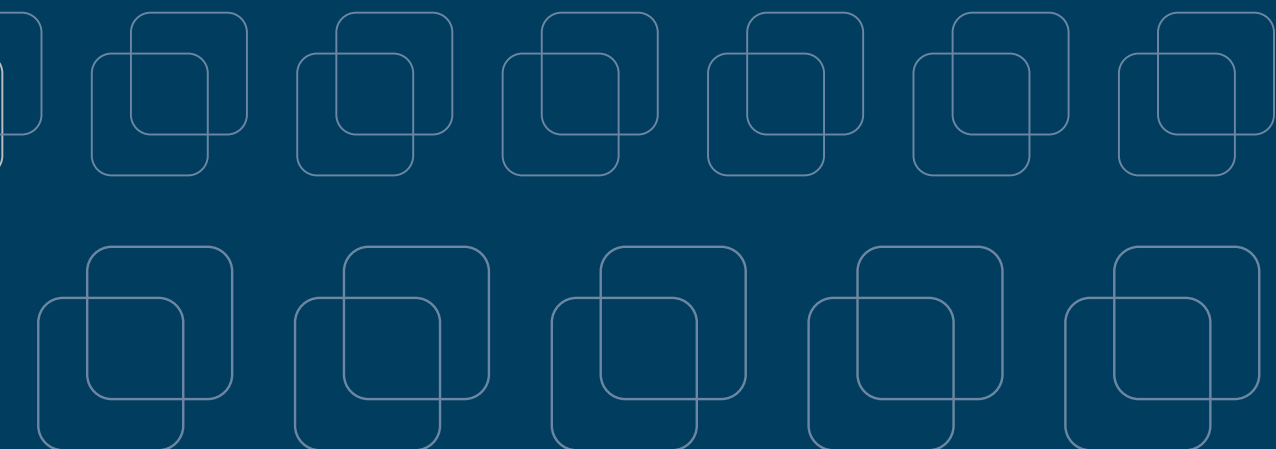


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CONTENTS

Lead article

- From digital divides to epistemic divides:
The rise of new inequalities in the conflict media space
Elena Vartanova, Anna Gladkova 5

Articles

- Science and technology agenda of Russian business magazines:
Topical and thematic analysis (2017-2021)
Tatiana Frolova, Daniil Ilchenko, Elizaveta Striga 24

- What does Systemic Functional Linguistics say about speech?
A discourse-semantic analysis
Hieronimus Canggung Darong 46

- Russian media generation of the “digital borderline”:
Theoretical reflection and empirical verification
Anna Sumskaya, Valeriia Solomeina 68

LEAD ARTICLE

From digital divides to epistemic divides: The rise of new inequalities in the conflict media space¹

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Abstract

In this paper, we approach Russian media policy through two main areas – digital inequality, which is a complex multilayer phenomenon embracing access, skills and benefits areas (three levels of the digital divide), and influencing all social processes in the country; and digital capital approached by scholars as a new intangible meta-capital that is becoming increasingly important under current digitalization processes in Russia and worldwide, as well as remaining conflict challenges and risks to information security. We discuss how Russian media policy has been changing in recent years to address new demands posed by digitalization and the growth of information society, which calls for new competencies, skills, and knowledge of citizens/users. Within broader epistemic rights context, we draw links between digital inequality and epistemic inequality, which concerns the widening gap in information, knowledge, and understanding between the elites and the majority of the population. We stress the need to overcome both intertwined types of inequality – digital and epistemic one – and suggest that closer attention of policymakers, scholars, educators, and public authorities should be shifted to the formation of digital capital, which is becoming fundamental for successful professional and personal practices in both offline and online realms today, also when it comes to overcoming digital and epistemic inequality.

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Keywords

Digital divide, epistemic divide, inequality, conflict, digital capital.

Introduction

Russian media system has been constantly adjusting to current trends of social and media change since early 1990s. Academic research has focused on radical transformations in media regulations, media structures and practices (Nordenstreng, Vartanova, & Zassoursky (eds.), 2002; Rantanen, 2002; Rihter, 2007; Nordenstreng, & Thussu, 2015), as well as various changes in professional journalistic cultures we have observed through 2000s (Pasti, 2007; Anikina, 2015). So far scholars have described media trends primarily from political-economic perspective (McNair, 2000) as driven by political forces, and explained recent developments through the lenses of Western democracy concepts and Western approaches to media systems and their dominant models (Curran, & Park, 2000; Hallin, & Mancini, 2004, 2012).

In 2000s however, scholarly attention has noticeably shifted to previously under covered non-Western regions of the world, going in line with increasing research on ‘Emerging States’ (Hallin, & Mancini, 2012; Vartanova, & Gladkova, 2020), BRICS (Shi-xu, 2009) and CIS (Nurumov et al, 2021; Vikhrova et al, 2021), as well as overall closer academic attention to ‘the rise of the rest’ phenomenon, originally approached in early 2000s by Amsden (2001) and others. Landmark studies on the BRICS countries (Thussu, 2013; Nordenstreng, & Thussu, 2015; Wasserman, Zhang, & Mano, 2016; Pasti, & Ramaprasad, 2018) together with current research (Vartanova, 2018; Thussu, & Nordenstreng, 2020; Shi-xu, 2022) analyze trends in media and communication fields following non-Westcentrism approach and focusing on national specifics and cultural context of each country.

Yet, in the context of Russian media transformation, the role of digital technologies, diversity of regional developments as well as specifics of ethnic and linguistic multiculturalism remain underexplored. Russia’s peculiar character as unevenly developed and regionally diverse country, as a multicultural and multi-ethnic society where over 190 ethnic groups coexist, has substantially influenced country’s digitalization shifting from digital gaps of 1990s, through prioritization of information society in 2000s to the formation of rather advanced digital media environment in 2010s. This happens to be a result of pressures coming from audience demands, as well as needs of growing media industry and state media regulation. Today, Russian Federation is indisputably an interesting case of the complexity and multi-dimensionality of digital media transformations

in the non-Western national context, in which digital developments coincided with ongoing social changes (Ragnedda, & Gladkova, 2020).

In this paper, we approach Russian media policy through two main areas – digital inequality, which is a complex multilayer phenomenon embracing access, skills and benefits areas (three levels of the digital divide), and influencing all social processes in the country; and digital capital approached by scholars as a new intangible meta-capital that is becoming increasingly important under current digitalization processes in Russia and worldwide (Vartanova, & Gladkova, 2020; Gladkova, Vartanova, & Ragnedda, 2020), as well as remaining conflict challenges and risks to information security. We discuss how Russian media policy has been changing in recent years to address new demands posed by digitalization and the growth of information society, which calls for new competencies, skills, and knowledge of citizens/users. Within broader epistemic rights context, we draw links between digital inequality and epistemic inequality, which concerns the widening gap in information, knowledge, and understanding between the elites and the majority of the population. We stress the need to overcome both intertwined types of inequality – digital and epistemic one – and suggest that closer attention of policymakers, scholars, educators, and public authorities should be shifted to the formation of digital capital, which is becoming fundamental for successful professional and personal practices in both offline and online realms today, also when it comes to overcoming digital and epistemic inequality.

Internet in Russia: opportunities and inequalities

Due to its complex and immense territory, its socio-economic and historical development, professional journalistic practices, and other factors (Vartanova, 2019; Vyrkovsky et al, 2019), Russia represents an interesting case study for the analysis of different kinds of inequalities, divides, discrepancies, and gaps. This topic has, indeed, attracted the attention of numerous scholars that, over the years, have focused on inequalities in socioeconomic development of the Russian regions (Kolomak, 2010); inequalities in access to the higher education (Mikheeva, 2004); and inequalities in the quality of life in Russia (Bobkov, Gulyugina, & Odintsova, 2009). Fewer research, however, has been conducted to investigate the development of digital inequalities and digital gaps in Russia (Deviatko, 2013; Nagirnaya, 2015; Volchenko, 2016; Gladkova, & Ragnedda, 2020), despite the country itself being ‘an illustrative example of social, cultural and technological complexity within Europe’ (Vartanova, & Gladkova, 2019: 202).

Uneasy transformations of the Russian society since early 1990s characterized by rapid unjust privatization of the former state ownership, rising inequalities in socioeconomic developments of regions, significant social stratification, disappointment and loss of values (Kolomak, 2010) resulted in a number of social problems, including digital inequalities on different levels. Since 1990s, Russia has faced various forms of digital divides, including low level of access to computers and telecommunication networks, limited volume of digital content, inability to use digital technologies and low level of media literacy (Deviatko, 2013).

Internet in Russia has been developing rapidly since early 1990s, and the number of users doubled almost every year in large industrial cities in the European part of country's territory. In 2000s, Internet penetration expanded among the majority of urban population, still reflecting discrepancies between industrial cities and small urban settlements, male and female users, different generations, ethnic minorities, and other groups of the society (Deviatko, 2013). In 2010s, digital media use continued to grow, and the number of Russians regularly using Internet went beyond half of the country's population, while the number of mobile connections became equal to population size. By the end of 2010s, the popularity of social networks began to challenge the use of traditional print and broadcasting media (Mediasistema Rossii, 2021: 247–249), which have traditionally been the backbone of the Russian media system.

At the end of 2021, more than 80% of Russians were digitally connected and were using Internet on regular basis, at least once per month. An increased use of social media by Russians is paralleled by the growth of digital media ecosystems, built around Russia-based digital services – search engine *Yandex*, social networks *Vkontakte*, *Odnoklassniki*, *Mail.ru*, and messenger *Telegram*, which increased its popularity in the last decade. Audiences also demonstrated a great demand for user-generated content accessed through *LifeJournal* and *Zen*. *Yandex*, as well as global digital platforms, and some popular bloggers including journalists and non-professional authors have become strong competitors to traditional legacy media. As a result, since 2020s, Internet and social media have become popular sources of news and entertainment, as well as means of interpersonal/group communication in Russia (Dunas et al., 2021).

Rapid digitalization of public communication in 2000s, together with the rise of social media brought up new challenges and inequalities, including audiences' unequal access to information, in many ways related to peculiarities of Russia's geopolitical and territorial nature. Russian Federation is a huge territory with tremendous cultural, lingual, ethnic, and socio-economic differences.

In a country consisting of eight federal districts, divided into 85 federal subjects (i.e. constituent units), 22 out of which are national republics, having a territory of over 17 100 000 square km and population of 146 million people, including over 190 ethnic groups, the problem of different types of inequalities between – as well as within – different parts of the country remains exceedingly important. Earlier studies showed that while urban Russians got access to the most advanced digital technologies, services and content, regional audiences still experienced numerous divides and absence of users' digital capital which includes poor technological access, undeveloped skills and inability to get benefits from the usage of digital media (Deviatko, 2013).

Recent research into Russian cross-regional digital divides (Gladkova, & Ragnedda, 2020) proves that digital inequality remains a serious problem in the country. Russian regions still differ from each other significantly when it comes to the spread and availability of ICTs and access to the Internet (first level of the digital divide), ICT skills/use (second level of the digital divide), and advantages online engagement can bring to users (third level of the digital divide). Digging deeper into these differences, Gladkova and Ragnedda (2020) argue that a set of 'objective factors' related to the specific character of Russia (distances, climatic and geographical conditions, urbanization level, etc.) may influence digital divides in the country and also within regions, which are not 'monolithic' either (ibid). This can be illustrated by comparing Northwestern or Central federal districts to North Caucasus or Far Eastern for example: urbanization level, socioeconomic conditions, location of the regions, the cost of building infrastructure in remote parts of the country, especially located and other factors may indeed create a situation when some regions are more technologically advanced than others. Further comparative research into digital capital (Gladkova, Vartanova, & Ragnedda, 2020) and digital inclusion (Gladkova, Argylov, & Shkurnikov, 2022) in Russia prove that digital inequality stretches beyond mere access problem in the country, revealing differences between ICT use in Russian regions and digital engagement of users based in difference parts of the country and belonging to different ethnic and cultural groups.

This is in line with broader international research on digital divide, showing that digital inequality is no longer a dichotomy between 'information haves' and 'information have-nots' or between 'access' or 'no access' (van Deursen, & van Dijk, 2015), but reflects larger geopolitical (North/South or East/West) and social, regional, cultural and even individual contradictions (Ragnedda, & Gladkova, 2020; Tsatsou, 2021). By mapping three levels of digital divide –

inequalities in ICT access, ICT use and benefits from use of ICTs and Internet, scholars underlined that regardless of reasons leading to digital gaps users have fewer social opportunities and advantages, different capacities to fully exploit digital media and transform the use to noticeable social outcomes (Ragnedda, & Gladkova, 2020).

In this vein, bridging digital gaps seem not just an issue for academic exercise but also a policymakers' concern since inequalities in Internet access and use reflect and reinforce social injustice (Ragnedda, 2020). Given that digital and social inequalities are closely intertwined and reinforce each other, digital exclusion has become an important challenge to social mobility, social justice and equal representation of various population groups around the world (Helsper, 2008; Reisdorf, & Rhinesmith, 2020), where lack of access or skills to use ICTs can lead to further social exclusion of people.

Moreover, digital inequalities are today closely related to epistemic inequalities, resulting in fewer opportunities 'to achieve epistemic goods, such as knowledge, understanding, and intellectual virtues' (Croce, 2020: iii). Access to knowledge and information, as well as ability to interpret and use them for one's professional and personal development, informed will formation, informed choices making about matters of societal importance, have become essential in modern information society. Digital inequality can hinder these processes or make them impossible in countries where digital divide on the level of access or skills has not been bridged yet. Due to lack of infrastructure availability, high cost of connection, lack of educational and training programs for ICT users, and other factors, people can face epistemic inequality, when those having access and skills to use ICTs receive more benefits, are better informed and have access to wider scope of knowledge than those excluded from online realm.

To overcome digital divide in Russia, the government has determined several priorities in state federal and regional policies (Vartanova, & Gladkova, 2019). Measures to bridge the digital gap were determined by the federal and regional authorities on the basis of the priorities and characteristics of federal and regional policies, as well as subject to the economic situation of the subjects. The main effort in the legislative policies to solve the problem of digital divide in Russia was made in 2008, when the 'Information Society Development Strategy' was adopted at the state level. This marked the beginning of 'intensive use of information and communication technologies by the state authorities, business and citizens'. Later, in 2010 Russian Government's Order No. 1815-r 'On the State Program of the Russian Federation 'Information Society (2010-2020)' was signed. The task to decrease the digital divide between urban and rural citizens

was also set in the Federal Law 'On Communications' (in force as of 2014) where establishing access points in communities of between 250 and 500 people and providing people with access to the Internet at a speed of at least 10 Mbps has been proclaimed.

The 'Information Technology Industry Development Strategy in the Russian Federation for 2014-2020 and for the future until 2025' defined a new aim to improve the literacy of the population in the field of information technology. In 2017, the Presidential decree approved the second 'Strategy for the Development of the Information Society in Russia for 2017-2030', which also included the creation of a level playing field for the use of digital information technologies by the Russian citizens. The government was instructed to ensure the rights of the Russians to access digital infrastructures.

Nowadays, almost all federal subjects of the Russian Federation have elaborated their own programs to foster and regulate digitalization process on regional level with the focus on specific socioeconomic and cultural priorities of the region. Recent study by Vartanova, Gladkova, Lapin et al (2021) looked into various programs focused on digital transformation/development or building information society/infrastructure in Russian regions. The analysis of documents showed that regional authorities have defined numerous, though in some ways similar, goals to build information society and foster digitalization process through improving quality of life, developing digital infrastructures and equal access of people to digital media services, effective public communication, etc. (ibid: 10–18). At the same time, the problem of digital divide was considered in all documents in various ways. In most regions, authorities focused on bridging the first level of the digital divide (access problem), focusing at the same time on improving digital services in citizens-state communication. On the other hand, citizens' skills/competencies to use digital infrastructure and ICT services were still far from prioritization (ibid: 21), which stresses the need to approach digital divide as a complex multi-layer phenomenon in further legislative documents and policymaking initiatives. In the following section, we will discuss how Russian media policy have been developing since dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, and what new challenges and concerns media policy in Russia has been experiencing in recent years.

