Media Environment as a Zone of Personal and Social Risk

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ABSTRACT

The paper considers elements of modern media environment taking more and more space in day-to-day life of people. The modern media environment enriched with various informational and technological resources, information transfer speed and availability of all kinds of content in unlimited quantities, requires careful examination - first of all, revealing dangerous and harmful effects of human interaction with media environment. There is a necessity of development of media hygiene from early childhood for the purpose of safe use of media content. The safety of media space is in general the task of state as the institution of society organization.

Introduction

The term of media environment has emerged in the academic circles not long ago and its content remains unsettled yet. However it can be broadly defined as cultural phenomenon sustaining communication (McLuhan, 1964; 1970; 1977; Meyrowitz, 1994; Gerbner & Byrne, 1981). L.V. Matveyeva, T.Y. Anikeyeva & Y.V. Mochalova (2000) and others consider media environment in the broad sense "an aggregate of messages being actually or potentially available for different target audiences or peculiar person in the definite period of history or personal time published by MCT of all countries of the world" and in the strict sense - "an aggregate of media messages, which are dealt by peculiar person, i.e. - the information and semiotic media content of person's life activity" (Medvedeva & Marik, 2015). The second part of the definition supplements the first one and as for today turns out to be more exact, since starting from 2000, when authors (Demidov, 2006; Kirillov, 2003; Kirillova, 2005; Pocheptsov, 2001) had formed the term, within the Russian-speaking segment of media environment, the main content of which had been placed to Internet, there is a development of not only traditional official and private communication media, but also of blogosphere, video blogs, social networks

(VKontakte, Odnoklassniki - the Russian analogues of Facebook), as well as largely popular Twitter and Instagram, multiplayer games and yet incomprehensible phenomenon of catching Pokemons, i.e. - an integration of information media into reality. Thus, it is reasonable to speak about digital media environment. We become active consumers, outside observers, witnesses of filling of our personal and environmental space with new phenomena produced by IT. Media (informational and digital) environment appears to be the unified communication space including online and offline (Social networks for the media: as a working team SMM, 2015). The environment is represented as integral part not only of our life, but in some cases as an expression of individual's quasipersonality. However, a personal account in social networks is not just a mirror image of a man created it - in fact it can be called a portrait of Dorian Grey or a metaphor of Dr. Jekill and Mr. Hyde, where it remains unclear who is who.

Methodological framework

It is evident the persistent problem of safe existence of man of any age in modern media environment that differs radically from other environments of the past with immediacy of information transfer, accessibility for self-presentation and making contacts irrespectively of what element we talk about - television, electronic or paper periodical, video blog, social network - requires maintenance, while new elements should be attributed with corresponding rules and behavior culture. The behavior rules for significant segment of Russian media environment are defined by such laws as "Information, Information Technology and Information Protection Act" (2006), "Mass Media Act" (1991), "Advertising Act" (2006) and others. State as the institution having impact on public structures by means of law in general sets the scope of permissible. However it is commonly acknowledged that any law regulates just averaged behavior of citizen and provides moral as social basis, while the formation of moral and culture of people's living is reached with other means - first of all, with upbringing. Additional rules of behavior for mass media can be represented with, for example, code of journalist's ethics and so on. It is just them that are based on moral principles accepted by society - in the present case by journalistic community.

The upbringing of journalistic and other structured media society is the task of the society itself. The process of upbringing provides positive results within one in a greater or lesser degree. However, a consumer of media product entirely and permanently dipped into digital media environment is absolutely different thing.

In connection with formed readiness to perceive new information the main part of such consumers is represented with young people. Therefore there is a necessity of researching psychological principles of perception and processing of media information by modern young man (Medvedeva, 2015; Medvedeva & Merenkoc, 2015).

Being the reflection of existing and actual for youth environment imperatives and exploiting these or those demands of young people, media environment influences formation of their system of values in social, political, cultural-educational and economic spheres of life activities (Castells, 1996; Levinson, 1999; Marchand, 1998).

One of the most relevant problems in studying information that is contained in media environment is the degree of its impact on behavior and value orientations of young people, whose age implies constant "openness" of mind to external influence, high level of conformity and search for self-affirmation in the area of interpersonal relationships (Sapunov, 2006).

Results and Discussions

Psychological impact manifests itself within processing of audiovisual messages - the emotions, thoughts and probable solutions stipulating peculiar behavior acts of a consumer. On the other hand, the processing of media information involves one's attitude towards a message, his emotions and feelings, for instance, the feeling of pleasure, self-esteem, envy, his understanding and acceptance or, on the contrary, rejection of perceived information (Urazova, 2014).

For example, the screen image influences emotional aspect of the attitude. The impact on emotions is often the best way of influencing creeds, forming in such a way attitude and as a result having effect on behavior. When putting trust in digital world, a man can gradually lose the very perception of reality, as far as there is a universe of images and symbols between him and real life (Boler, 2008; Pramod, 2010). All those images serve as landmarks and provide one's personification. An individual strives for likening and searching an image that would be adequate to him, and the screen helps him in it (Smirnov, 2009). Such processes are used in advertising industry, cartoon animation, as well as in production of TV series and many other types of media content (Shesterina, 2013).

In the Internet there are quite many researches dedicated to, for example, how much time user spends in the world web, what resources does he visit and how active he is. They are conducted by various researching holdings and other organizations, or can be ordered by major employers wanting to find out more data about their workers. The annoying contextual advertising is also the result of global researches conducted by owners of search systems. According to specialists, as for today the amount of accumulated data allows conducting multiparameter analysis and forecasting results of interaction between man and digital media environment. Besides, currently everyone speaks about negative physical effects of constant dealing with PC, notebooks, tablets, mobile phones, etc., as well as about excessive amount of information around consumer of IT content that turns him into a kind of zombie with clipping mind. Another significant problem is the matter of authenticity and unauthenticity of information causing postmodern non-confidence towards every aspect of our life and, probably, the loss of holistic world view. And this list is just endless. So, where can we find a way out of the situation? We believe it lies in upbringing and education. We would fill the terms of "media ecology" and "media hygiene" from time to time used in connection with the term of "media environment" with the following content. Media ecology is the systemic regulation, first of all, on behalf of state as the organizing institution that sanitizes media space in legislative way and encourages healthy behavior of citizen in social sense - i.e. his physical, moral and intellectual state. Media hygiene, to our mind, should imply the hygiene in the ordinary sense - i.e. the teaching of safe use of media space in every family and also in childcare facilities, which give a grounding of personality in the very early age. It seems, there is an acute need for quite an

"aggressive" and complex PR-program. Thus, we have a problem of bees' struggle against honey.

Conclusions

Today humanity sets up a grand experiment on production and consumption of informational fast-food, consuming the fast-food in motion, having no time for reflection and realizing goals and consequences of such consumption. Scientific researches on influence of media environment on human consciousness, as well as recommendations on safe media behavior (media hygiene) should be taken out from scientific community and turned into the matter of discussion and understanding at wider social level for the purpose of its subsequent transformation into trend by means of aggressive and continuous advertising. Such an approach will, probably, have its impact on modern media consumer.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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