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## Material aesthetics of stop-motion animation as a factor of trust: Narrative and cinematic analysis of the project

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**Abstract.** The growing crisis of media trust and fatigue with a standardised digital aesthetic encourage audiences to seek out an authentic visual experience. Stop-motion animation meets this request because of its fundamental materiality – the ability to turn the physical presence of objects into an aesthetic argument for authenticity. In this context, materiality appears not only as a technical characteristic of time-lapse animation, but also as an independent aesthetic category that affects the development of trust and the reduction of social distance between the message and the viewer. The purpose of the study was to theoretically substantiate stop-motion animation as a factor in the development of audience trust and identify artistic mechanisms of its implementation, in particular, through narrative and cinematic means of organising the audio-visual series. The research material was an author's social and educational project implemented within the framework of interdisciplinary cooperation between the Department of Visual Design and Art of the National University "Lviv Polytechnic" and the public sector. The methodology combined contextual, structural and system, and comparative analysis with practice-based research, which allowed integrating artistic design into the scientific plane and tracing the relationship between the material organisation of the image, the type of narrative, and the mechanisms of trust development. The results of the study showed that materiality in stop-motion animation functions as an aesthetic mechanism for reducing social distance and increasing the acceptance of media messages. The correlation between the textured organisation of the image, compositional chamber, and causally constructed narrative, implemented through cinematic techniques (editing, framing, rhythmic organisation), which form the effect of authenticity on the visual-plastic and emotional levels, was revealed. It was proved that the material aesthetics of stop-motion appears as an independent artistic factor of trust, expanding the idea of the functioning of this technique beyond its technological definition and actualising its potential in hyper-digital culture. The results obtained can be used by designers, teachers, and developers of social and communication media projects to create visual content aimed at increasing audience confidence in a hyper-digital environment

**Keywords:** audio-visual communication; multimedia; media content; animated video; animation project; animation technique; improvement of media literacy

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## INTRODUCTION

In the context of the rapid spread of algorithmically generated content and the growing lack of trust in digital media, the issue of aesthetic mechanisms for generating reliability is gaining a new research weight. The hyper-digital environment, characterised by an excess of standardised images and the rapid circulation of media content, highlights the need to seek alternative visual strategies capable of restoring a sense of physical presence and authenticity. It is in this context that stop-motion animation (SMA) appears as a demonstrative aesthetic phenomenon, whose material nature acquires a communicative and trusting function.

Research in the field of educational technologies confirms the broader aesthetic potential of SMA. According to M. Farrokhnia *et al.* (2020), the creation of videos by students and pupils in the SMA technique positively affects the measurement indicators of students' knowledge in subject-specific areas, and personal characteristics and behavioural attitudes. This effect was achieved if the process was organised with appropriate scaffolding – a system of temporary training support, which provides for a gradual reduction in assistance as the student's autonomy increases, and in the context of the SMA includes appropriate technical instructions, relevant examples, and leading questions. As noted by Y. Gong (2023), the appeal of SMA lies in its ability to “break the line between virtual and real” through the use of material objects, so that even the illusory screen world is perceived by the viewer as authentic and correlated with its own reality.

The mechanisms of building trust in animation (and in any media product in general) are the subject of interest of many researchers. Both in the local and global media space, there is a lack of audience trust, and, according to observations by I. Pohrebniak *et al.* (2024), this problem is only getting worse. In the context of contemporary digitalisation, building trust in a media product, brand, or any narrative is becoming an increasingly lengthy process, which is becoming increasingly complex due to the regular increase in the amount of information and the increase in cognitive load (Arnold *et al.*, 2023), which once again emphasises the importance of creating and testing a trust-building model, which is presented in the paper.

The relevance of the analysis of the development of trust in animation was confirmed by surveys conducted by a number of non-governmental public organisations and the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications in 2022-2025 (ZMINA, 2022; PO “Detector media”, 2025). The potential of the selected technique was confirmed by V. Shtets & O. Melnyk (2024), who argued that the potential of SMA is provided by visual clarity, emotional expressiveness, ease of perception by a wide audience, the ability to create a special viewing atmosphere, and high artistic characteristics. The unique aesthetic and communicative properties of SMA, the

ability to convey metaphors of movement and influence the viewer's perception through the development of a complete visual series were considered by L. Yilmaz (2019), analysing the application of SMA in project tasks. International discourse close to Ukrainian realities: as noted by M. Kops *et al.* (2025) in a review study synthesised based on 151 scientific publications, the effects of exposure to false information on young people are multidimensional. These effects cover emotional dimensions such as fear, confusion, uncertainty, stress, and frustration, and social consequences such as the development of distrust of institutions and feelings of information overload. This highlights the critical need for visual media literacy as a countermeasure against disinformation.

