

Feuilleton in the context of journalistic and literary texts

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Abstract

Feuilleton is a hybrid genre. This genre is important for both literature and journalism because it has literary and journalistic characteristics. There are different opinions about the genre characteristics of feuilleton. So, in studies, it is sometimes characterized only as a journalistic genre. Although some of the studies pay attention to its literary peculiarities, they do not mention its journalistic peculiarities. There are also studies that examine the genre in both literary and journalistic contexts, and such a complex approach is of great importance to the analysis of the genre. Based on the ideas about the hybridity of the genre, our opinion on this matter is that when examining the feuilleton, it is important to thoroughly study it, taking into account the fact that it is a hybrid genre. When conducting research, all features should be studied, no feature should be left out of the study. The artistic colors of feuilleton are distinguished by their realistic and sharp lines. Here, the events are given in all their reality. This is one of the points that form the basis of journalistic works. In this article, the feuilleton genre is examined in the context of literary-journalistic genre; the history of feuilleton, its main features, and its literary and journalistic aspects are studied.

Keywords: feuilleton, literary-journalistic genre, literature, journalism, artistry

Introduction

Each genre has its own rules. Feuilleton is one of these genres. There are specific regulations of feuilleton. In this case, we have to talk about the issue of its artistic and journalistic characteristics because feuilleton is a genre that involves literary and journalistic rules. It belongs to journalism as much as it belongs to literature. This genre follows the laws of both fields. In the works written in this genre, reflecting the truth, providing facts, and using a clear, obvious, short, and laconic writing style are observed, which are the basic laws of journalism. Feuilleton, which includes artistry, has a special role in literature.

The feuilleton was created on the border of literature and journalism. Therefore, the feuilleton genre is distinguished by its literary and journalistic features. Sometimes it is considered only a genre of journalism. But this is a one-sided approach.

Literary features are also noteworthy in the feuilletons. Some studies do not take into consideration the journalistic features of feuilleton and only discuss its literary features. In our opinion, the feuilleton genre is a hybrid genre that combines literary and journalistic characteristics.

Severina (2014, p. 122) also says that the feuilleton genre has hybridity in her article called *The Feuilleton as a Hybrid Genre of Journalistic Discourse (Based on Press Reports in the German Language)*. "The article features such hybrid characteristics of the feuilleton as highlighting a topical issue, using figurative devices of fiction and journalistic texts, employing rhetorical devices (irony, sarcasm)". Therefore, the regularities of both areas should not be overlooked.

Feuilleton is one of the most widely used genres in the coverage of social and political issues of society. In these writings, satire is reflected. The feuilletons, criticizing those who do not take ownership of national and moral values, the oppression of the ruling class against the people, backwardness, and ignorance, are aimed at justice, development, and scientific progress. Satire, irony, and exposure have a special place among the main peculiarities of this genre.

The formation and specification of the feuilleton genre

At first, feuilleton appeared in France, and later it became a world-famous genre. The meaning of the word feuilleton is given in the Merriam-Webster dictionary: "The word is a diminutive of the French *feuille*, meaning "sheet of paper", and ultimately derives from Latin *folium*, meaning "leaf" (Merriam-Webster. n.d.).

Some sources place the origin of feuilleton in the 18th century, while others place it in the 19th century. Most sources state that the history of the feuilletons begins with the addition of a separate section called feuilleton on

January 28, 1800, to the newspaper *Journal des Débats* published in France. Theatrical reviews, writings about art, literature, and fashion were given in this section. This date is very important in terms of naming the feuilleton genre. Before that date, feuilletons were written in France and other European countries. But until 1800, these writings were not called feuilleton. The naming of the feuilleton genre was due to the initiative of Julien Louis Geoffroy and Bertin the Elder (Louis-François Bertin), the editors of *Journal des Débats*. Their inclusion of a separate section in the newspaper in 1800, called feuilleton, has given impetus to the formation of feuilleton as a term.

When feuilleton, first appeared, it was noticed as critical writing about art, music, theater, literature, and fashion. After that, this genre expanded further and was formed as a satirical literary-journalistic genre.

It is noted that the earliest examples of feuilletons in Great Britain have arisen in the 18th century: “The first examples of feuilletons in English appeared in the 18th century. They were not called feuilletons, but they belonged to the hybrid genre of feuilleton-pamphlet and were written by famous English satirists D. Defoe and J. Swift (Shavladze & Makhradze, 2017, p. 29). So, we can note that the XVIII century was the period when the first examples of feuilleton were created, and the XIX century was the period when feuilleton was formed as a genre.

In Germany, feuilleton genre underwent a special development from the 1930s to the 1950s (Северина, 2014, p. 126).

Feuilleton genre is also very remarkable in Azerbaijani literature. The Azerbaijani press is rich with bright examples of the feuilleton genre. These feuilletons bring to the fore the true picture of the realities of time. In Azerbaijan, feuilleton genre was formed and developed in the second half of the 19th century and the beginnings of the 20th century.

