The Problem of the Devaluation of Education in the Age of Media Noise

Polyanina A.K.

Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia
Samara State Transport University, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia
Corresponding author. Email: Alker@yandex.ru

ABSTRACT

Modern education crisis takes on a systemic, global, and international character and is associated with diverse social transformations. The devaluation of social institutions also concerns the institution of education, which is primarily understood as a comprehensive process of personality formation, not just as a translation and assimilation of practical competencies. The author's devaluation of education is associated with the escalation of media logic in the educational space and the forced subordination of educational technologies to media principles, embedding it in a homogeneous media flow. The influence of the media noise as a background aimless media consumption forcing perception organs on the efficiency of learning educational materials is substantiated. The problems of simplification and gamification of educational technologies are analyzed against the background of the necessity to take into account the reduction of requirements to cognitive abilities of students and the "learning disability" of some part of them. The phenomenon of "quasi-formation", understood as the imitation of education, and the associated elitism of true education has been noted. A loss of priority of educational information products is noted as a result of horizontalization of interests, equalization of status positions of educational and entertainment media content, which, most often, has the same source of the media signal.

Keywords: *media noise, mediatization, digitalization, information hygiene, information overload, quasi-education, gamification of education*

1. INTRODUCTION

The devaluation problems of traditional education systems are currently evident at all levels. The desire for alternative education observed in the public consciousness, as well as alternative mechanisms for obtaining professional competences, point to the crisis of the adopted official system. Not the least of these is the general orientation towards total "mediatization of life" [1], the immersion of a young person into the media using all possible aspects of perception. Escalation of media into everyday life in such a way transforms the ability to learn, and in general, the value orientation of the individual, that the process of education, not included in the general media stream and the usual format of media consumption of a schoolboy (student, student) completely drops out of perception. Educational content becomes an "outcast of attention".

The totality of media, the power of media is the mediatization of life. The penetration of media into all areas of life, the leveling of borders between the consumer and producer of a media product, between public and personal communication leads to the "disappearance of the audience" [1]. This phenomenon is also characteristic of the disappearance of a learning audience, i.e. the addressee of new knowledge broadcasted in the process of educational technologies. The same blurring of boundaries is observed between the formative and the formation, the learning and the learner.

The phenomenon of media logic spreading to all spheres of social relations and the change of consciousness processes connected with it against the background of constant staying in a state of readiness for contact, a state of "in touch", a priori consent to be "pulled out" from the current activity at any moment generates new dangers in relation to habitual models of knowledge translation and formation of personal and professional competences.

Superfluous media diversity, which has already covered almost all educational fields offering unprecedented opportunities for the acquisition of all kinds of skills, devalues well-established patterns of human experience transfer in all spheres. The disarray of the young man in front of the assortment of educational programs, modules, trajectories collapsed on him is caused by the growing gap between the desire to become the most competitive in the increasingly complex requirements of the professional environment and his physiological and mental capabilities. This gap and imbalance can lead to a loss of motivation at all.

2. METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

The methodological basis of the study was formed by comparative and typological analysis of open statistical data approaches used in recent studies on this issue. Based on the research on the impact of media on social processes, the above problem can be focused on such conclusions as to the spread of media logic [2]; coercion to the external expansion of a person at the expense of the media flow [3], the diffusion of media to all social institutions [4]; hygienic problems of a constant flow of information and information noise [5], the problem of heavy multitasking of modern man. The investigation of scientific literature, analysis of statistical data observation of communication and information processes of modern society allowed to approach the analysis of the problem of educational processes in conditions of media escalation.

The qualitative transformation of the social system in general and the educational system, in particular, is associated with the increasing intensity of media streams, which are increasingly coming in the background, in the format of "background" of a particular activity. Various media products are consumed at the same time as useful activities. This is ensured, in particular, by the accessibility of devices and sources of audio and visual information, accessibility even for persons who do not have formed mental processes - children.

3. RESEARCH

Background media consumption has long been a habit for many social groups and is even becoming a social pattern. Media consumption can be a condition for attributing an individual to its reference group.

Consumption of media products in the background can go out of the space of individual control and become an external factor. In this case, such media consumption becomes forced, the individual is forced to consume media products, music, radio, advertising, etc., television. The resource that broadcasts media drops out of the subject's control, while the media stream itself, the stream of audio and video information, forces the perception organs to the reception.

Media noise appears to be a problem of hyper-exploitation of mental resources, actualizing the need to study the potential of resistance to negative impacts of the media environment, as well as the conditions, trends, and trajectories of adaptation mechanisms. This has a direct bearing on raising awareness of media consumption.