Russian media policy for digital era

Historically, Russian journalism and the media have been under a significant influence of relations with the state. The first Russian newspaper *Vedomosti* was established by the Russian Emperor Peter I the Great, who wrote and edited texts

for its issues in the beginning. Russian Empress Ekaterina II the Great was also active in publishing essays in magazines. The legal status of censorship, introduced in 1804 by Alexander I, was preserved in imperial Russia until 1917. In the USSR ideological censorship existed until 1991. This tradition had a strong influence on the relationship between the state and the media, including the model of state economic regulation. Thus, the structure of the domestic newspaper market was established in 1850-1860, when official regional newspapers subordinate to the governor were created in many regional centres. Many of them were subsidized and often directly controlled by local state bodies, and restrictions on advertising in newspapers (abolished in 1863) turned out to be a tool forcing young publishers to seek state support (Esin, 1989: 116). At the beginning of the XX century, the tradition of state economic control was strengthened by the introduction of a system of economic subsidies. Economically, the Soviet media, characterized by the vertical subordination of content production to ideological control, were part of a state-planned economy with a complete ban on private property and a large amount of state investment in telecommunications infrastructure (postal service, television networks, satellites and telephone lines) (Minaeva, 2018).

After 1991, media policy in the country was driven by the struggle for the liberation of journalism and media from the censorship and dependency from Communist ideology and the legislation was viewed as the only foundation for the free speech (Nordenstreng, & Paasilinna, 2001). The collapse of the Soviet state initialised a complete rebuilding of regulatory system – from the Constitution to particular laws and regulations acts. On the other hand, media experienced a need to change the logic of the Communist top-down ideologically biased media regulation to establishing corporate – journalistic and managerial – regulatory frameworks, norms, and set of accountabilities with the focus on the social responsibilities of journalism.

The new philosophy of the market driven economy defined the logic of the media policy in 1990s with the emphasis on the de-politization of the media, meaning withdrawal from the former Communist ideology. For professional regulation, reconceptualization of journalism with the articulation on the freedom of press principle, to a large extent borrowed from Western journalism theories and focusing on the complete abolition of the censorship, became a dominant trend. This also correlated with mainstream neoliberal approaches at Russian media market, as well as changing economic structures of the media business through processes of privatisation and building of new commercial business models emphasized the importance of the same logic of the state withdrawal from the media.

The deregulation of the Russian media began with the adoption of the Russian law 'On the Mass Media' (1991), which postulated the abolition of censorship and guaranteed – among many other freedoms – the freedom of speech and private ownership of the media. 1990s were characterized by withdrawal of the state from the media industry, and the privatization of the media, combined with a low level of legislative activity (the adoption of just one law 'On Advertising', 1995; the absence of antimonopoly regulation; and almost no regulation of foreign property) were the most striking signs of the deregulation process. In parallel with the rapid penetration of information and communication technologies in the mid-1990s this has led to entirely new private print and audio-visual media companies. The following factors significantly expanded the boundaries of the domestic media industry: the almost instant transition of the Russian economy to the market in the early 1990s, the growth of consumer industries and the subsequent rise of the advertising industry, the introduction of new lifestyle models and the rapid start of the digital revolution, characterized by the increasing use of consumer electronics, computers and ICT networks (Rantanen, 2002). However, the state has always been and still is an important player in the Russian media, setting the legal and regulatory framework, financially supporting media companies both formally and informally, protecting socially and culturally significant, albeit often unprofitable media.

In 2000s, the new logic of digitalization and the rise of the mobile emerged. Digital telecom environment became the central area for the rise of the neoliberal philosophy in the Russian economy regardless the crucial role of the state in controlling core technological infrastructure (especially fixed telephone lines, analogue transmission of TV signal, and satellites). It remained high as in previous periods, but surprisingly the area of content production and distribution was left outside the state interest. This new emerging digital and convergent system showed the trend towards technical deregulation with no attention to new possibilities of content distribution. The first outcome became an unlimited piracy in film distribution through widely privatised cable networks, which lately resulted in the rise of the pirate content market and still existing disregard to copyright, especially in online space. In 1990-2000s, the gap between traditional media industry and telecommunications in Russia remained still big, and media policy making continued to be sectors' split and undeveloped.

Information security has also become an important issue of the state media policy, especially for segments of the media audience that are less digitally

literate. This is especially true for young people, who, being advanced in their technological skills, are unable to be critical of digital media, understand the challenges of national security and the cultural identity of Russians. In response to these concerns, in 2010 new laws were passed. Among them are the law ‘On the protection of children from information harmful to their health and development’ (2010/2012) and amendments to it (2013, 2018), a set of amendments to the Administrative Code, the law ‘On information, information technologies and information protection’ (anti-piracy law, 2006), the law ‘On Communications’ (2004), ‘On Amendments to the Federal Law “On Information, Information Technologies and Information Protection” and certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation on streamlining the exchange of information using information and telecommunication networks (law on bloggers, 2014), amendments to the law ‘On Mass Media’ and the law ‘On Advertising’ (2016/2017), new laws on combating terrorism (Yarovaya law).

Despite actively developing media policy in Russia on a general scale, there are several challenges policymaking initiatives experience today. Controversies of the modern Russian media policy are being reflected in numerous collisions in digital rights characterized by clashes of equality and inequality in access to digital communication, violations of public and individual rights in terms of privacy and manipulation, among other things. The urgent need to develop holistic approaches to digital literacy and critical thinking among digital generations of young Russians poses another challenge in the field of digital rights. Today, there is a clear need for Russian media policy on both federal and regional levels to address new demands, as well as new risks, challenges and opportunities digital environment poses to citizens. Given the remaining digital inequality in the country, which we have discussed in the previous section, we believe there is a growing need for media policy to approach a new, albeit exceedingly important concept today, that is digital capital. In the following, concluding section we will discuss digital capital within broader digital divide/digital inequality context and suggest that closer attention in Russian policymaking processes should be paid to this important intangible capital, as well as significant benefits it can bring to citizens.

Digital capital in the context of digital and epistemic rights

Today, digital capital is becoming a key component, together with other intangible capitals, for interpreting digital social stratification and its related inequalities, as well as policies to overcome these inequalities in the information and network society. More than that, digital capital is perceived as a new and much-needed

capital in the modern digitalized world, which is gaining particular importance when it comes to epistemic inequality and epistemic rights of citizens, as we will elaborate further in this section.

In recent works of Park (2017), Ragnedda (2018), Vartanova and Gladkova (2021) and others, digital capital as a new type of intangible capitals is being closely linked to the digital divide/digital inequalities theoretical framework, considering digital capital as a key component of overcoming the third level of digital inequality, based on the difference in benefits from use of the Internet and ICTs. However, the original idea of digital capital is rooted in P. Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) classification of capitals, understood as any resource that gives an advantage to those who own it, and who can also be accumulated and perpetuated over time.

Digital capital is currently understood as closely linked to other types of capitals such as information capital or techno-cultural capital but should nevertheless be considered as a specific capital. Digging deeper into this difference, Ragnedda and Ruiu (2020) note that while information capital (Hamelink, 2000), information habitus (Robinson, 2009) and informational capital (Prieur & Savage, 2013) are often used to describe the technological component of the already existing social or cultural capital, 'digital capital should be conceived as a specific capital and not a mere subset of other capitals and, therefore, can be isolated' (Ragnedda, & Ruiu, 2020: 30).

In recent years, scholars theorized digital capital as a new intangible capital with a hybrid nature (Vartanova, & Gladkova, 2020, 2021), understood as 'an integral set of users' access to information technologies, digital communication environment (primarily the Internet) and the ability to use them for professional and personal purposes' (Vartanova, & Gladkova, 2020). Developing Ragnedda and Ruiu's (2020) idea about digital capital being a specific capital that can be isolated, scholars argue that digital capital should be considered also as a meta-capital, influencing the possession and use of other intangible capitals: communication, information, political, social, cultural and others in current digitalized world (ibid). Digging deeper into the idea of digital competences as a broad notion, scholars argued that digital capital embraces both technological skills/digital skills required for efficiently operating ICTs, and informational-analytical skills, which include social skills, competences in content-creating, ability to protect personal information by unsolicited use by others, and other types of skills, therefore having a complex multi-consistent nature.

In Russian context, several studies have been so far conducted to theorize, measure and construct digital capital of users (Vartanova, & Gladkova, 2020, 2021;

Gladkova, Vartanova, & Ragnedda, 2020), given remaining digital inequalities in Russia, across, and also within regions. The study by Gladkova, Vartanova and Ragnedda (2020) was focused on comparing Digital Capital Index between two big ethnic groups: Russian and non-Russian users. Research showed that minor ethnic groups in Russia can be disadvantaged when it comes to digital inclusion, due to lower level of digital capital they possess. However, scholars note that ethnicity should not be treated as an independent variable: there are plenty of other factors including education, social status, age, economic state of the region, etc. that may influence the result. Similar results were suggested in recent study by Gladkova, Argylov and Shkurnikov (2022), which showed that the first and the second levels of the digital divide interrelate and influence each other in multi-ethnic and multicultural Russia setting, leading to a situation when people with lower access to Internet and ICTs have lower skills and competences to use them, therefore risking becoming digitally excluded.

In 2021, Vartanova, Gladkova, Lapin et al proposed a model of ‘digital passport’ for deeper analysis of the current state and challenges associated with remaining digital inequalities in Russia. Although this model does not specifically measure digital capital of individual users or Russian regions, it nevertheless considered digital capital as an essential capital closely linked to three levels of the digital divide. Having tested ‘digital passport’ in several federal subjects of the Russian Federation (Moscow, Kaliningrad Region, Republic of Tatarstan, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Republic of Dagestan, and others), scholars showed differences in access, skills and benefits from using Internet and ICTs in different parts of Russia. They argued that this model can be used both by scholars and policy-makers engaged in developing strategies for further ‘overcoming digital divide, fostering digital inclusion and increasing digital capital of Internet users’ (Vartanova et al, 2021). By better understanding digital inequalities at all three levels, and the current state of the digital capital among users, policymakers, scholars and educators can work out legislative initiatives and educational programs aimed at building and further increasing digital capital of different population groups. In addition to bridging the access gap, which is still an important problem in many regions of the world, specifically in the Global South (Gladkova, & Ragnedda, 2020), scholars stress the importance of bridging the skills gap among Internet users. An important role in this context belongs to media education and digital literacy programs, enabling people to construct and further increase their digital capital level and fully use the benefits of online realm: civic engagement, social activism, communication in online space, self-representation and self-actualization, the use of digital services and much more.

Conclusion and ideas for future research

Looking at Russian media policy from historical angle as well as its current state, we can reiterate an important argument, that is Russian media policy being constantly developing, addressing new challenges and transformations associated with digitalization, commercialization, changing patterns of regulation/deregulation, the growth of new media sector, development of active audiences, transformation of journalistic cultures and journalistic professionalism, and much more. At the same time, there is a need for media policy to fully embrace new demands information and network society has posed to citizens, such as a clear need for digital access, digital skills, and – increasingly important today – digital capital, which goes beyond mere access or knowledge how to use ICTs. Talking about network society, van Dijk (2020) stressed a number of crucial new issues and challenges in today's digital media ecology, which should potentially be taken on board by policymakers too: the increasing importance of Internet, AI, big data; the growth of Internet platforms; constant appearance disinformation and fake news in online space, etc. We argue that for citizens to be able to successfully and efficiently work and live in this challenging environment, a certain level of digital capital is needed. Media policies aimed at acknowledging, protecting, and constructing digital capital are becoming essentially important therefore too, on both country and international/global level.

Elaborating this concept further, we believe that digital capital can play a pivotal role in bridging not only digital but, probably even more importantly, epistemic inequality in the society – be it Russian society, or any other society, where digital divide is still present on one or several levels. If we approach epistemic inequality as a gap in information, knowledge, and understanding between different groups of the population, we cannot but mention the importance of digital capital in knowing *first* how to access information (this requires digital access and digital skills of users); *second* how to interpret it, being cautious of the presence of intentionally false informing (disinformation), distorted information, which is closely linked to interpretations rather than facts, online falsehoods and fake news (Tandoc et al, 2018; Tumber, & Waisbord, 2021; Simons, & Manoil, 2021), as well as various social conflicts and risks; and *third* how to use information and knowledge in one's professional and personal life contexts. Digital capital in this vein is closely linked to all three levels of the digital divide, and can possibly contribute to bridging all of them, given a set of outer (availability of ICT infrastructure and Internet connection to population, straightforward policies aimed at bridging gaps in users' ICT access and skills)

and inner (personal motivation of users and their willingness/readiness to be digitally included) factors.

Finally, although this paper does not look into epistemic inequality within specific national, cultural or professional groups, but rather discusses it from a broad theoretical perspective, we think closer attention in the future should be given to particular contexts and population groups, and the way epistemic rights and epistemic equality/inequality are manifested there. Earlier works into epistemology of news production for example, showed that ‘The epistemology of journalism differs from other institutionalized forms of knowledge production with respect to the organized procedures and practices applied for the acquisition of information’ (Ekström, Ramskvist, & Westlund, 2021). There are also specific challenges, gaps and possible inequalities associated with particular professional contexts, such as ‘a particular epistemic challenge in the live reporting is to acquire information under time pressure to be able to add something meaningful’ (ibid). Our final argument therefore is related to a need for more research approaching close links between digital divides, digital inequality, epistemic inequality, digital capital, digital and epistemic rights, digital inclusion, and social inclusion. These notions/concepts/processes cannot and should not be longer studied separately, but rather should be approached within a broader paradigm of equality, human rights, citizen rights, and individual well-being in the modern society, as well as state and public policies aimed at securing and constructing them.

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ARTICLES

Science and technology agenda of Russian business magazines: Topical and thematic analysis (2017-2021)¹

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Abstract

The study of the science and technology agenda of leading Russian business magazines *Expert*, *Profile*, and *Forbes Russia* covered the period between 2017 and 2021 and used analytical publications on technology innovations as an example. The study showed that the main driver of innovative development of the economy from the perspective of business media outlets are digital technologies at the stage of implementation and diffusion, developed and embraced by experts from Russia and leading innovation countries, most particularly the U.S. and China. However, certain current trends in science and technology development were underreported by business media, and the smallest number of publications addresses innovations in the basic sectors of Russia's economy.

Keywords

Science and technology development, technology innovation, science journalism, analytical journalism, business journalism, business media, business magazines.

Introduction

Due to the rapid advances and spread of new technology and its unprecedented impact on the economy and society, the editorial boards of business media

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outlets have increased their focus on topics related to scientific innovations. By performing their key function of providing useful for making business decisions information (Terchenko, 2021) and ensuring communication between business process participants (Amirov, 2018; Business Journalism, 2012), the business media inform them about commercially viable research and development and analyze the performance of high-tech companies and innovation policy issues. Notably, the target audience of the business media includes entrepreneurs, investors, scientists, engineers, public servants, and representatives of civil society, that is, all the main actors of the national innovation system (Kudina, 2018). Therefore, the business media can act as a tool for responding to the challenges of Russia's scientific and technological development, first of all, by "supporting all stages of the 'life cycle' of knowledge through an efficient system of communication in the field of science, technology and innovation, higher susceptibility of the economy and society to innovation, and the development of knowledge-intensive business"³.

Research has shown that high-quality business media outlets can impact decision-making in the innovation policy of the state (Waldherr, 2012, Nordfors, 2004a; 2004b) and the development of knowledge-intensive sectors of the economy, such as medicine (Haider, 2004) or the nuclear industry (Gamson, 1989). The impact is partly due to the lack of in-depth knowledge of high technology in most readers, so they are forced to rely on information from the media, which are the main channel providing information on scientific and technical achievements and challenges to society (Vakhrameeva, 2018; Latov, & Latova, 2018). Since business media outlets both reflect and impact processes in the economy, it is important to study their science and technology agenda not only for practitioners and theorists of the media sphere but also for innovation policy experts (Ilchenko, & Frolova, 2021).

