

TYPOLGY OF MEDIA USERS IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITAL EXPERIENCE: THE PROBLEM OF MEDIA EDUCATION.

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ABSTRACT

The digitalization of social space has spawned a multitude of effects that, to date, remain unexplored, including in the social sciences. The authors believe that one of the most important problems is the status of a new subject – the media user. This paper presents the results of a study conducted among people with different "digital" experiences. This study was conducted to identify the specific requirements of the addressee, in relation to which media education is directed. Since the level of development of media education in the country is a marker of media literacy of its citizens and the precondition for their success, it is necessary to know the needs of different groups of media users. The analysis led to the conclusion that in addition to the groups of users of Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants, described by the American researcher M.Prensk, the Zero Users group should also be considered. Zero Users are those people who do not have an independent strategy of digital information navigation and do not treat gadgets as organic communication tools. The authors suggest that the findings can guide the teachers to adjust strategies for working with students of different "digital" experiences.

Keywords: Media Literacy, Media Education, Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, Zero Users.

INTRODUCTION

At the present stage of sociocultural development, we observe a shift in the focus of attention in social and humanitarian studies to the consideration of the digitalization of the social sphere. In many respects this situation is explained by the fact that the effects of digitalization have no analogues in the history of mankind in terms of the strength and scale of determining the daily events of human life, remaining at the same time polysemantic. The entry of digital media in almost all spheres of everyday life of a modern person marks the loss of the person's ability to stay in the situation of choosing the status of connectivity / non-connectivity. A person is limited to staying in the situation of imperative, that is to choose information channels.

Analog media users are subject to the logic of broadcasting, and therefore to a certain disciplinary practice - physical fixation in front of the screen. "The TV image ... is an extension of touch" [1]. While recipients of communicative types of media, such as social networks, in contrast to the passive type of recipient (TV viewer), are found face to face with unlimited information resources. The constant connection of users' data to the Internet is an attempt to satisfy the constantly growing information hunger, which results in content overload. Sociologist M.Castells notes that with the emergence of global consumer culture there also occurs a global public sphere that represents a single round-the-clock space of global information flows. However, the production of this information is always biased, "the construction of this global information is not neutral. It is biased towards certain values and interests" [2, p.123]. It turns out that information flows are always specifically targeted, and therefore, one cannot speak about the existence of a single representation of information.

In metaphysical terms, the subject of a global networked society is extremely valent in recipient, and, therefore, vulnerable to the impact of factors destabilizing its position. In this connection, the

understanding of the post-modern subject by the German theorist N.Bolz is highly relevant. This is a subject that "does not know anything that it would like to know" [3, p.32] including because "it watches on not an event but on observation" [3, p.36]. In addition, the presence of simultaneity of a huge number of information flows destroys the stable balance of the vital world, where it is impossible to focus on the vertical hierarchy of both epistemological and axiological order.

It should be noted that the subjects of the global network society shall be understood to mean Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants [4], however, it is important to emphasize that these types of digital subjects have fundamentally different stability thresholds before media effects, and, consequently, the ability to resolve such problems as gnoseological (a limited set of search strategies, the choice of information sources, etc.), and axiological (glam-orientation [5], the loss of humanistic reactions, etc.). This paper presents the results of a study aimed at finding the answer to the question of a real correlation between the type of media object and the way to increase its level of media literacy, which will allow us to determine the necessary changes in the content of media education work with students.

METHODS

The work strategy followed the logic of mixed methods that ensured maximization of the effects of quantitative and qualitative analysis [6]. The study took place in Russia (Kazan) from January 2017 to March 2017. This study includes two components:

1) conducting a closed anonymous test involving high school students (age 16-18, N=21 girls, N=26 boys); the 2nd year Master's student (age 22-25, N=10 girls, N=15 boys); and people working full-time jobs (age 42-53, N=24 women, N=8 men). Total 104 people filled in the questionnaire forms.

2) working in focus groups [7]: 2 discussions with the high school students (age 16-18, N=7 girls, N=6 boys); 2 discussions in focus groups with 2nd year Master's students (age 22-25, N=12 girls, N=4 boys); 2 discussions with people working full-time jobs (age 42-53 years, N=11 women, N=2 men). 42 people took part in the focus groups.

At the first stage, data were collected using a paper questionnaire. It included 8 questions with the choice of answers yes/no: 1) Do you watch TV daily? 2) Do you have a page on at least one social network? 3) Do you regularly visit social networks several times a day? 4) Do you make more than one repost per day? 5) Do you post your own publications in any of the social networks more than once a week? 6) Have you sought the help of friends / relatives to help you deal with any digital "thing" such as application, social network, messenger, search engines? 7) Do you remember the phone numbers of your relatives and friends? 8) Is a large number of likes and comments under your reposts and your own publications important for you?

The moderators working with focus groups were neutral and did not exert pressure on the participants. They consistently proposed three issues for discussion, among which were: 1) Can a modern person do without intellectual gadgets? 2) Who is a modern digital nomad [8] in your opinion? 3) How do you assess the degree of your dependence on gadgets?

