

# Guidance articles in women's press of the second half of the 20th century. Genre study

## Summary

This monograph is dedicated to the analysis of guidance articles published in women's magazines from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This interdisciplinary work is based on such fields as linguistic genre studies, textual criticism, pragmatics and discourse theory.

The theoretical part includes an attempt to anchor the notions of *advice* and *guidance*, which are the core of this piece of research, in the recently developed field of genre studies, especially with reference to the concepts of primary and secondary genres and the theory of speech acts.

Moreover, the introductory part discusses the notions of guidance discourse, the style of guidance genres, genre pattern and its variants. References to a variety of notions formulated by scholars specializing in the theoretical analysis of guidance serve here as the basis for indicating the similarities and differences between concepts that are so close in meaning, i.e. guidance books, studies, guidance and counsel.

Another important aspect of the present research is to characterize the guidance context as well as its main participants, i.e. the advisers and those who seek advice. The communicative location of a particular message in the media sphere determines the typology of the guidance providers, who can be journalists, experts or the readers themselves. The whole analysis is based on productive study material selected from popular women's magazines from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The following magazine titles were chosen for the analysis: "Przyjaciółka", "Kobieta i Życie", "Filipinka" and "Zwierciadło". The factors determining this selection were the size of the circulation (which reflects the popularity of the magazine), the target audience, time of issue and finally, the guidance function of the texts analysed. One of the main aims of this monograph is to grasp the ways that texts were adapted to the needs of the press, as well as the transformations within each of the genre forms identified.

As a result of this analysis, the following types of guidance genres can be identified: advice accompanied by a letter to the editor, small pieces of advice, instruction guidance, guidance interview and guidance article. The analysis covers a number of characteristics of each of the genres mentioned: structural, pragmatic and stylistic, including their mutual relations and transformations within the form of the genre patterns that took place as women's press evolved over

a number of decades. The concluding remarks refer to the shape of this particular genre field, which covers various forms of press with the function of offering guidance. Little pieces of advice have been located at the centre of this field, whereas instruction guidance and advice accompanied by a letter to the editor lie somewhat further away. The periphery is occupied by the textual realisations typical for the standard journalistic forms, such as interviews or guidance articles.

The description of the particular genre forms with a focus on changes within the architecture of the text, sender-receiver relations and the linguistic shape of the message allows those mechanisms to be indicated which determine changes in women's press taking place in the course of several decades. Stylistic hybridity based on the coexistence of various oppositional style characteristics has been identified as a specific feature of the guidance style, which is typical of various genres of guidance journalism. Of particular importance in the process of transformation within the genre form of guidance texts are such factors as the growing importance of the visual message, the weakening of the formality of communication, and combining guidance with advertising elements, with the latter being a typical feature of the contemporary form of guidance.

*Translated by Rob Pagett*