



# The Impact of the Internet on Genre and Stylistic Features of Media Texts

Kasperova LT\*, Klushina NI, Selezneva LV, Smirnova NV and Tortunova IA

Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia

\*Corresponding author: Larisa Tazretovna Kasperova, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Mokhovaya str, 125009, Russia, Tel: +74959393160; E-mail: kasperova651053@mail.ru

Received date: May 06, 2016; Accepted date: June 29, 2016; Published date: June 04, 2016

Copyright: © 2016, Kasperova LT, et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited

Citation: Kasperova LT, Klushina NI, Selezneva LV, et al. The Impact of the Internet on Genre and Stylistic Features of Media Texts. Global Media Journal. 2016, S3:07.

## Abstract

The article shows the functioning peculiarities of certain genres (press release, comment, news) in Internet communication. The study is based on the theories of Bakhtin about the Dialogic nature of genres, Jakobson on verbal genres, and Gajda about modern speech genres. The authors presented the following algorithm of the Internet texts study: the definition of the genre specificity of the Internet text; the revealing of the genre criteria (theme, style, composition, genre and intention); the analysis of the addresser and the addressee roles in the new genre formation or the old one transformation. In online news discourse, the hypertext links are presented not only by headlines, but also by links, both external (the message source) and internal (following the previous messages on the topic). The news items, connected by internal hyperlinks and devoted to one topic and one macro event, form the Plot. If the linear text presents the flashback mainly implicitly, then the hypertext explicates it by means of hyperlinks. It provides the more objective perception of events, compared to the traditional media. The collective, but not the mass reader, is the addressee of the press releases. In this regard, the press release is close, on the one hand, to the official texts and, on the other hand, to publicist texts. Corporate websites of Russian companies have formed the press release varieties, the names of which indicate the target audience of these texts. These include IR-release, the statement of the material fact and IPO news, or IPO releases. The article deals with the features of these varieties and the specificity of their functioning. The development of Internet, particularly the appearance of the Internet style art, has changed the research methods of reflection in verbal creativity. On the one hand, the results of the author's reflection cannot be seen in the texts of the proper online literature (generated texts), since there is no such process in production of these texts. On the other hand, the extension of research possibilities of the creative process reflection is associated, in particular, with the genre of Internet reviews. The comments to the pieces of work open a new field of study – the reader's

reflection, which could be previously studied only by means of survey. The following types of the Internet comments can be distinguished in the Internet communication: the analytical comment and the comment as an emotional response, the co-creative comment and the mixed comment.

**Keywords:** Mediatext; Hypertext; Internet-communication; Press release; Online comments; Reflection

## Introduction

The development of information technologies and the formation of the Internet have radically affected the traditional mass communication. The Internet, as a specific communicative space, attracts special attention of linguists, sociologists, psychologists, philosophers and many other professionals. Special research lines are being formed, including the studies of genre, discourse, linguistics, didactics, etc.

The journalistic text in the Internet space gets another existence and content. The recent researches denote the journalistic text by the term "media text", that underlines its inextricable connection with the different types of media, and not only with the printed ones [1]. The media text is transmitted through various media channels. Each of the media channel adds its features to distributed texts, thus differing them from the other media (e.g., sound for the radio text, sound and picture for the teletext etc.). The Internet text is a special type of media text, which differs from other types of media texts by hypertextuality, interactivity, non-linearity, and incompleteness. The features of the Internet communication also affect the system of media genres, transforming it in line with their rules or expanding it by means of the new Internet genres formation (forums, blogs, comments, chats, etc.).

## Procedure

This article considers the online communication under the theory of Bakhtin [2-4] about the Dialogic nature of genres,

and the dialogue, as the form of existence for any text. The online text is dialogic as soon as it presents a response to the addressee's request in the search systems (pragmatic dialogueness), a stimulus for the addressee's response (interactive dialogueness) and the reflection of the addressee, who leaves comments to the author's text (reflecting dialogueness). Thus, the Dialogueness theory of Bakhtin allows analyzing the Internet texts and distinguishing the Internet genres.

An important method for the research is to build a communication chain, based on the theory of speech communication of Jacobson [5]. The communicative chain includes the following categories: the addresser– the text + the context – the addressee.

This method allows identifying the communicative roles of the text addresser and the addressee, that are specific in the Internet communication: the addressee of the online text is an active participant in the communication rather than a passive recipient. The mass addressee of the Internet communication is stratified by interests and becomes the collective addressee rather than the mass one. That is, the mass addressee in the Internet communication presents the complex of collective addressees, united by topics, bloggers, to whom they are subscribed, corporate websites, etc.

The hypothesis about the addressee, who affects the genre choice, [2] is of great methodological importance. The term “genre” is understood as “the horizon of the reader’s expectations” [6,7] that is why the addressee's genre expectations have a strong impact on the genre transformation in the Internet space and the formation of new genre models.

Taking into consideration the selected methods, we have developed the following research algorithm: (1) to define the genre of the Internet text; (2) to identify the genre parameters (theme, style, composition, genre intention); (3) to examine the role of the addresser and the addressee in the formation of the new genre or the transformation of the old one.