The results of the questioning and work with focus groups were analyzed, so the work consisted of three stages: data collection, analysis, interpretation formulation, and classification by types.

RESULTS

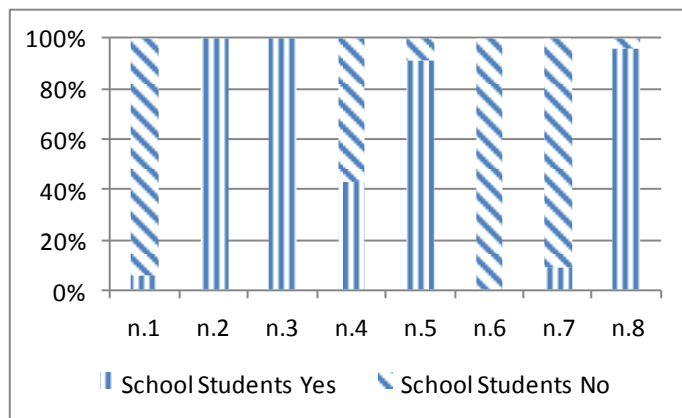
Table 1 provides a summary of respondents' answers to 8 questions of an anonymous questionnaire.

Table 1: Respondents' answers

Respondent s	Questions /Answers															
	n.1		n.2		n.3		n.4		n.5		n.6		n.7		n.8	
	Ye s	N o	Ye s	N o	Ye s	N o	Ye s	N o	Ye s	N o	Ye s	N o	Ye s	N o	Ye s	N o
School Students	3	44	47	0	47	0	20	27	43	4	1	46	4	43	45	2
Master's Students	0	25	22	3	20	5	11	14	20	5	10	15	12	13	7	18
People Working Full-Time Jobs	28	4	13	19	6	26	4	28	8	24	17	15	19	13	6	26

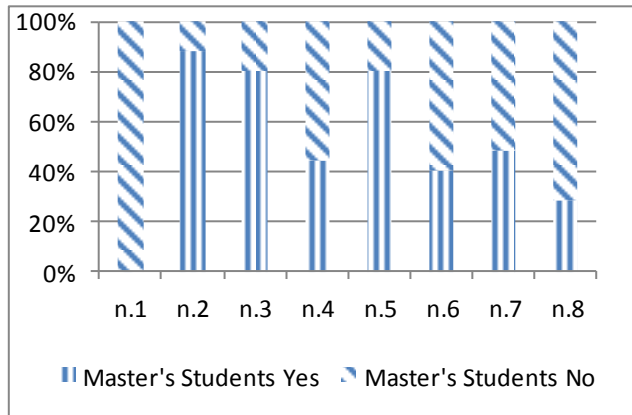
According to the data obtained, three groups can be distinguished, which coincide with the groups of the respondents interviewed.

The results show that the first group (School Students) is characterized by a refusal to watch TV every day (94%); all of them have their page in the social network (100%); regularly scan social networks (100%); actively publish their own content (91%); have never sought help from their friends / relatives (99%); do not remember phone numbers (91%); consider important the number of likes (96%).

Figure 1:

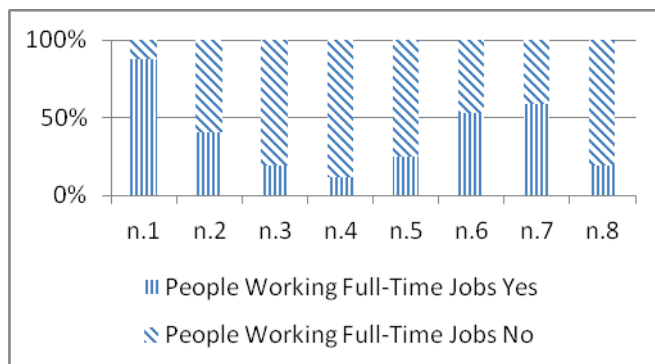
The results of the answers of the second group (Master's Students) in comparison with the first group have significant differences in the answers to such questions: (40%) sought help; remember phone numbers (48%); consider the number of likes not important (72%).

Figure 2:



The third group (People Working Full-Time Jobs) is characterized by such parameters: watching TV daily (88%); irregular visit to social networks (81%); do not make more than one repost per day (88%); do not post their own content (75%); consider likes not important (81%).

Figure 3:



The qualitative part of the research, which represented the work with focus groups, took on average 1 hour and 20 minutes: it was recorded and then decoded from the audio carrier. Discussions showed that those respondents whose childhood was outside of gadgets have the belief that digital technologies are important but not determinative, they also tend to believe that they are outside the digital environment. Those whose socialization experience was based on social networks feel confident in accessing any information and consider important their self-expression on the Internet.

DISCUSSION

Group 1 - "Zero Users" - are victims of the type of violence that was discovered at the end of the twentieth century and was called "sedation" [9, p.109], when the media mechanism forces its consumer to stay in one place and in one position – to sit opposite the screen, keeping still for a long time. The consumer at the physical level feels the inorganic nature of such rest, but his confrontation is expressed only in the continuous switching of channels and calling such a media carrier as a TV a "zombie box". TV media are the first in the strength of their effect as an agent of modern ideology - the ideology of non-resistance. Understanding a person's need for any specific information is removed, the consumer who was brought up in the logic of sedation is not sure of the need to conduct an independent information search; navigation outside the scope of the TV network seems dangerous to him.