Despite the relevance of the topic, scientific and technological issues in the business media rarely become the subject of media research. The attention of researchers is mainly focused on studying the media representation of individual thematic blocks, for example, physics (Kristensen et al., 2021), energy technologies (Ter vinen, 2014) or the work of science and technology centers (Illman, & Clark, 2008). The empirical base is often news messages (Strooban et al., 2019; Weaver et al., 2009) published in print and online news media, the content of which is often analyzed using specially designed software (Groves et al., 2016). Analytical journalistic materials published in the journal-format

³ State Program "Scientific and Technological Development of the Russian Federation". Available from: <http://government.ru/docs/36310/>

media are practically not studied. The exceptions are popular science journals (Ricci, 2010).

In Russian scientific media discourse a small number of works are devoted to the study of media discourse on innovation-driven growth and its individual trends based on the analysis of a wide range of mass media, including some business media (Toganova et al., 2016; Latov, & Latova, 2018). These papers have identified a steady growth in the number of publications on technology innovations and analyzed the topics of publications and the relationship between technology and socioeconomic factors reflected in them. However, the research methodology used by the authors raises a number of questions. The publications were analyzed using Exactus Expert and Medialogiya intelligent systems over the entire range of the selected media outlets. The decision to include completely different outlets, e.g. the popular newspaper *Moskovsky Komsomolets* and the business weekly *Expert*, in the total sample and to consider short news items on a par with long analytical publications does not seem quite correct. We believe that if the specific features of text genres, types and kinds of mass media were taken into account, the findings would be more precise and the conclusions more correct. Our research focuses on overcoming the chaotic and ambiguous nature of the topical and thematic empirical basis and providing more specific and in-depth content-related characteristics of the array of texts on science and technology innovations, which is presented in business magazines and potentially relevant to our objectives.

Research topics can be divided into three groups: the study of the phenomenon of science popularization in the media, the science popularization as a type of mass communication, its history, current state, and development prospects (Diveeva, 2014; Vaganov, 2014; Anikina et al., 2015; Emelyanova, & Omelaenko, 2015; Lobodenko et al., 2022, etc.); typological and profile features of popular science media (Makarova, 2013; Ovchinnikova, 2015; Parafonova, 2017; Ilchenko, 2018; etc.); professional duties of science journalists, principles of creation and evaluation of the quality of popular science content in the media, the study of science news (Frolova, 2015; Frolova et al., 2016; Gurova, 2016; Ilchenko et al., 2017; Kolesnichenko et al., 2018; Yudina et al., 2019; etc.). One thing that the above studies have in common is their approach to defining the concept of science “as a sphere of human activity, the general function of which is the development and theoretical systematization of objective knowledge of reality. The immediate goals of science are description, explanation, and prediction of processes and phenomena of reality” (Frolova, 2015). When researchers consider science as an object of reflection in the media, they determine the problem and theme-related aspects that form the

subject area of journalistic texts: scientific knowledge as such; people of science as subjects of scientific activity; facts of science, sensational discoveries, and the inception of new disciplines; the social role of science as a social institution and a special sphere of spiritual production; the socioeconomic platform of science (Suvorova, 2013).

However, when considering the topical and thematic areas of publications, authors often limit themselves to ranking the social/liberal, natural, and engineering sciences discussed in journalistic texts (Makarova, 2013), without going further to analyze the process of scientific and innovation activities, their various stages and nuances that may be reflected in publications. This approach can hardly be applied to the study of journalistic publications focusing on knowledge-intensive business and the impact of new technology on the economy and society, where descriptions of the fundamental and applied results of scientific work are not the only aspect of the presentation. This leads to the understanding that researchers should focus on the study of analytical journalistic texts about technology innovations. The key difference between business media and other types of mass media is their analytic character and high quality of journalistic examination of topics (Vyrkovsky, 2009). These are the texts where business journalism rises to eminence in its profession and fulfills its social functions to the full; science and technology issues are examined more deeply and thoroughly, revealing features that were never known before.

As part of the research project “Technology Innovations as an Object of Journalistic Analysis in Business Media”, a methodology was developed to study analytical publications on technology innovations using a wide range of parameters, including topical and thematic, functional, genre, and visual characteristics of publications (Ilchenko, & Frolova, 2021). During the first stage, a quantitative analysis of journalistic publications on technology innovations was made in printed issues of business magazines for the period between 2017 and 2021 (Frolova et al., 2022). The next stage allowed us to identify the key areas of science and technology development that are the focus of analytical journalists of business mass media and to rank the economic sectors developed by them.

Methods and interim research results

The timeframe of the research spans from 2017 to 2021. The five-year period makes it possible to describe the present-day media image of the innovation technology sector after the Strategy for Scientific and Technological Development of the Russian Federation, which outlines the national science and technology

policy, was approved by Presidential Decree No. 642 of December 1, 2016. The empirical basis of the study was the journalistic content of three business journals of the universal theme, which occupy a leading position in the Russian media market in their typological niche both in terms of circulation and citation: the monthly *Forbes Russia* and the weekly *Profile* and *Expert*. During this time period, we analyzed all 481 copies of *Forbes Russia*, *Profile*, and *Expert* magazines printed in this period, including 60 copies of *Forbes Russia*, 198 copies of *Profile*, and 223 copies of *Expert*.

During the content analysis, we selected journalistic publications that met two main criteria. *The first criterion* is related to the publication genre: the sample included texts of exclusively analytical journalistic genres, such as expert interviews, recommendations, forecasts, comments, reviews, ratings, opinion columns, case studies, news features (or trend articles), and analytical articles (Business Journalism, 2021). All these genres are distinguished by their analytical way of reflecting reality, which has specific target, topical and methodological features (Tertychnyy, 2013), i.e. it presents not only a description of a subject or phenomenon in the text, but also offers an explanation or evaluation for such a subject or phenomenon and suggests how it may develop and, in some cases, what should be done. *The second criterion* identifies the subject boundaries of publications, i.e. the development, implementation, application or potential use of technology innovations.

It is worth noting that this paper only considered *technology innovations* represented in the theory of innovation management by two types, product and process innovations. (Innovation Management, 2019). *Product innovation* is the development and introduction of technologically new or significantly improved goods and services. It can include new uses or combinations of existing knowledge and technology. Product innovations include new goods and services; significant improvements in the functional or user characteristics of existing goods and services; new uses; new designs. *Process innovation* is the implementation of technologically new or significantly improved production methods, including product delivery methods. Process innovations include new or significantly improved production methods; new delivery methods; new or significantly improved methods for the creation and provision of services.

The final sample consisted of 1,068 publications of analytical genres specifically devoted to new technologies (see sample publication: Krasnova, 2021) and publications with an explicit science and technology narrative (see sample publication: Proskurnina, 2017) (Table 1). The latter category of texts includes, in particular, publications on knowledge-intensive business

development, which, in addition to an overview of the technology (either developed or used), refer to companies' development strategies and financial performance (see sample publication: Geval, 2018).

Considering the challenges faced by traditional print media around the world (Okon et al, 2022; Rani, & Naik, 2022), it is worth noting that all the selected publications about technological innovations were published not only in print versions, but also in electronic versions of the studied business journals that are more in demand among modern audiences.

Table 1

**Number of analytical publications on technology innovations
in 2017-2021 (abs.)**

| Media outlet/ Year | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Total |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Forbes Russia | 31 | 28 | 32 | 15 | 34 | 140 |
| Profile | 43 | 63 | 76 | 59 | 52 | 293 |
| Expert | 112 | 108 | 134 | 126 | 155 | 635 |
| Total | 186 | 199 | 242 | 200 | 241 | 1068 |

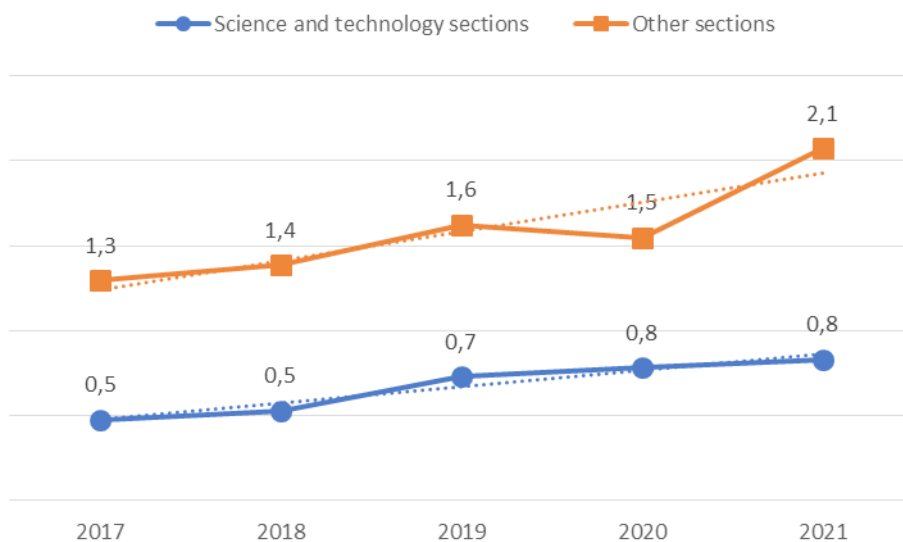
In addition to the number of publications, the following parameters were recorded: the volume of each publication (page count), the number of magazine issues per year, and the total number of magazine issues per year (number of pages). This data made it possible to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic factor represented by the decline in the number of copies and the volumes of business magazines in 2020-2021. To make a relevant assessment of science and technology topics in the content of business magazines, the average number of analytical publications on innovative technologies per magazine issue and a similar indicator for the average share of such publications by volume (% of the magazine volume) were calculated. Both indicators trended steadily upward, with the average number of analytical publications on new technologies per magazine issue growing from 1.8 in 2017 to 2.9 in 2021, and the average share of analytical publications by volume increasing from 8.6% in 2017 to 11.9% in 2021.

We reviewed the headings of the sections where analytical journalistic publications on technology innovations appeared and come to an unexpected conclusion: most of the texts under study were published in sections such as *Entrepreneurs, Business and Life, Investments, Economics and Finance,*

International Business, etc., where business development, main events, business problems and trends are discussed, rather than in specialized science and technology sections (*Technologies, Science, Innovations, Space*, etc.). Moreover, the identified increase in the volume of science/technology topics was, to a greater extent, due to non-specialized sections. This is corroborated by the data on the changes in the average number of publications in the science and technology sections vs. other sections per magazine issue per year (Graph 1). For non-specialized sections, this indicator increases faster. This can be explained by the unprecedented influence of the new technological revolution on social and political processes, the economy and business, which results in an increasingly important role of the science and technology aspect in the journalistic analysis of the business sphere (see Frolova, Ilchenko, & Striga, 2022).

Graph 1

**Average number of publications on technology innovations:
Growth dynamics**



The purpose of the next stage of our research was a topical and thematic analysis to identify the main areas of innovation and technology activity. In addition, each publication was examined to determine the geographical location and stage of the life cycle of the technology innovation described in the publication. Content analysis was used as the main method of text analysis. Hence, the categories of analysis included “*areas of science and technology*”

development”, “*geolocation of innovations*”, and “*stages of the life cycle of innovations*”. Codifiers, i.e. features of the categories of analysis, were based on the study of academic literature and supplemented during the content analysis of publications. Identification, i.e. assignment of the publication to a certain feature of the analysis category, was determined by the content of the text: the factors that improve the definition accuracy for these parameters were the large volume (4.2 pages on average) and analytical nature of the texts under study, which suggests that the subject of the publication was given full consideration.

Let us discuss the sources of the codifiers in more detail. To identify the *areas* of science and technology development, we relied on a wide range of theoretical research on the issues of innovative economic development (Dezhina, & Ponomarev, 2020; Innovative Economy, 2019; Oganessian et al., 2018; Maslennikov, 2017; New Technological Revolution, 2017; Ponomarev, & Dezhina, 2016; Schwab, 2016; Glazyev et al., 2014; Lebedev, & Kovylin, 2012; Averbukh, 2010, etc.). The trends in science and innovation activity are largely shaped by the typical features of the current fifth and the emerging sixth techno-economic paradigm: bio-, neuro-, and nanotechnology, genetic engineering, photonics, optoelectronics, additive manufacturing, new materials, global information networks, multimedia, etc. Promising technology areas are also driven by the transition to a digital economy, with the accelerating processes of automation, robotization, and production intellectualization. End-to-end technology areas that are expected to have a key impact on future markets include big data, artificial intelligence, blockchain systems, quantum technology, new and portable energy sources, new production technology, sensorics and robotics components, wireless communication technology, technology for managing properties of biological assets, virtual and augmented reality technology⁴.

The model list of the main *areas* of science and technology development is based on the analytical report “The Technological Future of the Russian Economy” (Technological Future of the Russian Economy, 2018). It comprises both platform (end-to-end) cross-industry technologies, such as ICT (information and communication technologies), bio-, nano-, aerospace, nuclear technology, etc., and technologies related to the focus areas that form the basis of Russia’s economy and are aimed at addressing the most important social and economic challenges, including health, food, natural resources and the environment, new energy, and transportation systems.

The geographic location was determined by the name of the country where the innovative technology was developed, implemented, applied, or discussed.

⁴ The National Technological Initiative. Available from: <https://nti2035.ru/>

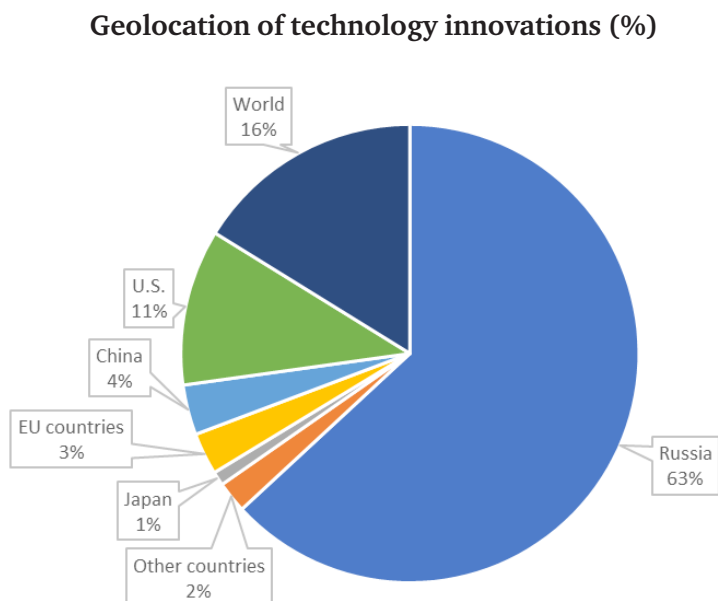
The process could use imported equipment or hardware components (see sample publication about the introduction of 5G mobile networks in Russia using imported equipment, among other things: Dvorak, 2019). *Stages of the life cycle* of technology innovations were identified using a four-stage diagram (Kudina, 2018: 25). Since the boundaries between the stages of development are blurred, preference was given to the dominant stage at which the technology discussed in the publication was: Stage I – *development of innovation*; Stage II – *implementation of innovation*; Stage III – *diffusion of innovation*; Stage IV – *socialization of innovation*.

When presenting our key findings, we move from simple and easy-to-understand categories to more complex ones that require detailed comments.

Results

Geolocation. The analysis of this category showed that most of the publications (63%) refer to the development and implementation of new technology goods and processes by professionals from Russia (Figure 1). Emerging technology currently developed in the U.S. is discussed in 11% of the publications; China, 4%; EU countries (most of all, Germany, France, Italy, Sweden and Switzerland), 3%; Japan, 1% of the publications. Other countries featured in less than 1% of the publications: United Kingdom, 0.8%; the Republic of Korea, 0.5%; India, 0.4%, etc.

