

Typology of Contemporary Media Texts: Problems of Identification, Delimitation, Typology

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Abstract:

The article deals with the media-text as a basic category of media-linguistics, which has universal and unique characteristics. The specific characteristics of media-texts are their mass nature, media, semiotic integrativity, intertextual openness. Typology of media texts is based on eight categories: communication channel, institutional type of text, typological characteristics of an edition or channel, addressee, addressee, code, functional and genre affiliation of texts, thematic dominant.

Keywords: media text, media product, media, media, media discourse, media genres.

Introduction

Research in the field of mass communication suggests that with the emergence and development of information technology a "new kind of text" has emerged, unique in its synthesis of audible and visible speech [Rozhdestvensky 1979: 166], a "text of higher semiotic complexity". [Volodina 2008: 14], in which verbal information is accompanied by graphic design, sound, video; verbal information may be minimised or absent altogether (for example, the format "No commentary"). Thus, when a classical text is transferred to the sphere of mass media, the text acquires new semantic shades and media additions [Dobrosklonskaya 2008], acquires an expansive interpretation and - in the end - goes beyond the sign system of language, getting closer to the semiotic understanding of the text [Solganik 2005: 15]. In essence, the media text is a "new communication product", a "communication conglomerate" whose peculiarity lies in the fact that it can be included in different media structures (verbal, visual, audio, multimedia) and in different media circumstances (periodical press, radio, television, Internet, mobile and satellite communication) [Zasursky 2007: 10]. The specific nature of the media product associated with the change in the status of the classic work is determined by the external conditions of its existence, which may include the following.

A special type and character of information - "without a rigid definition of the content of such information - just as long as it is seen by the sender as essential, important or even necessary for society as its mass consumer" [Kubryakova 2008: 185]. [Kubryakova 2008: 185]. The media construct their own reality (N. Luhmann) in

which modern man lives; they simulate an ideologised picture of the world (T. van Dyck, U. Eco); they create "informational constructions of reality" which are defined not only by striving for documentality and reality, but also fiction, and "even have a virtual character". [Volodina 2008: 46].

"Secondary textuality" - media texts differ from other types of texts in that they "use, systematise and reduce, recycle and specially design all other types of texts that are considered 'primary'". Rozhdestvensky 1979: 166]; media texts exist as hypertexts or intertexts, "in echo with other texts, even if the latter are not explicitly quoted" [Petrenko 2008: 170]. [Petrenko 2008: 170].

Semantic incompleteness, the specific character of mass media intertextuality, openness for multiple interpretations - "having an addressee, media texts are not necessarily complete, as they communicate the same contents, although in different combinations and modalities". [Volkov 2008: 130]; "constant and endless reference of texts to each other and constant quotation" makes these texts only a link in the transmission of information [Artamonova 2008: 110].7: 10].

Flow production, disposability, non-reproducibility and, as a consequence, standardisation, immediacy, transience of information are what, according to some researchers, take mass information outside the realm of culture into the realm of subculture, mass culture, "whose values are oriented towards a primitive level of consumption of goods and services". [Volkov 2008: 131].

Mediocrity, or the mediation of the text's qualitative characteristics by the technical capabilities of the transmitting channel. The dependence of the semiotic organisation of the text on the format properties of the channels to which modern communicators refer to the press, radio, television, cinema, sound and video recordings, various forms of the latest telecom systems and multimedia devices [Zemlyanova 2004: 197], manifests itself in the mixed nature of texts - verbal-nonverbal, verbal-visual, creolised, polycoded, integrating different sign systems into a single semiotic whole.

The polyintentional nature of media texts, the speech structure of which is determined by the hierarchy of media sphere, publication, genre and subject of speech. There are global intensions, such as informing and analyzing (V. I. Kon'kov), informing, evaluating, inducing (L. R. Duskaeva), informing, persuading, entertaining (N. I. Klushina), informing, explaining, persuading, inducing, entertaining (T. V. Shmeleva) and others. At present a new perspective direction in the typology of media texts is being formed in the framework of the intentional approach (see: [Media text as a polyintentional system 2011]).

