



The Problem of Adapting Regional Media Linguistics to Modern Communicative Conditions

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Abstract

New media linguistics examines not only the written language of the media, but also the media's speech. Media linguistics encompasses media speech experiments that analyze (1) the speech behavior of mass communication participants and (2) various areas, textures, and genres of media text. In this paper, it was tried to analyze the Internet portals and publics of regional media, with the help of which they adapt to modern communicative conditions. The sources are publications of the most popular title with the audience in the Republic of Mordovia, namely the newspaper "Stolitsa S", as well as its public page on the social network VKontakte. The authors carried out a content analysis of more than 500 media texts and a qualitative analysis of about 100 materials. As a result, characteristics were identified that allow increasing the number of subscribers and causing their activity, such as the expressiveness of materials, the use of various stylistic means and methods of attracting the audience's attention.

Keywords: Mass Media; Media Linguistics; New Media; Public Page; Social Network.

1. Introduction

Media linguistics is the linguistic study of language use in the media. It studies the functioning of language across electronic, audiovisual, digital and networked media in the media domain or in contemporary mass communication. Media linguistics is being developed in the process of defining linguistics as a general language theory and is a sub-field of linguistics close to other areas, such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, linguistic development, legal linguistics, political linguistics, etc. New media linguistics discusses not just the media's written language, but also the media's language. Media linguistics includes analyses of media debate that examine (1) the speech behavior of participants in mass communication and (2) various areas, textures and genres of media texts. Texts as well as their creation and reception are studied by media linguistics. Objective preconditions have driven the advent of media linguistics since the 1970s, when various publications mainly concerned with language employed in mass communication began to appear on a regular basis in Russia and Europe (Mubarakshina, Abdrakhmanova, & Fattakhova, 2019; Nadezda Pavlovna, Evgeniya Valerevna, Andrey Georgievich, & Elena Alexandrovna, 2019; Rishatovna Gareyeva, Evgenyevich Martynov, & Aleksandrovna Martynova, 2019; Soodmand Afshar, 2020; Varma, Paramasivam, & Nimehchisalem, 2019). The authors of those studies researched media texts, including sociolinguistics, practical stylistics and pragmatics, discourse theory, content interpretation, semantic linguistics and rhetorical criticism, in the context of various academic traditions. The attention was on a wide variety of issues: from determining the status of media language in terms of realistic stylistics and methods of expressing different types of media texts, to influencing the socio-cultural influences and language strategies of media power on the mass and person consciousness. Undoubtedly, the media text theory, which is currently discussed in all studies devoted to speech output in mass communication, is the most important theoretical aspect of media linguistics. The meaning of this concept can be summed up as follows: the traditional definition of a document as a coherent and integral part of the language spoken or written for linguistics applies substantially to the field of mass



communication. In mass media, the concept of a text goes beyond the formal limits of the scheme of verbal signs and reaches its semiotic sense when a "text" refers to a stretch of a symbol of some kind, not necessarily verbal. Many scholars agree that the degree of mass communication adds new facets of interpretation to the concept of the document, identified by the features and characteristics of this or that mass communication medium (Hashemian & Farhang-Ju, 2018; Rinatovna Eremeeva, Vladimirovna Martynova, Aidarovna Khakimova, & Ernstovna Ilikova, 2019).

The changes taking place in society have significantly transformed its entire structure and existing communication practices. Instead of traditional communication, there is transactional media communication now. It is "the transition to such interpersonal communication relations in which each party can in turn act as a sender, receiver or transmitter of information (Alipour & Nooreddinmoosa, 2018; Farnia, Saeedi, & Ataei, 2020; Jalilifar, Saleh, & Don, 2017; Khedri & Kritsis, 2018; Rahimpour, Sotoudehnama, & Sasani, 2018; Shahab, Rashidi, Seddighi, & Yamini, 2019). <...> "Media" means that these communication technologies still include media" (Bryant, Thompson, & Finklea, 2012).