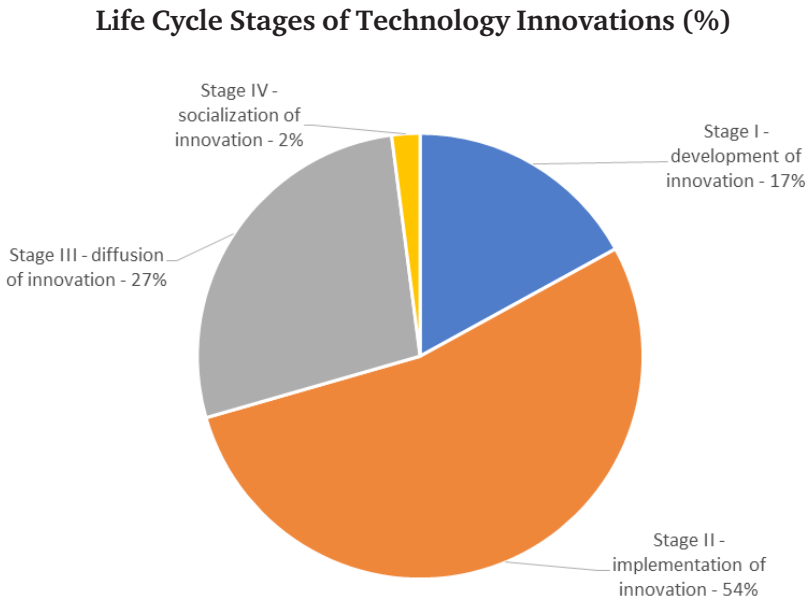
Figure 1



For 16% of the publications, we were not able to give preference to a single country (*World* in Figure 1). This group includes review texts analyzing the innovation and technology experience of companies, laboratories, or governments of several (three or more) countries at once (see sample publication about the global trends in alternative energy: Pazi, & Leybin, 2021). For the most part, these are industrialized states of North America, East Asia, and Europe, the achievements of which are compared with the situation in the sphere of technology in Russia.

Life cycle stages. More than half of the texts under study are about technology innovations at the innovation *implementation* stage (54%), when new technology products or processes are launched on the market by startups (see for example Kinyakina, 2019) or mature companies (see for example Mekhanik, 2018) and put into production by some enterprises (see for example Yurshina, 2019) or the industry as a whole (see for example Novikova, 2021) (Figure 2). The authors of almost a third of all publications (27%) describe innovations at the stage of *diffusion and replication*. The basis of this text corpus is publications about the development of medium and large high-tech companies, whose innovative solutions are already in demand on the market; moreover, the demand for them continues to grow (see for example Yuzbekova, 2021).

Figure 2

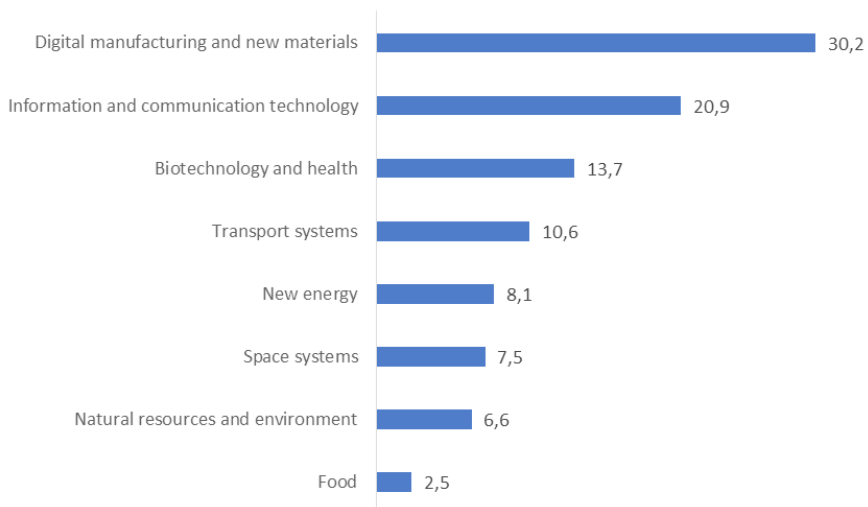


The object of a significantly smaller number of publications are promising technologies at the stage of innovation *development*, i.e., at the initial stage of fundamental and applied research (17%). Texts in this group are devoted to pilot projects of scientists and engineers from government academic and research institutions and employees of R&D centers of private companies (see for example Baulin, & Alekseenko, 2018). We found that the smallest number of publications were about technologies at the *socialization* stage (2%). This category includes texts about well-known high-tech products and services demonstrating a decline in once-high market demand at the time of publication (see for example Mamedyarov, 2018). It also included historical publications about technology innovations that had passed through all phases of development, up to their withdrawal from production (Kotov, 2021).

Areas of science and technology development. The analysis of areas of science and technology development of the economy identified thematic preferences of the editorial boards of business magazines. As can be seen from Figure 3, clearly dominant areas are related to the use of information technology, first and foremost, intelligent control systems and “smart” infrastructures based on AI and “big data”; information security; new hardware components and electronic devices (Table 2⁵).

Figure 3

Areas of science and technology development (%)



⁵ The table includes technology areas to which at least five analytical publications were devoted during the period under study (on average, one publication per year).

Publications about digital technologies in medicine (health-related information technology and medical robotics), transportation (intelligent control technology and transport safety), energy (intelligent energy systems), and food (“farms of the future”) account for a sizable share. It can be said that the topic of “digital transition” dominates the science and technology agenda of business magazines.

The obtained data about representation of the processes of digitalization of the economy by business media can be used to clarify and solve the problems that arise in this case, in particular the problem of digital inequality, digital divide and digital inclusion that are remaining timely issues in various cultural contexts, as current research shows (Vartanova, & Gladkova, 2020; Vartanova et al., 2021; Gladkova, Argylov, & Shkurnikov, 2022).

Table 2

**Target and platform technologies
within science and technology areas they develop (%)**

| Areas of science and technology development | % of pub. | Target and platform technologies |
|---|-----------|--|
| Digital manufacturing and new materials | 34.4 | Intelligent control systems and “smart” infrastructure technology, machine-to-machine connectivity and Internet of things technology |
| | 22.8 | New hardware components and electronic devices technology, quantum technology |
| | 13.9 | Structural, functional and metamaterials |
| | 13.6 | Mechatronics and robotics technology |
| | 8.2 | Computer modeling of materials and processes |
| | 7.1 | Additive and hybrid technologies |
| Information and communication technology | 37.7 | Data mining technology |
| | 27.0 | Information security technology |
| | 15.7 | Human-computer interaction technology, neurocognitive technology |
| | 12.3 | High speed data transfer technology and communication infrastructure |
| | 7.4 | High performance computing architectures and systems |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Biotechnology and health | 24.1 | Advanced pharmaceutical pre-formulations |
| | 21.1 | Health-related information technology and medical robotics |
| | 20.3 | Genomic and post-genomic technology |
| | 15.8 | Cell technology and tissue engineering |
| | 9.0 | Organ and system function monitoring and control |
| | 6.8 | Industrial biotechnology and biomaterials |
| Transport systems | 42.7 | Energy-efficient and zero-emission vehicles technology |
| | 39.8 | Intelligent control technology and transport safety |
| | 17.5 | High-speed passenger and cargo transportation technology |
| New energy | 27.8 | Efficient use of renewable energy sources |
| | 16.5 | Efficient accumulation of electric and thermal energy |
| | 11.4 | Hydrogen energy |
| | 11.4 | Intelligent energy systems |
| | 10.1 | Efficient transportation of hydrocarbons, fuel and energy |
| | 8.9 | Efficient and safe nuclear power |
| | 7.6 | Efficient and clean thermal energy |
| 6.3 | Efficient energy consumption | |
| Space systems | 34.2 | Technology for space vehicles and systems development and operation |
| | 27.4 | Advanced launch vehicles technology |
| | 23.3 | Ground and space support infrastructure technology |
| | 9.6 | Advanced space vehicle propulsion systems technology for launch vehicles |
| Natural resources and environment | 73.4 | Preservation of a healthy environment and environmental safety |
| | 15.6 | Subsurface studies, prospecting, exploration and integrated development of mineral and hydrocarbon resources and technogenic raw materials |
| Food | 41.7 | Agrotechnology for crop farming |
| | 37.5 | Agrotechnology for a wide range of applications in agriculture and related industries (“farms of the future”) |
| | 20.8 | Agrotechnology for livestock farming |

Other areas of science and technology development meet global challenges in healthcare (advanced drug design, genomic and cell technologies, etc.) and ecology (use of renewable energy sources, “green” technologies to preserve a healthy environment and ensure environmental safety) and are also in line with global technology trends, such as the development of electric transport, efficient electric energy storage, hydrogen energy, new space technology, etc.

Our research made it possible to identify important science and technology areas that are not widely covered by business magazines. They include neurotechnology, quantum technology, nuclear energy, high-speed transport, industrial biotechnology and biomaterials, and the biotechnology area in general. This is partly the reason for a relatively small number of publications about agrotechnologies, where the biotechnology research findings are used extensively. Besides, the *Study and Development of the World Ocean, Arctic and Antarctic Resources*, a technology area of strategic importance for Russia, has not passed the threshold of five analytical publications.

Conclusions

Research showed that most analytical publications on technology innovations (63%) are devoted to the development and implementation of new technology goods and processes by professionals from Russia, which meets the information needs of the national audience of business publications. In addition, they also discuss the experience of innovation leader countries, primarily the U.S. and China, but also Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and other highly developed nations, which is important for decision-making in the science and technology area.

The analysis of representations in analytical publications at different stages of the life cycle of technology innovations showed that the business media prefer “ready-made” technologies: both those that are introduced into production and brought to market, and those that have proven effective and are already in demand on the market. Much less attention is paid to emerging “breakthrough” technologies at the research and development stage and technologies that are past their golden age or are no longer in use. This data meets the objectives of the business media to provide readers with information to make the most pragmatic and reliable business decisions. However, this state of affairs can exacerbate the problem of underfunding early-stage innovation projects and “groundwork” research, which can be a stepping stone to future technological breakthroughs but are at high risk in terms of delivering results (New Technological Revolution, 2017: 92).

Business publications consider the state as one of the most important subjects of innovative development, and the main drivers of innovative development of the economy are digital technologies, which, as indicated above, will help overcome the digital inequality. Most publications on technology innovations are devoted to the Information Industry and Public Administration sectors. The technological development of several economic sectors is covered mainly from the perspective of digitalization (Finance, Electric Power Industry, and Trade). As expected, more attention is paid to science and technology development in traditionally high-tech sectors, such as medicine, transport, electronics, defense industry, etc.

Furthermore, digital manufacturing and ICT are the leaders among the areas of science and technology development in the analytical agenda of the business media. Publications on information technology in medicine, transport, energy, and food account for a significant share. Other areas of science and technology development meet global challenges in healthcare, ecology, and energy and are in line with global technology trends.

Finally, the industries with the least publications (less than 3%) on innovative development include basic sectors of the Russian economy with a high GDP (gross domestic product): energy production, trade, metallurgy, construction, and forestry. Our research also identified a number of important areas of science and technology development that rarely become the subject of analytical publications in the business media: neurotechnology, quantum technology, nuclear energy, high-speed transport, biotechnology in general and its related agrotechnology. Besides, the Study and Development of the World Ocean, Arctic and Antarctic Resources, a technology area of strategic importance for Russia, receives little to no coverage.

All in all, the findings shed light on the structure and content of the science and technology agenda of Russia's leading magazine-format business media and can be used to optimize their agenda by the media industry and innovation policy experts.

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What does Systemic Functional Linguistics say about speech? A discourse-semantic analysis

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Abstract

This comparative study uses Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory as analytical framework. The aim is to analyze the types of grammatical, lexical items, and language resources used regarding the experiential, interpersonal, and textual functions that are all respectively realized by the register category of field, tenor, mode along with the schematic structure, and the unity of the speech texts. After being converted into clauses, the speech texts were analyzed. Although the doer is slightly different, the result of analysis revealed that the field, as the realization of the experiential function of the texts, is similar. As such, the realization of experiencing action taken by the speaker and audience for the advancement of America is a feature shared by the transitivity patterns focusing on material process, reference, and lexical string analysis. In the meantime, the interpersonal function which is realized by the tenor, differs slightly in that Joe Biden and Barack Obama developed a close distance with the audience, whereas in Donald Trump's text, there is no sense of intimacy and a great deal of separation from the audience. Then, all texts belong to the spoken mode resulting from simple nominal group constructions. Pushing further, the texts were written in a similar manner in terms of their schematic organization, which included an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The study also discovered that the texts are classified as being highly cohesive by the anaphoric references that were frequently employed, a strong pattern of conjunction linkages, and lexical relations between lexical items appearing across sentences.

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Keywords

Discourse semantic, meta function, context, speech, SFL.

Introduction

Language is considered to be the most important component in communication. The general definition which states that language is a tool of communication used by humans can explain the concept of language and is widely considered relevant to most people. As such, Leech (1993: 47) states that language does have an informative function, in addition to expressive, directive, aesthetic, and phatic. In addition, another special function of language is as a political tool. This function is considered prominent and often persuasive, aiming to influence, invite, and give confidence to the audience about something or activity. The word chosen must be acceptable and not contradict the listener's interest. The accuracy of word choice or word suitability is demanded to convey the speaker's meaning. In addition, the writer or speaker must know who he or she is talking to.

One of the moments from which one can pay attention to the political tool language function is an election-victory speech. Speech is the text used to articulately explain or describe ideas, feelings, views, and ideologies (written or spoken). It also serves as a technique for centering the audience and allowing the language to convey particular meanings (Beebe, 2003). The speech text includes a beginning (opening), middle (body), and end as well as certain systems, opinions, and beliefs (closing). As a result, it serves as a tool for communication and is crucial in presenting social, cultural, and political issues (Brigrance, 1991).

Speech text study also appears to be motivated by the belief that it contains important language registers from a linguistics standpoint. This suggests that understanding the text in question requires knowledge of its context, purpose, and meaning. To put it another way, the speech takes into account not just the participants' relationships but also the social environment and language use (speaker and audience). Analyzing the language alone is insufficient; one must also consider the context in which it is used.

There have been many previous research studies on speech. The studies underlined the psychological aspect represented in the speaker's linguistics domain (see Bao, Zhang, Qu, & Feng, 2018; M tt , Puumala, & Ylikomi, 2021; Navarro, Macnamara, Glucksberg, & Andrew, 2020; W. Wang, 2020). They argued that the psychological aspect represented in the speaker's language might significantly influence the message conveyed to the reader or interlocutors.

As such, the text which is constructed in the form of clauses and sentences can represent one's psychological aspect. This argument is pertinent to the context of this study in that words, clauses, and sentences are designed functionally from which the writer may analyze the speaker's language meaning for the audience.

Additionally, the words choice and their context- relations definitely affect the coherence and cohesiveness of spoken texts (Bao et al., 2018; Bu, Connor-Linton, & Wang, 2020; Chu, & Huang, 2020; da Cunha, 2019; Gusthini, Sobarna, & Amalia, 2018; Hopke, & Simis, 2016; Horv th, n.d.; Jitpranee, 2018; Kelly, 2020; Martin, & Zappavigna, 2019; Moragas-Fern ndez, Calvo, & Capdevila, 2018; Nartey, 2018; Poulimenou, Stamou, Papavlasopoulos, & Poulos, 2016; Silke, Quinn, & Rieder, 2019; Zhang, 2016). However, the studies highlight the macro- context in which coherence and cohesiveness are built. Bringing to micro- context so-called internal relation of words used in the text is another significant aspect to consider. Although highlighting the importance of lexical relations as done by previous studies, this study is slightly different in terms of focusing on the context that is more on micro-level.

Unlikely, the speech should be organized so that it motivates the listener to meet the goal presented, focusing on the action suggested by the speaker's so-called experiential meaning. (Ademilokun, 2019; Bartley, 2018; Figini, Rocchia, & Rezzano, 2019; Kusuma, Dewi, & Kurniawan, 2018). In the context of this study, their ideas about transitivity analysis are beneficial for revealing the focus of speakers' speech. Other research emphasized the text's literal meaning (Ahmed, & Al, 2020; Briones, 2016; Leong, 2019; Ong, 2019; Othman, 2020; Potter, 2016; Suparto, 2018). They demonstrated that the subject and rhyme of the text can be carefully examined to discover the textual meaning. As a result, their placement within the text may assist readers or listeners in comprehending the message being put forth. As such, the idea of meaning as claimed by earlier studies is insufficient to reveal the textual meaning. Theme and rhyme analysis should go along with nominal group analysis to have a greater perspective what and how texts are; the mode of the texts, whether spoken or written by which the channel of text communication is determined.