Differentiation of media noise riskiness is related to the peculiarities of a person's communicative behaviour, including the ability to filter incoming information. Researchers note that pre-filters, deflectors, can reduce the power of the incoming message flow. At the same time, these filters themselves act as a communicative pattern characteristic of social groups actively using new media [6]. The danger is seen in the fact that these filters dissipate information not on the basis of the assessment of its significance but on the basis of an analysis of the presence/absence of one or more easily identifiable features peculiar to communicators from the relevant group. Increased interaction with online information resources and the common media noise composition of a social group creates patterns of a common communication pattern for more social groups. Thus, media noise leads to the unification of deflectors, filtering mechanisms, in which information is sifted out without prior interpretation and regardless of its relevance to a certain social group and its values. And the values themselves have levelled out the more contrary to the filter criteria. The absorption of educational material under these conditions passes through a non-optimal set of deflectors that sift out relevant information.

The appearance of the "streaming" principle of material supply, which is phenomenally new, increases the effect of immersion in the situation. A privileged stay in the media stream can lead to information stress, deterioration of critical thinking, reduction (insensitivity) of emotional response, activation of subconscious resources. Continuity of activity in the background media consumption mode reduces the manageability of channels of information receipt, including educational character.

Untargeted consumption of multi-layered and largely chaotic media text distorts the worldview, leads to inconsistent communicative behavior (disorientation), consolidation of non-optimal information filters, lack of useful information, and, as a result, devaluation of education.

Compulsory reception absorbs intellectual and psychological resources, makes people multitask, and, as a result, deprives them of the ability to absorb educational materials. It is a scramble, a rivalry for attention, a rivalry of media noise, and education that requires involvement and concentration.

Another manifestation of the impact of emerging patterns of background media consumption on education is the tendency to embed educational materials in the media stream. The forfeit of the educational content of positions of interesting content adequate to the needs and trends of time is due to the lack of high emotions compared to entertainment media, hot media [3].

The mass modification of educational programs on the way to the greatest individualization of educational trajectories does not essentially affect the substance of knowledge, which is undergoing a crisis against the background of total immersion in the media. Integrating educational technologies into the general media stream, although it provides a certain amount of attention, distracts a person from the realization of the need to "reach" knowledge through intellectual efforts, the need to temporarily "turn it off" for the rest of the world. The inertia and habit of media emotiogenicity, inability to influence the external medium, complete the circle. The experience of mankind in creating spiritual and material culture accumulated over the millennia remains unclaimed or in demand for the increasingly narrowing circle of individuals.

The actual and latent elitism of education is being observed, i.e. the inaccessibility of true education is increasing. Only a quasi-version of education that is not related to the creation of a personal subject is available. At the same time, the imitation process has nothing to do with personal education as the main goal of education. Imitation is carried out by all subjects of the process both on average and on the higher stages, both forming and formative.

The course on practice-oriented education confirms a decrease in the desire and ability for in-depth knowledge and recognition of only the instrumental value of education as a means to generate income from activities.

The increasing tendency of a part of society to leave for alternative education, informalized and cleared of bureaucratic accessories, confirms not only disappointment in the official system, but also the awareness of the importance of building boundaries between the spaces of life, some of which, exploiting a shaky emotional sphere, seek total absorption, while others, requiring labour and mental effort, create a personality.

Contingent with a low level of requirements to the quality of education is observed in higher education already as a result of a vicious circle, a chain of primitivization of cognitive interests associated with staying in media noise - a necessary adaptation of secondary school to the low cognitive abilities of children through the gamification of education - the learning disability [7] of most applicants. This tendency is expressed in particular in the rating of popular and unpopular among entrants specialties. As experts note, the most frequently chosen areas are those that involve rapid practical application and income generation and the least intellectual effort to obtain a diploma. For example, according to specialists, various "applications" to fundamental disciplines, such as mathematics, biology, physics, have become popular, which by themselves have ceased to be in demand due to, perhaps, their poor payback and labor intensity.

Homogenization of media space in the direction of simplification, visualization and gamification of content leads to dissolution, loss of clear guidelines for educational content. Teaching materials, even in digital form, online are perceived by users of a media source (e.g. a smartphone) as being of no priority. There is a horizontalization of interests, equalization of the status of educational, and, for example, reference or entertainment content. The lack of hierarchy dismantles the whole education system as a system, firstly, and as a value, secondly.

There is now a proliferation of gamification of school lessons, supported by the hope of involving children with Attention Deficit Disorder in the learning process, with more and more such diagnoses being made each year. ADHS is one of the most common disorders in children and adolescents. It occurs in about 5% of the child population as well as in 3-6% of the adult population [8].

Gamification is the introduction of game techniques into non-game processes. The problem of gamification is expressed in particular in the idea of simplifying the learning process, increased involvement in the process, the belief in the person's desire to play.

