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THE COLOR CODING ALGORITHM OF COMPLEX AIR TRAFFIC INFORMATION MODEL FOR OPERATOR'S EFFICIENCY

The present article studies formation of complex air traffic information model in the operative thinking of operators of the automated air traffic control system. It shows interaction of operators with the color model of the air traffic; characterizes existing models of color spectrum; analyses their disadvantages. The article suggests an algorithm for finding the optimal color spectrum of information model elements; develops and investigates the color component of the information element of a complex air traffic working information model. It analyzes relationship between the quality of information model formation and the efficiency of operators' activity.

Keywords: information model, information element, display, activity of operators, air traffic control.

Introduction

Problem statement. The main peculiarity in operator of automated system of air traffic control's work is a permanent interaction with information model, which shows information of a controlled object and the progress of control. If the information model (IM) is built up correctly, the information display facilities structure will be also well developed and data elements will be correctly distributed between them. Usually while developing IM general attention is paid to the structure of display facilities and selection (forming) of data elements coding alphabet [1–3]. Choice of information color-coding is bounded with estimation of contrast and color brightness of data elements.

The analysis of recent researches and publications. Along with the development of technical capabilities of information display facilities, problem of color coding of data elements, quantity of which exceeds dozens of units, became critical [4–7]. We also have proofs of influence of color on both information perception and psychological state of the operator of automated system of air traffic control that should be also taken into account while developing IM [6].

In everyday life with no damage at all people pay no attention to colors nature and nobody think of it as a reflected light. The problem is in different lighting that can also change colors of objects. The relative stability of surrounding lighting makes it possible to select and match colors quite well in different life conditions. In computer graphics, with monitor and images on the screen as sources of light, human's previous experience

and conception about colors are useless. Computer differentiates only the formal color performance. That is why software developers while forming the IM should take into account such factors as: purpose of IM; structure and characteristics of tasks executed by the operator; tensity of work; surrounding light; defined requirements to information display. It is also necessary to define base model of information element (IE) color forming as well as algorithm of color choice to code this elements, taking into account the fact that colors at developing IM can be mathematically described as a ratio of base components.

Objective of the article. Objective of the present article is to show the results of IE color coding alphabet formation algorithm's development while developing IM in automated system of air traffic control.

Exposition of basic material

To develop IE color-range formation algorithm for IM in automated system of air traffic control it is necessary to define the terms, used in the theory of color.

Color hue: this term describes the main characteristic of color, which differentiates red colors from yellow and blue ones [7].

Chromaticity: High-chromaticity colors contain the maximum of own color and minimum or zero admixture of white, black and grey one. In other words, the level of other colors admixture absence in specific color characterizes its chromaticity [6].

Value: depends on quantity of light, beamed by colors. More light is in color, brighter it will become. For example, purple has less value, than light-blue, because it deems less light [7].

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Contrast is a measure of induction. There are the followings types of contrast: by value, by saturation and by color tone [6].

Value contrast is a relation of dots brightness difference to higher value.

Saturation (intensity) is color intensity, which describes level of color brightness (value). In other words color saturation means its difference from grey at a certain brightness of illumination [6].

The followings color tones are distinguished [7–12]:

- Warm colors;
- Cold colors;
- Dark colors;
- Rich or saturated colors;
- Dull colors.

The parameters of colors can be expressed with help of a few color models. Let's consider the basic ones:

RGB model. While a human eye perceives the color, we can see three colors – red, green, dark blue. Other colors appear at mixing these three basic ones [1]. The RGB color model is based on these colors (by the first letters of Red, Green, Blue).

RGB is a three-channel color model. This model is presented as a three-dimensional coordinate system. Every coordinate reflects the contribution of every constituent in resulting colors (within a range from zero to the maximal value). All of colors, forming color space, are "situated" inside the received cube [1].