Communication is a two-way mechanism in which both directions flow messages. The use of various types of media, such as print, electronic media (radio, television), new media, etc., also applies to communication. These media are used as a platform for empowerment, i.e. as a tool for promoting and supporting people's engagement in developmental activities. Different mass media are used to convey awareness and information efficiently to individuals for developmental purposes. It is possible to break the word 'Development Communication' into two terms, i.e., communication and development. Communication here refers to the use of various forms and media in the sense of creation. It is also used to mean the exchange of data and experience in order to speed up growth. Whereas growth refers to society's transition for betterment. For development or progression, social and economic change may be both. Therefore, when we refer to communication in production, it is about such communication that can be used for growth. It is about using contact to improve or enhance the way of life of a country's people. We use various types of messages here to improve people's socio-economic conditions. These messages are meant to change people's behaviour or to enhance their quality of life. Therefore, communication with development can be described as the use of community to foster development. Mass communication specialist Everett M. Rogers described communication of growth as referring to the uses to which communication is placed in order to develop further (Rogers, 1976, 1986; Rogers & Shukla, 2001). These applications are intended either to grow more in a general way, such as by growing the level of mass media visibility among people of nations, in order to establish a favorable development environment, or to help a particular program or project. In the above description, Rogers said that the society would create an atmosphere or climate for growth in order to grow the community. There will be two forms of this climate, a) physical climate and b) psychological climate. On the other hand, Rosario Braid argues that development communication is an aspect of the management process in the overall planning and execution of development programs (Rosario-Braid, 1979; Rosario-Braid & Tuazon, 1999). Thus, development communication can be said to be the identification and proper use of adequate knowledge in the development process that will help to increase the participation of people. Therefore, contact with development can be said to have two primary functions, i.e. (a) evolving position, as it seeks social improvements for a higher quality of life. (b) the task of socializing by trying to retain some of society's existing values. The role can be explored as follows:

Communication in development is used to turn the task of bringing about social change in a way that brings about a higher quality of life. Communication here serves as an instrument for attaining these goals.

Communication in progress also seeks to preserve the existing values of society by playing a socializing role. In performing these positions, communication with creation aims to create a climate for change and to provide creativity from which society can change.

For growth purposes, mass media and technology should be widely and tactfully used. It should be noted that for constructive developmental purposes, it is a tool in the possession of the government. When the media is used for developmental purposes, communicator creation must take into account that the use should be comprehensive. And the framework of the mass media should be prepared for this reason and attempts should be made to reach out to the maximum number of people each time. Via its message to the masses, the media in developing and underdeveloped countries aim to bring about developmental change. Through interpretation, review and debate, the mass media point out the disadvantages of society and main areas of growth. The message should be such that it should generate a desire among common men for change and growth. The media would act as a decision-maker and instructor in its objective of developmental improvements. As a mass medium, television has a tremendous appeal to the average individual. For that purpose, television is used to inspire people to engage in developmental activities in a planned way. Function,

documentaries or development initiatives should be such that it stimulates curiosity in viewers' minds, content should be contemporary to attract individuals of all ages, and should be able to influence viewers to engage in developmental programs.

I.M. Dzyaloshinsky writes that “with the advent of the Internet, new communication practices have emerged that have significantly changed the traditional models of relations between an initiator and an addressee of communication” (Dzyaloshinsky & Pilgun, 2015). If earlier the reaction to the message of the originator was delayed, now, with the development of the Internet, society is moving “to an almost continuous interaction between subjects of communication” (Bryant et al., 2012).

In this regard, the main problem is the adaptation of traditional media and the development of new media in modern society. These issues were studied abroad (Abdenor, 2016; Dimmick, Chen, & Li, 2004; Djierf-Pierre, Ghersetti, & Hedman, 2016)

Among researchers, these addressed various aspects of the functioning of mass media (Dzyaloshinsky & Pilgun, 2015; Kolesnichenko, 2018; Lü, Zhang, Yeung, & Zhou, 2011; Rachynska, 2019; Ross et al., 2019; Siregar, 2019; Turcotte, York, Irving, Scholl, & Pingree, 2015; Vannucci & Ohannessian, 2019).

1.1. Research Objective

The paper analyses web portals and regional media audiences to adapt them to new communicative circumstances.