The purpose of the study was the theoretical substantiation of the materiality of SMA as an aesthetic factor of trust development and the analysis of artistic mechanisms of its implementation through narrative and cinematic means in the conditions of hyper-digital culture and the identification of artistic mechanisms for reducing the social distance between media content and the viewer. Thus, the purpose of the study was to confirm the phenomenon of SMA reliability in times of military threats and at its theoretical reinterpretation in the plane of trust aesthetics.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

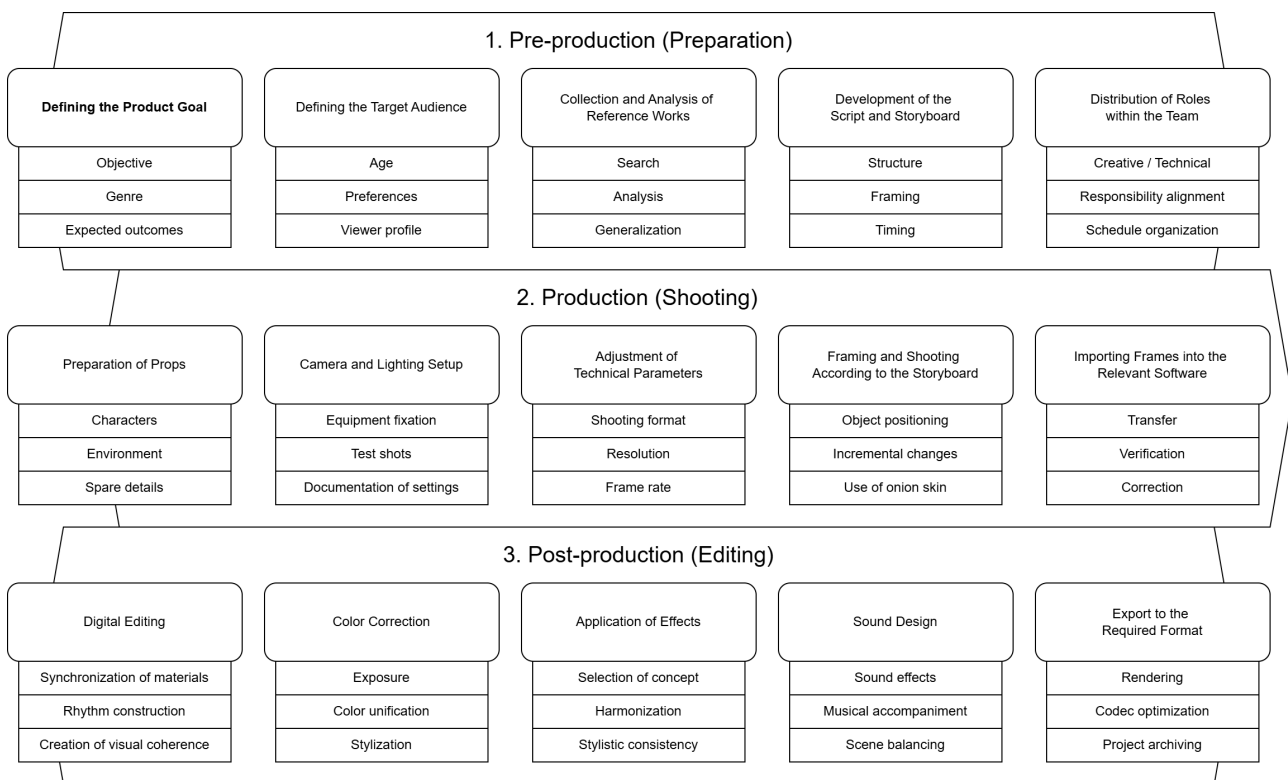
The research was conducted as a case study of a specific design product, involving an analytical examination of an individual project as a representative example. To achieve this objective, a creative team comprising students under the guidance of their lecturers developed an animated short film entitled “Easy money” (Veterans' Support NGO “Palms for a Hero”, 2025) at the Department of Visual Design and Art at Lviv Polytechnic National University. The video was developed as part of the project “Eco. Info. Children” commissioned by the public organisation “Palms for a Hero” for demonstration at educational and preventative lessons conducted to warn teenagers about the threat of propaganda of the Russian special services, including, in particular, the recruitment of Ukrainian teenagers via the Internet to carry out acts of sabotage and terrorism (Chop, 2025). The methodological basis of the research was the practice-based approach, in which the creation of an animation product was considered not as an educational process, but as a research tool that allows identifying artistic, expressive, and communication properties of the material aesthetics of SMA and their impact on the development of trust in media content. The video was developed in three stages: research, script development, and implementation.

In order to make the video correspond to the complex image of the target audience, students of the working group conducted a survey among children aged

8-15 in the form of an open interview. The questions were general in nature and concerned the interests and preferences of the participants. The criteria for selecting respondents were school age; the survey was conducted anonymously. The study followed the ethical standards of the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 1964). The results of the responses were used to develop exposure, symbolic details, and “desire objects” in the video, so it is not necessary to present detailed quantitative data in this case.

