

# opción

Revista de Antropología, Ciencias de la Comunicación y de la Información, Filosofía,  
Lingüística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

Año 35, 2019, Especial N°

# 20

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1587/ ISSNe: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



Universidad del Zulia  
Facultad Experimental de Ciencias  
Departamento de Ciencias Humanas  
Maracaibo - Venezuela

# The specifics of the Russian media process in the context of transformations

**Natalya Rinatovna Balynskaya<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University,  
Magnitogorsk, Russia  
[n.balynskaya@mail.ru](mailto:n.balynskaya@mail.ru)

**Nina Vladimirovna Kuznetsova<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup>Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University,  
Magnitogorsk, Russia  
[nina.kuznetsova.69@inbox.ru](mailto:nina.kuznetsova.69@inbox.ru)

**Dmitry Borisovich Simakov<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>3</sup>Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University,  
Magnitogorsk, Russia  
[professor-simakov@mail.ru](mailto:professor-simakov@mail.ru)

**Anastasiya Grigoryevna Vasilyeva<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>4</sup>Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University,  
Magnitogorsk, Russia  
[anastasia-vasilieva@mail.ru](mailto:anastasia-vasilieva@mail.ru)

**Irina Sergeevna Akulova<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>5</sup>Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University,  
Magnitogorsk, Russia  
[akulova.i.s@bk.ru](mailto:akulova.i.s@bk.ru)

**Larisa Vladimirovna Orinina**

Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University,  
Magnitogorsk, Russia

**Mariia Gennadjevna Kashuba**

Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University,  
Magnitogorsk, Russia

## Abstract

The author examines the specifics of the Russian media process in the modern context and predicts its further development via the functional approach. As a result, despite the invariability of functions

of stakeholders in the political process, there is still a manifestation of innovations in the mass media process with the involvement of all the members of modern society living under political laws. In conclusion, society, on the contrary, is increasingly using the political informer function, urging the media not only to accumulate opinions on pressing problems but also to produce them to the authorities in a consistent manner.

**Keywords:** Political Governance, Mass Media, Process.

## Los detalles del proceso de los medios rusos en el contexto de las transformaciones

### Resumen

El autor examina los aspectos específicos del proceso de los medios de comunicación rusos en el contexto moderno y predice su desarrollo posterior a través del enfoque funcional. Como resultado, a pesar de la invariabilidad de las funciones de los interesados en el proceso político, todavía hay una manifestación de innovaciones en el proceso de los medios de comunicación con la participación de todos los miembros de la sociedad moderna que viven bajo leyes políticas. En conclusión, la sociedad, por el contrario, está utilizando cada vez más la función de informador político, instando a los medios de comunicación no solo a acumular opiniones sobre problemas apremiantes, sino también a presentarlos a las autoridades de manera consistente.

**Palabras clave:** Gobernanza política, medios de comunicación, proceso.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Russian political process at the present stage of development of public relations is undergoing a systemic

transformation, with quite contradictory trends manifesting therein. The first one is that political governance is passing through another democratic stage: the procedure for establishing new political parties has been simplified and gubernatorial elections have been reintroduced. Thus, changes in political governance, which started with passage of new Federal law On General Principles of Local Government Organization in the Russian Federation that markedly differs from the antecedent one, partially outlined a development paradigm of democratic tendencies. On the one hand, it (the law) has considerably reinforced the centralized (federal) principle in regulating the key issues of local government, filled it with uniform rules and unified provisions.

At the same time, the list of provisions that were previously regulated by the subordinate entities of the Federation was shortened. The number of municipalities increased to 24.5 thousand (instead of previously existing 12 thousand of municipalities) (Lozovsky, 2010). On the contrary, the second tendency suggests a certain limitation in the will expression of citizens. Thus, according to researchers, consecutive refusals of municipalities to hold direct mayoral election are nothing but a rollback of democratic tendencies. In this regard, they note that today the problem is inconsistency and lack of systematized legislation in the Russian Federation on local government. A number of federal, regional and sectoral legislative and other regulatory legal acts contain provisions that do not comply with the constitutional status of local government. There is no need to explain the importance of an open dialogue in this situation and discussion of the current

situation on the part of all the political stakeholders, since this is the only way to implement a new, innovative policy not only in the mass media sector but also in general political governance in Russia.