2. Material and Methods

The purpose of this work is to study the features of the regional media development in modern communicative conditions (by the example of the Republic of Mordovia) (Dovbysh, 2016; Savina, 2017). The methodological basis of the study was the principles of systemic, structural and complex analysis. The authors used systematization and various methods of analysis (interpretation, classification, pragmatic and contextual analysis, and also content analysis). The analysis of statistical data made it possible to identify the most popular title in the region under consideration, which is the newspaper “Stolitsa S”. The authors carried out a content analysis of more than 500 media texts and a qualitative analysis of about 100 materials of the publication.

3. Results and Discussion

The development of the Internet is a process that is typical for Russia as a whole and for its individual regions. The number of Internet users in the Republic of Mordovia has been increasing significantly since 2008. Internet media began to develop here since the mid-2000s; however, according to experts, they never became independent monetized media.

In 2006, the information agency “Info-RM” was opened in the republic. The next news agency was a feed on the “Stolitsa S” website and since 2011, “Vestnik Mordovii” and “MordovMedia” have been opening one after another; in 2013, a large holding RNTI Media Group with a paper edition “Pro Gorod” and the portal pg13.ru entered Saransk. “MordovMedia” is a product of the “Project Wave” Mari holding, which launches similar linear products in many cities of the Volga region. Since 2015, there has been a dramatic increase in media publicity on social media.

The website Liveinternet.ru traffic statistics for January 2020 brings five portals to the leaders in the city of Saransk: “Stolitsa S” (with attendance of more than 98 thousand users among the people of the selected region), “MordovMedia” (more than 43 thousand), RIA Info-RM (about 26 thousand), “Pro Gorod” (about 25 thousand), and State TV and Radio Company “Mordovia” (more than 7 thousand).

After analysing during a week, the top 5 news items in Saransk according to the aggregator of news messages Yandex. News, we found that news of the portals Stolitsa S, Info-RM, Izvestiya Mordovii, Gazeta13, MordovMedia got there.

Summarizing their ratings, we can conclude that the most popular news portal is the newspaper “Stolitsa S”.



Information public pages "Stolitsa S" in "Vkontakte" and Instagram involve at least one-third of the population of the republic. Here the newspaper relies on gonzo journalism (Fayzullina, 2016; Kilpatrick, 2019), completely ignoring journalistic ethics.

The title wins in terms of the number of news items posted per day: about 35–40 messages on weekdays and 20–30 news items on weekends. The news feed contains the most important messages about events taking place in the republic; that is, the priority of the edition is efficiency in informing from the scenes. Among the genres are notes, interviews, announcements, etc., there are analytical materials also. The site contains traditional and multimedia long reads ("European bison appeared in the forests of Mordovia, the largest male weighs a ton", 01/22/2020). There are practically no materials which are not accompanied by a photograph; infographics are presented in rare cases.

At the same time, "Stolitsa S" is represented in almost all social networks (as of 02/01/2020): VKontakte (more than 109 thousand subscribers), Facebook (about 2 thousand), Odnoklassniki (more than 10 thousand subscribers), Twitter (over 140), Instagram (over 40 thousand), Telegram (over 700), YouTube (2.14 thousand subscribers, over 2 million views), and LiveJournal. The site of the title is registered as a mass media in the form of an electronic periodical with the Russian Federation as the territory of distribution.

The locality of most of the materials (about 65%) does not go beyond Saransk; the main headings are standard for a comprehensive public-political title: society, politics, incidents, religion, economics, sports, culture, life, posters, etc. However, the events taking place outside the Republic of Mordovia in the regions of the Volga region, in Russia, or in the world are also touched upon. Basically, they 1) give an idea of the most significant events; 2) tells about scandals and incidents that can attract the attention of readers.

A large number of materials in the title are based on facts and present notes or extended notes that answer the questions of the triad "What? Where? When?" and include expert commentary. Statistical data and official comments from press services are used. However, such informative messages may contain colloquial and subnormal vocabulary, for example, it has cheated in the meaning of 'told' ("A resident of Saransk lost 150 thousand roubles by installing the application", 01/29/2020), a kid, knocked around, poor fellow, poison ("They took a 33-year-old drug addict on Tatyana Bibina Street in Saransk ", 01/27/2020), eccentrics, hardheads (" In Saransk, the unemployed people stole a cart from a store to hand it over to a metal collection point", 01/27/2020).