The script was developed using a combination of classical drama principles and LLM tools “Chat GPT” and “Gemini”, which were used to form plot hypotheses, variants of the conflict structure, and clarify the motivation of characters. LLM tools were not used for

other purposes. The generated materials were selected by experts according to the criteria of narrative integrity, ethical compliance, and production feasibility using the SMA technique. The final version of the script was created by iterative editing and author’s revision. The Universal SMA shooting algorithm shown in Figure 1 was close to the typical video production process, and its fixation in this paper was aimed at summarising the stages of creating an animation product in time-lapse technology. In the process of implementing the project, managers avoided excessive moderation and strict restrictions on creative thinking, since a significant difference in age and life experience could reduce the effectiveness of students’ independent work and limit their experimental thinking.



**Figure 1.** Video production algorithm using the stop-motion animation technique

**Source:** compiled by the authors

The video was produced in the technique of time-lapse cut-out animation using paper characters and handmade decorations. Shooting was carried out in a classroom adapted to the studio environment with a permanently fixed camera and using the Stop-Motion Studio mobile application (n.d.). Graphic materials and backgrounds were prepared using the Adobe Photoshop 2022 editor (version 23.0; Adobe Inc., San Jose, CA). The final editing took place in professional video editing environments (Adobe Premiere Pro 2022 (version 22.0; Adobe Inc., San Jose, CA, USA) and related instruments). Officially available licensed and training versions of the software were used. The full production

cycle – from scenario development to final export – lasted four weeks. Shooting was carried out at a frequency of 12 fps in a 1920×1080 resolution. The final file was exported in .mp4 format with the H.264 codec. The total duration of the video was 2 minutes and 27 seconds.

In addition to the practice-based approach and case-study format, the study used elements of narrative and cinematic analysis to interpret the structure of the audio-visual series, and comparative analysis of relevant animation projects to typologise artistic solutions. To summarise the results obtained, the method of conceptual modelling was used, which helped to develop a scheme of mechanisms for developing trust in the

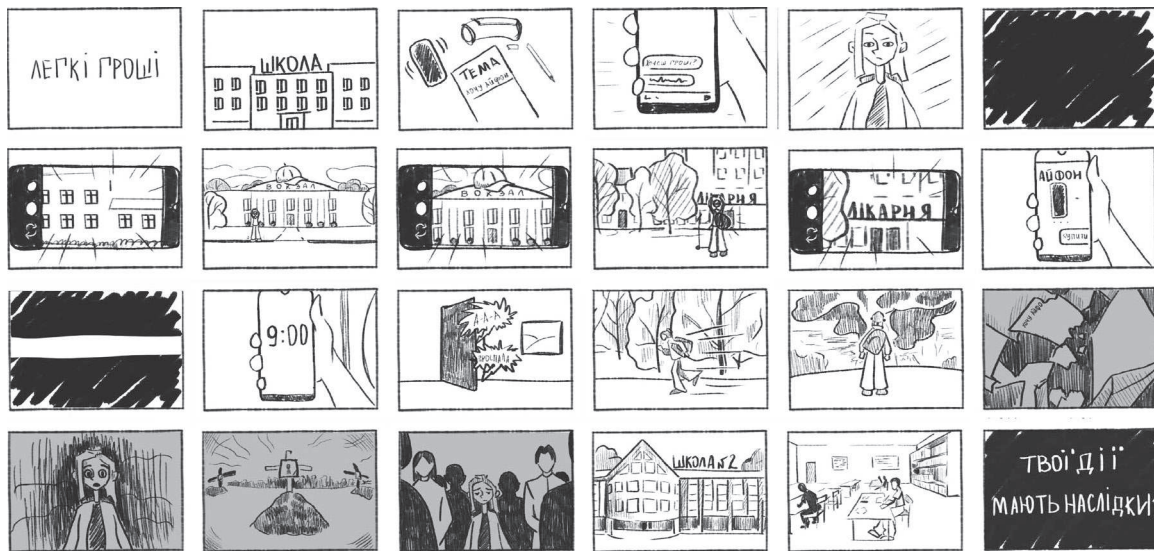
animation product. It should be noted that the proposed trust development scheme was an interpretive generalisation and did not reflect statistically confirmed patterns.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the narrative structure of the project in this study was considered not as an end in itself, but as a tool for identifying mechanisms for implementing the material aesthetics of SMA. Since, visual and plastic characteristics in SMA are inextricably linked to the organisation of action, narrative components are analysed through the prism of their cinematic realisation, which allows tracing the interconnection between the materiality of the image and the creation of a sense of authenticity. Thus, the analysis of the narrative

structure and cinematic techniques of the project allowed considering them not as autonomous elements, but as ways to implement the material aesthetics of SMA, through which the effect of reliability and audience trust is formed.

