

SUMMARY

Final graduation paper on the topic: «Social journalism as a way of designing social problems on the example of materials of the federal and local press of Russia»

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Topicality of the research. Social journalism has become an integral part of the public space. In many respects it has become an outcome of those rough changes which occurred in the Russian reality during the perestroika. The social journalism is distinguished by a special functional orientation and the author's position of a journalist. Indeed, in the last decade a special professional specialization was formed which was caused by an objective necessity to pay attention to a social component of the Russian reforms.

Social journalism is expected to be addressed to a human, reflect topical aspects of people's everyday life, development of civil qualities of a person, upholding human rights. It is also called a journalism of participation, involvement which task is to help rank and file. It is not about circulation and influence but rapport between a journalist and a citizen.

Social journalism, reflecting real contradictions of the daily life of the population, formulates them in the form of social problems, pays to them attention of the public, social institutes and thus brings them into «agenda». Social problems are the most characteristic of social journalism.

The social sphere in modern Russia contains many topical problems which solution in many respects depends on attraction of attention of the authorities and the public to them. Mass media act as an important tool in designing the social reality, and, it means, social problems as well. To study the features of coverage of social subject matter in Russian mass media and the degree of their participation in the solution to socially significant problems.

The objective of the research is to investigate a phenomenon of social journalism as a means of designing social problems.

The goals of the research are: 1) to reveal specificity of social journalism as an element of public space; 2) to study creative ways of designing social problems in journalism; 3) to analyze features of representation of social problems in national quality press; 4) to investigate social problematic in local press.

Theoretical and practical importance of the research. Main propositions of the graduation paper supplement the theory of corporate mass media, drawing attention to such insufficiently studied segment, as university TV. Materials and conclusions of the paper can be used as recommendations for management of university television studios and employees of university departments of public relations and marketing.

Materials of the research can be used in educational process of high schools for the disciplines «Journalistic skill», «Typology of mass media», «Theory and practice of mass information», a special course «Corporate mass media».

Results of the research. Social journalism should be understood as a possibility for a journalist and journalism to participate, act, help with solution to problems, resolution of conflicts between a person and the society. The function of social journalism is connected with the social organization of citizens – with creation of new communities, a part of which is the

edition in the person of the journalist – the author of the publication. Thus, the role of the journalist is shown in the way he sees the problem and identifies the audience and what idea he puts into the publications.

The social problem should pass legitimization in the public space which allots to it the right to be considered on the recognized arenas of public discussion. In the modern society such arenas are mass media, other means of communication, educational institutions, civil organizations, legislative assemblies, executive and judicial power, church. If a social problem has no «the respectability mandate», it is doomed.

Not every problem in the life of a regular person can appear in the centre of attention of the state, to become a subject of legislative reforms or the reason of re-structuring the system, social policy. Defining these or those events, phenomena, situations, conditions as social problems depends on what their consequences will be, and also how the society or individuals can influence them. In aspiration to define the nature of social problems there is recognition of their complex character, their dependence on interpretations.

Analyzing creative ways of designing social problems: convincing narratives (or belief-requirements), counterrhetorical strategies, author's discourse (or authorisation), «situational model», a method of problematization, interdiscursiveness, «game situation»; it is possible to draw the following conclusion.

Designing and modelling creative ways in social journalism is possible only when the journalist (author) is capable to estimate and comprehend independently a real situation, to «virtually» think, showing the world his outlook and individuality of the language freedom, aspiration to step aside from the course and orientation of the edition, search of optimal means of realization of his creative reflection in practice of mass media.

As basic elements of the discourse-analysis of the national Russian printing editions (the «КоммерсантЪ», «Новая газета», «Новые известия») the following everyday journalistic practices: «thematic repertory», «situation», «situational model», «context», «contextual model», «concepts», «subjectivity codes», «working idea of the author in the text» have been chosen. We have analyzed the issues of the above-stated editions dated September-October, 2013.

The discourse-analysis of the newspaper «КоммерсантЪ» has shown that social problems are mentioned in the newspaper superficially, chaotically, irregularly, unvariedly and one-sidedly (as a rule, only from financial and economic or politically prognostic points of view). Frequently materials have an informational character.

The analysis of the edition «Новая газета» has revealed that it follows a social content and does not have the chronicle of official events or messages of the «central» scale, official information, etc. The authors' staff of the newspaper represents the most possibly real picture of the social reality without making reference to local administration. On the contrary, the newspaper tries to show the professional competence, multidimensionality of consideration of events, phenomena, conflicts, forming a certain field of estimations, more often critical in relation to the authorities, business structures and the state.

The analysis of the edition «Новые известия» has shown the following. 1. Covering social themes on the pages of the «Новые известия», their discussion, and more often investigation of the presented social problem or a collision gives to the newspaper a peculiar status of a «defender» and «lawyer» which struggles with social injustice and lawlessness. 2. The elements of the journalistic discourse: «thematic repertory», «situation», «situational model», «context», «contextual model», «concepts», «subjectivity codes», «working idea of the author in the text» contribute to the real discourse-analysis revealing certain features and regularities.

Recommendations.

The discourse-analysis of the newspaper «КоммерсантЪ» has shown a low «model of social responsibility». The newspaper aspires to correspond only to high professional standards of conducting an information policy, but not to burden itself with the solution to social problems.

The analysis of the edition «Новая газета» has revealed that «the working idea» of the journalists, as a rule, comes to one scheme: state structures, business community and officials act as «initiators» and regular citizens act as «victims». Therefore, frequently in publications on topical social issues instead of the weighed analysis and forecast just rhetorical questions appear; therefore, efficiency of the journalists' statements is low.

Studying a semantic part of publications of the newspaper «Пятигорская правда» we have come to the conclusion that social problems are, as a rule, an occasion to show an «activity» of the authorities. On that basis it is possible to draw a conclusion that social journalism in a small city (similar to Pyatigorsk) designs another picture of the reality: out of a problem it designs «not a problem». A disbalance is observed between critical and positive information in favour of the latter. Deproblematization, absence of problem zones in «vulnerable» groups in the picture, which is drawn by the «Пятигорская правда», does not mean their absence in the real life. It is possible to speak about the «harmonizing reality» in practice of the given newspaper. If the criticism is voiced, the accent is transferred from political and social contradictions on the financial and economic reasons.

As for the thematic areas touching social problems, in the first place there are themes of child care, family and youth. According to the frequency of mentioning (less than 10 %) the themes devoted to healthcare, housing problems and education are included into the second group. In the third group the themes appearing no more than 3 times or less than 5 % are presented. These are the problems of elderly people, disability, ecological state, psychological health of the society, charity and social partnership. But there are also such themes (gender problems, rights of women, prostitution, refugees, suicide) about which journalists do not write. There is a suppression of the problems.

Genres presented are mainly informational – notes, interviews, reportages, reports. Analytical, social and political publications appear less often than the former.