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GENRE AND STYLISTIC TRANSFORMATION OF CRIME PREVENTION COVERAGE IN THE CONVERGENT MEDIA SPACE

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Abstract:

This article examines the genre and stylistic transformations of legal-themed media coverage within the context of global media convergence. The study analyzes the integration of traditional press, broadcast, and digital platforms, highlighting the emergence of hybrid formats (multimedia longreads, live blogs) and social media microgenres (Reels, TikTok, YouTube Shorts). Special emphasis is placed on the media coverage of crime prevention, particularly juvenile delinquency, within Uzbekistan's contemporary media landscape (drawing on case studies from Postda, Kun.uz, Gazeta.uz, and national television). The author provides a critical assessment of the prevailing reliance on formulaic chronological news briefs, which report offenses post factum and demonstrate inherent limitations in communicative and preventive efficacy. Employing both form-based and function-based theoretical approaches to genre studies, the paper argues for the strategic incorporation of in-depth analytical, narrative, and interactive formats—such as investigative reporting, court essays, studio talk shows, and documentary films—to foster civic legal literacy and realize substantive preventive impact.

Keywords: Media convergence, legal journalism, crime prevention, genre transformation, hybrid genres, microgenres, news briefs, multimedia longread, preventive communication, juvenile delinquency.



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Over the past two decades, the global information space has undergone radical transformation, with media convergence serving as one of its key determinants. This phenomenon refers to the convergence, technological integration, and content synergy of print press, radio, television, the internet, and social media networks. As widely defined, convergence represents the flow of content across multiple media platforms, cooperation between media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want. Thus, media convergence is not merely a technological integration; it is an interdependent collaborative process between content producers, distributors, and the audience. While this dynamic accelerates dissemination speed and expands audience reach, it simultaneously introduces new challenges regarding content quality and societal impact.

Russian scholar O. Molchanova underscores this reality: "A convergent newsroom is a structural entity that simultaneously combines productive and creative operations, generating media products tailored for diverse mass media outlets¹. The media audience ceases to be a passive consumer of content and transforms into the focal point of a perpetually updated information environment." Today, not only newsrooms but also audiences have evolved from passive consumers into active content creators. However, this process has catalyzed drastic shifts in journalistic genres and styles, prompting the transformation of traditional genres and fostering entirely unprecedented genre configurations.

In journalistic theory, the category of genre serves as a vital structural framework that embodies the format, stylistic approach, and architecture of information delivery. Every genre is delineated by its designated target audience, expressive

¹ Deuze, M. (2004). What is multimedia journalism? *Information, Communication & Society*, 7(2), 139–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118042000232666>



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techniques, and communicative objectives. As a primary unit of communication, genre represents a multifaceted phenomenon shaped not only by linguistic parameters but also by social and cognitive dynamics. It ensures the textual identity of a media product and situates it as an archetype of a specific socio-communicative reality. Consequently, determining a genre solely on surface-level linguistic features proves insufficient; it is predominantly conditioned by extralinguistic contexts. Modern genre studies distinguish between two fundamental approaches: form-based (bottom-up) and function-based (top-down) interpretations. The former categorizes text varieties via the statistical distribution of grammatical, lexical, and syntactic units, whereas the latter delineates genres through their socio-cognitive functions and communicative purposes. In professional practice, these two approaches complement each other: superficial linguistic properties help identify potential genre characteristics, yet comprehensive categorization necessitates a broader context encompassing socio-cultural conditions and a shared cognitive domain among discourse participants. For instance, traditional print genres—such as news briefs, analytical articles, feature stories, and sketches—possess dedicated structural and linguistic conventions, influencing the reader primarily through textual density, empirical precision, and exhaustive analysis. Television genres rely on the fusion of audiovisual techniques and on-screen journalistic delivery. In digital journalism and social networks, genres adopt dynamic, interactive, and multimedia forms where text, photography, video, audio, and data visualizations coalesce within a single story.

Analytical materials traditionally reserved for print media are now delivered across digital outlets enriched with interactive infographics, embedded video interviews, and podcasts. Similarly, television reports are distributed across web platforms accompanied by extended narrative texts and immersive 360-degree



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video formats. This landscape demands that media professionals master not only classical genre structures but also technological literacy, visual design, and digital storytelling techniques².

Under these conditions, genre transformation manifests across two primary vectors. First, hybrid genres have emerged by blending the characteristics of multiple traditional forms. Media scholarship defines this development as the emergence of a new genre format resulting from the synthesis of elements from two or more conventional genres. Real-time live blogs (live reporting) and multimedia longreads serve as salient examples of hybrid communicative formats that integrate live streams, narrative prose, photo galleries, audio fragments, and video assets.

Second, microgenres tailored to specialized social media platforms have proliferated. These typically develop within the boundaries of a single platform or media format and adjust dynamically to consumption demands. Throughout the twenty-first century, subgenres multiplied and narrowed to such an extent that many are now most appropriately conceptualized as microgenres. For instance, vertical short-form videos lasting between 30 and 90 seconds on TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and Instagram exemplify modern digital microgenres. While the term "microgenre" originated within music criticism, it has expanded rapidly across internet culture to denote distinct social, visual, and stylistic communication streams³.

