Transformation of information genres: from printed media to social networks

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Abstract. In the paper the problem of information genres transformation from traditional newspapers and magazines, towards the attempts to use well-known and time-tested ones on the Internet is analyzed. In particular, in blogs, telegram channels, various performances on social networks made by politicians and non-professional writers, bloggers, environmental activists, etc. It is argued that such type of transformation is a consequence of not only social network's rapid development but also a special phenomenon of social consciousness. Accordingly, a particular individual, not being able to realize his ideas, thoughts and even secret feelings and emotions in a rather limited communication circle, realizes them under the guise of journalistic work in a way he imagines it. Moreover, the transformation of genres, although on a much smaller scale, is a conscious or unconscious action performed by professional journalists and is aimed at optimizing the processes of general perception of the journalistic text itself. Decrease in the number of periodicals and socio-political printed editions, especially in third world countries, accelerates this process as well. In the paper, the indisputable fact is emphasized that the transformation phenomenon should be perceived as a reality that is not influenced by discretionary decisions, different reviews or wishes of those who own printed or online communication media. Transformation takes place beyond our perceptions and requirements, just as carbon is accumulated in nature or various species disappear. On the other hand, in case of creative and productive understanding the laws and trends of genre transformation, an educated and capable mass media employee is able not only to adapt to this process, but also to join it, correct it in some way and drive it in a right direction. In the paper, various aspects of the above-mentioned issue are considered: from practical and creative to those dealing with professional journalistic ethics. The paper also reveals the question of the audiovisual imagery often accompanying the text material.

Urgency of the research

Rapid development of technological civilization has entered a new, original phase with the emergence of information civilization, which has led to the active introduction of social networks, mass blogging, amateur information portals, etc., where both neophytes and professional journalists are engaged. History has never experienced such a phenomenon as the interference of a large number of non-professionals into the journalistic activity. There have even been predictions on social media concerning the "end of journalism" similar to the statements about the "end of Gutenberg galaxy" and civilization in general. Time will show how true they are. However the author of the given paper has no doubt that fears concerning the "end" or simply the regress of journalism are exaggerated, and the

development of information civilization, expansion of communication opportunities provide for optimization of creative search, giving professionals much more options for creative realization than it was before. Moreover, social networks have provided an opportunity for moral self-affirmation, sometimes developing a wrong idea about the professional qualities of amateur journalists. Of course, at the same time, either consciously or unconsciously, the "idea" is imposed that journalism does not require any professional or basic education while even just secondary education is enough. Therefore, such important components of journalistic education, as literary editing and proofreading are being completely ignored. Therefore, due to the general decline in the cultural and educational level, apologists for social networks demonstratively reject literature and history.

At the same time, however paradoxically it may seem, the involvement of a large number of amateurs in the process of writing journalistic or pseudo-journalistic papers has also positive aspects and characteristics. Here belong an original view of the event, its paradoxical, unexpected interpretation. An amateur, a beginner who is not burdened with behavior stereotypes and protocols can consider the event from an unexpected perspective when doing his job. Of particular attention are attempts to write journalistic works by the representatives of technical professions. We often observe no bright imagery, whereas instead comes meticulous work on processing and understanding the facts, the analytics becomes more thorough and motivated. Representatives of non-humanitarian professions, having mastered the basics of journalism, arrive at the idea of necessity for self-education. They do it chaotically, often subconsciously. Here they should take an advantage of the research developments of our theorists and practitioners, the studio of journalism teachers.

Methodology of the issue was developed by domestic and foreign scholars: M.Vasylenko, R.Radchyk, V.Rizun, E.Canetti, M.Castells, T.Wolfe and others [1; 10; 11; 6; 7; 2].

Goal of the research: to investigate the effectiveness of information genres' transformation in the print media and social networks.

Object of the research: information genres in a broad sense of this concept.

Subject of the research: information genres transformation to social networks inclusively.

Methods of the research: comparative, structural-functional, monitoring method. Certain issues are considered by means of intuitive method of exploring the surrounding world.