Feuilleton is a literary-journalistic genre that attracts attention with its satirical features. This genre, which has a key role in exposing the negative aspects and shortcomings of society, is particularly important in waking the people and the nation from their slumber. The writers of feuilletons try to eliminate the shortcomings in society and point out through feuilletons that these shortcomings and negative aspects lead people to disaster. From this point of view, irony and satire are of immense importance for feuilletons. One of the defining features of the genre is exposure. Feuilleton is an invaluable genre for our literature and press.

“During social, political, and cultural society transformation satirical genres of literary journalism come to the fore, their sharpness and expressiveness most accurately reflects phenomena and processes in the country. The satirical genre, reflecting the reality, is a basis for communication between author and reader. A feuilleton as a satirical genre of literary journalism originates in Ukrainian press at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is a genre of communication between writer and reader that makes possible dialogue exposing negative through using humor and imagery, allegory, associativity, etc.” (Koval, 2017, p. 152).

Feuilleton based on the regularities of journalism reflects the actual problems of the time it was written. Factuality is so important for feuilletons. Socio-political events and concrete facts are reflected in these writings. However, the points arising from the artistic nature of the feuilleton genre should not be forgotten here. The use of artistry in the presentation of real facts in the feuilleton has a special place. Feuilletonist creates a work that is born from the unity of art and journalism. This genre originates from the power of both literature and journalism. It is no coincidence that the works written in the feuilleton genre are printed mainly on the pages of newspapers and magazines. In the works written in this genre, the writing of events in a satirical style and with artistic colors arouses the interest of the readers. Feuilleton, which is one of the most widely used genres in the press, serves to express real events in a comical-satirical way. The fact that the genre is based on laughter and written in a simple, clear, understandable language makes it possible to appeal to a wider audience of readers.

Feuilleton and literature

Feuilletons are also essential for literature. The use of literary devices in this genre is so significant.

Taking advantage of artistry in describing events, using literary expressions, narrative techniques, dramatic speech (monologues, dialogues, and polylogues), irony, and satirical style are the literary features of feuilleton.

“The feuilletonists sustain the reader’s interest by communicating a haphazard mix of information in the form of a narrative. More importantly, he dramatizes contemporary exhibitions: in a conversational, easily accessible style, the feuilletonist ends up writing a story, complete with detailed descriptions, well-defined characters, and extensive dialogue” (Dianina, 2013, p. 103).

Literature serves as the artistic expression of life. Feuilleton is also distinguished by a description of the facts of life. Also, the reality of the facts is important here. In a sense, the feuilleton genre is one of the most important genres of literature with its artistic features. Here, everyday life events and facts are not presented as in the news, literary features and techniques are used in the presentation of these events. Expressing the facts in this way increases the power of influence on readers in feuilletons. Feuilletonist puts a fact of life at the center of his feuilleton and narrates it masterfully. This is where the artistry of feuilleton comes from.

Feuilleton is a satirical genre. In satirical works, conveying the shortcomings of society to the readers is the main goal of the author. The main weapon of writers who saw the shortcomings of the society in which they lived was satire.

Habibbayli (2007, p. 485) mentions satire as a literary type. Here he emphasizes that the feuilleton genre belongs to that literary type. The author writes about satire: "Satire, laughter, and humor in the works written in the genres belonging to the satire literary type create conditions for the perception and presentation of life in a unique way from other literary genres".

Mammad (2010, p. 98) wrote about satire: "Satire is a phenomenon of social laughter. It does not mean that the writer writes something that everyone laughs at, he can draw attention to things that others do not consider funny, that they cannot see the truth, and turn them into a target of irony. However, when this irony becomes public, when it becomes the object of laughter of the society through the writer, it becomes stronger and has a satirical character".

Feuilleton and journalism

The presentation of real events is of great importance for journalism. Journalistic writings is very valuable for focusing attention on real life facts. This is also notable for feuilleton. Factuality and accuracy are very compelling characteristics of this genre.

Fact is the main thing for journalism. This is considerably significant for feuilleton. Feuilletonists caught the real-life facts and put them into their writings. Hicks (2000, p. 11) said about the factuality in feuilleton: "Unlike a correspondent proper, the feuilleton writer selects one fact for the focus of the article". That is, feuilleton is mainly based on a certain fact taken from life. In the mentioned article, the author also notes that one of the main characteristics of feuilleton is immediate topicality. This is one of the main features of journalistic texts. Immediate coverage of the processes that happened in society, adequate attitude toward the events are the main points in the focus of journalism. Presenting the problems of the day in a comical and satirical manner draws attention to the problems and defects of society.

Real facts are the main sources for feuilletonist. One of the main merits of feuilletonists is that they show the general picture of the era to the readers through the presentation of an event. Although a fragment is taken from the real-life events that happened here, overall, the attention is focused on the general situation of the events of the time.

"There is an idea that in journalism it is not necessary to use all facts, but one of them is enough and so you have built the channel through which information flows, from the source to the public. The overuse of fiction not only brings about a re-dimensioning of the event but leads it to a variety of genres or subject line variations. This is why the journalist is not interested in this kind of variation, but it is important for him to follow the news while respecting the truth" (Hanoli, 2020, p. 90).