Collective text production (author - collective (A.N. Vasilyeva), collective (Yu. V. Rozhdestvensky), collective-individual (M.N. Kozhina), "team under Mr. N" (Yu. D. Artamonova) and mass audiences engaging in a retinal, mediated, socially oriented communication [Leontiev 2008: 134]; dispersed, undefined, heterogeneous audiences,

representing social groupings unrelated by goals and interests, and united by "only elementary knowledge of language" [Volkov 2008: 130].

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The specific nature of feedback is limited, minimised, delayed in time and space, imitative in nature (for example, "crowd" on television) or absent altogether [Kostomarov 2005].

The list of extra-linguistic factors is not exhaustive. Thus, a separate item could be the economic parameter, which turns information into a commodity and leads to the commercialisation of the media.

Thus, the leading characteristics of media texts can be considered to be their media character (text determination by the format and technical possibilities of the channel), semiotic integrativity of the text (unification of various semiotic codes into a single communicative whole), mass character (both in the sphere of creation and consumption of media products), and text openness at the content, semantic, compositional, structural and iconic levels (mass media intertextuality, in the broader sense of the term).

The typology of texts functioning in mass communication is based on models of communication, among which the models of G. Lasswell (who - what is communicated - through which channel - to whom - with what effect) and R. Jakobson (addressee, message, addressee, context, contact, code) are considered classics. The components

of communication models are fully aligned with the functional representation of the mass media product proposed in the sociology of journalism, where the addressee is "publisher," "journalist"; message is "text"; addressee is "audience"; context is "social institutions," "reality"; contact is "channel"; code is "language" and other semiotic systems [Journalism Sociology 2004: 90 108].

Following the models of communication, the following categories can form the basis for distinguishing types of media texts:

- distribution channel - print, radio, television, Internet,
- institutional type of text: journalistic, advertising, PR text,
- typological characteristics of publications/channels,
- addressee (author, text producer) - social/private, in accordance with which authorial modality (objective or subjective attitude to reality) is formed in the text fabric,
- addressee (audience) - mass / specialised,
- message (text) - functional-genre and stylistic classification of texts of the three social institutions of mass communication,
- code (language) - verbal, non-verbal, verbal-non-verbal (polycode, creolised) types of texts,
- thematic dominant, reflecting the media topics and forming the national media landscape [Dobrosklonskaya 2008].

Naturally, the list of categories is not finite, it can be expanded at the expense of other communicative elements. Classification of media texts can also be based on such attributes as forms of information creation and dissemination (oral/written texts and their variants) [Dobrosklonskaya 2008: 55; Chicherina 2008]; feedback that takes into account the conditions of communication (mediated/interactive communication), communication efficiency (communicatively successful/unsuccessful texts), etc. However, it seems to us that the eight parameters proposed are dominant, taking into account the technical, institutional, ideological, communicative, format, genre and content features of media texts. It is significant that the typological characteristics are in an ambiguous and overlapping relationship: bringing one of them to the forefront restructures all the other characteristics. The attributes around which media texts are grouped do not include the media sphere, because it is assumed by default, and all external and internal textual indicators are refracted under its influence. Mediasphere as a "special territory of communication" is the most important concept in media linguistics because facts of all other spheres are drawn into its zone of action, all discourses "have a media dimension" [Shmeleva 2012: 158]. [Shmeleva 2012: 158].