CMYK model. CMYK is a four-channel color model. C is Cyan (blue), M is Magenta (purple), Y is Yellow and K is Black. Everything that does not beam its own light is painted with colors of CMYK model. Painted non-light objects absorb some parts of white light spectrum that exposes them. Depending on that part of light spectrum in which light is absorbed, objects will be painted in different colors. Colors, that do not beam light themselves, but use white light taking from it certain colors, are named subtractive [1]. Resulting colors become darker (absorb more light), while mixing two subtractive constituents.

 L^*a^*b model. L^*a^*b is a three channel color model. It was created with the purpose to overcome substantial lacks of RGB, CMYK, HSB models, in particular, it is aimed to become a device-independent model and determine colors without looking at features of device (monitor, printer, printing press etc.).

Any colors of the present model are determined by light level (L) and by two chromatic components: parameter "a", that changes in a range from green to red; parameter "b", that changes in a range from dark blue to yellow [7].

As we can see form the above stated information on color models, there is a considerable variety of color processing and presentation. The majority of information, needed for operator, is displayed on the screen and just a little part is displayed with help of printing or multimedia projectors.

A screen of a monitor (like all other light non-beaming object) is dark. Its initial color is black. All other colors on it are created by means of tree colors combination, which in their mix must produce white colors. We have here an RGB model. Black color in the scheme is absent, because it is the screen's own color [3].

That is why it is better to use RGB model and its features for a subsequent analysis and choice of colors developing IM elements color coding algorithm.

As it was indicated above, color has plenty of parameters, which to a certain degree influence the human perception of information. The present work examines co-operation of an operator and a color model and its influence at information perception. Therefore, among all existing parameters of color it is necessary to choose the foremost ones, such as:

- 1. Constituents of color (R an amount of red color; G an amount of green color; B an amount of dark blue color);
 - 2. Color value:
 - 3. Color contrast;
 - 4. Value contrast.

Actions for determination of colors basic parameters (Fig. 1):

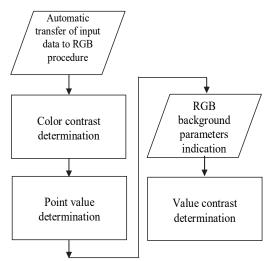


Fig. 1. A sequence of actions for determination of colors' basic parameters

With help of defined algorithm and defined ratios we will get the certain characters of color resolution for analyzed IM.

We found the following weaknesses as a result of basic parameters calculation of used colors in an existing IM in automated system of air traffic control (Fig. 2):

A background color of Ukraine map and other countries is identical. It requires displaying of such IE, as a state border. Countries' borders are displayed by RGB color (255, 85, 170).

Color contrast of state border and map background is 0,34, and value contrast is 0,30. Such contrast between background and object colors identifies as weak contrast and can not be considered as satisfactory.

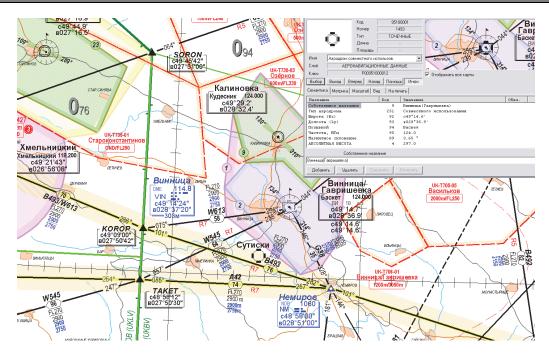


Fig. 2. Analyzed information model development

To solve this problem we can change the brightness of displayed state border, or display the territory of Ukraine with chosen base background colors, and territories of other states with colors that are 10–15% different from the base one.

Meanwhile, 8% color contrast will be insignificant, but will allow to distinguish states' territories due to large areas, which are displayed by these colors. In this way, the state border can be shown as a difference between colors of territories.