Additionally, thematic information within the text may be readily disclosed by focusing on the approach, socio-pragmatic framework, and methodology (Ahmed, 2020; Boch, 2020; Brookes & Mcenery, 2019; Fetzer & Bull, 2012; Schumacher, Hansen, Velden, & Kunst, 2019). Similarly, Afzaal (2020) and Cartagena & Prego-V zquez (2018) have stated that the language competence of the speaker or audience is crucial to support such approach and framework in question. However, in order for someone to be considered communicatively

competent, one needs to master both linguistic rules, and rules of social use of language so-called communicative competence. This competence is reflected in the word choices and language used in the context, not only macro but also micro as the concern of this study.

Despite the positive outcomes of such an approach and skill, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), another theory, is nevertheless widely used in text analysis. According to this theory, earlier studies discovered that process types and context affect the meta functions of language utilized in a text (Bartley, 2018; Darong, 2015; Darong, 2021b, 2021a; Kelly, 2020; Kusuma et al., 2018). The investigations also emphasized the theory's advantages in identifying a text's language function. However, it is essential to note that the SFL theory is frequently referred to as a discourse- semantics. As such, the concept of a connection between a language's various meaning kinds and a certain lexical and grammatical area is known as semantics. As a result, the text has the meaning that is encoded or realized in not just one but three different meaning systems so-called ideational, interpersonal, and textual. It needs a mastery of grammatical analysis abilities as well as common technical word constructions that are built on the structure or pattern of the clause to analyze and define the meaning systems in question (Eggs, 1994).

By expanding the ties to the contextual factors of the field, mode, and tenor of which the meaning interpretations are expressed, Eggs further emphasizes that the word semantic is employed to relate the meanings taken outward from the speech text. As a result, language analysis based on SFL is focused on both the text's clause level and its so-called lexico-grammar for expressing meaning. In the meantime, language is a reflection of speakers/orator who can provide identification such as hope, willingness, changes and determination through the language used. Likewise, this phenomenon happened to the three respective presidents of America who won the election. On this occasion, each has distinctive characteristics in speaking, both from the choice of diction or lexical, functions and other linguistic elements should all are embraced in the view of the SFL theory.

Previous studies have hardly ever focused on lexical and grammatical aspects. By focusing on language meta functions and lexico-grammatical structures employed in the speech text, this study develops prior research on the usage of SFL by answering the following research questions: *first*, what are the types of grammatical and lexical items used to realize the register category of field of the speech texts; *second*, what are the types of grammatical and language resources used to realize the register category of tenor in the speech texts; and *third*, what

are the types of language resources used to denote the mode of the texts. The study addresses these questions by analyzing the types of grammatical and lexical items used, the types of grammatical and language resources used, and lastly the types of language resources used.

Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), where the 'S' stands for 'Systemic', is a broad term for a network of relationships and choices that pushes from general to certain characteristics that are typical in nature. Additionally, it indicates that the text uses an interconnected system of meaning. The 'F' for 'Functional' is concerned with how the system is realized functionally in structures. As a result, the system should be designed so that it has a specific purpose that is accomplished by register categories including field, tenor, and mode. The last letter, 'L', stands for the theory of 'Linguistics', which is one way that the study of linguistic phenomena might be conducted (Halliday, 1985).

According to SFL, language has a functional purpose. Functionality generally refers to how something conveys meaning and message in context. As such, it refers to so-called meta functions of ideation, interpersonal relations, and text (Egins, 1994). This is supported by previous studies saying that according to SFL, there are three meta functions in question: ideational which is realized by register category of field; interpersonal function which contributes to social relationships; and textual function, which deals with the use of language to create logical and coherent texts and is realized by a text's register category of mode. More significantly, the theory of SFL underlines that context is crucial in the creation of a particular text (Andersen, Emilie, & Holsting, 2018; Baysha, 2019; Kaneyasu, 2020; Scholman, Demberg, & Sanders, 2020; Upadhyay, Houghton, & Klin, 2018). Therefore, for the audience or readers, context-dependent analysis of a speech text may therefore be useful in addition to linguistic sources.

The first is 'language about things', and it deals with the internal and external realms of real existence. In this regard, Halliday (1978) noted that the representation of the internal and external world of phenomena could seize the shape of 'content so-called experiential meaning'. As a result, it is mirrored in the transitivity of language. The language of transitivity, which is believed to be an ongoing process, is used to depict the taking of one's external world consciousness into one's internal world awareness (relations, events, states, and material actions). Material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential processes are involved (Halliday, 1985). To add, an examination of the ideational process as realized by the text's register category of field

(Ademilokun, 2019; Figini et al., 2019; Guswita, & Suhardi, 2020; Montes, Barboza, & Olascoaga, 2014; Wang, 2010) found that the majority of texts depict the actions taken by both the speaker and the audience. In this regard, one's external world consciousness are reflected in the employment of process types within the texts.

The relationship between participants in specific speech events is the subject of the second. As such, it is ascertained in the commodity exchange occurred during the interactions. With regard to the potential meaning conveyed in their language, Chen and Shuo (2018), Damanik, Zein, Thyrhaya, and Nurlela (2020), Darong (2021b), Hulu (2019) found that the participants, namely the addresser and addressee, might have a tight interpersonal relationship, a profound intimacy, or be far from one another. In their studies, the mood structure, modality and pronoun are crucial for fostering interpersonal relationships among individuals. However, the texts should be constructed in such a way that they can express the aspects in question by considering the commodity exchange at their grammatical level. Meanwhile, the third is seen as linguistic communication. The message is perceived both innately and extrinsically in that it is connected to the language used in its context. The organization of ideas or thematic structure, which consists of the clause's theme and rheme, represents this language function, known as the textual function (Kusumawardani, & Putra, 2021; Potter, 2016; Umiyati, 2019) found that the speaker might be able to get the listeners' attention to focus on the message being delivered by carefully construct the system of clause in which the theme and rheme are embedded.

Additionally, Martin (1992) and Eggins (1994) proposed discourse as a semantic component. The stratum of meaning is involved somehow. The name 'discourse-semantics' denotes the unique texture characteristics; a linguistic resource that benefits the text. As a result, the method for writing texts and the various linguistic resources employed systematically serve the model discourse level. In other words, the semantics aspect of conversation entails the cohesion types from which the texture arises. Additionally, discourse- semantics analyses a text in light of its situational (register) and cultural contexts (genre). In this regard, claimed that discourse-semantics appears to apply the theory of context, where language plays a crucial role, as well as the theory of language. As a systematic social process relation, genre as meaning integration is actualized in the register category of field, tenor, and mode.

Expanding on the register category, Martin (1992) and Eggins (1994) showed that field is concerned with the ongoing social action in context. Besides, it deals with action, what is occurring in the world, or the social situation under

discussion. Tenor, on the other hand, focuses on the relationships between those taking part in particular social speech activities. It is concerned with who participates in social action, as well as the amount to which factors like age, position, gender, and social status play a role in their interpersonal relationships. Mode also addresses how language is used in social interaction. The channel of action may be determined by such linguistic roles. More significantly, the theory of SFL holds that context is crucial in the creation of a particular text (Baysha, 2019; Heruti, Bergerbest, & Giora, 2019; Kaneyasu, 2020; Scholman et al., 2020; Upadhyay et al., 2018). For the audience or readers, context-dependent analysis of a speech text may therefore be useful in addition to linguistic sources.

SFL also suggests the text wholeness and relatedness as integral to the context. The premises and ideas follow a clear organizational structure, which contributes to the sense of unity and relatedness. The phrase ‘coherence’ in relation to the subject under study refers to a set of clauses that have been placed into a social context, including situational and cultural context. To put it another way, these settings use situational or registered coherence in addition to generic coherence (Halliday, & Hasan, 1976; Eggins, 1994). However, for the text to be cohesive and connected, lexical relationships, a well-managed and consistent participant presentation, and semantic ties must all be present (Leong, 2019).

An important point to keep in mind is the rule of the text-making resource is included in the functional linguistic theory’s discourse stratum. This indicates that the discourse is focused on describing the several types of cohesiveness that allow a text to be realized. Reference, lexical relation, conjunction ellipsis, conversational structure, and a number of lexical ties are examples of cohesion types appropriate for this use. These types are advantageous for the step-by-step construction of texts. The schematic structure of genre refers to certain processes or stages that must be followed and socially established. By using the text’s functional constituent pattern, it is linguistically portrayed. To put it another way, a schematic can be thought of as a genre’s staged, or step-by-step, organization that includes coherence and cohesiveness elements.

Methodology

Employing comparative method by means of discourse-semantic label as highlighted in the theory of SFL, this study analyzed the three selected speech texts delivered by three different figures on their respective victories. To have unedited versions, the texts in questions were searched from Google and crosschecked in YouTube to guarantee their originality.

The reason for choosing such presidential speeches was due to the agenda setting. The most significant source of presidential authority has long been thought to be influencing the policy agenda. The president plays a big part in determining the policymaking agenda. Agenda setting is likely the most important source of presidential authority. Most individuals agree that presidents have the power to influence the agendas of the government and the American people.

In general, presidential speech reflects distinct values and has a specific structure, order, and point of view. The presentation of cultural, political, and social life is significantly influenced by the speech in question, making it another significant social communication tool to the country or world. This means that the value of speech can be perceived in the thoughts and information it conveys about society as well as in how it serves as a window into the personality of the speaker or writer regarding the world. This study is guided by the idea that the three recent presidents set their distinctive agendas that can be revealed through language used in their victory speeches. In this regard, the important language function in regard to meaning and context of the US presidents' victory speeches was taken into consideration in this study.

Since the objective of this analysis was to look at the context of situation which is known as the register category of field, tenor and mode and genre as the context of culture, SFL theory proposed by Halliday (1985) was used. As such, the transitivity analysis demonstrating the significant process type and the lexical string relations of each text were determined for the benefit of the field. The lexical strings and transitivity structures of the three texts should be presented before conducting an analysis. Besides, the reference link should also be displayed. It is because reference tools can also make the text's field visible. In the meantime, to understand the tenor of each text, a study of mood, modality, and pronouns was done. Nominal group analysis is advantageous for the mode of the texts being studied. Meanwhile, conjunction analysis along with pronoun and lexical relations within texts are necessary to know the unity of texts. A comparison of the findings analysis has to be done eventually to draw generalizations about the use of the linguistic resources used in the texts. Thus, the efficiency of SFL theory as a method of analysis was the exclusive focus of the analysis stages.

Along this line of objectives, data collection methods in this study included note-taking and observation. Observing method used to examine the language used. The use of language in this context is not just being examined verbally; it is also being examined in writing. Therefore, language forms used in the texts that are pertinent to this research should be noted. The note-taking technique

used in this study was an advanced technique. Several sorts of language use that are pertinent to this inquiry should be noted. To sum up, data collection method and data analysis were employed with these following steps

- Watching the speech recordings;
- Downloading the speech scripts;
- Reading and examining the data carefully;
- Modifying the scripts into clauses;
- Finding out and naming every sentence that contains meta functions of language (ideational, interpersonal, and textual);
- Identifying and classifying the process types and the lexical string of the script;
- Identifying and classifying the mood structure, pronoun and modality the script;
- Identifying and classifying the nominal group of the script;
- Tabulating data;
- Data analysis using Halliday's theory;
- Comparing the findings;
- Drawing conclusions

Results and discussion

Aside from the literal meaning, the connotation was the most prevalent type of diction identified in Biden's speech on November 7th, 2020. The use of such dictions reflects who he is, and the goals to achieve. His experience in politics and high self-determination make him dare to utter some promising changes for America. The speech that consists of 71 clauses is uttered elegantly and attracts the audience smoothly. The focus of the utterances is concerned with the action done for America.

Meanwhile, Trump's speech consisting of 59 clauses, delivered on November 9th, 2016 shares something different. Trump's campaign is divisive. Some even say that Trump's speech about making America great again means restoring white supremacy (Kelly, 2020). Trump also in his personal view towards others, both religiously and ethnically is considered negative. A much different policy and controversy compared to the Obama previous leadership caused Trump to come under fire from the world. Such policy and controversy included recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, stopping Chinese tech giant Huawei, limiting the flow of refugees from a number of Islamic countries to the US, and building the US-Mexico border wall. The policies in question have shaken the world's geopolitical and economic conditions.

Unlikely, Obama's speech consisting of 83 clauses, delivered on November 5th, 2008 made the US people see that having hope was a new energy because they saw Obama's position when it came from hope. The hope for peace, tolerance, new immigration policy, and prosperity, among many other things.

To date, it is important to note that there is a necessity to reveal the speech from the relation of grammatical and lexical items used in the text. The items in question are of benefit to reveal the functions of language as the concern of this study. As such, the functions so-called meta functions of language are realized respectively as the register category of field, tenor, and mode. Integral to the registers in question, schematic structure and unity of the speech texts need be examined further. Saying it differently, the micro aspect in which the internal grammatical and lexical items as well as language resource are used should be examined as stated below.

Text analysis

The grammatical choice in transitivity, lexical cohesiveness, and reference analysis lead to the field register category. The study of the process types used in the texts is what the transitivity is concerned with. Lexical string analysis can be used to view the lexical cohesiveness. Meanwhile, the reference analysis focused on how participants were introduced in the texts and how to get the majority of the reference items. The analysis of the aspects in question is presented in the tables below (Tables 1, 2, 3).

Table 1

Process types of the speeches

| Process types | J. Biden's speech | D. Trump's speech | B. Obama's speech |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Material | 103 | 76 | 163 |
| Mental | 16 | 17 | 36 |
| Verbal | 14 | 4 | 17 |
| Behavioral | 4 | - | 7 |
| Existential | 3 | 3 | 11 |
| Relational | 32 | 17 | 52 |

Table 2

Lexical relations

| Speech | TLS | TLR | The longest string | Lexical string in process types | Rep | Syn | Co-Hyp |
|------------|-----|-----|--------------------|---------------------------------|-----|-----|--------|
| J. Biden’s | 30 | 104 | America | Material process | 88 | 16 | 3 |
| D. Trump’s | 23 | 55 | America | Material process | 15 | 13 | 3 |
| B. Obama’s | 41 | 121 | America | Material process | 98 | 24 | 5 |

Note: TLS: Total of Lexical String; TLR: Total of lexical relations; Rep: Repetition; Syn: Synonym; Co-Hyp: Co-hyponomy

Table 3

Reference analysis

| Speech | Reference chain | The most popular references | Reference construction |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| J. Biden’s | 17 | We, American | Anaphoric |
| D. Trump’s | 15 | I, America | Anaphoric |
| B. Obama’s | 36 | We, America | Anaphoric |

The fundamental focus of a speech as a social activity is participant engagement, which is related to the register category known as a field. Regarding the information in Table 1 above, the material processes predominate in all texts. This suggests that the experiential actions are at the heart of the majority of clauses in the three texts. The participants – most commonly the speaker (I), the audience, and all Americans (You) – perform the activities. The speaker and audience are both Americans (We). Except for Trump’s victory speech, where ‘I’ is mostly utilized, in most cases ‘We’ are used.

Additionally, only a small number of lexical strings are long, and the majority are short (Table 2). It is necessary to notice that the longest string supports the texts’ primary concern (what, where, and who the text is intended for) (Eggs, 1994). It was discovered that the text string labeled ‘America’ is the longest of these texts. Acceptably, the speaker’s plans, promises of change, and mission for future American life serve as their focus or target. It can be argued that the majority of lexical strings in those texts are linked to the material process, given that each text contains lexical strings connected to various process categories (verbs of action). Additionally, repetition representing the concern of text appear is the most frequent lexical relation used in the texts under study. Synonyms

and co-hyponymy, which do not support the topic of the texts or what is being discussed, come next.

A text's field can also be revealed using reference analysis. It shows how the addresser introduces participants and then follows them when they are shown in the text. Knowing the participants who were most prominently featured in the field, and about whom the text is actually speaking, is crucial (Egins, 1994). The references to 'we' and 'America(n)' are far more prevalent in Obama's and Biden's texts. The use of the pronoun 'We' is taken to relate to their personal attitude. Both references were eager to make America better. To achieve the objective, progress, and prosperity of America, the audiences are involved. Therefore, the word America also occurs as the texts' most frequent reference.