The defining attributes of these formats include immediate audience engagement, concise distillation of core ideas, and the elicitation of prompt emotional responses. For example, Instagram Reels employ dynamic editing, initial

² Surette, R. (2015). Media, crime, and criminal justice: Images, realities, and policies (5th ed.). Cengage Learning.

³ Postda.uz. (2024). Voyaga yetmaganlar o'rtasida jinoyatchilik va huquqbuzarliklarning oldini olish chora-tadbirlari. <https://postda.uz>



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attention-grabbing hooks, saturated visual effects, and algorithmic structures designed to provoke immediate user commentary and sharing.

Media convergence has likewise generated new paradigms in audience reception. Rigid boundaries between classical genres have dissolved, enabling users to consume a single story across diverse formats and distribution channels. An individual may encounter an initial news report on a newspaper website in the morning, view an analytical video report on YouTube during midday, and consume a concise summary via Instagram Reels in the evening. This multi-stage consumption flow reinforces message retention across diverse cognitive modalities.

Nevertheless, the erosion of genre boundaries carries risks of intellectual oversimplification, as the drive for immediacy and visual stimulation frequently sidelines rigorous analytical depth. Furthermore, algorithmic personalization on social networks exacerbates information fragmentation, confining users to echo chambers. As previously noted, while linguistic surfaces signal basic genre cues, unpacking meaningful discourse demands an appraisal of the overarching socio-cultural context.

Within Uzbekistan's media environment—particularly in the coverage of law enforcement and legal administration—the chronological news brief remains the dominant genre. Both traditional newspapers and their official digital channels rely heavily on brief factual accounts documenting incidents post factum. While this format provides prompt, verifiable notifications, it demonstrates limited efficacy in crime prevention and legal awareness. Chronological news items register events only after their occurrence, without elucidating root causes or examining preventive solutions.

The pervasive reliance on basic news briefs for legal reporting stems from legacy conventions and rigid institutional press protocols. Yet, in modern media



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environments, audiences seek answers not merely to "What happened?" but critically to "Why did it occur?" and "What mechanisms can prevent recurrence?" Expanding the share of analytical articles, field reportages, and professional interviews would elevate public legal literacy and reinforce crime prevention. For instance, on the website of the newspaper Postda, coverage concerning juvenile delinquency remains confined to formulaic news briefs that recount procedural facts:

"According to data provided by the Romitan District Department of Internal Affairs, at approximately 23:50, a minor born in 2005 residing in the Tarnaut neighborhood, while in a state of alcohol intoxication, unlawfully seized a Damas vehicle parked outside the Dirham café in the Alisher Navoi neighborhood. Provincial internal affairs agencies initiated operative inquiries and activated a regional vehicle interception plan. Through timely operative-technical and search measures, the perpetrator was apprehended. A criminal case has been instituted under Article 267, Part 1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and preliminary investigative proceedings are underway."

This text restricts itself to factual narrative, lacking legal commentary, psychological evaluation, or expert perspectives. It merely registers an incident without achieving communicative depth. Comparable tendencies are evident on leading domestic platforms such as Gazeta.uz and Kun.uz, where juvenile legal offenses are overwhelmingly presented through succinct news flashes.

Due to its structural and functional constraints, the news brief cannot fulfill preventive legal functions. Its primary utility lies in rapid, concise factual dispatch, which intrinsically precludes thorough investigation into socioeconomic roots, causal vectors, and systemic remedies. Achieving authentic preventive impact necessitates expansive formats capable of interpretive depth,



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such as analytical commentaries, in-depth dialogues, investigative reportages, or documentary features.

Television addresses juvenile delinquency and crime prevention through a wider array of formats, including news broadcasts, field reports, investigative journalism, talk shows, and documentary films. Television reportage holds the advantage of combining on-scene visuals, direct participant statements, and specialist commentary to generate emotional resonance, signaling to the audience that the issue is real and urgent. However, some televised reports remain superficial, highlighting only organizational procedures rather than investigating systemic drivers of crime.

Documentaries possess distinct significance for legal socialization by depicting real-life human trajectories, critical life junctures, and psychological factors precipitating delinquent conduct. The documentary format evokes deep affective engagement, allowing viewers to grasp complex human realities through authentic life stories of individuals who either succumbed to or overcame criminal circumstances. Nonetheless, the high production costs and extensive time commitments associated with documentary filmmaking limit its frequent deployment.

Studio talk shows and interactive forums represent an equally vital mechanism. These formats facilitate direct deliberation on juvenile delinquency involving experts, state officials, educators, parents, and youth representatives. Their strength lies in the confrontation of diverse perspectives, collective problem-solving, and direct public engagement through real-time feedback. Through interactive participation, talk shows cultivate an open space for civic dialogue.

In summary, television addresses juvenile delinquency across varied genres, each exhibiting distinct capabilities and limitations. News bulletins deliver prompt notifications without comprehensive analysis. Television reports capture real-



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time dynamism yet often understate structural causes. Analytical broadcasts and documentary films provide profound insight but appear infrequently due to resource constraints. Talk shows encourage multi-sided discussion, though their impact hinges on participant competence. Finally, journalistic-artistic formats offer immediate affective impact, yet their persuasive imprint often remains transient.

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