The headlines of the newspaper use all five principles of attracting the audience's attention: 1. Priority and interest of the topic for the audience, according to which press reports most often "relate to such problems as terrorism, various man-made accidents and natural disasters and public hazards" (Salter, 2018) ("Our main task was to resist the Russian system in the face of the power structures", 01/12/2020, "Vekselberg's company continues to cook living people in boiling water", 01/28/2020). 2. Unusual facts ("Mysterious creatures live under Syzran: they are dwarfs having faces covered with wool", "A patient with a heart attack survived four clinical deaths successively and returned alive from the other world"). 3. The novelty of the facts, which include "information that has not yet received mass massaging, and which can be a sensation" (Salter, 2018). ("A resident of Saransk sent her 7-year-old granddaughter to a holiday by taxi: the child was lost", "A resident of Saransk "fell in love" with six Uzbeks", 27.01.2020). 4. Success ("Miss Mordovia" admitted that she is a fan of Zemfira", 04.11.2019, "The head of Mordovia handed over to the museum a ball with an autograph of Cristiano Ronaldo", 26.10.2019). 5. High social status ("Zubovopolyansky court in Mordovia released Zakharchenko on parole!!!", 01/25/2020, "Valentina Matvienko: "I am sure that the creative work of Mordovian deputies will contribute to the realization of the potential of the region in the interests of the entire state", 24.01 .2020).

Quotations, in particular, containing swear words are often included in the headline ("This Kozlov needs pneumatics to be pushed into his a..s!", 01/26/2020, "Putin: " Such scum, freaks, when I found out about them, I opened my mouth and goggled out my eyes, and where do they come from?", 01/22/2020), puns ("GOMs up!", 01/26/2020, "Turkmen gambit", 01/24/2020).

Some publications deliberately contain subjectivity and reliance on unverified facts. Thus, one of the texts begins with the words: "A wild, terrible and absurd rumour is tearing apart the elite circles of Mordovia. Experts from the movement "Goodwin cheated on the Tin Woodman with a Group of Hamsters" do not want to believe in him. And yet..." (" Did one of the representatives of the elite in Mordovia infected his wife with syphilis when she was nine months pregnant?!", 15.01.2020). This text repeatedly emphasizes that the subject of the publication was not a fact, but a rumour:

"sort of like", "there are rumours", "the scandal remained at the level of rumours." Here we can trace the presence of means that affect social assessment (direct assessment, irony, antithesis): "shocking", "extreme", "one of the over sophisticated people", "in the corridors where the carpets have grown into the parquet", "sinner", "As you know, only highly moral individuals live in Mordovia".

Other linguistic means are also used in the newspaper, such as a pun: "This young man is harsh but hopeless. And even moneyless" ("They are looking for a guy in striped pants in Saransk, 01/27/2020), rhetorical questions, by example the caption to the material "A resident of Saransk gave his bride a stolen car: the wedding did not take place" sounds like this: "Who is this young man? Hero? Romantic? Or just an idiot? The court will establish the truth ... (01/23/2020), syntactic parallelism - "The US State Department will not help. Relatives will not understand. Friends will smile. Like, life is dull without a gull" ("the 32-year-old resident of Mordovia has "presented" almost 100 thousand roubles to a swindler", 01/12/2020) and others.

V.V. Begun in his work "Vulgarity and "naive cynicism" as destructive qualities of a journalistic text" considers some technologies for creating such texts: "excessive expressiveness, excessive detail, <...> inappropriate language play, inappropriate humour; false pathos, profanation of values" (Begun, 2009). The analysis showed that these technologies are used in the newspaper "Stolitsa S". Thus, the material about a pensioner who paid for his kindness by letting a gypsy woman into the house to drink water ends with the words: "At the trial, she pleaded her guilty. <...> But the pensioner did not wait for the verdict: he died without knowing that in 2020 the government will change in Russia. But Gracheva managed to give him money at the stage of the investigation. So, the old man had something to bury..." ("A resident of Mordovia let a stranger go to the toilet and lost money", 27.01.2020). Another example is the use of a precedent statement in the text: "an 8-month-old child was taken to the hospital in a coma, a spice was found in his blood" ends with a line from a poem by E. Uspensky: "Seryozha just came, we played a little game".

