seattle to determine common approaches with regard to different levels of development. This would also assist in introducing our ideas and making them more familiar among the public at large.

Concluding the introductory part I observe that in our work today we have to consider not only mental attitudes but also the requirements laid down by the authorities (mainly local). They are not always interested (because of personal reasons) in taking long-term decisions, based on our information, but are concerned to satisfy the requirements of a wealthy client - someone who may not possess great intellect but because of his money can dictate conditions.

Text information in video simulation
Thinking about the form of the statement of the problem, we chose what we felt to be an optimal variant. We shall show our approach using the example of a Workshop and illustrate
some additional considerations using two important practical works that we recently made.

The Workshop task was to create a simple project for redesigning a town square from a given initial situation (a part of an imaginary small town with an unbuilt area in the centre). We were to consider it from points along a given trajectory of movement using endoscopic and computer methods. In doing this we came to the conclusion that using this opportunity (when the majority of the participants at the conference are acquainted with the initial situation) it is possible to clearly demonstrate the technology of our work. It is connected with the formation of the scenario (we use the word to mean: the formation of a logical sequence of the final presentation) that precedes the process of video-simulation itself.

So a task is defined. It is interesting from the technical and methodological points of view (comparison of technical methods of presenting design information dealing with the same initial space), and is straightforward from the architectural point of view - solution of a local architectural task on the outskirts of a small town. This means that if it is solved in the simplest way, following the task requirements precisely, the result is not likely to attract public attention to this important problem. Some kind of intrigue is necessary! What shall we do? A creative search begins (a kind of skeleton of a scenario appears).

The examination of the initial model we receive, showed - using an endoscopic device - that following the given route at a number of points we find empty spaces behind the model (between its buildings). What shall we place there? We know that the techniques we used (because of financial difficulties in the Russian educational system) are far from perfect. How shall we lessen their defects? We are searching for a way out (now it is work on a scenario or formation of a procedure - how to present what will be designed). In order to enter the situation, we watch the video Welcome to Delft many times. But our mental approach needs to be taken into account - it will help to explain some architectural peculiarities of our project. We watch the first chain (or video-row) demonstration (with wry humour) of how it could be in Russia today. It is a kind of initial psychological preparation for spectators.

After this we are initiated and have a right to enter a European town and demonstrate how we imagine transformation of one part of its territory. Creating a new space, it is reasonable to observe from real points how the proposed principal sections might appear. Our time was limited and we failed to consider alternative solutions - but they can be and sometimes must be included in a scenario (we shall discuss this later).

Suggestions were made (with regard to our technical possibilities) about individual episodes which are connected with the given trajectory of movement. (It is important from the point of view of the possibility of comparing the experiment's results, which unfortunately, it is impossible to achieve completely, but still this will be considerably more than at any previous conference).

We have remembered some episodes from the Welcome to Delft video and see that some frames could fill the empty spaces on the edges of the model, which I mentioned above. Our video-computer technology helps us to realise our concept. A new trend emerges in the scenario: if the given Workshop theme is `Image Imagination', why can't we place ourselves on the outskirts of Delft? It isn't difficult for us to do this, since we haven't been there and this proves a psychological advantage - our imaginations are unfettered.
How do we do it? Choosing a video-frame from *Welcome to Delft* one must be carried away into an imaginary endoscopic space (something like Alice in Wonderland). Visually it will be perceived more gently than when it is done by computer methods (we aren't considering digital video but use the available VHS-video titled *Welcome to Delft*). Later the scenario (or rather the arrangement plan on its base) must provide for special effects. But I would like it to come across like a gentle statement, not like a lecture; it is simply an exchange of experience.

**Practical Example**

Now let's consider some characteristics of our actions in real works. One of them is video-materials we produced for the reconstruction project of Borovitskaya Square. The development of the territory near the Kremlin is determined by decisions of Russia's President and the Moscow government, therefore the most important role in it is played by the introductory and final parts, demonstrating the necessity of making decisions. The video-simulation methods seem to confirm that the project proposition is realisable. About 30 percent of the scenario of the video-material, executed by us, consisted of a historical description of the territory and proofs of the necessity of the Moscow Kremlin Museums. The video-simulation itself (i.e. demonstration of design proposals in a real video-environment) accounted for 30 to 40 percent of the total time. The design proposal was executed by a computer and is built into a real video environment. Since purely computer video space can (by the author's decision) differ considerably from the real one (in trajectories, points and angles of observation) we provide for a chain in the scenario in order to prove the reality of images: a real frame - its super-imposition on the model of the existing building 1:500 (demonstration of the exact siting of the future building) - replacement of a simplified model of the exact size by a computer (3DS) model. Because of the importance of the work, in the final part of the scenario detailed technical and especially economic substantiation of the proposed buildings is provided.

Turning aside for a moment from the main discussion of this article, I'd like to note that during the work on this video-material, the designers - having seen their project in a real video-environment - had to introduce considerable changes into it. This became the basis for a new scenario - information for students about the use of video-computer technologies in the process of optimisation of design solution.

Another example is a practical exercise on the creation of a big public building in the historic centre of Moscow. According to the scenario set by the client it was supposed to provide information about the project in detail (on the model 1:500) and to demonstrate in detail the functional purpose of rooms on the model 1:200. The demonstration of an intermediate video-film to the client showed defects of the project and it was decided to prepare video-material with two variants for a wide discussion. This video-material was produced, and a solution based on it (now being realised) was reached. The video-film was demonstrated many times in different administrative and public organisations and showed that the introductory and final parts were too long. As it was this video-film that was demonstrated most often in different organisations (and we have received similar opinions about it) we can draw the following conclusions.

**Conclusions**

1. When carrying out work for different (private and state) organisations, at least in our country, it is necessary to define accurately tasks of the video-material (e.g. advertising, business - substantiation - search for sponsors etc., historic-archive), which will influence its
2. When agreeing to the client's suggestions it is necessary to define clearly on the basis of one's own experience the optimum contents of the scenario and proportions of its parts.

3. Video-films should not last more that 5-10 minutes (this is connected with people's ability to absorb specific information).

References