Journalism is based on the reflection of real events. Drawing attention to the real facts is considerably significant for journalism. It is also very important for feuilleton. So, we can say factuality, topicality, originality, accuracy, and clarity are the main journalistic characteristics of feuilleton.

The importance of literary journalism

As we already said, feuilleton is a literary-journalistic genre. We must take all its features into account when we investigate this genre. There are unique peculiarities of feuilleton. When studying this genre, special attention should be paid to its literary and journalistic characteristics. Let's focus on literary journalism while talking about the literary-journalistic genre feuilleton.

"Literary journalism, sometimes called narrative journalism, is a style of reportage that presents true stories in a more narrative way, using storytelling techniques to create a gripping and personal form of journalism. ... The difference is in the way the story is presented: Unlike typical news media, which can be very dry, literary journalists use an engaging writing style to craft memorable stories" (Masterclass, 2021).

Applegate (1996, p. xii) explains literary journalism in this way: "Literary journalism has been defined as a form of writing that combines the literary devices of fiction with the journalistic techniques of nonfiction".

One of the main conditions of journalism is to write the text in a simple, understandable, and clear language. The text addressed to a wide readership must comply with this condition. Otherwise, the text will not arouse readers' interest because texts written in a difficult, unclear style seem boring and uninteresting to the readers.

"Across time and space, many talented writers found it indispensable to blur the boundaries between fact and fiction while providing fresh insights into major and minor issues of the day. Literary journalists believe in the supremacy of objectivity and the role of storyteller as a mediator of reality" (Kaur, 2012, p. 55).

"Literary journalism requires immersion reporting, accuracy, careful structuring and lots of labour on the part of author so that it can be considered as literature or art" (Kaur, 2012, p. 55).

Literary-journalistic style is especially important for feuilletons. “Like journalistic writing, the part of literary journalism needs to be well researched, focused on a short period of time, and focused on what is happening outside the small circle of the writer’s personal experience and feelings” (Hanoli, 2020, p. 88).

As we have already mentioned, feuilleton was created on the border of literature and journalism. Hanoli said about the connection between literature and journalism:

“Remaining in this line we need to address what else connects journalism with literature, what are those key points that make the union between them. If in fiction the role of conveying the truth (even if it is a “fabricated” truth) is taken by the writer, in journalistic literature the unique and inalienable role of transmitting the truth belongs indisputably to the journalist (remember here the norms of principles of ethics and ethics of journalism) where the fanatical treatment and transmission of truth constitutes the basic law” (Hanoli, 2020, p. 88).

He notes about fiction genres and media genres: “Genres of fiction show that they are similar to media genre. Fiction is an important material for journalism; it serves it as the object of analysis and evidence of the occurrence of various phenomena in the course of time. The writer through the literary work, and the journalist through his writing is integrated or not in the system of values and from this relationship depends their impact on the society” (Hanoli, 2020, p. 92).

Literary techniques and journalistic style are used together in literary journalism, especially in the feuilleton genre. “When narrating the scenes, authors many a times present the events without blurring or creating confusion in the mind of reader, using simple explanation wherever required. They draw on the sources of journalism, using a brisk, direct, and factual narrative, while making use of complex intertwining literary techniques to produce the desired real-life effect” (Kaur, 2012, p. 55).

Applegate writes about the literary forms of journalism: “Obviously, distinct differences exist between traditional and literary forms of journalism. However, because literary journalism uses the techniques of the novelist, problems may inhibit the reporting. Certain factual information, for instance, may be overlooked or changed for dramatic effect by writers” (Applegate, 1996, p. xvi).

Koval explains the satirical genres of literary journalism in her article about the feuilletons of Kapelhorodsky:

“The genre system of literary journalism quickly responds to current events and phenomena of public life. ...In the midst of political, cultural, religious changes satirical genres of literary journalism gave a reader an opportunity to orient in these processes” (Koval, 2017, p. 152).

Literature and journalism are connected fields. Glover-Meni wrote about the relationship between literature and journalism in his article called “Between Facts and Fiction: The Relationship between Journalism and Literature” (2011). The author analyzed the connection between these two fields:

“This means that the media, like literature, reflects society. Both primarily use language to capture and convey human experience. Also, both journalism and literature provide glimpses of not only the events of a particular time period but also the general mentality of a people as well. Like literature, journalism capitalizes on the human interest. In addition, both journalism and literature seek to effect change. Journalism’s core duty is to ‘raise hell’, which is in many ways, similar to Wordsworth’s dictum of literature being the moral umpire of society” (Glover-Meni, 2011, p. 92).

Conclusion

Overall, we can say that feuilleton genre is a literary-journalistic genre that conveys society’s problems to readers in both an artistic and journalistic manner.

This genre, which has a great role in exposing the negative aspects and defects of society, is very important in waking up the nation from the sleep of ignorance. The feuilletonists work to eliminate the flaws in society, and through their feuilletons, they point out that those flaws and disadvantages lead people to disaster. This literary-journalistic genre, whose main defining features are factuality, accuracy, laconism, brevity, clarity, artistry, irony, satire, and exposure, is important for both the press and literature. It is more related to journalism with factuality, and literature with typicality and artistry.

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