Group 2 - "Digital Immigrants" are active users of digital media. They demonstrate a different type of media consumption than the representatives of the first group. These are those who participate in the production of content. The work devoted to the problem of changing the status of privacy by the Italian philosopher U.Eco states: "Visiting home pages, you find that the goal of many people is to unveil their uninteresting normality or, worse, uninteresting abnormality" [10, p.34]. The establishment of the fundamental role of knowledge, which D.Bell predicted to our era, was not so unambiguous. The pluralism of the presence of the user on the Web, the ease of building communication has produced, as a side effect, the release of a pseudo-intellectual, somewhat schizoid communicative ecstasy. Actualization of schizoid trends arose primarily due to the possibility of an anonymous and structural simplicity of the organization of social networks. Residents of Group 2 do not think about the presence of the digital code, it is given to them through an interface that represents the same phenomenon of the consumer society as the situations when the buyer is manipulated, exposing the eye level to the most expensive products from the range of the shopping center. Representatives of this group are subject to the proposed simplicity of new media, they receive a privileged communicative position - they have an incomparably greater volume of connections and are able to increase their number every time they need it. Knowledge of network etiquette and network language is much more important than knowledge of programming languages and is mastered intuitively, like network navigation. As a result, active consumption begins to fade in such a channeling phenomenon as "repost". Reflecting the constant content pressure with a repost this type of users gets the illusion that it is not the final link of information flows. They identify themselves as mediums that actively transmit information, thereby opposing themselves to the user of group 1, who has less opportunity to share what he has received through television channels, since he has no possibility of instant retransmission of the content.

Users of the third group - "Digital Natives", as well as users of the second group, interact with new media every day. However, their essential distinctive feature is that their personal space-time organization is completely subordinated to the logic of the Internet action. This is confirmed by the phenomenon of "digital shower" [11], which is the construction of a new hierarchy in the sequence of everyday activities. Before a person goes to perform hygiene procedures in the morning, he turns to his own gadget, where he checks news in social networks and news portals, looks through push notifications, marks letters by importance in e-mail, browses visual networks such as Pinterest, Instagram, etc. In other words, users of the third group are caught by the phenomenon described by the French philosopher Guy Debord in his work "The Society of the Spectacle": " Images detached from every aspect of life merge into a common stream, and the former unity of life is lost forever. Apprehended in a partial way, reality unfolds in a new generality as a pseudo-world apart, solely as an object of contemplation". [12, p.9].

All spheres of life of the users of the third group turned out to be subordinated to the Network. For those who were born in the era of new media, it is impossible to think offline, thanks to pocket, portable gadgets: a person stays in continuous information contact. Even when a person is engaged in his own health, jogging, his smartphone or fitness bracelet is already synchronizing his result with the result of his

friends from Facebook. Users of group 3 are, first of all, invalid subjects who have a pathology from birth. Gadgets is the only thing that can reduce the gap between the human nature as such and the requirements of the new digital environment. In other words, the gadget prosthetics is the addition of a functional to the corporeality of a person that is necessary for its socialization in modern society. Summarizing, one should emphasize once again that user-3 is primarily the type of the user whose thinking is organized in accordance with the order of the new environment, while he is not inclined to divide the real and virtual events.

How much media education can be claimed by users of all three types that are hardly aware of its necessity? Media literacy for the user of group 1 is primarily techno-practical, that is, the development of gadgets as tools for establishing communication and retrieval of information and determining the boundaries of a secure presence. Therefore, the main media education microcosm for this type of users will be all sorts of circles, courses on teaching skills to work with search engines. For users of the second type, media education is presented in the form of visual or text consultations on current trends in a particular area of network traffic. The users of the third group do not raise the question of the need for a special increase in their own media literacy, as it organically follows an expanding own network presence. That is why it is not possible to talk about the existence of a special consumer request.

The authors believe that media education today should be directed primarily at the reflexive and ethical orientation of students. Here it is necessary to fix a paradox that consists in the bipolarity of the situation: amid a real increase in the presence of the "digital code" in the person's existing being, his prosthetization with gadgets, the urgency of finding answers to value-ethical questions and working on the usefulness of modern social interaction is growing.

CONCLUSION

This study, as well as publications by E.Helsper, R.Eynon [13] A.Koutropoulos [14], is aimed at completing the typology of digital subjects and proposing to take into account their peculiarities for increasing the flexibility of the media education program. The authors suggest that the introduction of adaptive media education will increase the overall level of media literacy among all user groups.

It should be noted that when interpreting the results of the conducted research, it is necessary to take into account the presence of a common specific, typical of Russia cultural past among the survey participants.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work was supported by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research on (RFBR) and the Government of the Republic of Tatarstan, the project number 17-13-16001.

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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