The media undoubtedly serves as the basis for this dialogue. A situation in the mass media that would ensure equal access to the opportunity to express opinions is in many ways essential for political accord in society is the mainstay of innovative management policy and an indicator of its development and implementation in the country, since numerous political stakeholders are involved in the mass media activities (Mikhailova, 2014). According to the author, the research problem to solve is to define the development specifics of the entire media process in Russia through sore points in the mass media functioning at the current development stage of social relations, as well as to predict its further development from the perspective of all political actors: from the authorities and society to the media themselves.

## **2. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS**

Many researchers refer to the issue of innovation in information management in Russia. For example, the Russian mass media science places emphasis on the relationship between the government and the media. The researchers note that the media is an information field whereby an image of power is created. There is obviously a certain coordination procedure established by stakeholders in information

relations in this system. The authorities are the main stakeholder and in many respects, a customer of image-building modules promoted into the public consciousness. According to researcher Bolshakov (2014), there is a growing interest in online media. Today people choose to read the news on the Internet over buying printed editions. The population that is accustomed to printed press will soon shrink into insignificance and go to the net. In the wake of the crisis, some editions have ceased to exist as printed.

However, they actively and, equally important, successfully continue their development in the online environment. The next trend that is emerging is a subscription to electronic editions, that is, access to reliable and verifiable information becomes fee-based. As soon as the issue of payment for information appears on the agenda, one has to face the institutional aspect of the problem under discussion. Such stakeholders as the state and business can be behind the solid investment. Moreover, this is not only related to the mass media sector but also many others. Economic researchers' reason about this, thereby concluding that in this aspect the key role belongs to the state as an institutional innovator. Thus, the whole diversity of stands and views on the issues of management in the field of information can be reduced to several ones, according to the author (Khmara, 2013).

The first theory is the leading role of the state as the main actor of innovation policy in any area, including the sphere of information management. All legislative innovations are congruent with this paradigm, which, taking turns to expand and narrow the democratic

tendencies, are provided with certain informational support in the media, thereby channeling mass media streams in a certain way, creating a new information reality, shaping the attitude to political events on the part of other stakeholders in the information exchange. The second theory is the leading role of society in the dialogue on landmark issues. Here, the introduction of the knowledge economy concept into the scientific environment in the globalization context may be an implicit basis that symbolizes adding knowledge to such traditional factors of production as labor and capital ... Scientists note that innovations increasingly appear at the junction of various regions of science and become interdisciplinary.

Having reflected the changes that have occurred, the innovation process models began to take a non-linear form, launching a feedback mechanism. It seems that inter-branch information connections between completely different areas are possible only in dialogue, through communication of different social groups in the context of their access to sources of production and dissemination of information. It is in this way that science can be popularized, and a progressive process in the information exchange by different stakeholders in social relations can be established (Balynskaya & Kovalyova, 2014).

Another theory deserves attention. It specifies that the leading role in the information exchange belongs to the media themselves. Some researchers believe that the media are full-fledged subjects of political interaction and that they have functions in the political management that are different from other stakeholders: they are both

full-fledged actors that produce information and targeted objects of influence from both the government and society and means of transmitting information from the authorities to the population. However, other authors disagree arguing that as soon as the media begin to act as an independent stakeholder in political management, they are put under tremendous pressure and the result is a manipulative component in politics.

Nevertheless, the author considers it possible to formulate the theoretical position of the media as a full-fledged stakeholder in political management. The three theoretical positions outlined above are not new to science; various scientific schools in the mass media theory have been doing research into them. Thus, St. Petersburg journalistic school inclines more to the first theory, while the second and third ones are discussed in the framework of research conducted by Yekaterinburg scientists. Without disputing the opinions of the researchers cited above, the author will nevertheless make an attempt at some system generalization and deduce one more theory, tentatively referring to it as subject-functional. The title suggests that functionality method will lay its groundwork (Vydrin, 2013; Voyevodina, 2014).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The author has designated her approach as functional. According to the author, this is exactly what makes it possible to consider the specifics of the Russian media process in the modern



context. The modern political reality is increasingly demonstrating that Russia is going through a period of systemic political transformations. There is variety of reasons globalization processes that include Russia in the international legal framework; the imposition of economic sanctions prompting the search for developmental resources for numerous industries at the domestic level; a search for self-identification on the part of political actors. Referring to each specific prerequisite to political changes, one can infer a vast number of cause-and-effect relationship patterns. However, this approach is unlikely to provide a systemic insight into the totality of changes and their consequences (Avdeyeva, 2014).

