

**THE USE OF CONTEMPORARY MASS MEDIA TEXTS FOR THE FORMATION  
OF CRITICAL THINKING IN RUSSIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES**

**Murodkhodzhaeva Malika Alisherovna**

Department of Russian Language and Literature

Non-State Educational Institution

University of Economics and Pedagogy

Faculty of Foreign Languages

[Malikamurodxodjayeval797@gmail.com](mailto:Malikamurodxodjayeval797@gmail.com)

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20542416>

**Abstract**

The article explores in detail the scientific and methodological potential of integrating contemporary mass media texts into Russian language teaching to develop students' critical thinking. The author substantiates the necessity of transitioning from reproductive forms of text analysis to analytical ones, driven by the specific nature of the modern information space. The publication reveals the stages of linguomethodological analysis of media texts, describes techniques for detecting verbal manipulation, language norm deformations, and hidden presuppositions, and proposes a comprehensive algorithm for organizing language and literature classes based on the critical evaluation of media discourse.

**Keywords:** methods of teaching Russian, media text, critical thinking, media education, linguistic text analysis, speech manipulation, philological culture.

**Introduction**

The contemporary system of strategic guidelines in middle and higher philological education requires a significant modernization of classical approaches to teaching the Russian language. In conditions of total digitalization, exponential growth of information volumes, and the aggressive impact of the media environment on the minds of the younger generation, the traditional focus of language education, aimed exclusively at the mechanical memorization of spelling rules and punctuation algorithms, proves clearly insufficient. A graduate of a modern educational institution must possess not just narrow-format literacy, but a developed linguistic reflection, the ability to perform a semantic audit of incoming information, recognize hidden markers of ideological or commercial pressure, and thus possess a high level of critical thinking.

Critical thinking in the context of linguistic didactics is understood as an individual's ability to analyze the structure of information flow, evaluate the reliability and logical consistency of arguments, uncover subtextual components, reconstruct authorial intentions, and formulate independent, reasoned conclusions based on deep textual analysis. The discourse of contemporary mass media serves as the most productive, dynamic, and didactically valuable base for forming this cognitive skill in Russian language classes. The media text, being a syncretic phenomenon, instantly captures the current state of the linguistic system, the modes of public consciousness, and the newest speech practices, making it an ideal object for critical philological dissection.

**Theoretical Foundations of Integrating Media Texts into Linguodidactics**

The theoretical foundation of the research is based on the convergence of the principles of communicative-activity language teaching, concepts of media education, and the theory of critical thinking. Within modern linguistics, a media text is viewed not as a static graphic

fixation of words, but as a three-dimensional, multi-level communicative event functioning within a specific sociocultural context and possessing a complex pragmatic setting. The texts of contemporary mass media (print periodicals, online analytical publications, news feeds of information agencies, high-quality multimedia blogging) represent the so-called "living language," which is in a state of continuous functional-stylistic change.

For a long time, the traditional methodology of teaching the Russian language relied primarily on academic, exemplary texts of nineteenth and twentieth-century fiction. Admittedly, these materials are indispensable for shaping aesthetic taste and mastering master copy syntactic structures. However, they do not reflect the specific nature of those speech environments in which a modern young person finds themselves daily. The collision of a student with the language of contemporary media without developed critical analysis skills leads to an uncritical assimilation of speech clichés, linguistic deformations, manipulative stereotypes, and aggressive discursive practices.

The inclusion of media texts into the canvas of Russian language lessons pursues a dual goal. On the one hand, standard linguistic tasks are solved: the study of functional stylistics, lexicology, word-building methods, and syntactic models of the publicistic style. On the other hand, an essential meta-subject function is realized: the formation of analytical literacy, the ability to deconstruct a text, separate facts from authorial assessments, detect logical inconsistencies, and understand the mechanisms of the linguistic construction of reality.

#### **Linguistic Markers of Manipulative Influence in Media as an Object of Analysis**

The methodological strategy for developing critical thinking on media material is structured around sequentially teaching students to detect and analyze specific language markers with which the authors of media texts program the reader's perception. Students and schoolchildren must realize that a media text is never completely neutral; it always represents a certain angle of interpreting facts. In the process of linguistic dissection, the students' attention is focused on several basic levels of the language system.

#### **The Syntactic Level and the Concealment of the Agent**

The structural features of syntax possess a colossal manipulative potential, often invisible to the regular reader. The use of the passive voice (passive constructions) and impersonal sentences allows the author of a media text to shift the focus of attention or completely hide the subject of the action, removing responsibility for what is happening (compare: The government raised taxes and The decision was made to raise taxes, or Prices have risen as an impersonal process of self-development). The teacher's task is to teach children to translate passive constructions into active ones, restoring the real subject-object structure of the event, which contributes to the development of the logical component of critical thinking.

#### **Metaphorical Modeling of Reality**

A metaphor in a media text rarely performs a purely decorative function; more often, it serves as a cognitive frame imposing a specific vision of a problem. The use of military metaphors when describing economic processes (for example, the battle for the harvest, the price front, a breakthrough in logistics) forms a sense of emergency and a mobilization type of thinking in the reader's mind. Conversely, medical metaphors (for example, the recovery of the market, the decay of the system) subconsciously force one to perceive social processes as inevitable biological stages. A critical analysis of metaphorical transfers helps students understand what emotions (fear, panic, pride, submission) the author is trying to evoke in them.