In contrast to those, 'I' and 'America' are the most frequent references in Trump's text. In our view, he positioned himself in the forefront of the effort to realize the greatness of America. As a result, this is consistent with the process types analysis of transitivity, where the main actors: 'We' for Obama and Biden, and 'I' for Trump perform the activity. Regardless of their individual distinctions, they all share the speech's primary target – America – as the future orientation. 'We', the majority of participants who appeared in the texts (aside from Trump's) represents the experiential activity that the texts are about. The goal of this activity is America, and it genuinely deals with a change. The results from the analysis of the process type in which the material process appears most frequently supports this claim. Additionally, the term 'America' was the longest string in lexical string analysis, while reference analysis revealed that 'We', 'I' (Trump), and 'America' were the texts' longest strings overall. The results of this study show that SFL theory can be used to determine the speaker or writer's concerns. The material process type that was most prevalent and was supported by the dominant lexical string as well as reference usage suggests that both the speaker's and the listener's (audience's) action (Darong, 2015, 2021a; Guswita, & Suhardi, 2020; Kelly, 2020; Kusuma et al., 2018)

Tenor of the texts

An examination of the mood structure and modality could reveal the tenor. The results of the two aforementioned features are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Mood structure

| Criteria for analysis | J. Biden's speech | D. Trump's speech | B. Obama's speech |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Mood</i> | | | |
| Declarative | 116 | 98 | 238 |
| Imperative | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| Interrogative | - | - | 1 |
| <i>Modality</i> | | | |
| Will | 5 | 14 | 19 |
| Must | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Can | 2 | 4 | 21 |
| May | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Should | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| Be going to | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| <i>Pronoun</i> | | | |
| I | 11 | 33 | 23 |
| We | 30 | 17 | 47 |
| You | 18 | 13 | 15 |

The examination of the mood structure reveals similarities among the three texts. Declarative clauses predominated in the texts. It demonstrates how similar their information-delivery styles are. Unlikely, the results of modality analysis varied from one text to the next. Obama and Trump both promised to follow through on their goals, while Biden concentrated on his obligations. The fact that Obama and Trump predominately used 'will' (inclination/futurity) whereas Biden tended to use 'must' supports such judgment. However, compared to Biden, Obama and Trump have a lot more 'can' in terms of their ability to rouse the crowd. Biden makes the claim that the speaker and Americans in general are the major players for America.

The use of pronouns is another way to look at the tenor as a fulfillment of the interpersonal function of the texts. In terms of reference analysis, the pronoun 'We' was primarily present in Obama's and Biden's speeches, whereas 'I' was primarily present in Trump's. As such, Trump prefers to gently distance himself from the addressee and position himself as the principal agent. Meanwhile, Obama and Biden direct attention and engage the crowd to advocate for America. The force of transformation is unity. In addition, it should be emphasized that the more an addresser employs the pronoun 'we', the closer their relationship

with the addressee and vice versa. In actuality, Trump failed to maintain close distance with the audience.

In general, the three speech texts' various tenor revealed diverse interpersonal relations. These results are consistent with those of Ademilokun (2019), Darong, (2021b), Silke et al., (2019) and Wang (2010) who discovered that the modality of the clauses they exchange with the audience, the use of pronouns, and the system of mood all serve to demonstrate the differences in interpersonal relationships. Due to the distinctive mood structures, the modality usage, and the pronoun employment, the speakers' potential relationships, relatedness, familiarity, and intimacy with the audience are all different.

Mode of the texts

It has been suggested that determining whether a text is spoken or written can be inferred through the examination of nominal groups. Written text is defined by the usage of complicated nominal groups, whereas spoken text is concerned with simple nominal groups. It is abundantly obvious from the nominal group analysis that several kinds of structural patterns for nominal groups are in use. Among these, 'T' or one-word nominal groups appeared most frequently in three texts and followed nominal groups composed of one to two simple modifiers. The investigation proved that only a few nominal groups are complex and that the construction of the 'DT' nominal group is typically utilized. These seem to follow logically from the phrase and clause being used. They are often grabbed using the modifier Q (Qualifer). At this time, the speech texts' nominal groupings are basic and denote the spoken mode. The results of this study support prior research that the message of specific texts is determined by its grammatical complexity (Andersen et al., 2018; Tolochko, & Boomgaarden, 2017). The message in question might be conveyed in a manner that complements the text's mode.

The schematic structure the texts

The phrase schematic structure must be connected to the term genre in which it is considered as a feature of analysis in discourse. As a result, through the use of schematic organization, genre is realized linguistically.

Table 5

Schematic structure of the texts

| Stage | J. Biden's speech | D. Trump's speech | B. Obama's speech | Function and ideology |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Introduction | Clause 1-11 | Clause 1-7 | Clause 1a-5b | Arousing the audience's attention |
| Main body of the text | Clause 12a-56b | Clause 9a-50b | Clause 5-72 | Stating gratitude, changes and American' progress |
| Closing | Clause 58a-71 | Clause 50-59 | Clause 73-82b | Expecting an action for America |
| Ideology | An obligation for changes in togetherness. ('We') is the doer | Expectation of great change. ('I') is the doer | Expectation of great change by the power in togetherness. ('We') is the doer | |

Referring to the stage, as shown in Table 5, all three speeches are very similar. They are similarly organized in a way that they adhere to the standard three-part form of introduction (opening), main body of the text, and conclusion (closing). The introduction (opening) stage is focused on how to get the audience's attention by posing some thought-provoking or contentious issues. The main body and concluding parts have similar appearance. Each relates to the speech's primary topics, which are the progress, changes, and development of America in every facet of life. The points are arranged so that they build upon and are related to one another. They are also built in a very logical order. In this regard, the texts fit in with Brigance (1991) and Beebe's (2003) theory that a speech text should include an introduction (opening), a body (middle), and a conclusion (closing).

Unity of the texts

The aspects of text-forming resource systems are included in the stratum of discourse of the SFL theory. This indicates that the discourse is preoccupied with describing the various forms of cohesiveness that give the text texture. Reference (Table 3), conjunction (Table 6), and lexical relation (Table 2) are examples of the cohesion types appropriate for this situation.

Table 6

Conjunction the texts

| Types of logical relations | J. Biden's speech | D. Trump' speech | B. Obama's speech |
|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Additive | 46 | 38 | 69 |
| Contrast | 6 | 1 | 24 |
| Purpose | 17 | 5 | 23 |
| Simultaneous | 7 | 2 | 13 |
| Means | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Successive | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Condition | 4 | 2 | 12 |
| Cause | 7 | 5 | 22 |
| Comparative | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Consequence | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Location | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Alternation | 2 | 2 | 3 |

The method of introducing and keeping track of the participants in a text is referred to as referencing. In this context, the participants relate to the characters, settings, and objects discussed in a text. These three victory speeches exhibit a high degree of cohesiveness as shown by the reference analysis chart that summarized in Table 3. The fact that the majority of the references in the texts are endophoric- anaphoric lends credence to the conclusion in question. It is consistent with Eggins' (1994) idea saying that if the majority of items are retrieved from endophoric, they belong to highly cohesive. Since endophoric ties shape the text's internal texture, this reference helps the piece come together so-called cohesion.

The type of conjunction relation that is employed in the text is also crucial to the text's structures. All clauses in the texts under study fit together according to conjunctive reticula and its analysis, as shown in Table 6. The texts' cohesiveness is supported by the presence of conjunctive relations of addition, which are frequently used. It implies that the usage of conjunctive relations can also reveal the text texture. Conjunction relation is concerned with how logical connections between text elements are formed and expressed (Eggins, 1994) Additionally, the use of other conjunctive relations, such as conjunctive of purpose, contrast, cause, condition, comparison, alternation, succession, means, and simultaneity, supports the text cohesiveness, particularly with regard to its schematic structure, which includes an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. By using

a variety of conjunctive relations that are presented in external implicit and explicit as well as internal implicit and explicit, these three basic domains are formed cohesively.

Finally, the lexical relationship of which the lexical items employed, such as verbs, adjectives, nouns, and adverbs, are used to indicate the cohesiveness of the texts in this study. Such lexical items also deal with chains of clauses and sentences or event sequences. Here, the main focus is on connecting a text to its primary topic. Thus, the study of lexical relations can be described as a methodical method of characterizing the relationship between words in a text. In this respect, lexical string analysis is of benefit to examine the lexical relations in question.

The findings of this study support those of earlier studies that suggested that the choice of words may contribute to the coherence and cohesiveness of speech texts (Bu et al., 2020; Chu, & Huang, 2020; Gusthini et al., 2018; Hopke, & Simis, 2016; Poulimenou et al., 2016; Qian, & Pan, 2019; Risberg, & Lymer, 2020). This study mostly focused on how words and grammatical structures are created or produced in order to provide a particular meaning. Word selection, context, and meaning are widely acknowledged as guiding principles in functional linguistics when producing texts. A speech's lexical item, phrase, and grammatical structure should all reflect a meaning system in order to achieve certain communicative goals. Speech therefore embraces its own features in terms of linguistic use and function.

In order for the message to be conveyed properly, speakers need to have a good knowledge of the language and its use. Both of them contribute to the success in conveying a message to the audience. Aside from considering macro context, one of the efforts to make one's speech attractive and powerful is the use of grammatical and lexical items along with language sources to apply the meta functions of language as well as the unity of text.

Conclusion

With respect to the findings, there are some points to infer regarding the use of SFL theory in this study. The types of grammatical and lexical items used to apply the register category of field of the speech texts are concerned with the actions taken by the speaker and audience. While this is happening, the grammatical and language resources used to realize the register category of tenor are different. Last but not least, all texts belong to spoken modes and are described as highly being cohesive. In addition, the texts are primarily ordered in accordance with recurrent patterns or stages of schematic structure, including

introduction (opening), main body of the text, and the conclusion (closing). In this study, SFL was only used to analyze speech texts, therefore future research can assess its efficacy by looking at different text genres. Additionally, directing to the context of second or foreign language teaching could be more intriguing.

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Russian media generation of the “digital borderline”: Theoretical reflection and empirical verification¹

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Abstract

This study verifies the authors’ sociocultural concept of media generations. This concept helps to identify media generations in accordance with significant socio-political and cultural events taking place along with the technological development of the media industry, according to K. Mannheim; and behavioral patterns, according to X. Becker. This study uses a sample of 30 respondents interviewed during a series of in-depth interviews. The results showed that the most significant characteristic of this Russian generation is so-called ambivalent Soviet and Russian identity. The socio-economic transformations of the 1990s and the ubiquitous spread of the Internet and information technologies, which led to the ‘digital lifestyle’, played a big role during the formative period of the generational group. Being adherents of the analogue television in childhood and adolescence, representatives of the media generation, with some effort, have mastered digital technologies and are actively using many of the achievements of digitalization, including social networks. Although media practices of urban and rural informants differ in some ways, they still show significant conceptual similarities that allow us to classify the respondents as belonging to the same generation of media communicators - the “digital borderline” generation.

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Keywords

Mass media, digital media, “analogue” and “digital” media generation, media generation of “digital borderline”, formative years.

Introduction

Digitalization has led to the changes we observe in our everyday life: virtualization of communication, mediatization of life practices, the development of the digital media industry, the rise of programmable media and, accordingly, the transformation of media consumption. One of the most important changes is the transition from analogue to the digital mode of production and broadcasting. Until the 1980s, the global media industry predominantly relied on the analogue broadcasting models. Radio and television used an analogue (wave) method of signal transmission, having such characteristics as continuity, duration, and strength, while limiting the quality, quantity, and security of information transmission.

The Internet first appeared in the USSR in August 1990. The spread of the Internet and digital technologies in Russian media practice proceeded gradually and regionally rather unevenly. Undoubtedly, this influenced the specifics of the development of the Russian media industry: the media slowly, but surely switched to the digital format of production and distribution to meet the requirements of the time and maintain competitive attractiveness. At the same time, not all readers, listeners, and viewers of traditional (analogue) mass media mastered information technologies and preferred digital versions of mass media. Usually, this is the older age group, because “Adolescents are widely assumed to adopt ‘the spirit of the age,’ whereas adults are expected to persist in their previously acquired attitudes and behavioral patterns” (Van den Broek, 1999: 503).

A significant part of the users/audience of the media, having spent their childhood and adolescence in the so-called ‘analogue’ period of their upbringing, and their youth / primary professional socialization years during the development of the Internet, still predominantly mastered the digital environment. In addition, several generations of media users have grown up, who have been defined as ‘digital’ all over the world (Prensky, 2001; Tapscott, 2008; Mccrindle, 2014; Soldatova, Rasskazova, & Nestik, 2017; Scholz, & Renning, 2019; Kulchitskaya, Vartanov, Dunas, Salikhova et al, 2019; Dunas, Vartanov, Kulchitskaya et al., 2019; Dunas, & Vartanov, 2020; Vartanov et al., 2021; Solomeina, & Sumsckaya, 2022). In this vein, we can single out not only two major generational clusters – ‘analogue’ and ‘digital’, but also an intermediate, ‘echo-media generation’, or ‘generation of digital borderline’, transitional bet

ween ‘analogue’ and ‘digital’, attention to which not only in Russian, but also in foreign studies, is undeservedly small.

Understanding the essential characteristics of this media generation is significant both for the modern media industry and for the organization of intergenerational institutional media communication. This is crucial because in the methodological paradigm of media studies in the post-Soviet period, the media audience has been the subject of the scholarly analysis, with the audience being identified as an active subject of communication processes (Vartanova, 2019: 16). The purpose of this study was to identify the essential characteristics of the representatives of the “digital borderline” media generation, including the use of digital media.

Theoretical background

The theoretical and methodological basis of the research is the provisions of the sociological, historical-cultural, anthropological and media approaches, applicable to generational topics. The importance of referring to the concept of generations is beyond doubt. Gasset wrote that the generation “is the most important concept in history” (Gasset, 1933: 15), and Shanin recognized the generation as the most important element of social division (Shanin, 2005: 8). Finally, Mannheim, the founder of the generational theory, recognized the phenomenon of generations as one of the main genetic factors in the dynamics of historical development (Mannheim, 2000: 55).

The Oxford Dictionary (2021) helps us understand a generation as “all the people born and living at about the same time, regarded collectively. In later use frequently with implication of shared cultural and social attitudes”. For Mannheim, the central aspect of understanding “generation” and differentiating between generations is the concept of close meaning: “The fact that people are born at the same time, or that their youth, adulthood, and old age coincide, does not in itself involve similarity of location; what does create a similar location is that they are in a position to experience the same events and data, etc., and especially that these experiences impinge upon a similarly ‘stratified’ consciousness” (Mannheim, 1952: 297). Mannheim argues that an identical experience gained during the formative period of personality development contributes to the formation of a joint unique worldview, which can be a powerful force in people’s lives, and “...feeling for the unity of a generation is consciously developed into a basis for the formation of concrete groups” (Mannheim, 1969: 165).

The generation theory of W. Strauss and N. Howe is currently popular all around the globe, which continues the development of American scientific

tradition in the study of generational communities based on historical and anthropological approaches. According to the scientists, values of generations are formed under the influence of four factors: social events, practices of upbringing and education, media and visual environment (Howe, & Strauss, 1991). Although there is a considerable interest in this generational paradigm around the world, it has been heavily criticized by the academic community. Specifically, American academics have criticized the theory for its deterministic approach, lack of empirical evidence (Aanestad, 1993; Giancola, 2006), stereotyping (Hoover, 2009), comparing it to a newspaper horoscope and considering it an example of pseudoscience (Lind, 1997). Nakai recognizes generation as a social construct and believes that “inapplicability of American classification of generations in other cultures seems reasonable, as every society has unique historical experience and emerging generations may well differ in age ranges compared to the claimed universality of W. Strauss and N. Howe classification” (Nakai, 2015: 333).