## Hypothesis

The articles assumes, that that Internet communication, as a special type of communication, forms its own genres (e.g., online comments) and transforms the existing ones (for example, the news or the press release).

This hypothesis will be verified in the experimental part of the article. In Section 1, we will analyze how the Internet affects the transformation of the genre of news. In Section 2, the genre of press release and the transformation of its structural and stylistic parameters will be analyzed. Section 3 contains the description of new types of Internet comments, functioning in the Internet space.

## The event hypertext presentation (on the material of the Russian Internet publications editions)

The specificity of the events presentation in the mass media is reflected in the concept of T. van Dijk, according to which the event selection and structuring in the news media are subject to two leading principles: the relevance principle (importance, relevance) and the novelty principle. These principles determine the structure of the news item, that includes the Summary, the Main Event and the Background (events) [8-10] Van Dijk developed the structure based on the analysis of the vast body of the newspaper news items, where the text linearity strongly affected the structuring of the events. The online publications, as a new media format, exist in the hypertext mode and require the analysis of the specifics of news events presentation in this new information space

The fragments of news structure, presented on the front page, are the titles of the news items, which demonstrate a significant difference from the traditional newspaper headlines. All headlines on the main page of the online publications are the hyperlinks to relevant news items, that are preceded by the headline, duplicating the hyperlink. The specificity of the online news headlines lies in their autosemantic nature: they can function as the separate messages in the Internet news space, because their content presents the leading semantic categories of the event. The news structure, developed by van Dijk, is being transformed significantly: the Summary category (including the Title and the Lead) in fact has been eliminated, and the Main event is being included in the headline of online news. Such information structuring can be explained by the consumption specificity of news content in the Internet: many readers read only the headlines and do not use the hyperlink to the entire message.

Hypertext links in online news discourse are presents not only by the headlines. Both external and internal links are presented in the text of the news items. External links are presented by the indications to the source of the message, typical of the secondary news media that receive news not from the eyewitnesses directly, but from the news agencies. Internal links mainly follow the earlier messages on the same topic, located on the website of the same online edition.

The news items on the same topic and the macroevent connected by the internal hyperlinks, form the Plot. The category of retrospection, typical of the linear text, manifests itself within the news plot. If the retrospection of the linear text is implemented mainly implicitly, the nit is explicated by means of the hyperlinks in the hypertext. The reader of news items does not have to keep in memory all the details of the story, because he/she can just click on the hyperlink and go to the earlier news items, that contain these details. It provides major credibility of the event perception, as compared to the traditional media [11].

## Genre and stylistic features of the press release, posted on the company's website

The widespread use of the Internet communication in public relations has an impact on structural and genre forming criteria of the press release. Tom Foremski declared the death of the press release and the appearance of the new media communication release (new media communications releases) [12]. The Internet allows expanding the audience of press releases, making their content available not only to the media, but also to the mass audience. On the one hand, these texts are available for everyone, who has an access to the Internet, but, on the other hand, they are aimed at the audience, united by the interest to the same website. Therefore, the addressee of press releases is not a mass, but a collective reader [13]. In this regard, the press release is close, on the one hand, to the texts of the official style and, on the other hand, to publicist texts [14].

The corporate websites of Russian companies have formed the varieties of press releases, which titles contain the target audience of these texts. These include IR-release, statement of a material fact and IPO news or IPO releases.

IR-release is a release for the investor, i.e. the addressee is the person, concerned with the idea of the event. IR-release is based on such documents as the report, the balance sheet and the key financial indicators. The IR-release headline is formed to actualize the subject and the action, which form the basis of the event. Another type of press releases is the statement of material fact. A significant fact is the income payment to shareholders, the decision to hold the Board of Directors and the agenda, the annual report in the Internet, etc. This information is a proposition, which is updated in the statements (texts) and obtains the value of the truth.

The statement of material facts has a structure, consisting of three sections: 1. General information; 2. The content of the communication; 3. Signature. The sections 1 and 3 contain the details of the company, that makes the text close to the document. The facts, that are presented in section 2, are expressed in simple sentences, they are not descriptive, but only listed.

Another type of press release is the IPO news, which presents the press releases about an initial public acquisition of securities. The headlines of these texts show, that the subject includes both previous and future events, described with the use of professional vocabulary.

The functional orientation of the press release is also being changed: the journalistic press release is aimed at informing the public and forming the public opinion, while the public relation press release is intended to form and maintain the image of the subject, presented by an organization or a person, i.e. apart from the informative function, such press release also performs the image-making function.

## Artistic reflection in the online comments

Reflection is one of the processes of the subject's self-knowledge of internal mental acts and conditions (lat. reflexio – back, self-analysis). Due to the development of the psychology in the early twentieth century, the topic of "creative work self-understanding", "psychology of creative work" or "reflection of the creative process" has become relevant. The artistic reflection in this scientific thought direction is a reflection of self-understanding in the literary text, and the imaginative reflection as a reflection of self-knowledge, using the figurative means in the texts of different styles (mass media, conversation, etc.).