Academic novelty: it is revealed that the transformation of information genres, the oldest genres in domestic and world journalism, takes place due to objective reasons caused by the development of technological civilization and human society. Information genres are traditionally the most mobile and perceived by the widest groups of respondents. That is why, this group was the first to transform from the usual newspaper interviews, reports, newsletters, into more complex, expanded, supplemented with audio and video sequence, numerous links, materials on social networks. The author of the given research paper argues that transformation does not mean a radical change, whereas it implies a partial change in the criteria of the approach to the facts' analysis; other scales of journalistic work; the ability to quickly verify both the facts and the reader's reaction to a journalistic work, or an attempt to write a journalistic work. The author also concludes that the basis, the essence of the report, article, interview, coverage, has not fundamentally changed. The methodology of this issue is partially revealed in the works of Ukrainian researchers L Gorodenko, S Danylenko [3; 4] and many others. However, the issue is still not comprehensively studied and cannot be solved, since social networks are expanding in time and space, attract hundreds of thousands of active participants daily, and produce new transformational changes.

Informational genres of the periodical press are traditionally studied in the second year on journalism faculties and usually include news (information note), coverage, interview, report. This gradation, developed by such well-known researchers as D Pryliuk, I Prokopenko and V Zdorovega [8; 9; 5] the author takes as a basis, deliberately ignoring the attempts to include review, annotation

and even an epitaph into the group of information genres. Such research "experiments" initiated by the northern neighbors did not ultimately lead to any positive results in the development of printed or online journalism. Instead, they have complicated the development of domestic journalism studies and the practical work of journalists of periodical editions. At the same time, with the introduction and synchronization of the genre system, the numerous interpretations of transformation and genre formation have started to develop. Here is what a well-known expert in information genres M Vasylenko has written about this over fifteen years ago: "Genre formation is now taking forms that adequately reflect not only the requests of the reader with the appropriate national mentality. There are processes characterized by the integration of printed products to European and North American standards. In particular, such journalism genre as an investigative report has developed rapidly and dynamically. The latter one is gradually being transformed, turning from purely informational into a separate group of genres, which in the West is called investigative journalism" [1, p.7]. The prediction came true, and nowadays the investigative journalism is extremely popular on social networks and is actively developing on television. The Ukrainian print media, which is currently experiencing financial and moral hardship, however, also takes advantage of investigative report. Investigative journalism, previously characterized by a "step-by-step" manner of development: from newspapers to television, from television to social networks, now acquires completely different transitional qualities. After appearing on social media, such report becomes the achievement of television; later, the idea can be implemented and significantly developed by the representatives of print media. In any case, the investigative report is essentially a classic example of genre transformation from one type of mass-communication tool (hereinafter – MCT) to another. Whereas in this case, it is difficult to say that in any particular mass-communication tool, the investigative report is "better" or more effective. However, each type of MCT has its own features and hence – differences in the report itself are observed.

It is notorious that the material gets a new meaning and new details are revealed by means of simple increase or decrease in the volume of a journalistic work. However, the report also changes when, for instance, a newspaper publication is adapted to the requirements of social networks. A report that is artificially turned into a blog has its own features. Namely, report in the form of a blog has brightly individualized character of the author's personal style. From specific expressions and vocabulary – to the possibility of including links into the report, for the reader to follow in case he gets spontaneously interested in the issue under discussion. Whereas the above-mentioned issue is not the main one in the material and therefore the author considers it enough to refer to it "in one click".

The question is whether the references in the text of the report can be considered a positive or negative phenomenon? At first glance, it seems that any information that supplements the report with facts, saturates it with emotions, enriches with visualization, is a positive phenomenon. However, the traditional report according to E Hemingway, G Wallraff and other classics of the genre, written for a newspaper or magazine, is supposed to be of certain volume, and, therefore, develops according to purely literary laws. It should have an introduction, culmination, and denouement. All these are accumulated in 2,500 characters and the text is supposed to be read "in one breath". Thus, there can be no distraction in the form of links.

In general, according to I Prokopenko, the Ukrainian classic of making reports: "report is such a literary presentation where a concrete reality, truthful facts and people directly from the place setting are described picturesquely, in the most vivid details and at the same time concisely and accurately. An important characteristic feature of the report is that it attracts reader's visual attention to the situation and conditions of the event or phenomenon. The report allegedly makes you see the described subject with your own eyes, as if having touched it. Such feature of this genre is due to the fact that the report depicts events and phenomena in detail, using various expressive elements, spicy touches. It does not tell about them, but depicts reality in a dynamic, vivid picture instead [9, p.12-13]. According to the author of this research, the above-given definition vividly and fully reflects the essence of newspaper and magazine report. A journalist who seeks to post his report on social networks should also be concerned about the accuracy of expressions, the imagery of vocabulary.