Thus, political governance has always been the main function of power structures. Certainly, a legal or political initiative can also be expressed from bottom up, but upgrading any of such initiatives to the category of mandatory rules is a prerogative of the authorities. Despite the globalization trends and continuously blurring informational borderlines between states, the main government function remains unaltered. The function of the media as another stakeholder in political interaction also remains the same. The Western media arose from the need of society for economic information exchange, whereas in Russia – from the initiative of the authorities to mainstream their own political actions. In any case, both modes of origin are related through the informing function.

From such a statement of the question, invariance of the function of another political stakeholder, which is society, becomes

apparent (Balynskaya, 2009). The society consumes information from all sorts of media, accumulates a reaction to it and in the form of some kind of public inquiry produces it to the authorities either as validation of the chosen political agenda or as a demand or disagreement with the declared stance. If the functions of stakeholders in the political process remain constant, in what way is the Russian media process specific? The author believes that it is not about changing the functions of political stakeholders but rather about a shift in each stakeholder's thinking that has taken place and about switching to innovative methods of experience sharing. Let us dwell upon each political stakeholder in due sequence (Kanayeva, 2015).

#### **4. RESULTS**

According to the author, government agencies, that is, public authorities as the key political force in the country have not changed their function: they continue to legislate and their will is binding for all the stakeholders in political interaction. However, the very methods of this interaction are changing. For example, the power structures have to learn different forms of communication with the public, such as the Internet, that were not known to them until recently. Researchers note that today, a government official is expected to effectively use new information technologies (IT) in their professional activities, to be adaptable to the rapidly changing IT, to be able to develop themselves and to find effective solutions to managerial tasks using IT, with

creativity and innovation when using them ... These requirements reflect in the Federal Target Program Electronic Russia 2002-2010.

Public representatives are also forced to change their methods of influence on the power structures. Various social media and interactive websites are not the only examples of such innovations. A new method of influencing the power structures has appeared – through electronic appeals on the President's website. According to the author, this innovation is fraught with a multitude of problems in addition to benefits. On the one hand, this is undoubtedly an effective form of communication between society and the government, since a quick response from the supreme authority elicits a positive response in the population, enhances confidence in the authorities and strengthens the belief in a speedy and just solution of the problems that arise.

On the other hand, the very possibility of such appeal deprives the population of the need to understand the hierarchical structure and to rank the existing problems. The supreme authorities are thereby addressed for issues that are within the mandate of the regional and local authorities. But, the desire of the authorities to appear as a kind of almost magical power capable of cutting the knot of all problems at once forces the mass media stream into a rather manipulative channel, since a deliberately positive image of power is created in this case. This function of the media is not close to objective informing but rather to political advertising, which is neither bad nor good alone – it is simply premised on different principles.

Thus, the media in the political process are beginning to perform the function of a political manipulator along the power-society vertical. However, the specificity of the Russian media process at the present stage also lies in the fact that, along with the reverse society-power vertical, the media implement their other function – that of a political informer. By accumulating and displaying the opinions of various stakeholder groups about political events, the media informs the authorities about the public response to power initiatives. Obviously, one is aware that there is a certain amount of capital behind each specific media source, which imposes certain restrictions on the expression of a particular opinion.

In this case, when referring to the media, one talks about a generalized political stakeholder that comprises the entire set of printed, audiovisual, and electronic media. As can be seen, the media functions in the political process do not alter. The media continue to premise the informing of the public or authorities on objective (as in analytical genres), non-objective (as in advertising genres), and purely subjective (as in author's programs or personal websites) principles. The choice of an appropriate model of media behavior depends on the political agenda they are facing. For example, if a media source is in charge of the image of certain territory in the eyes of the authorities, the mass media flow created by the media will not be objective because the development of the entire territory depends on how the information is shaped.

It is worthwhile dwelling in more detail on the functions of society in the political process in the context of transformations. As already mentioned, this stakeholder's function is to express opinions about political events and make adjustments to the current policy. This is especially important because during turns in the electoral cycles, the society, while making its choice, adjusts the political agenda in the country, and these cycles have noticeably extended: the term of office of the State Duma and the President has increased. The function of adjusting the political line has remained assigned to the society. However, the methods to implement it were transformed. Traditional methods of expressing public opinion were public appeals to the media and speeches at demonstrations and rallies. Modern life shows that such methods are receding into the past.