Russian researchers in sociology, anthropology, psychology, and cultural studies have warned against the danger of oversimplifying generation from this theory, the unreasonableness of its use in the social sciences (in particular, practical and organizational psychology, applied anthropology) (Petrushikhina, 2016), the inexpediency of its application in distinguishing Russian generational communities shaped by significant historical events (since, for example, the American birth rate surge that led to the formation of the baby boomer generation cohort in relation to the similar period in Russian history, after the Great Patriotic War (World War II) bears no distant resemblance to events taking place in the USA) (Miroshkina, 2017: 186); they criticize it for being too philological and artistic, calling the generation theory of W. Strauss and N. Howe pop-culture. Strauss and N. Howe’s pop-culture theory for its lack of evidence-based empirical data, liberal appropriation of archetype characteristics, and inapplicability to the socio-historical context of our country’s development (Popov, 2018: 312).

Nevertheless, we cannot deny the phenomenal success of this theory worldwide. Moreover, since the emergence of this theory scientists from different countries have intensified efforts to develop their own country-related generational concepts. In this situation, the current excessive popularity of N. Howe and W. Strauss’ generation theory can be explained by the supposed similarity of modern younger generations worldwide as a result of globalization and use of identical information technologies. We believe that the use of this theory for pre-Internet-era generations can and should be implemented with

caution in different historical and social and cultural generational communities, while application of the theory to generations of the digital age is quite acceptable, as it can provide some insights into the trends of formation and development of these generational cohorts.

Differences in values due to differences in history and culture are shown by the most recent results of the World Values Survey. For example, the value of work is very important to Russian informants at 41%, and only 11.4% for American peers; the value of independence is valued by Russians at 36.1%, and by American youth at 56.7%, but the value of obedience is significant for Russians at 17.6%, and 22.4% for American peers. Willingness to fight for their country is valued by Russians at 70.1%, and by US peers at 39.6%. Finally, Russian youth estimate the importance of technology development at 76.4%, while US youth estimate it at 49.5% (Haerpfer, Inglehart et al, 2021). All of this suggests significant differences between Russian and American youth due to a variety of factors. However, there is an undeniable unifying factor: the Internet is the predominant news acquisition platform for Russian and US respondents, all of whom use or have used transnational media until recently, and social media is the main source of daily news. That is the reason why N. Howe and W. Strauss' generational theory can be applied to the youngest cohorts of the digital generation in a cross-country perspective.

We believe it is possible to consider generations from the perspective of a media approach related to the development of media and technology, including digital technology. Being instrumentally specialized, the media approach allows us to explore the problematic fields of media in interaction with the audience, so identifying the essential features and typological characteristics of media generations can make a significant contribution to the development of communication between the journalistic community and the generational audience groups of media. In our view, a well-known work of the Canadian cultural scientist and philologist Marshall McLuhan on the importance of media in human life, their centripetal role in the development of communication and their influence on civilizational transformations and the formation of technogenic civilizations can be a point of reference in formulating ideas about media generations.

According to the scholar, the media or the means of communication are technological extensions of the human being, and the form of the media is more important than the content being broadcast (*The Medium is the Message*). That is, the medium on which the content is transmitted, in other words, becomes the message itself, and this form is crucial in the transformation of consciousness (McLuhan, 1962, 2003:25). The German media theorist Norbert

Bolz, elaborating on Marshall McLuhan’s ideas pointed out the significance of generational differences due to the media: “Which generation one belongs to today depends on which information culture one belongs to. There are no common media now. Different value systems serve different media. Different information worlds are separated by demographic, political and cultural boundaries” (Bolz, 2011: 15).

Digitalization has once again changed the means of communication, including the media. The result of digitalization is a greater compression and condensation of information, the possibility of non-linear use, the almost instantaneous availability of anything and everything, the possibility of easy copying and dissemination, etc. Therefore, in today’s reality, digitalization as a result of the development and transformation of the electrical and the electronic has led to even greater human empowerment, which has given rise to a new way of life – the digital one in which the virtual and the real worlds not only coexist but also mutually influence behavioral patterns.

All the above-mentioned judgments about means of communication, their distribution, duration of use and leading to cardinal successive transformations of individuals and society show that it is possible to single out the phenomenon of media generation, whose essential nature is manifested in the priority sustainable use of one or another media in a particular historical time, with the level of penetration of communication and media being linked to the prevailing type of culture in a particular society.

In this study we adopt the understanding of a holistic media generation as a set of media audiences united by a familiar engaging information and communications technology environment with similarly enduring media preferences and media practices. The formation of the media generation and the formation of behavioral patterns is influenced by formative experiences (a period of socialization), leading to solidarity and a shared destiny of the generation in a particular socio-cultural reality. Conceptualization and the study of media generations have been previously successfully implemented in the large-scale international project Global Media Generations 2000. In the course of this research project three media generations (the “press/radio” generation, the “black and white television” generation, the Internet generation) were identified on the basis of qualitative research methods allowing for the reproduction of subjective points of view and a cross-national analysis was made in 12 countries (Volkmer, 2000).

Volkmer (2003) concludes that each generation perceives and constructs a “different” media world: “Media events are stored away in our brain along

with all the other events happening in our lives and years later our memories of them are only selective and merged with personal life experiences. Apparently, the mass media form mutual worlds of knowledge for generations of people” (Volkmer, 2003: 302). Moreover, “in the youngest generation the media shape ‘worldviews’, not only locally and globally, but also in terms of ‘analogue’ and ‘digital’ knowledge. Whereas the oldest generations revealed ‘analogue’ knowledge, defined their worldviews according to national and cultural specifics, and described media-related memories in great details. The youngest generation shares a great variety of superficial media-related knowledge, when asked to describe this in-depth, they hardly know contexts and facts and use a somewhat ‘universal’ code” (Volkmer, 2003: 16). This is due to the fact that each generation has its own, so to speak, ‘native media’, which are the most understandable to use, have shaped the media consciousness of the media audience and evoke the greatest emotional attachment to them (Bolin, 2014: 111).

As for the definition of the boundaries of generations and the formative experience of the individual, at present, the opinions of scientists differ significantly. We agree with the assertion by Semenova (2001) that the ‘step’ of a generation makes it possible to determine the relationship between the past state of society and its movement towards the future. According to the Russian psychologist Rean (2016), the process of forming the values of generations is considered complete when people reach adolescence (12 years old) and formulate their own individual views of the world. American scientist Nakai believes that “those who were in their teens to early 20s at the time of event may identify it as more influential in their life” (Nakai, 2015: 334).

At the same time, Becker still refers to the years of puberty and adolescence as the most important formative period. In his opinion, “New knowledge and skills are acquired relatively easily during this period, such as working with technical innovations. The stronger the influence of technical innovations at this stage, the better they can be applied in a longer life. This formative period ends at about the 30th year of life. From this moment on, human thought becomes more and more limited by biological and psychological processes” (Becker, 2008: 207). However, Parsons called adolescence a part of the life cycle during which “there first begins to develop a set of patterns and behavior phenomena which involve a highly complex combination of age grading and sex role elements” (Parsons, 1964: 91).

In this case, we agree with the Russian sociologist Radaev, who, in his large-scale population studies, concluded that in the context of recent Russian reality,

“the period when representatives of generations entered adulthood, considering the period of “growing up” (emerging adulthood), or formative years, which is determined by the approximate age interval from 17 to 25 years old”, keeping in mind that adolescence is still between 15 and 17 years old (Radaev, 2000: 32).

Mannheim considered it important not only to study the reproduction of generations, to establish their “rhythms”, but to study, conditionally speaking, “factories of social processes” localized in a particular cultural-historical time. “Concept of a generational location can be re-defined as a generational ‘field’, a field defined by the emergence of a changed relationship between past and present social spaces. Generational style or consciousness can be treated, in like fashion, as generational ‘habitus’ – dispositions that generate and structure individual practices and which emerge and are defined by the forces operating in a particular generational field” (Gilleard, 2004: 114). “A habitus circumscribes a set of dispositions to act and an evaluation frame of perception which are at once historical, social and individual” (Eyerman, & Turner, 1998: 99).

In the context of the historical and cultural approach, the generation is studied in organic unity with the historical era, which, as a ‘neutral nerve’, forms the historical memory of generations and determines the essence of their change, reflecting the diachronic aspect of social life (Alwin, & McCammon, 2003). That is why we agree with Semenova stating that “a historical event, as a fact that had the greatest symbolic influence on the fate of a social community, that determined the ‘spirit of the times’, can be considered a more significant starting point in defining the boundaries of generations, realizing, however, that such boundaries are always quite conventional, as are the types that form them” (Semenova, 2001: 215). Significant cultural and historical events, transformations of society, lived by a person in the formative period, have an impact on the emergence of ‘generational phenomena’. “How people think about the social world around them may depend as much on what was happening in the world at the time they were growing up as it does on what is happening in the present. The reference to this as a generational phenomenon is probably derived from the presumption that historically based influences shaped the development of all or most people growing up at a particular time and that there is nearly always a shared cultural identity that sets them apart from the parental generation” (Alwin, & McCammon, 2003: 24).

From the standpoint of the anthropological approach, the concept of a life path is built into a certain generation not as a simple set of life events, but as a structured phenomenon that spreads to all spheres of life. Therefore, the life path and biography become a certain eventful filling of the generation. Author of

his own concept of generations, McCrindle, summarizes, in this regard: “While people of various ages are living through the same events, the age at which one is exposed to a political shift, technological change or social marker determines how embedded it becomes in one’s psyche and worldview” (McCrindle, 2014: 3).

The simultaneous involvement of a generation in the historical context, but a different degree of involvement, presupposes a different impact of these events on the life of a particular person. The presence of an integrative factor of involvement in events, but at the same time the differences according to other criteria, makes it possible to identify generational groups united in a common generational field with existing individual biographical differences in life. The generation field can be concretized and structured using the generation formation model proposed by Becker. By a pattern or model of a generation, he understands a complex of characteristics at the systemic (size and composition, general culture, organization) and individual level (biographical characteristics, value orientations and behavioral patterns) (Becker, 1992: 222).

Based on the criteria of Becker’s generational patterns in the framework of this study, we distinguish the following five criteria for identifying media generations:

- system characteristics (size and composition of the generation, generational alliances);
- social and technological contexts of the formation of the media generation in Russia (the most important events that took place during their formative period);
- features of socialization, social opportunities during the period of formation that influenced the life path, value orientations and behavioral patterns;
- the state of the media during the formative period;
- the usual practices of media consumption, including in the digital environment.

Media generation of “digital borderline” in Russia: theoretical reflection

For the first time, the generation of the ‘digital borderline’ was identified in our concept of media generations, within which ‘analogue’, ‘digital’ and ‘echo generation’ are distinguished as intermediate (Sumskaya, & Sverdlov, 2019; Solomko, Emchenko et al., 2022: 155). The program for the study of media generations was set out in our different study (Simons et al., 2021). According to

Nikonov (2021), “representatives of borderline generations possessing the values of two generations, at the junction of which they were born, have competitive advantages due to their ability to build relationships and communicate more effectively”.

Mannheim identifies transitional generations as “intermediary”, Becker as “borderline”. Codrington defines representatives of such generations as “cusper” (edge, at the junction) and specifies that while being born at the end of one generation and at the beginning of another, they combine the main characteristics of neighboring generations, but do not look like their typical representatives (Codrington, 2008: 8). Mitchell metaphorically calls cuspers “generational swings” (Mitchell, 2003), Smit uses the term “lodgers”, focusing on the opposition “their own-others” in the context of matching biographical time and identity of typical generation representatives (Smit, 2017). According to the researchers, representatives of such transitional generations are intermediaries, connecting adjacent ones like bridges or glue.

The concept of ‘electronic frontier’ was introduced by Reingold (1993). This means a transition point, in a sense a milestone, a shift from pre-Internet communication to the widespread use of the Internet and digital information technologies, which led to the network era of communication within virtual communities.

We prefer to use the term “digital borderline” as a more accurate one, applying it to generations of media, since in a broad sense “digital” is a continuation of electronic, and the opposition “analog-digital” to the greatest extent reflects the essence of the transition from wave to digital transmission of information. Generations of the digital age tend to shift the socialization period due to an increase in adolescence. Since the media generation of the “digital borderline” is intermediate between ‘analogue’ and ‘digital’, we define its formative period in the 11-27 age range.

The most significant characteristics of this media generation in the Russian context are the following ones:

1. *System characteristics of the media generation.*

This generational group is described most accurately by a Russian sociologist Anipkin: “The originality of [this generation], firstly, manifests itself demographically (there are few representatives of this generation in quantitative terms), and secondly, ideologically (this is a ‘perestroika’ generation with an ambivalent Soviet and Russian identity). “The locus of the core of the last Soviet generation should be shifted to the range of 1971-1973 years of birth” (Anipkin, 2018: 294).

2. *Social and technological contexts of the formation of the media generation in Russia.* There are two important events spanning time that characterize this generation. The first one was the collapse of the USSR changed by the economic policy, perestroika. The formation of this generation was preceded by a complete destruction of the scale of values and ideals formed under socialism. Anipkin emphasizes that this generation “the children of perestroika” found themselves at the turning point of two eras, having finished school and entered universities/colleges in Soviet times, but whose active work biography began in the mid-1990s” [during the reform time, focused on the formation of a market economy, the onset of capitalism – from the author] (ibid: 292). According to Shamis, this is “a strong generation that broke through the changes of the 1990s and 2000s. It has a special uniqueness, because it turned out to be at the turn of the epochs” (Shamis, 2019).

The second was the development of the Internet and the first experiences of digitalization of all spheres of life. Castells states: “In the 1990s, the Internet became the backbone of global computer communication. In the mid-1990s, it connected 44,000 computer networks and about 3.2 million host computers worldwide, with approximately 25 million users and rapidly expanding” (Castells, 2000: 330). By the end of the 1990s, it became obvious that ubiquitous computerization makes changes in all spheres of human life, thus forming a network society. In those years, the development of digital technologies turned computers into universal carriers of culture, and media into new media, justifying the transformation of previous meanings and cultures. Thus, according to Shestakova: “This generation in Russia has felt the whole drama of life, because all the shocks of the new reality ricocheted against them, making it not just sag, but radically rebuild the entire foundation of human existence. A generation that turned out to be beyond the turning point when scientific and technological achievements transforming the life of a person and society appear many times during the life of one generation” (Shestakova, 2017: 48).

3. *Features of socialization, social opportunities during the period of formation that influenced the life path, value orientations and behavioral patterns.*

Childhood and adolescence spent during the stable Soviet era with the verified ideological support of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and youth, including the first years of professional socialization in the reformation period of Perestroika had a significant impact on the value orientations and behavioral patterns of this generation. Let us turn again to the apt statement of Anipkin: “They had expectations and hopes that never came true. They planned some career paths, but completely different ones were in demand. Their

personal future, like the future of the country, turned out to be different from what they had seen then” (Anipkin, 2018: 294). According to Levada, “this is the first generation of pragmatists in a century. They are mainly committed to the existing market and limited political diversity, but not because they preferred them to some other order, but simply because they saw nothing else” (Levada, 2001:14).

4. *The state of the media in the formative period.*

Radical changes in the socio-economic development of the country, of course, led to significant changes in the media. Economic transformations in Russia, the powerful development of the information space and the formation of the information market, the tremendous speed of technological digital innovations have opened opportunities and prospects in the field of electronic media. The commercialization of the media is one of the most significant vectors of development of the media of that period. The transformation of the Soviet production model was the result of a significant reduction in government funding and was based on the introduction of the advertising business model into the practice of the Russian media industry (Vartanova, 2020). According to Kirshin, the editor of the regional newspaper *Chelyabinsk Rabochy*, “the change in the social system naturally led to a change in the ideological base and professional guidelines of our journalists” (Kirshin, 2004: 14).

Among general trends in the development of the media of that period the adoption of the first law on the media in the history of the Russian Federation, in many respects the independence of the founders of the media from the state, and therefore an atmosphere of free thought, pluralism of opinions, and rare availability of political information should be mentioned. In those years, there was a clear tendency of a rapid growth in the number of newspapers and magazines (both socio-political, advertising, and entertainment “tabloid”, including “erotic”, etc.), because periodicals were read by almost 90% of the country’s population, the most powerful media holding was formed, VGTRK (All-Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company), which still holds the leading position in the Russian media industry. At the same time, a significant decrease in circulation of newspapers and magazines was noted, which was due to the need for independent funding by the editorial teams of the media outlets, and a decrease in the purchasing power of Russians in the context of the collapse of the ruble and hyperinflation.

