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Post mass media in the modern informational society
"Journalistic text in a new technological environment:
achievements and problems"

REGIONAL MASS MEDIA OF THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION
ERA: EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONAL-ACTIVITY MODELS

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Abstract

The article considers the problems of integration of regional mass media into the information system of Russia on the basis of the results of sociological research. The active development of the global network and the digital revolution led not only to the transformation of the traditional typological characteristics of the media and the selection as one of its actively developing groups of "new media", but also extremely illustrated the question of the degree of demand for regional media and its consumption by the mass audience. The authors identify the factors of optimization of information and communication processes, the dominant role in which even in the context of globalization is determined by the representatives of this typological group. In particular, we are talking about the inclusion of regional mass media in the transmission mechanism of government decisions and local media discourse, which should serve as a kind of indicator of the effectiveness of the representatives of certain management structures identified as a result of public dialogue. Thus, it is concluded that for the modern journalistic science the task of identifying the characteristics of the media discourse of the most successful (effective, branded) media is actualized by practice. In the course of the analysis of the media practice of The Greater Ural macroregion, functional and activity models of some of media practices were identified and described, as well as the problems of formation and development of professional culture of journalists were identified and realized.

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Keywords: The mass media, digitalization, geographic region, media discourse, professional culture of a journalist.



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1. Introduction

The problem of integration of Russian mass media into the world information system is actively discussed in the modern scientific literature (Dzyaloshinsky & Pilgun, 2017; Online Activism in Theory and Practice, 2003; Vartanova, 2018). But in this regard, the following aspect is also extremely relevant: how dynamically are regional and local media developing and are they in demand in the context of the digital revolution? At the same time, in our opinion, this question is no more than rhetorical, as Professor of MSU, Ivanitsky (2010), and a number of other researchers are convinced that the immutable tasks of a truly legal state today are "restoration of a homogeneous national audience, organization and moderation within its framework of the dialogue between the government and society" (p. 341). The latest practice shows that the first condition for the further development of journalism as a socially significant institution of opposition to power structures at various levels, which determines one of its essential characteristics in modern socio-economic conditions, a priori, is the introduction of new information technologies into the daily practice of the mass audience (Oleshko & Oleshko, 2018). Rapid communication through the global network, as well as, in particular social networks, blogs and "live magazines", dynamizes this process at the level of information support. The second condition, and no less important, is the inclusion in the transfer mechanism of decisions of the regional media authorities, the local media discourse of which should determine the factors of optimization of information and communication processes and serve as an indicator of the effectiveness of the representatives of certain management structures, identified as a result of public dialogue. In this case, the media, in general, should take on the tasks of analytical nature, as well as the formation of meaningful components of journalism.

2. Problem Statement

The problem is that the functional-activity models of Russian regional and local media (the latter include a group of corporate media, actively funded by large enterprises and organizations, even in the economic crisis of 2014-2018) do not always meet the requirements of modern times. In the context of the permanent development of technologies for obtaining real-time information, its free formatting and further broadcasting of content, professional journalists, as we found out in the course of the study (Oleshko & Oleshko, 2016), are not always ready to resist the aggressive and offensive tactics of representatives of the mass audience, often not limiting themselves to messages broadcast on the global network, with no moral and ethical principles (Kiriya & Sherstoboeva, 2015). It is not easy for them also because of many objective circumstances and reasons of subjective and personal nature (lack of basic education, economic difficulties that do not allow to improve skills in a timely manner, isolation from major scientific and cultural centers, etc.) to discuss with "narrow" specialists competent in a particular field, and with civil journalists (Sokolov-Mitrich, 2017). In connection with this formulation of the problem is not just natural, but largely predictable for the development of the national Institute of journalism formulation of the problem, firstly, the systematic formation and development of professional culture of journalists of regional mass media (Professionalnaya kultura journalista: problemy meshkulturnoy kommunikaziyi, 2016), and, secondly, the nomination as the main-the question of the need to perform a typological group of regional media as a moderator of public dialogue (Rheingold,

2012). After all, if the mass audience in the aggregate interest is primarily news of a global or Federal level, the representatives of its local groups are concerned about ways to solve specific problems or ways to solve problems relating to them personally or loved ones. But there is a third aspect. Within social networks in modern conditions, many political and social institutions are increasingly delegating organizational functions for the preparation of certain mass events or actions. Therefore, the authority of branded regional media, fixed in the minds of the audience as a whole or its individual target groups, can largely determine the effectiveness of those regional media, the information support of which is taken by journalists.

