

ISCKMC 2020**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****POLITIZATION OF MEDIA SPACE AS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL
FOR NEW INFORMATION PRODUCT**

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Abstract

The relevance of the research topic is due to the need to understand the role of global information space in the formation of political reality. Although the history of mass media can date back to ancient times – the prototypes of mass media can be the ancient boards used to put information important for residents – it became an object of sociological and philosophical study and comprehension only from the middle of the 20th century, which is primarily due to the stormy advent of television. The importance of mass media in society has led to the need to understand how it affects the consciousness and perception of the public. In this sense, exploration of mass media as a social institution goes beyond a traditional sociological consideration and comes to a philosophical understanding of the development of a media space. The media space of the information society is constituted as a unified environment with material, technical, content, social and organizational components. Its current state should be seen as the integration of the virtual and physical world based on the fusion of traditional and electronic media. The paper corrects the definition of “media space”, characterizes the tendencies of its development, and addresses its main properties – access to information and creation of information in the present time act as indicators of social status. There is a new differentiation – informational – based on the possession of high-quality information and low-quality information among a vast majority of ordinary members of society.

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1. Introduction

In the last decade the development of information technology has brought about changes in the structure of mass media. However, the unprecedented freedom of communication – any person with access to the Internet is able to share information, exchange thoughts and opinions with a potentially unlimited audience – entailed new challenges for the state and society and required a balance between freedom of information exchange and stability of social institutions. A decline in the influence of traditional media and a shift from text to audiovisual images as the main means of information exchange have led to changes in the perception of reality. In the context of modern time, the influence of the media space on politics and the use of information technology to manage public opinion are clearly visible. It is becoming increasingly important to evaluate the means and participants of mass communication, in order to strengthen existing practices, structures and institutions, as well as information activities aimed at social changes.

2. Problem Statement

With the advent of communication technology, greater amount of information and speed of its dissemination, the structure and role of mass media is changing. The use of network and multimedia technologies has resulted in the formation of a global media space that unites sources of information and its consumers. Therefore, it is urgent to study the structure of media space and the relationship between its components, as well as power functions of mass media in the formation of social relations. Unlike mass media with its conventional function to reflect reality, the media space provides opportunities for constructing and simulating reality, which affects society at all levels, from a single person to the international community.

3. Research Questions

The subject of the research is politicization of media space in the context of information society.

4. Purpose of the Study

The paper aims to study politicization of the media space in the context of the information society as an effective tool for creating a new information product.

5. Research Methods

The systemic, functional, structural-typological and comparative-historical methods were used as priorities in the paper.

Systems analysis has found application for considering the integrity and basic elements of the media space. It was also used to address the media space as a mediating link in the constitution of the main subsystems of modern society. The functional method was used to study the role of audiovisual images in electronic media and “simulacra”, capable of creating illusions in an audience exposed to information impact. The structural-typological method was used to distinguish the features of

conventional and electronic media, and the comparative-historical method – to demonstrate the historical dynamics of their development and synthesis tendencies.

The study was also based on general scientific methods of idealization, analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction. It also used the tools of linguistics, semiotics and psychology, allowing a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of modern mass media and impact on the public.

The problems of the media space are considered within the activity approach.

6. Findings

In the second half of the 20th century, information interactions appeared that could unite countries and continents. The resulting global media environment, including multiple media (traditional media and WWW) was studied in the West by D. Bell, M. McLuhan, P. Berger, T. Luckman, M. Castells, N. Luhmann, E. Toffler, T. (Kohlborn et al., 2013), Kosinski et al. (2015), Janowski (2015), and in Russia – by Balynskaya et al. (2019), Kiselev and Kirichek (2019), Pavlyutenkova (2019), Sukhodolov (2019), and others. Thus, according to Castells (2004), wealth, power, public welfare and cultural creativity in Russia in the 21st century will largely depend on the ability to form one's own model of the information society, adapted to specific values and goals of the country (Castells, 2004).

A crucial factor in the formation of modern social space is the mass media, which, in addition to the traditional function of transferring information, act as a mechanism for constructing an alternative reality that creates a picture of the world outside the sensory experience of an individual. This phenomenon, resulting from the interaction of mass media and the public, is defined by Eliseeva (2019) as “media space” – a special reality that constitutes the social space and organizes social practices and representations of agents included in the system of production and consumption of mass information. This definition, which has an integral character, was introduced into the scientific content by A. Appadurai in his *Disunity and Difference in the Global Culture-Economy* (1990). It is suitable to study the emerging cultural phenomenon through the prism of sociocultural approach.

Dzyaloshinsky (2017), in his book *Contemporary Media Space in Russia*, made an attempt to integrate the existing points of view on this issue into a single definition: ... At present, the concept of “media space” is used both in the Newtonian sense – a certain conditional area where information and its carriers are located and where producers and consumers of mass media occasionally enter; and in the Leibnizian understanding – a system of relations between determinative subjects regarding the production, distribution, processing and consumption of mass information. The most important feature of the media space is that the actions of all the above-mentioned subjects are determined by the norms and rules inherent in the social institution – the media (Dzyaloshinskiy, 2017). In the interpretation of Vazhenina (2018): Media space is a complex, open, relatively autonomous social system that is created by the interdependent integrity of relations between producers and consumers of mass information transmitted through mass media, in the process of integral communication interaction of the following social institutions, namely: audience of mass media, producers/authors of content for mass media and the content as such, technical means to transmit this content, and the media at large.