Let's consider such data element as differentiation areas (Fig. 3). Here it should be noted, that RGB of present element is (128, 0, 0). With more detailed consideration this element is perceived as black (0, 0, 0). This feature of information display conflicts with the operators' activities experience. In this case color contrast constitutes 0,28, and value contrast is 0,05. Color contrast of such level is perceived by the operator as different colors, and allows to interpret these lines as different IE. Their combination within the framework of one IE requires knowledge and efforts of operator, that complicates and increases amount of processed data.



Fig. 3. Operational and tactical directions

To solve the present problem we can display this IE with one color, for example (0, 0, 255). But this will not be correct, because other IE are displayed by the same

colors. Meanwhile, IE in information model is displayed with the lines of different thickness (3 pixels and 2 pixels). A little difference in the numerical values of lines thickness results in occurrence of two different data elements. These elements are perceived separately and require certain decoding efforts of this information and concordance of it in a single IE. In such a way the displaying of this element is done using three elements of code alphabet: color, lines thickness, lines type. Meanwhile, these elements of alphabet are not accorded and can reduce the efficiency of their perception by the operator. We can suggest the following solution to deal with this contradiction of the displayed IE.

The borders on the maps are indicated with brownorange colors (249, 157, 56). Let's apply these colors to display responsibility areas' information. We will use the same thickness to represent the lines. Studied IM has some more similar weaknesses related to the absence of IE color code concordance as well as: coincidence of colors; very low value and color contrast; colors of other states territories do not reflect the traffic load. Thus, it is necessary to develop the algorithm, which will allow to analyze and find color range of IM in order to get color code of any data element in this model.

Algorithm structure as a sequence of actions to search optimal color code of information model elements is shown at the Fig. 4. The present algorithm suggests research of existing information model, detection of weaknesses and lack of coordination in it as well as fixing these disadvantages. Let's consider the following attributes – color, value, value contrast and color contrast – as the base indexes. First we check coordination with the background for every IE (basic part of IM) and then the coordination within itself.

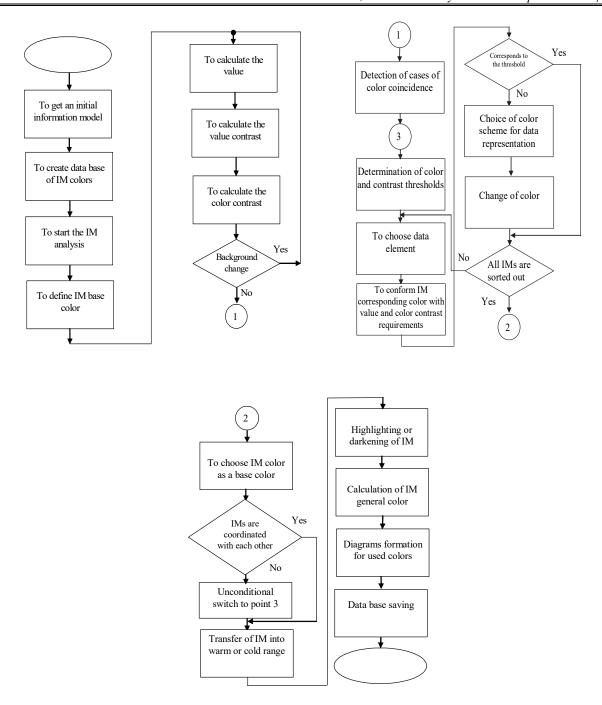


Fig. 4. Structure of developed algorithm

The optimum color coding of elements can be obtained by means of implementation of some successive iteration in the IE concordance. Certainly, the present suggestion is only an option of color coding which can be taken as a basis in IM development.

Conclusion

The IM color resolution is very important due to the features of the operator's work with the information model. It is necessary for the operator to percept any information adequately, so information models should be developed in accordance with ergonomic requirements.

The present paper studies the basic models, principles and general characteristics of colors representation.