3. Research Questions

The period since the beginning of 2010 is characterized by the active development of the digital revolution in Russia. And although the practical introduction of new information technologies in everyday journalistic practice was more concerned with the Federal media, it was from this time that the leading regional mass media began to rebuild their management and creative work. First of all, as we found out, it could be attributed to branded publications of regional centers and private/independent media. At the same time, as a trend, it can be noted that the preservation or even growth of circulation of newspapers and magazines, as well as a high reader rating of online publications, largely determined the communicative practices of dialogue nature. And since it was during this period, within the framework of the Federal Law "on General principles of local self-government in the Russian Federation", regional media were deprived of the opportunity to constantly receive budget subsidies, and many faced the question: to disappear from the media map of the region or fundamentally restructure the work with the audience, as well as the principles of formation and broadcasting of content, including advertising. At the same time, the transition to a combination of effective paper and digital media models was most often hampered by three circumstances: the habits of their target audience to receive content only on paper, the weak spread of the Internet as a technology (especially in remote rural areas) and the personnel problem. All three circumstances are expressed primarily in the inability of many journalists to engage in universal creative activity within the framework of the convergent edition model.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the work is to identify the organizational and substantive characteristics of the media discourse of the most successful/effective media of The Greater Ural macroregion, as well as to highlight the main contradictions in the functioning of regional journalism in General. Since the issue of typological transformations of the media in the post-Soviet period, as well as in the period of technological updates of the media business and the digital revolution, is relevant to the modern theory of journalism, the conclusions and recommendations can be useful in the development of the capabilities of models of interactive journalism of the modern information society.

5. Research Methods

The empirical basis of this article is the results of the study "Convergent journalism in the views of the media", conducted by the authors and working groups of the Ural Federal University under their leadership, from 2011 to the present. During this time, more than 260 journalists of the Greater Urals macro-region, including 9 regions and regions of Russia, were interviewed in a semi-formalized interview, and the functioning of regional mass media was constantly monitored. The main features of the selection of publications in this case were the components important from the point of view of the objectives of the study – multimedia, online, multi-channel, as well as the interactive nature of the information provided. In total, 24 print media (Newspapers of different typological groups, including their websites) and 12 online publications were identified as objects of analysis. In total, the subject of study within the goals and objectives of this study to date have been more than fourteen thousand publications.

6. Findings

On the basis of the conducted research the following results were obtained:

Conclusion 1. It is established that the functional-activity approach chosen by us for the analysis of modern media practice can serve as the basis not only for allocation of the components promoting improvement of technologies of multimedia creativity, but also serve as an important methodological component of the system description of elements of professional culture of journalists of the regional mass media included in process of modern convergent journalism. Thus, reference to the Internet as a communicative phenomenon of the modern time (Lindgren, 2017) can be traced, in our opinion, to the example of changing the content of mass media evolution, in particular the transformation of part of the texts of journalists to hypertext. At the same time, journalists communication component a priori determines the synergy of dialogue characteristics not only of the global Network as a whole, but also of the mass media as one of the most important subjects of the formation and transmission of specifically targeted or exclusive information by the acutely demanded audience (Deacon & Stanyer, 2015; Hepp, Hjarvard, & Lundby, 2015; Mosco, 2017).

New technologies have extremely actualized the social component of mass media activity, since practically any of its subjects are now given the opportunity to go beyond the geographical boundaries of the region, country and continent. But the limitless amount of information can be accompanied by the fact that it expresses not only political, economic, social and other intentions of the authors, but also components that can be attributed to the methods of manipulation of the person, to information noise, and the spread of outright spam. Thus, the ratio of humanitarian and technical information in modern communication is not just closely interrelated, but in fact is equivalent, which increases in the eyes of the audience the authority of branded regional media as sources of objective information.

Conclusion 2. The analysis of the activities of the most economically successful mass media of The Greater Ural macroregion shows that in order to attract the widest possible number of subscribers and generally active consumers of information products, content would meet standards such as exclusivity,

efficiency, reliability, dialogue in the form of providing different points of view, as well as multimedia, as the opportunity to express different meanings of events and facts simultaneously through several technological means, is necessary. Using Vlasic's (2004) approach to the classification of measurements of the integration function, the media discourse of regional mass media, which effectively implement the dialogue model of convergent journalism, we systematized the main groups.