**Analysis of the created animation project.** The video tells the story of an ordinary schoolgirl against the backdrop of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which has been ongoing since February 2022. The girl receives an offer of quick earnings through social networks, the acceptance of which leads to disastrous consequences. The script consists of four key scenes, each of which serves as a separate narrative element – exposition, rising action, climax, and resolution. The key points of the plot are presented in the form of a storyboard, shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Storyboard – representation of the script as a sequence of frames

Source: Veterans' Support NGO "Palms for a Hero" (2025)

**Exposition.** The first shot shows the school as the main scene where the action begins. The camera moves towards the window, through which the pupils can be seen writing an essay on the topic "What is happiness?" during their lesson. A young schoolgirl, the main character of the video, captures the answer "I want an iPhone". Her desire is shared by a friend sitting next to her. Suddenly, a schoolgirl's phone receives a message with the meaning "Do you want to earn easy money?" and an attached web link. The girl hesitates at first, and then follows the link, which serves as a catalyst for further events.

The scene serves as an exhibition, outlining the spatial, social, and motivational coordinates of the story. The generalised image of the school and the typed interior form a recognisable everyday environment for the school-age viewer, which facilitates viewer identification. The neutral visual image of the main character – without any special external features and subcultural

markers – emphasises her ordinariness, which allows a wide range of school-age viewers to identify with it. The smartphone, which is a fairly typical material desire for many teenagers, appears as a symbol of the initial motivation that is understandable to the viewer, which determines the initial vector of action. According to R. McKee (1997), the opening of the story should show the character's daily life before the balance is disturbed: therefore, information is presented through actions and objects, not explanations. A brief silence and an emphasis on a close-up of the face capture the moment of internal choice, marking the first transformation of the heroine – from a passive schoolgirl to the subject of the decision. Already in the first 30 seconds, a dramatic tie is formed, triggering the cause-and-effect development of events. Simultaneously, the material organisation of the stage – paper scenery, flatness of objects, and chamber composition – enhances the effect of recognition and "accessibility" of the environment, which

reduces the distance between the viewer and the image and contributes to the initial development of trust.

*Rising action.* The heroine continues to receive messages from the same number where she is assigned paid tasks and performs them: she takes photos of various official institutions – a school, a train station, and a hospital. The moment of each image is accompanied by a characteristic shutter sound. Each photo leads to a material reward – the girl gets new sneakers, a bag, and later the desired smartphone, but she never thinks about who and why needs these photos for such money. The stage is built in the form of a montage based on the principle of rhythmic repetition “tasks – photo – money accruals”, where minimal variations in locations and objects form a gradual increase in meaning. Such a “repeat with variations”, according to Y. Lavandier (2005), is a way of developing an action by increasing the value of each subsequent step; therefore, the mechanical reproducibility of a gesture turns it from random to systemic. Camera clicks serve as symbols of instant benefits, recording the process of gradual normalisation of the action due to its repeatability. The light, almost cheerful colour scheme of the frame contrasts with the minor musical accompaniment, forming an audio-visual counterpoint. Such counterpoints, according to R. McKee (1997), amplify dramatic tension through the semantic contrast between the visual series and the soundtrack. Combined with the material stability of the image and the repeatability of actions, this contrast highlights the hidden contradiction of the situation, as a result of which the image of the heroine gradually transforms from a confused schoolgirl to a performer of repeated automated actions. The repeatability of actions is enhanced not only by the editing structure, but also by the material constancy of objects in the frame: the constant texture of paper elements, and manual animation of movements create a sense of physical presence of the process, which normalises the actions of the heroine not only on the narrative, but also on the perceptual level.

*Climax.* The girl wakes up at home and realises that she overslept and is late for school. She hurriedly gathers and runs to the school. On the way, she looks at the phone and sees a few missed calls and disturbing messages from her friends. When she almost reaches the school, suddenly a rocket hits the school building, which leads to instant and large-scale destruction. After the explosion, the camera captures the burnt sheet with her writing “I want an iPhone” flying nearby in the air after the explosion: this shot is designed to remind the viewer of where it all started. This scene becomes a moment of shock and the culmination of the story.

The scene dramatically changes the temporal and emotional mode of the narrative: the everyday morning routine – waking up, rushing, driving to school – is interrupted by a sudden catastrophic intrusion. A rocket strike destroys the established order of events and

instantly reassigns the heroine’s previous seemingly insignificant actions, giving them a tragic dimension. This strategy of a sharp tonal break is based on the effect of shock and perceptual destabilisation of the viewer, when violent interference in the usual space of everyday life creates maximum emotional tension. A similar technique, according to the observation of L. Badley (2010) in a study of the aesthetics of Lars von Trier, is a sudden “break” in everyday reality that forces the viewer to experience an event as a direct affective experience. The scene becomes particularly expressive due to the material nature of the image: the physicality of destruction enhances the affective tone, transferring the event from an abstract level to a tangible “real” visual experience.