Following Dashevsky (2017), the authors define media space as a spontaneously created and partially self-regulating supranational and super-government system of social, political, cultural

interaction, operating on the principles of free creation and dissemination of information using digital and other technologies.

Consequently, the media space can also act as an information field within the media system, where journalists are the subjects of the media space, or as an unreal information space, where the subjects are the creators of information and the target audience.

In fact, in early 21st century, the media space was also installed in everyday life, so did, a century earlier, the communication space created by real events, books, a circle of close friends and distant acquaintances. According to Nime (2012), the modern community “in the industrialized countries of the world is not only permeated with media communications, but also largely shaped by them”.

The media space has three forms of representation: physical space, space of social relations and symbolic space. The dissemination of information in the environment of social relations includes three interrelated components: mediaization, computerization and intellectualization, by which the cultural meaning of public consciousness is formed, providing for the rational and worthy use of information.

The last component can be differentiated by its constituents:

1 mass media that make up the material and physical basis of production and transmission of mass information;

2 social relations between agents of the media space related to the production and consumption of mass information;

3 informational symbolic product in the form of which mass information is disseminated.

The media space is heterogeneous – open to some interactions and closed to others. Since mass media are not directly connected with their audience, a controversial question still remains among modern researchers as to what tools mass media rely on to communicate with society. The system of social norms, publicly available to the participants of communication, forms a “semantic field” that suits to perceive or decipher a “command aspect” of the transmitted message, to provide the necessary response. Hence, the feedback of the media and society is supported by social norms.

The media space as an open system of relations between producers and consumers of mass information is always realized in the form of social and political structures. Since it is part of the social system, all structural components of the media space, including TV space, RV space, media space, WWW, World Wide Web, Web, etc., are interconnected and obey the general laws of the development of the whole.

It has become possible to unify the Russian media space into a single network thanks to the Internet. Today, almost 90 % of young Russians (aged 19–27) cannot imagine their life without the Web, social networks and blogs. If the media space as a whole is a representation of social space, then the Internet in the information dimension acts as a representation of the media space at large. Internet blogs are attractive to young people, as they provide a favorable environment for demonstrating points of view, opposition to traditional or official, help to find like-minded people with similar opinions, reasoning and ways of thinking.

The most educated and critical-thinking part of the WWW audience – opinion leadership – bloggers create an innovative information product that is actively discussed by ordinary members of the blog community.

Being an opinion leader, blogger is a member of the blog community, organizer, initiator of user interaction, who, thanks to his ability to provide relevant, attractive and reliable information, is recognized as an intellectual leader. It is the opinion leadership that forces the blogosphere to develop, provide little-known and interesting information to the Internet community, and comment on the events, showing their intellectual or professional competences.

For many young Russians, blogs are the only accessible and safe means of expressing their opinions. It is especially important in recent years, when, due to censorship, administrative pressure and “disputes between business entities”, there are almost no media outlets that openly and consistently convey to a wider audience the views of the opposition and the counter-elite failing to coincide with the official interpretation of facts or events. Now people who take an active civic position, who do not want to give up their views and beliefs, have a real opportunity to leave the data feed controlled by the authorities and express their opinion on blogs.

It is a common fact that YouTube in Russian was apolitical, with children and entertainment content to be popular. In recent years, the majority of YouTube subscribers are still concentrated around entertainment and children’s channels, but there have been significant changes in content among a number of top bloggers – a kind of reaction to the desire to work with “hot” political topics that viewers are ready to discuss. The fashion for politics on YouTube was brought by A.A. Navalny. It is his videos that regularly gain more than a million views, often get to the Top of YouTube, and everything that gets to the top (except for junk content) is picked up by other bloggers. A study conducted among part-time students (Department of ICT) of the North-Eastern Federal University (December 2019) showed that 72 % of future computer science teachers and system administrators visited V.V. Zhirinovskiy, 75 % – look into the blog of A.A. Navalny, 2/3 occasionally or regularly read the materials of the blog Ukhkhan Sire of the republican “troublemaker” Ivan Nikolaev-Ukhkhan.

7. Conclusion

The media space is a special reality that constitutes the social space and organizes social practices and representations of agents involved in the system of production and consumption of mass information. Blogs are a promising sector for the development of the media space. It was blogging activity in LiveJournal that provided A.A. Navalny Russian and international fame. Although most of the top bloggers are now less than 30 years old and have little interest in politics, bloggers who depend on hot and urgent topics will discuss everything that causes a public outcry, what the viewers will choose, and what will be popular. Experts predict further politicization of content among popular bloggers (Balynskaya & Kovaleva, 2015), the intentions of the parties to include young opinion leadership into their ranks in the 2021 elections.

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