The definition of a journalistic text is usually carried out by listing the following attributes: factual basis, evidence-based and reliable sources of information, accuracy and comprehensibility of the material, priority of public interests, consideration of

audience needs, observance of professional, ethical and stylistic standards [McVale 2007: 3]. Cf.: the journalistic text is a creative product, a social product endowed with a "presumption of reality" (E.P. Pronin); a carrier of operational knowledge that ensures the progression and continuity of information; a unique type of text connected with the interaction of the journalist, publisher and audience [Boguslavskaya 2008], regulated by socio-cultural and ideological attitudes of society, dependent on distribution channel, publication format, etc. [Simons 2007: 6].

The distinction between the two notions of a journalistic text and a journalistic text, which function interchangeably in the traditions of linguistics, is problematic. Examples can be cited of how representatives of various schools of thought are trying to resolve this issue. For example, E.S. Schelkunova considers the introduction of the concept of "journalistic text" along with a journalistic text to be terminologically redundant [Schelkunova 2004: 70]. Considering "the absence of a single stylistic principle for newspaper speech", V.V. Boguslavskaya suggests replacing the term "journalistic text" with "journalistic text": "Today <...> it is more appropriate to speak not about newspaper speech <...> but about the language of mass communications... It is necessary to speak not about journalistic texts, but about journalistic texts". [Boguslavskaya 2008: 43].

In the theory of journalism, which recognises journalism and journalism as different types of creative activity [Lazutina 2004: 41; Polonski 2009], a trend has emerged towards the strict differentiation of these notions. At the same time, the difficulty of differentiation begins at the stage of analysing the types and genres of media texts according to their belonging to the category of publicistic or journalistic. This area of research does not have an unequivocal solution: texts with socio-political themes, or polemically acute works, or materials made in analytical genres, or, on the contrary, materials made in artistic-publicistic genres, etc., are considered to be publicistic. It seems to be true that journalism and journalism are in an overlapping relationship, with the specificity of the texts being sought not so much in their genre systems, but in the way the material is presented, in the colouring of the text, in the refraction of the category of author in the textual fabric. L.G. Kaida's approach to this problem seems fair, considering the author's attitude to reality and the functions the text aims to fulfil as the main criteria of a journalistic text [Kaida 2006: 25].

The typological characteristics of a publication are based on format (circulation, publication volume, duration of broadcasting, periodicity, time of publication), economic (form of ownership, budget, etc.), audience, target, and organizational features. The types of media texts created in quality, mass or specialized editions differ significantly at the content, structural-compositional, genre-stylistic and linguistic levels.

The author as the most important text- and style-forming category is classified in the scientific literature based on various indicators. Thus, the study by E. S. Schelkunova

takes into account the degree of presence of the author in the textual fabric, in accordance with which three types of communicator are distinguished: personified, generalised and depersonified author [Schelkunova 2004: 136]. Based on the notion of volume (quantitative criterion) and communicator status (qualitative criterion), N. V. Muravyova proposes such types of author as personal / collective and private / public / social [Muravyova: http]. According to the concept of G. Я. Solganik, in the category of the addressee there is an opposition: author - "person social" and author - "person private". Between the extreme poles of the category of the author there is a huge number of transitional cases, types of the author are formed: propagandist, polemicist, editor, chronicler, artist, analyst, researcher, etc. [Solganik 2010: 17]. [Solganik 2010: 17]. T. T.V. Shmeleva proposes three parameters of authoriality in a text (author identification, degree of complexity, specific weight), which allows us to build a kind of scale of representation of the authorial self [Shmeleva: http] and offer a fairly reliable toolkit for the analysis of authoriality in contemporary media texts. It should be noted that the measure and degree of the author's presence in the textual fabric can be considered as an indicator of publicistic materials.

The category of the addressee is an essential category of the media text, determining the communicative interaction between author and addressee through the text (N.D. Arutyunova, T.G. Vinokur, I.M. Kobozeva, L.P. Krysin, Y.M. Lotman and others). M.M. Bakhtin's ideas about the "two-voiced" word became the basis for the theoretical comprehension of media communication as a two-way process, the principal characteristic of which is dialogicality. L.R. Duskaeva's research has shown that the structure and content of media texts are anticipated by the audience's informational and communicative demands. Although the addressee is a "hypothetical interpreter" of the text, in which the author's ideas about the audience are reflected, nevertheless the role of the addressee in text formation is great [Duskaeva 2004].