*Resolution.* There is a funeral, during which the girl cries, watching the process of burying her friend. The camera first moves up to the sky, “clearing” the exposition, and then descends and shows the viewer another school near the cemetery where the burial takes place. The camera zooms in on one of the windows, through which a schoolboy can be seen sitting at his desk. The frame captures the moment when a boy receives a message on the phone with the same meaning “Do you want to earn easy money?”. The video ends with an open ending and a shot with the words “Your actions have consequences”.

The final scene is built as an emotional climax and at the same time as a new launch of the dramatic circle. Funeral of a friend demonstrates the consequences of previous actions – an abstract “game” with photographing objects leads to a specific human loss. The camera, moving away from the grave and looking at another school, expands the boundaries of a private tragedy to the scale of a public problem. Montage goes to a boy who gets the same message: “Do you want to make easy money?”, creates the effect of repetition and a closed loop: the story does not end, but is reproduced again. In this context, the material closeness of the final scene and the preservation of the visibility of manual animation enhance the emotional perception of the consequences, consolidating the effect of authenticity through the feeling of the viewer’s “presence” in the depicted space.

This construction corresponds to the principle of dramatic resolution, when the ending not only summarises events, but also forms a new causal perspective. In the structure of the narrative, conflict is built as a contrast between the attractiveness of quick material benefits and the hidden threat of its consequences, which the heroine does not realise in the course of action. S. Field (2005) emphasised that the final act should “give an emotional end to the story and show the outcome of the conflict”. In this scene, the outcome of the conflict – the loss of life – is presented as specifically as possible, which enhances the moral and social meaning of the narrative. The sequence of each scene and its role as a plot component are summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Functional characteristics of scenes

Scene	Component	Content	Value
1	Exposition	Offer of easy earnings	Definition of the story background
2	Rising action	Regular execution of customer tasks	Emphasis of the systematic and purposeful actions of the heroine
3	Climax	Moment of missile strike on the building	Fixation of the clash of individual gain with collective tragedy
4	Resolution	Funerals and the beginning of a new story	Demonstration of the consequences and repeatability of the story as a hint of the larger and more systemic nature of the problem

**Source:** compiled by the authors

This scenario structure works as a sequential chain “temptation – repetition of an action – sharp tragic consequence – generalisation of a problem through an open ending”. This model corresponds to the classical transformational drama according to C. Vogler (2007) and the principles of a multi-level, cyclical narrative where the ending is also a new beginning (Aronson, 2010). The proposed scenario allows consistently demonstrating the potential social and emotional consequences of adolescents’ unconscious interaction with digital media, forming a context for further study of the communicative effectiveness of SMA as an educational and media-educational tool. According to this scenario, a schematic traditional storyboard was developed, the value of which as a creative tool in animation is confirmed in different periods by both classical authoritative sources (Thomas & Johnston, 1981; Williams, 2001) and more contemporary research.

The analysis of the developed animation project allows identifying a number of artistic and communication mechanisms that potentially affect the development of viewer confidence. In particular, the material texture of objects, the compositional chamber nature of the frame, and the consistently constructed causal narrative form the effect of authenticity at the visual and plastic level. The absence of excessive stylisation and preservation of signs of the physical presence of objects reduce the distance between the image and the viewer, which is consistent with theoretical provisions on the role of materiality in the perception of media reports. In this context, trust appears not as a result of external evaluation, but as a property inherent in the very structure of the visual statement. From the standpoint of dramatic theory, the effectiveness of this approach is associated with the possibility of establishing the primary identification of the viewer with the character and the absence of a communication barrier, which is a prerequisite for emotional involvement.

**Materiality as an artistic principle of SMA animation.** The organisation of SMA production involves direct frame-by-frame intervention of the animator in physical models, scenography of the physical space of the scene, as a result of which the texture of materials, light conditions, mechanics of manual manipulation and all visible details become integral expressive

components of the screen image and comprehensively affect the perception of the final product. The final stages of digital editing and post-processing provide an opportunity to adjust the structure and rhythm of the video sequence, but in the SMA, these interventions remain limited and time-consuming, since a significant part of the expressive decisions is recorded directly during time-lapse shooting. Consequently, according to K.A. Priebe (2010), production efficiency largely depends on the maximum accuracy of the material obtained during the survey phase.

According to F. Thomas & O. Johnston (1981), the physical limitations of shooting techniques and the specifics of animated visual language form the need for stylisation as a leading artistic principle, because it provides a controlled level of detail and preserves the expressiveness of the frame. Excessive texture and small decorative elements create visual noise, disrupt the stability of time – lapse shooting, reducing the readability of movement and silhouette – therefore, preference is given to generalised and symbolic details that accumulate the semantic load of the composition. Generalised volumes, selective detail and stylised design provide better handling of animation and direct the viewer’s attention to the plasticity of the gesture, enhancing the expressiveness of movement and emotional expressiveness of the character.