With the development of the Internet, particularly with the appearance of the Internet art-style [15,16], the capabilities of the written word reflection researchers, on the one hand, have declined, and, on the one hand, have increased.. The main loss lies in the fact, that the online literary texts (generated texts) do not contain the results of the author's reflection, since this process is missing while creating such texts. This fact discredits the attribution of the generated products to the acts of artistic creation. This style could be called formal art or conditional art. It can be described with the following features: (1) the priority of form over content and (2) the occasional semantic strikes [17]. The creative work should generate something new every time. The generation program, the same as any other program, in any case has its limits.

The expansion of research opportunities of the creative process reflection is connected with the appearance of the special Internet competitions on the topic (for example the contest "Reflection of the creative process in poetry, or poems about how poems are written" on the website [www.obshelit.ru/contests/14](http://www.obshelit.ru/contests/14)), with the genre of Internet comments. The comments to such pieces of work open up a new field of study – that is the reader's reflection in the perception of literary texts, which had previously been studied only in vitro by means of survey [18].

The Internet communication includes the following types of the online comments: 1. The analytical comment, which includes the reader's observations on the text, his questions to the author, the analysis of the semantic strikes and failures in the text. 2. The comment as an emotional response does not contain the elements of the analysis, but it represents the emotions in relation to the author or to the piece of work; may contain the assessment without justification [19].

3. The co-creative comment contains the reader's reaction to the author's text and the desire to answer the author in the figurative and, often, in the literary form. This is the most interesting type of comment, because sometimes the reader can start the artistic polemics with the author and other readers. 4. The mixed comment, which includes the elements of two previous types as a minimum [20].

## Conclusion

Our research shows, that the media text in the Internet space adapts to the phenomenological characteristics of the

Global Network and receives special media additives (interactivity, nonlinearity, incompleteness, interactivity), which allows us introducing the term "online text" as a specific concept to the generic concept of the "media text" in scientific use. The text is necessarily formed by the genre. The Internet genre also gets special content: the feedback components become more intense; the dialogueness of the genre is explicated in comments, hyperlinks, links, i.e., any text in the Internet is being expanded and extends the genre boundaries. The news genre, complicated by hyperlinks, allows interpreting the events in details, transforming them into stories; the comments add the addressee's opinion about what was read, thus complementing the author's text; the journalistic press release is being displaced by the information press release of the corporations, providing the collective addressee with an opportunity to collect the required information without any journalistic interpretations. The online communication today is the most comfortable form of communication, because it has not the one-way format (from the addresser to the addressee through the text, created by the reporter), but the interactive nature, making the recipient to participate in the dialogue.

The study of the genres of news, press release and comment, conducted by the authors, presents to the scientific community the following reliable data for further analysis: 1. Most actively developing Internet genres are news, press release, and comment. 2. The Internet generates a special type of news genre – online news, which differs from conventional news in that it presents information in a hypertextual form. 3. The conventional press release on the Internet is replaced by IR-release, statement of a material fact, IPO news. 4. In Internet communications, the following types of comments are widely used: analytical comment, comment – emotional response, co-creative comment, mixed comment.

## References

1. Klushina NI (2008) The style of journalistic text. Moscow: Media World p:242.
2. Bakhtin MM (1975). Problems of literature and aesthetics. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura p: 504.
3. Bakhtin MM (1979a) Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics. Moscow: Soviet Russia p:320
4. Bakhtin MM (1979b) Aesthetics of verbal creativity. Moscow: Iskusstvo p: 424.
5. Jakobson RO (1975) Linguistics and poetics. Structuralism: "for" and "against". Moscow:Progress pp: 193-230.
6. Gajda St (1999) Genres of colloquial speech. Speech Genres, Saratov 2: 103-111.
7. Gayda S (2015) Topical tasks of stylistics. Actual problems of stylistics 1: 11-21.
8. Dijkvan TA (1988) News Analysis. Case Studies of International and National News in the Press. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates p: 324.
9. Dijk van TA (2000) Language Cognition Communication. Blagoveshchensk: BGK them. I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay p: 308.
10. Dijk van TA (2008) Discourse and power. New York: Palgrave Macmillan p: 308.
11. Rudnitskaya AP, Pletneva NS (2014) Principles of Organization of Information and Communication Interaction between Government and Society through Mass Media. Nauka I tehnologii 4: 72-81.
12. Foremski T (2006) Die! Press release! Die! Die! Die! Retrieved from.
13. Bogdanov VV (1993) The Text and text communication. SPb.: St. Petersburg State University p: 68.
14. Selezneva LV, Tortunova IA (2015) Discursive image of the business press in Russia 2:107-111
15. Toshovich B (2015a) Internet-style. Moscow: FLINTA Nauka p: 238.
16. Toshovich B (2015b) Internet as a stylistic space. Actual problems of stylistics 1: 27-35.
17. Bhatia VK (2010) Interdiscursivity in professional communication. Discourse & Communication 4: 32-50.
18. Internet media: Theory and practice (2010). Moscow: Aspect Press p: 348.
19. Foucault M (1996) The order of discourse The will to truth: beyond knowledge, power and sexuality. Works of different years pp: 49-96
20. Schiffrin D (1990) The language of discourse: Connections inside and out Text 10: 97-100.