The basic features of the textual category of the addressee are the presence in the text of the opposition "one's own - another's", the orientation on the speech experience of the target audience, the use of elements, representing the picture of the addressee's world and characterizing his lifestyle and social status. According to the study, in contemporary texts of mass communication several types of addressee are distinguished: "intellectual minority", "representative of the exemplary environment", "common man". [Kaminskaya 2009: 14]. The study of communication participants (speech-makers, with their speech behaviour) in the general section of media personology seems promising [Shmeleva 2012: 56], which allows establishing communicative hypostasis of addressee and addressee in one media text.

Typology of messages (texts) according to the genre-stylistic principle is the most demanded branch of contemporary media research. Under the influence of external factors in the real life of media texts, a clear tendency towards contamination, mixing of genres and montage of textual models has emerged. There is a notable evolution in

the traditional system of journalistic genres, reflecting the departure of some forms, the appearance of others, the actualisation of others, the abolition of genre partitions, and the free combination of textual models (works by L. E. Kroychik, B. Ya.) The processes of integration encompass media genres in a broad range, not only within the borders of journalism, but also at the intersection of journalism, advertising and PR. Researchers have warned of the unpredictable social consequences of the convergence of journalism and PR texts ("PR journalism", in A.P. Korochensky's terminology), affecting both the structure and communicative processes, and the behaviour and outlook of the mass audience as a whole. Thus, genre heterogeneity in mass communication, on the one hand, shows the natural flexibility and mobility of the boundaries of texts, but, on the other hand, actualises professional, ethical and normative problems regulating the limits of genre freedoms. Textual heterogeneity is also manifested in the active interaction of the journalistic style with other functional styles and non-literary forms of the national language, in the expansion of media language boundaries towards a lower style.

The code of the media text appeals to its form, texture and semiotic organisation. Any media text integrates heterogeneous components: verbal, visual, auditory and audiovisual in a single semantic space. And even newspaper publications are difficult to identify only as a type of written speech, as an important element of the newspaper text is the visual component, its graphic, font and colour design. For an adequate understanding of the newspaper material the spatial parameter, which performs "a certain sense-forming function", is essential. [Chicherina 2009 : 22]

The semiotic heterogeneity of media texts is a consequence of the media structures (verbal/non-verbal) and media formats (print, radio, television, Internet) in which media texts function. The determinacy of technical and semiotic features of media texts allows us to combine the diversity of material embodiment of speech in an autonomous section of facturology, as suggested by T.V. Shmeleva. The peculiarity of media-texts turns out to be that they are practically deprived of the possibility to exist in one of the textures (print, radio, television or Internet texture), on the contrary, they flow from one texture to another, so media-text is able to have a texture paradigm, providing intensity of its circulation through all communication channels [Shmeleva: [http](http://)].

As for thematic dominance, this parameter allows to typologise media texts according to their belonging to sustainable, regularly covered topics, such as politics, economy, business, sports, culture, news [Dobrosklonskaya 2008: 66], which constitutes a traditionally strong side of Russian media research.

Thus, eight different in nature attributes (channel, institutional type of text, typological characteristics of publications, addressee/addressee, functional-genre typology of media texts, code, media topics) allow us to evaluate media text as a text of a special type, unlike scientific, business, artistic or conversational texts. The proposed features

are on different planes, they constantly overlap, interact and, depending on the aspect of research, flow into each other. Such an approach to the analysis of media texts testifies to the multidimensionality and multidimensionality of media products and, as J.N. Zasursky rightly points out, can serve as a universal method of media text analysis [Zasursky 2007: 7]. Media text research is still in its infancy in this direction.

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