However, at the same time, he has to pay maximum attention to the visual imagery: photos, live shooting. We have already mentioned that sometimes, when the respondent refers from the main text to the link, it is not only the atmosphere of the word that gets lost. It is quite possible to simply forget what the journalist wrote in his report some time ago. Moreover, the reader can get so much interested in the link, that whether consciously or not, he will not get back to the report itself. While when report with the link is posted on Facebook or any other social network, the reader in case he is interested in the link, can quickly post his comment concerning the facts provided in the link, and not reflected in the report. Here a creative dichotomy can be observed, when, in the end, the journalist himself is the one to blame. Therefore, looking for optimal ways to implement his creative idea, before writing material, a modern journalist should pragmatically consider all the pros and contras, check the quality and quantity of photos, videos, links and try to evaluate the reader's reaction to these components of his work. It is extremely difficult to predict all the possible reaction of the reading community, which consists of individuals with different cultural levels, preferences and tastes. However, this must be done in order to optimize the presentation of the material.

To a lesser extent, the report material changes if it is submitted in online publications. Here, the readers' comments are sometimes turned off at all, and the package of photos or videos is corrected by a special editorial team. Among them are experienced journalists and specialists in the mass consciousness, advertisers and those who are directly responsible for the growth of the number of subscribers to this online edition. They are to decide how many photos should be placed; whether the provided links are reasonable, and if so, to what extent? There are many other aspects, up to the publication of the material at a certain time of day. Previously, such decisions were made by the secretariat of a newspaper or magazine, and now times had changed and the technology became more sophisticated and complicated. Does the report still remain a genre of report? It is difficult to say, because even the domestic expert in reports M. Vasylenko comes to the conclusion that: "there can be no universal definition of the essence of report. This dynamic genre cannot be placed within the frames of strict rules or regulations. Every report, first of all, is a reporter's personality, his creative talent" [1, p.117].

According to the author of this research, the report and the reporter himself remains the same employee of the journalistic editorial office as he used to be a hundred or two hundred years ago. A very characteristic fact is that recently there has been an active discussion about the concept of "reporter" itself. Allegedly, there is no need for reporters since blogging has become widespread and there are so many amateur attempts to represent facts in the form of posts on social media.
According to M. Vasylenko, a similar precedent has already taken place. The very concept of "reporter" and "reporter's work" was called into question and since 1924 had been the subject of discussion in journalism. It was at that time when a discussion started in the "Journalist" magazine – the official organ of the All-Soviet Union Journalists Organization – as to whether a journalist-reporter is needed in terms of socialism. Since, according to the initiators of the discussion, the reporter was viewed as a personification of individual labor, which was the opposition to mass collective creativity, the methods of the old bourgeois report could not be used in the new Soviet press. The discussion appeared to be not in favor of report and so this genre started to disappear [1, p.121]. As it is well-known, the situation, according to the laws of a centralized, paramilitary society, was changed rather quickly by the order of state authorities. The reports were extremely needed in order to see through the eyes of provincial journalists, special and later on – military correspondents, all the vicissitudes of socialist construction, and to provide timely response to all its drawbacks which, of course, were concealed for obvious reasons by the local bureaucracy [1, pp.122-123].

The modern issue concerning the need for reporting and individual creativity of certain journalists on the whole is far-fetched. It arises out of expectations of the possibilities of teamwork multiplied by the power of computer and search systems. In addition, we are witnessing experiments, especially on social networks, when amateur journalists try to "improve" their own or even someone else's material, constantly making changes and additions to it. Moreover, such amendments are often so radical that, in the end, not only the style but also the meaning of the whole text may change completely. All these,

of course, are done with the best of intentions, quite aggressively, taking into account the aggressive ignorance. The main motive for the changes looks standard: "The material is improved, enriched with new facts and new impressions from freelance bloggers, "friends", etc.".

It is worth mentioning that, in this case, the material is really changed including its main idea and the task. However, at the end, within a few days or even hours, we come across a diametrically opposite text, moreover, with collective authorship. Whereas the latter one, as it is well known, presupposes collective irresponsibility. Thus, the sense of journalistic activity, creative search and professional skills are lost. A report or what is called a "report" becomes a rather vague, infinitely expanded text with many links, associations, and allegories, each of them corresponding to the level of education of the blogger who edited it. It should be noted that such experiments are still not welcome or simply banned in the classic online publications; in many social networks, copying the author's material and its subsequent third-party editing is punished by blocking this user for a certain period of time. However, the problem exists because there is a fact of turning purely journalistic materials into collective posts on social networks. It is quite clear that this was difficult to imagine a quarter century ago, when classic reports used to be printed on newspaper and magazine pages and therefore no changes could be made to them.