RGB color model was taken as a basis due to the possibility of formalized work with a color model and degree of its prevalence. This color model helped to estimate the basic parameters of color. Obtained information gave us the opportunity to analyze disadvantages of existing IM. We also found the alternative colors of IE coding while applying the suggested algorithm of data elements' color coding search. Therefore, execution of all steps of suggested algorithm will allow getting the optimal ratio of colors in information model.

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АЛГОРИТМ КОЛІРНОГО КОДУВАННЯ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНОЇ МОДЕЛІ ДЛЯ ПІДВИЩЕННЯ ЕФЕКТИВНОСТІ РОБОТИ ОПЕРАТОРА В СИСТЕМІ УПРАВЛІННЯ ПОВІТРЯНИМ РУХОМ

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В роботі досліджено проблему формування інформаційної моделі складної повітряної обстановки в оперативному мисленні операторів, що входять до складу чергової зміни автоматизованої системи управління повітряним рухом. Розглянуто питання взаємодії операторів із кольоровою моделлю повітряної обстановки під час супроводу повітряних суден за допомогою візуальних засобів відображення. Охарактеризовано існуючі моделі представлення кольорової гами інформаційних моделей, проаналізовано їх позитивні та негативні властивості. Запропоновано алгоритм пошуку оптимальної кольорової гами елементів інформаційної моделі відображення повітряної обстановки. Розроблено та досліджено колірну складову інформаційного елементу робочої інформаційної моделі складної повітряної обстановки. Проаналізовано зв'язок між якістю формування інформаційної моделі та ефективністю діяльності операторів в системі управління повітряним рухом. Розглянуто одну з головних особливостей роботи оператора автоматизованої системи управління повітряним рухом, таку, як постійна взаємодія з інформаційною моделлю, яка показує інформацію керованого об'єкта та хід управління. Якщо інформаційна модель (ІМ) побудована правильно, структура засобів відображення інформації також буде добре розвинена і елементи даних будуть правильно розподілені між ними. Зазвичай при розробці загальної інформації загальна увага приділяється структурі засобів відображення та вибору (формування) елементів даних, що кодують алфавіт. Проаналізовано вибір колірного кодування інформації, який обмежений оцінкою контрастності та яскравості кольорів елементів даних. З'ясовано, що поряд з розвитком технічних можливостей засобів відображення інформації, проблема критичного кодування даних елементів, кількість яких перевишує десятки одиниць, стає проблематичною. Розглянуто докази впливу кольору як на сприйняття інформації, так і на психологічний стан оператора автоматизованої системи управління повітряним рухом, які також слід враховувати при розробці інформаційної моделі.

Ключові слова: інформаційна модель, інформаційний елемент, відображення, діяльність операторів, управління повітряним рухом.

АЛГОРИТМ ЦВЕТОВОГО КОДИРОВАНИЯ ИНФОРМАЦИОННОЙ МОДЕЛИ ДЛЯ ПОВЫШЕНИЯ ЭФФЕКТИВНОСТИ РАБОТЫ ОПЕРАТОРА В СИСТЕМЕ УПРАВЛЕНИЯ ВОЗДУШНЫМ ДВИЖЕНИЕМ

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Исследована проблема формирования информационной модели сложной воздушной обстановки в оперативном мышлении операторов автоматизированной системы управления воздушным движением. Рассмотрены вопросы взаимодействия операторов с цветовой моделью воздушной обстановки во время сопровождения воздушных судов. Охарактеризованы существующие модели представления цветовой гаммы моделей, проанализированы их недостатки. Предложен алгоритм поиска оптимальной цветовой гаммы элементов информационной модели. Разработана и исследована цветовая составляющая информационного элемента рабочей информационной модели сложной воздушной обстановки. Проанализирована связь между качеством формирования информационной модели и эффективностью деятельности операторов.

Ключевые слова: информационная модель, информационный элемент, отображение, деятельность операторов, управление воздушным движением.