The difficult and sometimes contradictory process of transformation and development of the media during this period was marked by new opportunities in the development of the industry, capitalization of production, a more

meaningful understanding of the audience's demands in the conditions of the emerging market economy, redistribution of the infrastructure of the media industry, the introduction of new forms and methods of media activity in connection with the development of information technologies opportunities for digitalization.

It is important to note another phenomenon that was a consequence of the development of the Internet the emergence of social networks. Their distribution and transformation took place in several waves: from simple and local social network resources of the first wave in the 1990-2000s (Livejournal, LunarStorm, Cyworld), the emergence of specialized social networks of the first five-year plan of the new millennium (MySpace, Professional.ru) during the second wave, to the social networks today, primarily focused on communication and self-expression, including Russian networks VKontakte and Odnoklassniki (2006) in the third wave.

5. *Habitual media consumption practices, including in the digital environment.*

This media generation grew up when television (first black and white, and then color) was present in every family, in every household. The parents of the younger generation of the “digital borderline” ardent adherents of the print media and the few state TV channels. Therefore, watching TV for this generation has become a family-forming, such a cozy holiday of education, enlightenment and culture, a kind of admission into adulthood.

Today, representatives of the “digital borderline” generation prefer ‘background’ television viewing and radio listening to a greater extent, because the media have become a kind of “audio-visual environment with which we constantly and automatically interact. Very often television first of all means the ‘presence’ of other people in the house a precious property in a society where more and more people live alone. Usually listening to radio broadcasts and watching television programs “are combined with homework, common meals, social interactions. It is an almost constantly present background, the fabric of them life.

According to Shestakova, this generation, knowing the era of slow changes and pre-digital existence, nevertheless “jumped into the outgoing tram and managed to keep up with all the innovations. Representatives of generation X are active users of digital technologies, but they are not yet a ‘digital’ generation” (Shestakova, 2017: 50). They know and remember about the possibility of writing with a pen and compare it with working on a computer, testing all the possibilities. There is an element of pleasure for these people in the new info

communication reality: computers, smartphones, Skype, and Internet. “They are delighted, seeing all these miracles taking place, and cannot enjoy all the opportunities that have opened up” (ibid).

The results of a study led by Radaev show that the share of users of personal computers of this media generation in 2000-2018 increased from 45 to 77%. “In general, in 2007-2018. The share of Internet users in the reform generation has grown from 54 to 84%. Share of smartphone owners in 2010-2018 increased from 3 to 60%. By 2018, the share of social media users in this generation was 62% (for example, compared with American peers of generation X - 75%), while women used social networks much more actively than men (70 and 52%, respectively). Actually, these generations began to use social networks at the age of 34-36” (Radaev, 2020: 42).

In 2016, representatives of the “digital borderline” generation in rural areas access the Internet via mobile devices only 34%, and only 56% are involved in social networks (Radaev, 2019). Representatives of this generation in social networks are looking for news about domestic politics, economics and the environment (Gudkov, Zorkaya, Kochergina, Pipiya, & Ryseva, 2020: 88). However, already in 2020, the most significant increase in the use of social networks occurs in the age group 40-54 years old (Volkov, & Goncharov, 2020: 144).

At the same time, the Russian research group of the Internet Development Fund nevertheless concludes that “the general pattern of digital competence since 2013 among parents [representatives of the generation of the “electronic borderline”- from the authors] has remained unchanged: with a general high level of knowledge, they have there is a certain lack of skills and responsibility and a pronounced unwillingness to improve their knowledge of the Internet” (Issledovaniye...).

Research methodology and characteristics of the group of respondents for empirical research

Based on an analysis of the dates of the emergence and period of digital media technologies in Russia, the period of their adoption by the Russian media industry and our application of our knowledge of the formative period of the media generation, 30 informants born in 1964-1983 were invited to participate in this study. Considering the importance of regional factors for the Russian media industry, understanding the uneven development of territories in the context of “centre-periphery” (Gladkova, Vartanova, & Ragnedda, 2020; Zubarevich, 2017), the group of informants included representatives of the media generation living in large metropolitan areas of Russia and peripheral

territories. In addition, the survey involved respondents who moved from provincial territories to megacities during the formative period.

In this situation, we focused on the statement of Radaev (2019): “within one generation, significant differences in behavioural practices generated by the characteristics of the external environment persist. In less developed communities (for example, in rural ones), the environment is more conservative and traditionalist, there are fewer changes and at a slower rate”. In addition, M. Anikina’s conclusion about the role of settlement type as a more or less favourable environment for the formation of a media culture of media users is important for us (Anikina, 2017:56).

In our work, following Radaev and Anikina, we will proceed from the assumption that new behavioural practices within one generation are distributed unevenly and differences in the level of development of territories/settlements may be superimposed on generational differences.

The work carried out, in fact, was a qualitative non-representative study, the results of which do not allow a statistically accurate assessment of the entire generational population. However, the selection of respondents was carried out in accordance with the requirements for a distinctive sample, the concept of data saturation or data redundancy, “selected by representativeness of concepts” (Strauss, & Corbin, 2001:158).

Therefore, we consider the results obtained to be comparable, allowing us to discursively formulate a certain framework that reflects the essential characteristics of the “digital borderline” as generations in Russia and draw conclusions based on the general logic of the informants’ narrative.

So, the primary sample of respondents included 10 people who were born and live in the Russian province, 10 were born in the provinces, moved to a metropolis, 10 were the indigenous inhabitants of the metropolis).

At the first stage of the study, all participants were asked to answer two questions:

1. What Russian events during your growing up years left the greatest mark on your life?
2. At what age did you learn to use a computer and the first office programs? What is the reason for the need for this training/learning, how did it happen and how long did it take to form the skills of a confident user?

Thus, we tried to follow the technology of Semenova (2003: 219) and based on subjective indicators, that is, mentioning significant events that most closely resemble the idea of a generation to determine the approximate boundaries of the media generation.

At the second stage with 30 informants who showed the most “significant presence” markers of the digital borderline media generation, identified theoretically, and realizing that a certain density of empirical evidence has been achieved, in-depth interviews were conducted to identify and clarify events and facts modeling generations. Thus, the group of informants included 30 people (9 men, 23 women). 25 informants have higher education, 3 secondary, 2 secondary specialized. The sphere of employment includes: 7 representatives of the creative sphere; 6 representatives of private entrepreneurship; 5 representatives of science sphere; 3 representatives of primary and secondary education sphere; 3 representatives are self-employed; 2 representatives of municipal government; 1 representative is a housewife; 1 representative of the law sphere; 1 representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1 representative of the blue-collar occupations.

With this group, we proceeded to the empirical part of the study. The results, which will be described in the section below, showed that participants born in 1964 and 1983 identified the era of growing up with factors other than those that we identified theoretically and described in the structure of generational patterns. At the same time, most respondents named the factors that we formulated, which nevertheless confirmed the correctness of our reasoning.

Results

Firstly, the representatives of the digital borderline generation in this particular case include informants who were born between 1965 and 1982. Secondly, among the most significant events of the formative period that influenced the worldview and the life path, value orientations and behavioral patterns of the respondents is Perestroika (1985-1991) as a “sharp change in the course of the country’s development”, which causes an ambivalent attitude to what happened. On the one hand, these are negative memories of a “*dark, terrible time*” (food coupons, queues for groceries, the collapse of Yeltsin era, the destruction of the secondary education system, and on the other, pride in a country that has entered a new stage of development, the opening of interstate borders and the ability to travel around the world, access to the entire world heritage, holidays discos, understanding that “now we will be 100 times happier because we have the opportunity to achieve what we want.” 25 participants out of 30 note the significance of this event, and there are still more negative memories than positive ones.

In addition, the Putsch and the collapse of the USSR in 1991 are also highly significant for the generation. Some of the respondents’ recollections:

“Fear, anxiety for the future”, “The picture of the world collapsed, the unshakable collapsed”, “The programmable future was gone”, “I did not suspect that somewhere abroad there was another life altogether, but I had to learn about it. By the way, she turned out to be better than she thought”, “admission to the pioneers did not happen, and it was so important for me”, “I wrote an essay that I dream of joining the CPSU, which was read to all Komsomol members, and suddenly the CPSU was gone. The dream of several years has collapsed”, years of hunger, “delayed wages even in budgetary organizations”) 12 of respondents note the significance of these events (negative evaluative vocabulary prevails).

Finally, the respondents consider the advent of the Internet and information technology to be an important milestone in their formative period. All 30 of the respondents received their first experience of acquaintance with a computer during their school years in computer science lessons, but this gave a minimal result. As a result, 28 of respondents now know how to use a computer, 7 respondents learned how to use it independently during their student years to prepare coursework and diplomas. The rest learned to use special computer literacy courses in the first years of their professional activity to fulfil professional tasks or to prepare dissertation research (4 people), to fulfil the need for computer games (1 person). 21 respondents learned to use within 2-3 months (simple office programs). For one respondent, *“a personal computer at home is an indicator of wealth and status”*, therefore the respondent *“married the owner of a computer”*.

When asked about the presence of a computer at home, the frequency and purpose of its use, the answers were received that all of respondents have at least one computer in the house, only 1 person does not use a computer at home. Half of all respondents use a computer at home every day, but if in the provinces this is 3 people, then in the metropolis it is 7 people, and the time of interaction with the computer is 8 hours a day or more. For 7 respondents, *“the phone is my home computer, which is used for communication and messaging.”* For those who use a computer at home not every day, as a rule, they resort to it to work (perform professional functions), print something in case of urgent need, communication, shopping, searching, etc.

Thus, we have confirmed the significance of the Russian reform changes in the 1990s and the years of mastering information technologies, therefore, it seems, we can initially identify the respondents as representatives of the “digital borderline” generation and continue the study of the media activity of this media generation.

With regard to media consumption and media use practices, the situation is as follows.

Television viewing has a large role in the media practices overall (Lopes da Silva, 2020; Vikhrova et al, 2021) and specifically when it comes to digital borderline generation. The top five TV channels for the whole sample are: Russia 1 with 15 respondents; Channel One with – 14 people; Russia 24 with 7 respondents; TNT and STS with 6 respondents; Pyatnitsa and NTV with 4 respondents; and Karusel with 3 respondents.

There are differences in media consumption among provincial, urban and migrant audiences. In particular, for the provincial audience, Channel One remains the undisputed leader in television viewing. For other viewers in this sample of respondents this is Russia 1 and Russia 24. Residents of the provinces are more inclined to watch regional TV channels and channels such as Domashniy, Hunter and Fisherman, while the “migrant” audience is more inclined towards film channels such as Nashe Novoye Kino, Russkiy Roman, and others. Television viewers, natives of megacities, prefer business TV channels (e.g. RBC), Animal Planet (stopped broadcasting in Russia due to sanctions on 09.03.2022), RT (broadcasting is blocked throughout the European Union after the start of the special military operation in Ukraine); international TV channels CNN, BBC.

All respondents listen to Avtoradio, Russkoe Radio and Radio Dacha. But there are also clear differences. If in the provinces the group of leaders includes Radio Chanson, then native inhabitants of megapolises prefer such radio stations as Echo of Moscow (ceased operation as of 04.03.2021), Radio SI (Yekaterinburg), Radio Monte Carlo. The audience of "migrants" prefers radio stations such as Silver Rain, Na semi hills, Radio record, Business FM, Zvezda, Detskoye radio, Taxi FM, and online Radio 101.ru.

Traditional print media is hardly used by the digital borderline audience, except for provincial readers of municipal newspapers and mass papers such as Argumenty i Fakty.

However, digital media is actively used by the audience. All respondents are fans of Yandex services, so Yandex-news and Yandex-Dzen are a priority for them. Provincial readers turn to digital versions of the same municipal newspapers (e.g. Nyazepetrovskie Vesti, Satkinski Rabochy, Magnezitovets), mass papers (like Komsomolskaya Pravda) and quality publications (e.g. Kommersant) as well as numerous communities in social networks (for example, Podslushano social project, automobile and cookery forums). The migrant and native metropolitan audiences prefer online digital media projects and personal channels on YouTube.

Let us move on to diagnosing activity in social networks. 27 respondents are registered in various social networks. The rating of the importance / relevance of social networks for all respondents is:

1. VKontakte – 27 users.
2. Instagram* – 14 users.
3. Odnoklassniki – 12 users.
4. Facebook* – 10 users.
5. Telegram – 5 users.
6. Moi MIR – 2 users.
7. Professional.ru, ResearchGate – 1 user.

It can be stated that the social network “My MIR” is used by some, but only by residents of the province. The importance of the social network “Odnoklassniki” is decreasing among the residents of the megalopolis compared to the residents of the provinces, and for the residents of the megalopolis, the social network Facebook* is becoming more and more important. The low level of use of the social network VKontakte by residents of the province is not confirmed by our research. On the contrary, we can attest to the popularity of this social network among the residents of the provinces both based on our research and on the basis of personal daily life observations, since one of the authors of this study is a typical representative “digital borderline”. Non-indigenous residents of metropolitan areas are registered in greater numbers and on different social networks than indigenous residents of the province and metropolis.

Finally, the study revealed that the activity of the studied media generation in social media is more related to professional activity than to the territory of residence. It is perhaps important to mention another result of this study. 24 respondents indicated that they felt more comfortable writing with a ballpoint pen than typing on a computer. And 3 out of those often write with a pen due to the requirements of their profession. All provincial residents do not write notes on their phones, but 7 out of the metropolitan residents noted that they take notes on their iPhones and androids.

Thus, in our opinion, representatives of the media generation of the “digital borderline” managed to very successfully “immigrate” to the digital space and actively use the possibilities of digitalization and communication in the network media space. By using the media, they seem to be successfully fulfilling emerging needs. This finding seems to be in consonance with the results of another large-scale study carried out by scholars from Lomonosov Moscow State University,

* Belongs to Meta company, banned on the territory of the Russian Federation.

which, based on a rethinking of the theory of use and satisfaction, concludes that media practices are social (Mediapotrebleniye, 2021). Finally, it also confirms the conclusion of Bourdieu that “habitus which have been produced by different modes of generation cause group to experience as natural and reasonable practices or aspirations” (Bourdieu, 1985: 78).

Conclusion

During the study, the media generation was studied from the standpoint of sociological, historical cultural, anthropological and media approaches, the essential characteristics of the media generation of the “digital borderline” were revealed based on generational patterns of the media generation using the conceptual framework of Becker. The most significant characteristic of this Russian generation is the ambivalent Soviet and Russian identity. The socio-economic transformations of the 1990s and the ubiquitous spread of the Internet and information technologies, which led to the ‘digital lifestyle’, had a colossal impact in the formative period of the generational group. Being adherents of analogue television in childhood and adolescence, representatives of the media generation, with some effort, have mastered digital technologies and are actively using many of the achievements of digitalization, including social networks.

The results showed that members of the “digital borderline” are both active viewers and listeners of traditional media, as well as users of digital media. Of course, the media practices of urban and rural informants differ, but nevertheless they have significant conceptual similarities that allow them to belong to the same media generation. User activity is mostly represented by the so-called ‘immigrants’ who, during the formative period, moved from provincial territories to megacities. It seems that this is the result of adaptation strategies, the need to be in demand in the new cultural and territorial environment.

Thus, the results of the study showed that theoretical ideas about the media generation of the “digital borderline” are supported by empirical data. We can state not only the transitional nature of the media generation from “analogue” to “digital”, but also identify this media audience as a kind of frontier, but not in the Turnerian sense of the economic and geographical term, but in the cultural, temporal and virtual-spatial senses. Andreeva identifies the frontier as “the interpenetration and contradictory combination of different cultural and civilizational practices” (Andreeva, 2014: 12), calling cultural space a special communicative universe. The media generation of the “digital borderline” is then a frontier that accommodates ambivalent behavioural media patterns in media communication space, occupying an intermediate position between stable “analogue” and “digital” media generations.

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