Quite opposite, the social media can be often useful for professional journalists who specialize in the interview genre. In general, interviews in online publications and social networks acquire new qualities, and the hero or heroine of the interview can be asked questions depending on the interests of average readers. This is done as pragmatically as possible. Preparing for the interview, a journalist on social networks, for example on Facebook, asks his readers – friends or acquaintances: "What questions would you like me to ask the hero or heroine of the interview, or just the respondents?" In the latter case – when it comes to the genre of blitz interview. Thus the effect of "think tank", collective creative process is reached. It is common that those who sympathize the journalist may know such aspects, nuances, sides of the problem that the journalist has no idea about or simply has no time to study. Typically, after receiving dozens of questions, the interviewer makes a quick selection, dividing them by significance, relevance, etc. After the questions are being stylistically processed, the professional puts them into a logical order and offers them to the respondent/respondents if it is a blitz interview.

It should be mentioned that in such a case the issue of professional ethics – the authorship of the given questions – becomes urgent. Moreover, almost identical questions can be asked by different social network users or the can be duplicated by the journalist himself.

According to the author of the research, in this case, in the prepared material, voluntary consultants and followers who participated in content generation should be mentioned. "The author is sincerely grateful to Ivanenko, Petrenko, etc., who assisted in finding interesting questions". Or: "The author is grateful for the kind help in preparing the material…". Thus, a journalist who cooperates with social networks or works in the staff of online publications justifies the use of other people's ideas, hints, tips. The question whether to share the material reward for the interview with the voluntary consultants is up to the author to decide.

In any case, regardless of the information medium, the essence of the classic interview remains the same. According to the Ukrainian researcher R Radchyk: "The specific feature of an interview as a genre is that a fact, event, phenomenon, their socio-political significance is revealed through a message, the opinion of a competent interlocutor who possesses the necessary information. Providing it "at first hand" via direct speech creates a feeling of greater authenticity" [10, p.77].

Online publications and social networks create perfect conditions for the development of the interview genre. First of all, it is the possibility of duplicating information by means of visual record. The reader, the viewer will now be able to see the respondent: to evaluate his physiognomy and manner of speaking. You can even take a closer look at the setting of the interview. In this regard, the channels NASH and Pryamiy, connecting several political analysts and experts via Skype to discuss socially important topics, should be mentioned. Whereas, News One and Channel 112 – invite respondents to the studio, but take only close-ups, which allows you to observe the respondent's

change of mood and so on. As a live broadcasts, these interviews are spread on social media, and are often used as a basis for expressive, vivid blog.

There are many classifications of the interview genre, but it is already quite obvious that online publications and social networks require a comprehensive research program, which includes not only the classification of new interview types, but also addresses a number of above-mentioned issues of professional creativity and journalism ethics. Some types of interviews have changed so much that they are almost completely different from the basics – a newspaper and magazine interview.

Let us take, for example, a sketch interview. In a traditional newspaper or magazine, this type of "lyrical" genre usually took a whole page with a large photo. Depending on the font size – up to 4,000 characters. An epigraph and a headpiece with an ornament in case of a color magazine, was used. Nowadays, sketch interviewing traditionally remains a difficult genre, mastered mainly by journalists with literary skills. However, the method of its presentation has changed greatly. First of all, the number of photos increased. Colorful, often "3G" format photos dominate in the mind so strongly that sometimes prevent the reader from perceiving the text itself. In this case, the journalist's professional skills help. In addition to a well-made text with a perfect combination of questions-answers and interjections in the form of comments, the journalist has to divide his text material into small separate sections. He also has to give an expressive name to each of them. As a rule, it is a quote or excerpt from the respondent's answer. The journalist should also make sure that absolutely all the questions that were previously suggested by users of social networks are taken into account. Unlike traditional press journalism, where the interview, in fact, used to take several hours maximum, the current format of this genre significantly expands the scope of an interview. Many online publications generally practice serial interviews. In particular, this is typical of "Lb.ua" ("Livyi Bereh"), where Sonya Koshkina, the editor-in-chief, first makes an advanced advertisement, then submits an interview with a VIP of Ukrainian society for several times. It should be taken into account that in "Lb.ua" ("Livyi Bereh") as well as in other online publications, the term "submission" does not mean change of the interview once a day. The material can be submitted in parts: morning and evening, every other day, etc. All these nuances are decided by the editor-in-chief, the executive secretary or the content editor, having previously considered the reader's reaction to the first issues of the material. Methods and techniques of journalistic work, however, have not fundamentally changed. According to the author of the paper, the method of preparation for the interview still consists of several stages. They are: getting an editorial task; considering the given task; searching for materials dealing with the object, in this case – the hero of the interview. It is obvious that most of the information comes through the Internet. Having accumulated a certain amount of knowledge, the editorial staff through social networks appeals to their subscribers with an offer to submit their own tasks. Alternatively – to mention topics that should be covered during the interview. The next step is to bring in accordance all the received questions and topics, arrange them in a single stylistic range. Preparation for the interview remains a constant factor: technical means, the image of the journalist himself. Further comes the arrangement procedure and the interview itself.