As noted by B. Block (2021), the colour palette in SMA functions not only as a decorative element, but also as a structural component of the artistic language of animation, forming its spatial organisation, emotional register, and dramatic logic. Since characters and scenery exist as material objects, colour acquires the properties of scenographic reality: through the texture of surfaces, black-and-white modelling, and the interaction of lighting, it determines the atmosphere of the frame and the nature of perception of space. Limiting the palette, contrasting differentiation of the figure and background and consistency of tonal solutions not only provide perceptual expressiveness of the movement, but also organise the composition, direct the viewer’s gaze, and enhance the symbolic and emotional interpretation of the action, making colour an active means of drama of the image. However, SMA is defined by a number of materially determined limitations: since anima-

tion is created by physical manipulation of real objects, the movement of characters obeys the laws of weight, gravity, and structural mechanics, which narrows the amplitude and complexity of actions (Purves, 2019). In addition, the frame-by-frame nature of production makes the process extremely time-consuming and not flexible in terms of changes, because corrections after shooting often require complete re-shooting of scenes (Priebe, 2010). Such technological and time constraints form a specific aesthetic of the technique, where expressiveness is achieved through a compromise between the materiality of the object and the director's idea.

The application of the comparative table (Table 2) is aimed at typologising approaches to visual and narrative construction of SMA projects in the field of social communication, which allows identifying the specifics of the author's strategy and its difference from existing

practices. To ensure the correctness of the comparative analysis, not commercial high-budget animation projects are involved in consideration, but close in scale of production, execution technique, and educational and social function – this approach allows comparing design solutions, and not financial or technological resources of production. Example 1 “Bim Bim” (Imago Animation, 2024) – created within the framework of the project “InterNet/Tak” with funding from the Department of Youth and Sports of the Lutsk City Council; example 2 – “Education for everyone” (Public Organisation “Vidchuy”, 2025) – from the project “30 stories of my life” created by the Public Organisation “Vidchuy” with the support of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation; example 3 – “Ukraine” (Horobtsova & Serhiyenko, 2025) is a non-profit project of photographers and animators from Kyiv.

**Table 2.** Comparative analysis of the use of SMA in social and communication projects

Video	“Bim Bim”	“Education for everyone”	“Ukraine”	“Easy money”
<b>Purpose of communication</b>	improvement of media literacy	social and educational advertising	demonstration of features	improvement of media literacy
<b>Target audience</b>	children and teenagers	children and teenagers	youth and adults	children and teenagers
<b>Production</b>	educational and institutional	educational and institutional	independent	educational and institutional
<b>Animation technique</b>	plasticine	paper animation	paper animation	paper animation
<b>Narrative</b>	metaphorical / social and digital	social and educational / emotional	emotional and symbolic	realistic causal narrative
<b>Stylistic strategy</b>	metaphorical	didactic and realistic	symbolic	dramatic and realistic

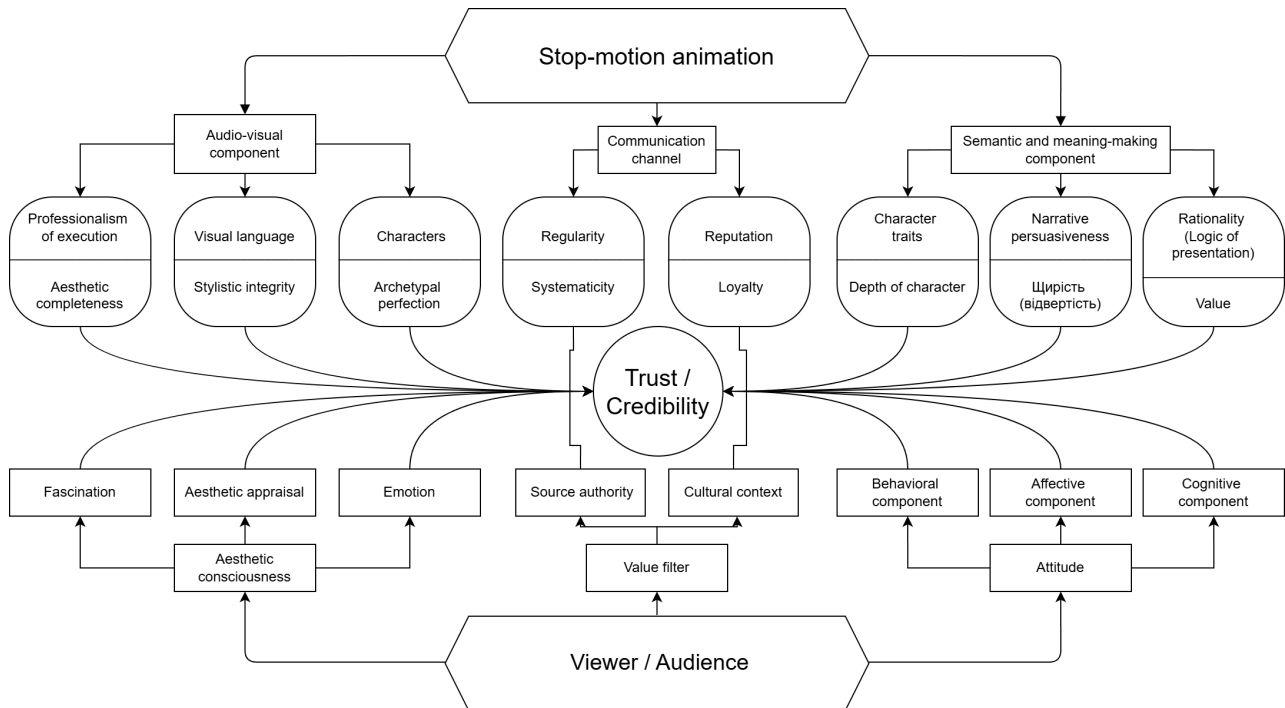
**Source:** developed by the authors based on Imago Animation (2024), Public Organisation “Vidchuy” (2025), O. Horobtsova & O. Serhiyenko (2025)