The journalistic style is divided into two types: informational and influencing (Pajunen, 2008). The media texts of "Stolitsa S" are more expressive, which means they belong to the influencing ones.

We calculated the ERday indicator (Alevizaki, Kara-Murza, Lomykina, & Agafonova, 2019) (the total user engagement rate for all posts published on the resource for a day or a selected period) from VKontakte for five weekdays of a week determined by random sampling in January 2020 (January 20-24), as well as for several weekend days of January. The days were chosen, taking into account the absence of important events in the life of the republic that could affect the information tactics of media publications. ERday of "Stolitsa S" is the highest among all analysed public pages and averages 431% on weekdays, and 342% on weekends.

At the same time, the following publications caused the greatest response (Erpost - the coefficient of people engagement for the selected publication): the search for the owner of a lost dog - 40%, an accident with a drunk driver - 27%, the trial of a distinguished doctor accused of murdering a teenager - 26%, an arrival to Saransk of a confessor of Patriarch Kirill - 25%, a request to find the keys lost by a resident of the city - 23%, the return of the "unkillable man" (about a man who threatened to jump out of the window of a high-rise building), an increase in transport fares by 2 roubles - 21%, and stabbing - 18%.

Thus, the title of "Stolitsa S" attracts the attention of the audience due to the expressiveness of its materials, the use in its texts of various stylistic means and methods of attracting the audience's attention, and "vulgarity and "naive cynicism" as a destructive quality of the journalistic text (Begun, 2009). News is posted promptly; most often it is based on facts and is accompanied by a photograph, while the title also wins by the number of posted publications that are news, and are not reposts of gifs and memes. In addition, the publication is featured on all social networks (except Yandex-Zen).

4. Summary and Conclusions

The concepts of systematic, hierarchical and complex analysis became the conceptual framework of the research. Systematization and diverse methods of study were used by the writers (interpretation, classification, pragmatic and contextual analysis, and also content analysis). The statistical data analysis made it possible to classify the most famous title in the area under consideration, the 'Stolitsa S' newspaper. The analysts performed a content study of over 500 advertising texts and a qualitative analysis of over 100 publication materials. So, based on our qualitative and content



analysis of Internet portals and publics of regional media, we can conclude that publications are quite successfully adapting to the new information space. There is a successful development of the platforms of all social networks and messengers; the number of subscribers to each of them is regularly increasing. Having analysed the data on the ratings of the sites of titles and made our own calculations of the audience reactions in the social network Vkontakte (ERday and Erpost), we found that the newspaper "Stolitsa S" is in the first place: the title is leading in terms of the number of subscribers, the number of the news posted per day and the response of the audience to them.

News is posted promptly; most often, it is based on facts and is accompanied by a photograph. Attracting the audience's attention is due to the expressiveness of the materials, the use of various stylistic means and methods of attracting the audience's attention, and the use of "vulgarity and" naive cynicism "in the texts.

The newspaper uses the whole range of genre means, including multimedia, as well as linguistic diversity aimed at influencing the audience.

In the course of our research, we examined the features of the functioning of regional media in modern communicative conditions and identified the most competitive title. Summarizing, we can highlight the criteria for the effective presentation of information in public pages and Internet portals, which contributes to the response of the audience:

1. Using the principles of attracting attention;
2. Expressiveness, stylistic diversity;
3. Genre variety;
4. Availability of entertainment content;
5. Use of multimedia formats;
6. Catching headlines or click-baiting.

The prospects for the development of media in the Republic of Mordovia in particular and regions, in general, are possible in this direction.

4.1. Contribution

The authors have developed standards for the successful presentation of information on public websites and online portals, which contribute to the audience's response.

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