The issue of editing the answers by the respondent himself remains problematic. The fact is that earlier, in classic interviews, the respondent used to read the material and put his signature at the end of the text. However, nowadays the situation has changed both in terms of technical check and moral control. According to the author's practical experience in MCT, at the present time the respondent can demand to correct the text material even after it has been posted in the online publication or social networks. Here a problem of moral dichotomy arises: on the one hand, the respondent consciously or unconsciously "recalls something", wants to supplement his answer in order to optimize it. On the other hand, the editors of the online publication do not have the opportunity to do so due to the fact that the reader or viewer may suspect the falsification of the event referred to in the material. In such cases, there are several ways to overcome the problem. First of all, a visual record comes in handy. Besides, the editorial board can openly address both the respondent and the reader with a request to clarify all the details.

Conclusions

Interview keeps transforming as a genre, and here one can speak about certain patterns. Among the main ones: the desire of modern journalists to dynamicize the conversation as much as possible, to focus the respondent's answers, up to turning him into an opponent. This, of course, impresses the reader and the viewer, but emotions often affect the objectivity of the event coverage. That is why it is necessary to adhere to the "golden mean" in order to reveal the truth and, at the same time, not to mix true information with emotional statements. The transformation of the interview genre, as mentioned above, is also the artificial introduction of a significant number of references to facts or individuals, their actions into the structure of the material. In order to make sure that the main idea, the task of the interview is not lost in the main flow of information, it should be carefully selected and the main ideas should be defined. If the staff member of the online publication is not sufficiently competent in this area, the creative correction for him should be made by the responsible secretary or editor.

The transformation of the interview genre also involves such an important fact as the rapid individualization and personalization of the interviewer himself. From the history of journalism of totalitarian times, we know that that interviews with state officials of the past were often conducted anonymously, and the material could be simply lapidary signed as "our correspondent". At the time of the print journalism, readers of newspapers and magazines were mostly familiar only with the name and surname of an editorial staff member. Nowadays the average social networks user, regardless of his desires or preferences, is bound to become public and recognizable person after several consecutive interviews posted on social networks. This happens in two main ways. The first one is obvious: during audio and video recording, the journalist definitely gets in frame. While the operator or the assistant, depending on a kind of the Internet MCT, can even take "close-up" of the journalist. In such a way, a purely creative effect is achieved: the emotions on the face of his colleague are visualized, thus encouraging the viewer to empathize. The second way that leads to the personification of the journalist himself is that users of social networks, after reading a particularly interesting material, try to learn more about the author. They search for information, explore the archives and post everything from photos to videos on the same social networks. In both cases, a number of problems arises that must be considered in terms of professional ethics of a modern reporter, interviewer.

Traditionally, the group of information genres also includes news (information) and a report. However, the latter one is not practiced in modern online publications. The term "report" is used in its direct meaning, without reference to the genre. Under "report" the practitioners usually mean the material that scrupulously, methodically, pragmatically informs users and subscribers about the course of an event.

News information in modern online publications comes mainly from large news agencies specializing in this type of journalistic activity. If the news comes to the online publication spontaneously, from a random source, the editorial office should carefully check its authenticity. Criteria can be different, but there is a traditional method, which has already proved its efficiency since the last century. The news must be verified from at least three sources. Especially if the news is sensational, emotional and scandalous. Often, especially in amateur telegram channels, any hot news is hastily presented as a sensation. The temporary popularity and growing number of visitors, however, leads to negative results in the end. The reader, the viewer no longer trusts social networks, online publications, telegram channels, etc., which produce unverified information.

Detailed study of the issue of genre transformation in modern conditions of social networks' rapid development, increasing number of Internet publications, telegram channels, etc. is an urgent problem, since reliable information is a key feature of a democratic society.

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