For example, the media legislation requires that government officials respond to appeals or criticism addressed to them from the media within a certain period of time. Is it worth mentioning that this rule does not merely fail to be observed in Russia, it is even defied? There is also a rational explanation for this: in a turbulent flow of information, it is sometimes impossible to track the very appeal to which the public official is obliged to respond. That is why this method has long ceased to be effective.

Rallies and demonstrations are also retiring as the social media advance, connecting people into faceless communities on a virtual basis and giving them a sense of unity and involvement in events. Going to a rally to express one's own opinion is no longer necessary –

today it is enough to come into view on social media or vote on a website for or against an initiative in order to obtain satisfaction from seeming participation in politics. Thus, a unique situation is observed: despite the invariability of functions of stakeholders in the political process, there is still a manifestation of innovations in the mass media process with the involvement of all the members of modern society living under political laws.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

Thus, it can be summarized that the functional approach to the Russian media process in the context of political transformations suggests that there has not been any change in the functions of political actors. However, it is safe to talk about innovations in the media process. The reason is changed methods of exhibiting information activity on the part of all stakeholders in political relations. The power structures have altered their media behavior, thereby using the manipulative aspect of media activities. Society, on the contrary, is increasingly using the political informer function, urging the media not only to accumulate opinions on pressing problems but also to produce them to the authorities in a consistent manner. The question deserves to be asked about how the media position themselves in the new context. Informing is the main function of the media. It is its implementation that allows the media to act as a kind of space for dialogue between various political actors.

However, informing can be on an objective and non-objective basis. Modern mass media continue the search for self-identification, effectively adjusting to the position of independent political actors and at the same time trying to become full-fledged stakeholders themselves. In any case, it is obvious that the specifics of the Russian media process in the context of political transformations is a highly topical issue for further study, requiring joint effort from political scientists, media theorists, sociologists, and historians in comprehending the systemic transformations taking place in the mass media process at the current development stage of public relations.

## REFERENCES

- AVDEYEVA, A. 2014. **Institutional aspects of economy formation based on knowledge**. Innovation Herald Region. N<sup>o</sup>1. USA.
- BALYNSKAYA, N. 2009. **The specifics of the media involvement in the political process in contemporary Russia: a monograph**. Yekaterinburg: Ural Academy of Public Service. P. 183. Russia.
- BALYNSKAYA, N., & KOVALYOVA, M. 2014. **The specifics of creating an image of power in the media in the context of information technology progress (case studies of the Chelyabinsk region)**. Management Issues. Vol.6, N<sup>o</sup> 12. Russia.
- BOLSHAKOV, S. 2014. **Trends in the Runet space development**. Economics and Politics. Vol.1, N<sup>o</sup> 2: 43-47. USA.
- KANAYEVA, E. 2015. **The role of information technology in the management process**. Economics and Politics. Vol. 1, N<sup>o</sup> 4: 51-52. USA.
- KHMARA, Y. 2013. **Local government as one of the constitutional foundations in Russia: vectors and development prospects**. The Constitution of new Russia is 20 years old: origins, theory and modern practice: materials of the All-Russian Scientific and

- Practical Conference on October 25. Chelyabinsk: RANEPa, Chelyabinsk branch. pp. 82-88. Russia.
- LOZOVSKY, B. 2010. **Manipulative technologies of influencing the media: author's abstract of PhD thesis.** Yekaterinburg: UrFU. Russia.
- MIKHAILOVA, A. 2014. **Innovation process: history and current modeling trends.** Innovation Herald Region. N° 3, pp. 22-27. USA.
- VOYEVODINA, O. 2014. **The investment environment impact on the level of innovative development of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.** Innovation Herald Region. N° 3. USA.
- VYDRIN, I. 2013. **The evolution of local government in Russia: results, problems and prospects.** Municipality: Economics and Management. Vol. 1, N° 4: 5-11. Germany.





**UNIVERSIDAD  
DEL ZULIA**

---

## **opción**

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales  
Año 35, Especial N° 20, (2019)

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.  
Maracaibo - Venezuela

[www.luz.edu.ve](http://www.luz.edu.ve)

[www.serbi.luz.edu.ve](http://www.serbi.luz.edu.ve)

[produccioncientifica.luz.edu.ve](http://produccioncientifica.luz.edu.ve)