A common feature of the project examples shown in the table is the use of SMA, however, the way they are materialised is different. Plasticine animation in “Bim Bim” emphasises the physical plasticity of images, while paper technique in “Education for everyone”, “Ukraine” and “Easy money” forms a flat, graphically conditional visual. As noted by the classics of time-lapse animation K.A. Priebe (2010), G. Bendazzi (2017), and B.J.C. Purves (2019), it is the physical presence of material and the appearance of manual labour that determine the perception of SMA as “animate matter”. Thus, the choice of material determines not only the texture of the frame, but also the model of the viewer's distance. In “Education for everyone”, trust is built mainly through the didactic structure of the message, in “Ukraine” – through emotional and symbolic generalisation, in “Bim Bim” – through metaphorical plasticity. Instead, “Easy money” combines paper material with a realistic causal narrative, which enhances the effect of recognising the situation and reduces the social distance between the message and the viewer. Thus, within a hyper-digital culture, materiality appears not only as a technical characteristic of SMA, but also as a determining aesthetic factor of trust.

**Aesthetic mechanisms of trust development in SMA.** Research on the influence of an animated product on the emotional involvement of a teenage audience, which was conducted by S.V. Sosniuk & T.V. Vlasuk (2020), demonstrated that 2D graphics technologies most attract the attention of younger teenagers (12-15 years old), although 3D graphics cause the most positive ratings and the desire to act as a consumer. Analysing the impact of the animated format, the findings of J. Kuisma *et al.* (2010) were also considered, who demonstrated that a dynamic visual format enhances the cognitive processing of information and increases trust in the content presented. Although the researchers focused on advertising messages, their findings are relevant to adolescent audiences who are sensitive to emotional triggers and visual expressiveness. These studies were conducted using social surveys, which, despite a number of typical shortcomings: the tendency to social desirability of respondents, the central trend, and stereotyping of responses, are still relevant methods of superficial diagnosis. Generalisation of the results of the analysis of the author's project, and considering theoretical approaches to the perception of audio-visual content, allowed identifying three main

groups of SMA characteristics: audio-visual component, semantic and meaning-generating component, and communication context. The scheme shown in

Figure 3 is formed based on an analysis of the author's project and generalisation of theoretical approaches to the perception of audio-visual content.



**Figure 3.** Model of viewer trust development in stop-motion animation

**Source:** created based on M. Kohring & J. Matthes (2007), S. Marković (2012), X. Cheng *et al.* (2017), M.A. Shareef *et al.* (2020)

According to the authors' hypothesis, connections are formed at the intersection of the characteristics of animation and the viewer, which foster trust in animation – a vital resource in the post-information age. The proposed model represents trust not as a consequence of a separate characteristic of an animation product, but as a result of the interaction of three structural blocks: audio-visual, semantic and meaning-generating, and communication component, which correlate with the cognitive and affective parameters of the viewer. The scheme demonstrates that the material organisation of SMA functions not only as a technical or stylistic feature, but also as an aesthetic mechanism that activates elements of aesthetic consciousness, value filter and recipient attitude. Thus, the proposed scheme is not an abstract theoretical model, but reflects the generalisation of patterns identified in the process of analysing a particular project and comparing it with existing research.