Table 01. Media discourse of mass media effectively implementing the dialogue model

Measurements	Addressed to society in General	Addressed to the classroom group
Dissemination of relevant information	Economy (90%), politics (82%), dissemination of General knowledge (58%), culture (36%)	Targeted social issues (88%), crime (55%), entertainment (51%), education (34%)
Formation of the public sphere	Social control: activities of political, administrative, judicial bodies (93%)	Articulation of interests of different societies (74%), traditions, norms of behavior (58%), social sanctions (39%)
Normative value measurement	Normative regulation in various fields (69%), intercultural communication (48%), the theme of moral / ethical choice (37%)	Terminal values: health, safety, personal identification (88%), preservation and maintenance of group norms (46%)
The construction of reality	Maximum degree of novelty of information (90%), conflict potential of the event (66%), accentuation of the same topic for the formation of public opinion/attitude to specific facts or phenomena (32%)	Local character of a typical event or fact (84%), relevance and recursiveness/ repeated return to the event (57%), violation of various norms and evaluation of these facts by an authoritative actor for the group (37%)
Mass media representation	Dissemination of personal information about journalists and their active use of the blogosphere (66%), branding as a way to promote a positive image of the media (45%)	Dissemination of personal information about journalists and their active use of the blogosphere (66%), branding as a way to promote a positive image of the media (45%)

Conclusion 3. The system analysis of the content (see table 01) and the results of a survey of journalists showed that the complexity of the structure of the national and regional media sphere is closely associated not only with the transformation of the traditional typology of the media and the configuration of professional standards of the journalistic profession. Eighty four percent of the total number of respondents we surveyed said that there is an urgent need for systematic training, 48% of journalists were not at training seminars from one to three years, 37% did not have journalistic education. Both the above-mentioned trends and these contradictions in the development of regional media determine the formulation of one of the most urgent tasks for the practice of the formation and development of professional culture of journalists. Two of its vectors – instrumental (development of new

information technologies) and mental-primarily the development of creative consciousness, including the formation of ethical and ideological components, can be combined, as evidenced by foreign experience (Smith, 2017; Manovich, 2017), in the implementation of not only traditional, but also distance forms of education and media education.

We reviewed and systematized the main promising forms of training practitioners, including relevant skills and the acquisition of necessary competencies.

These may include:

- practice-oriented resources that provide access to relevant information portals and online courses on various topics;
- comprehensive online education at the University, where experts conduct webinars, give assignments, and communicate regularly with the audience in dialog mode;
- educational start-UPS, providing the opportunity to participate in international exchange, as well as systematically share experiences with colleagues, both from the professional workshop and from the academic environment;
- sources of "inspiration", or otherwise "inspiration resources", that provide opportunities for professionals to evaluate, as a rule, collective creativity, or projective activity;
- and finally, the classical distance education, which allows one to pass online testing in an educational center for admission to specialized programs of universities and colleges with the possibility of obtaining a diploma of a professional specialist.

It is significant that the survey of the group of heads of regional mass media showed that 93% of them in organizational terms as the main difficulty in the implementation of effective information policy indicated not financial difficulties, but a factor of limited creative and professional human resources. This, in our opinion, testifies not only to the fact that the problem requires an early solution, but also characterizes the attitude of representatives of local authorities and various administrative structures toward the problem of formation in the new conditions of the unified information space of Russia and the regional media as a typological group, embodying it in practice.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, we can conclude that the essence of the digital revolution, which has changed many of the principles of the organization of mass media and journalism in general, in particular, cannot be considered only in the context of technological development of forms and methods of content broadcasting. At a fundamental, deep level of conditions of permanent social transformations that are typical for the information age, many institutional bases of journalism development undergo serious changes. Correctional system of mechanisms of external regulation and internal self-regulation is modified with the general preservation of the socio-political nature of mass communication activities and under the influence of interactive features of the global network. And for a truly legal state and an open society it is natural. At the same time, the social role and the dominant goal of the media's sense – based activity in the implementation of these mechanisms in principle remains unchanged today. In its most

general form, "the main subject of information activity – journalism-within the framework of its mass media policy does not harm (from good or evil intentions) the political, economic, moral foundations of the society that gave rise to it" (Nurullina, 2007, p. 306).

But the contradiction lies in the fact that the expansion of the number of subjects of system information activities (primarily due to civil journalists and bloggers community, often focusing on their external independence from any government or management structures) has led to a decrease in circulation and ratings of traditional media and the outflow of advertisers. And in part, even with the loss of trust in the Institute of mass media and the development of the trend, which, in our opinion, can be labeled an "information omnivore" of many consumers, who spontaneously perceive broadcast flows without realization of the fact that among these communicators are subjects with manipulative or even asocial and destructive intentions.

It is especially clear that these and other selected trends and contradictions of the development of the modern Institute of journalism can be seen within the example of the regional media. We conclude on the basis of the study that the formation and development of professional culture of journalists will help to overcome the gap between the proper and the real. Its main system parameters in relation to employees of regional mass media were presented in this article and in other above-mentioned publications of the authors.

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