#### **Methodological Model of Lesson Organization Using Media Texts**

The development of critical thinking requires strict adherence to stages and a transition from simple analytical operations to a comprehensive expert evaluation. In pedagogical practice,

a three-phase technological model adapted for the linguistic analysis of media discourse has proven highly productive.

#### **The First Phase: The Evocation Stage (Decontextualization)**

The purpose of this stage is to actualize the students' existing knowledge on the topic, awaken research interest, and prepare them for a critical perception of information. At this stage, the technique of working with headlines of media texts is highly effective. The teacher offers students a selection of headlines from different publications dedicated to the exact same news item, with the main text completely removed.

The students must analyze the syntactic structure of the headlines, the use of parcelling, question or exclamation marks, clickbait elements, and lexical expressives. Based on this analysis, they are expected to predict what pragmatic setting will dominate the article itself, what facts will be hyperbolized, and what will be obscured. This technique effectively destroys the illusion of objectivity in a media headline.

#### **The Second Phase: The Realization of Meaning Stage (Textual Audit)**

This is the central stage of the lesson, dedicated to direct analytical work with the media text. Here, students apply their entire arsenal of linguistic knowledge. To organize deep work, the method of text marking is used. Reading the article, students use multi-colored markers or conditional signs in the margins to highlight different content-language layers of the statement.

The letter "F" marks verifiable facts, that is, statistical data, specific dates, names, geographical locations, and direct quotes from eyewitnesses. The letter "O" marks authorial evaluations, emotional judgments, value-laden epithets, and subjective comments. A question mark highlights obscure parts of the text, logical gaps, unproven assertions, and introductory words like obviously, as everyone knows, without a doubt, which are used to mask the absence of real argumentation. After completing the marking, a comparative analysis is conducted. If a text of several pages reveals only two or three real facts surrounded by an array of emotionally charged evaluative judgments, the students independently arrive at a scientifically substantiated conclusion about the manipulative, propagandistic, or purely entertaining nature of this media product.

#### **The Third Phase: The Reflection Stage (Transformation and Construction)**

At the final stage, the internalization of the acquired analytical skills occurs, along with their translation into practical application. Students are asked to perform creative tasks aimed at reformatting the text. The task of clearing the text of manipulative elements possesses high efficiency. Students must rewrite the proposed emotional media article in a strict, dry informational style, removing all euphemisms, metaphors, passive constructions, and evaluative epithets, leaving exclusively verifiable facts.

An alternative option for work at the reflection stage is modeling. Students, combined into micro-groups, receive cards with the same set of basic facts (for example, a new factory opened in city N, 50 jobs were created, but an old park was closed). Each group must write a short note for a media resource of a specific orientation: the first group writes in the optimistic style of an official chronicle, the second in the critical style of an ecological newsletter, and the third in the sensational style of a tabloid. In the process of the subsequent comparison of the results, the students clearly see how, by varying linguistic means, fundamentally different informational realities are constructed from the exact same factual material.

#### **Overcoming Methodological Difficulties and Risks**

The introduction of contemporary mass media texts into the practice of Russian language lessons is associated with certain risks and methodological difficulties that the teacher must be able to mitigate in a timely manner.

#### **The Risk of Politicization and Subjectivism**

Media texts often touch upon acute social, economic, or political problems. It is extremely important for the educator to keep the discussion exclusively within a philological, linguistic channel. The teacher must not act as a political arbiter or impose their civic position on the students. The focus of the lesson should remain not on what exactly the author of the text asserts, but on with the help of what specific linguistic mechanisms and syntactic tools they do it. Critical thinking implies an impartial, instrumental analysis of the linguistic fabric of the text.

### **The Problem of Selecting Didactic Material**

The modern media stream is overloaded with texts of low stylistic quality containing gross violations of the language norm, an abundance of unjustified borrowings, and slang. The use of such texts requires a strict preliminary filter from the teacher. The didactic material must be representative, stylistically expressive, and demonstrate the complex, subtle mechanisms of speech influence, rather than banal illiteracy. It is advisable to turn to high-quality journalism, analytical reviews, texts by famous popularizers of science, and recognized masters of contemporary journalism.

### **Conclusion**

The use of contemporary mass media texts in Russian language classes as a tool for forming critical thinking is an urgent need of the modern school and university. This approach allows the academic isolation of the school subject to be overcome, connecting the study of linguistic theory with the actual speech practice in which students live.

A systematic linguomethodological analysis of media texts under the guidance of a qualified educator allows a stable cognitive immunity against informational manipulations to be formed, and develops independence of judgment, accuracy of word choice, and general philological culture. Ultimately, Russian language classes are transformed from lessons in reproductive grammar acquisition into a unique space of intellectual development, preparing the individual for a conscious, free, and successful life in the complex information society of the twenty-first century.

### **References**

1. Baranov A. N. Introduction to Applied Linguistics. — Moscow: Editorial URSS, 2001. — 360 p.
2. Dubichinsky V. V. Lexicography of the Russian Language: A Textbook. — Moscow: Nauka; Flinta, 2008. — 432 p.
3. Kozyrev V. A., Chernyak V. D. Modern Orientations of Domestic Lexicography // Questions of Linguistics. — 2014. — No. 1. — P. 87–103.
4. Morkovkin V. V. Anthology of Educational Lexicography. — Moscow: Russky Yazyk, 1994. — 256 p.
5. Polat E. S. New Pedagogical and Information Technologies in the Education System. — Moscow: Akademiya, 2010. — 272 p.
6. Chernyak V. D. Educational Lexicography in the System of Philological Education // Bulletin of the Herzen University. — 2007. — No. 11. — P. 42–46.