The audio-visual component initiates the primary level of fascination (Marković, 2012), forming the effect of tactile presence and reducing the sense of digital distance, and it is at this level that materiality appears as a factor in reducing the disembodied hyper-digital environment. The semantic and meaning-generating block, which covers the causal transparency of the narrative,

the depth of characters, and rational argumentation, activates the appropriate levels of perception, ensuring the persuasiveness of the message. Communication component – the regularity and reputation status of the resource and context correlate with the viewer's value filter, determining the degree of previous trust in the source. At the intersection of all these parameters, an integral trust effect occurs, which is not only rational, but also visually plastic in nature. Thus, the model confirms that trust is formed as a multidimensional construct, where the materiality of SMA acts as a mediator between the artistic form and psychological mechanisms of perception. In the context of hyper-digital culture, this allows considering material aesthetics as an alternative to algorithmic standardisation of images and as a factor in restoring a sense of authenticity of media communication.

## CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the study, it was found that the aesthetics of SMA in the context of hyper-digital culture can be considered as a factor of trust development. Its material nature helped to reduce the social distance between the message and the viewer, increased the level of trust, and provided deeper emotional involvement, which



was especially important when working with sensitive social topics. In the environment of digital redundancy, materiality acts not as a stylistic device, but as a semi-otic marker of reliability. The analysis of the author's animation project revealed that the combination of the material organisation of the frame, compositional chamber, and causally constructed narrative, implemented through cinematic techniques (editing, framing, rhythmic organisation), forms an integral system of visual and communication influence. Within this system, materiality does not function in isolation, but in interaction with the narrative structure and audio-visual characteristics, providing emotional involvement of the viewer. Generalisation of the findings, and comparative analysis of relevant animation projects, showed that different approaches to material implementation (plastic, planar, symbolic) determine the specifics of the audience's perception, but it is the combination of materiality with realistic causal drama that contributes to the strengthening of the effect of recognition and trust.

Thus, the material aesthetics of stop-motion animation can be considered as an important resource for creating socially oriented media content that can effectively interact with the audience in a hyper-digital environment. It was established that the key

condition for effectiveness is the analytical stage of design. A step-by-step model that integrates target audience research, narrative structure development, storyboarding, visual solution testing, and comparative analysis of relevant cases reduces communication risks and increases impact manageability. The proposed system of schemes formalises the algorithm for creating an SMA and creates prerequisites for reproducibility of the result in educational and social media projects. Thus, in the context of contemporary design practice, SMA appears as an interdisciplinary form in which materiality functions as a consciously constructed communicative resource. Its application opens up prospects for the development of project strategies aimed at restoring trust in a hyper-digital environment.

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#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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## Матеріальна естетика стоп-моушн анімації як чинник довіри: наративно-кінематографічний аналіз проєкту

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**Анотація.** Загострення кризи довіри до медіа та втома від стандартизованої цифрової естетики спонукають аудиторію до пошуку автентичного візуального досвіду. Стоп-моушн анімація відповідає цьому запиту через свою принципову матеріальність – здатність перетворювати фізичну присутність об'єктів на естетичний аргумент достовірності. У цьому контексті матеріальність постає не лише технічною характеристикою покадрової анімації, а самостійною естетичною категорією, що впливає на формування довіри та зменшення соціальної дистанції між повідомленням і глядачем. Метою статті було теоретичне обґрунтування стоп-моушн анімації як чинника формування глядацької довіри та виявлення художніх механізмів її реалізації, зокрема через наративно-кінематографічні засоби організації аудіовізуального ряду. Матеріалом для дослідження став авторський соціально-освітній проєкт, реалізований у межах міждисциплінарної співпраці кафедри візуального дизайну та мистецтва Національного університету «Львівська політехніка» з громадським сектором. Методологія поєднала контекстуальний, структурно-системний і порівняльний аналізи із practice-based research, що дозволило інтегрувати художнє проєктування у наукову площину та простежити взаємозв'язок між матеріальною організацією зображення, типом наративу та механізмами формування довіри. Результати дослідження засвідчили, що матеріальність у стоп-моушн анімації функціонує як естетичний механізм редукції соціальної дистанції та підвищення прийняття медіаповідомлення. Виявлено кореляцію між фактурною організацією зображення, композиційною камерністю та каузально вибудованим наративом, реалізованим через кінематографічні прийоми (монтаж, кадрування, ритмічну організацію), які формують ефект достовірності на візуально-пластичному та емоційному рівнях. Доведено, що матеріальна естетика стоп-моушн постає самостійним художнім чинником довіри, розширюючи уявлення про функціонування цієї техніки за межами її технологічного визначення та актуалізуючи її потенціал у гіперцифровій культурі. Отримані результати можуть бути використані дизайнерами, освітянами та розробниками соціально-комунікаційних медіапроєктів для створення візуального контенту, орієнтованого на підвищення довіри аудиторії в умовах гіперцифрового середовища

**Ключові слова:** аудіо-візуальна комунікація; мультимедіа; медіаконтент; анімаційний ролик; анімаційний проєкт; техніка анімації; підвищення медіаграмотності