The growing interest in the gamification of different areas of activity shows the analysis of queries with the help of the statistics service search queries Yandex and Google, among which the leading query is "gamification in education". The second place is occupied by search queries on "business gamification," the third - "staff gamification," the fourth - "life gamification." And the dynamics of requests shows an increase in the number of requests for information about gamification from 7,000 to 12,500 for the year from 03/01/2019 to 03/01/2020.

Involvement in mechanisms that improve the efficiency of processes is logical. Such a mechanism often appears to be gamification as a time-consuming way of engaging in activities. Otherwise, gamification is seen as a way to win the battle for attention that is increasingly dissipated in modern man due to the increasing media noise. Gamification is thus causally related to media noise, which we understand as audio and video media signals coming in the background and forcing the senses to receive them regardless of the person's will or because the person loses control over the source of the media signal. For example, background work of the radio accompanying various useful activities, advertising in public places [9], staying in a space filled with a media signal, the source of which is beyond human control. The gamification function is conditioned by the necessity to overcome the consequences of media noise as the main distracting factor.

There is a replacement in goals and motivation. For example, gamification tools mainly relate to external motivation, because there is an impact on the person by external stimuli. External motivation has great power, but it is not long-term. In other words, gamification, for the time being, is able to engage in activities promising a gambling and entertaining action but does not affect the deep foundations of knowledge based on inner motivation and self-worth.

4. SUMMARY

Adjustment of educational technologies to entertainment content and "gamification" of education, especially professional education, leads to its depreciation as a factor of culture and development, a factor of sociogenesis in general. Understatement standards, acquiring the image of "fun" and easy pastime, followed by bonuses in the form of an official document leads to the devaluation of the process of personality and subjectivity, which is education. The erasure of boundaries between media spaces, between entertainment and educational content, is related to the homogenization of the media signal. The difficulty, and often the impossibility, to overcome media noise actualizes the necessity of forming internal adaptive strategies aimed at suppressing the influence of media noise on intellectual processes. It is not only about mastering the media immunity to noise, which may eventually have even more negative consequences, but

also about forming strategies to manage one's own media consumption.

The transformation of mental processes, the rapid decrease in search motivation and heuristic abilities of young people, associated with the hyper-exploitation of channels of perception of information is really like "the transfer into the ownership of a private corporation of our common speech" [3].

The feverish pace of communication technologies, including in the media industry, causes uncontrolled acceleration of human living space, devaluation of the meaning of wisdom and reflection, the infantilization of society, its "juvenilization", information overload of the social system [10].

The phenomenon of quasi-formation on a background of homogenization of a media space, simplification and gamification of educational content is caused by horizontalization of communication connections, as a consequence of the influence of total immersion of the contemporary in media noise. The formulation of appropriate adaptation strategies will help prevent education from losing its status as a critical social institution.

REFERENCES

[1]   Kolomiets V. P. Sociology of mass communication in society of communicative abundance. Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya [Sociological Studies]. 2017. No 6. P. 3-14.

[2]   Livingstone, Sonia (2009) On the mediation of everything: ICA presidential address 2008 Journal of communication, 59 (1). pp. 1-18. DOI: 10.1111 / j. 1460-2466. 2008. 01401.икс

[3]   M. McLuhan, Understanding Media: the Extensions of Man. L., 1967, p. 329-359

[4]   I.V. Zhilavskaya, Teoriya vseobshchikh media: opyt obosnovaniya// Mezhdunarodnyy elektronnyy nauchno-obrazovatel'nyy zhurnal «Media. Informatsiya. Kommunikatsiya»   (elektronnyy   resurs) http://mic.org.ru/new/676-teoriya-vseobshchikh-media-opyt-obosnovaniya.

[5]   I.V. Bukhtiyarov, E.I.Denisov, A.L. Yeremin Osnovy informatsionnoy gigiyeny: kontseptsii i problemy innovatsiy//Gigiyena i sanitariya. 2014. T. 93. No. 4. S. 5-9.

[6]   D. F. Mironov, Informatsionnyy shum i obrazovatel'nyy protsess// Vestn. Sankt-Peterb. gos. un-ta kul'tury i iskusstv (2015). No. 4. S. 24–30.

[7]   A.I. Fedotchev, A.A. Zemlyanaya, S.A. Polevaya, L.V. Savchuk, Sindrom defitsita vnimaniya s giperreaktivnost'yu i sovremennyye vozmozhnosti yego lecheniya metodom neyrobioupravleniya//Zhurnal nevrologii i psikhiatrii im. S.S. Korsakova. 2016;116(5):98-101. https://doi.org/10.17116/jnevro20161165198-101

[8]   Ye.V. Denisova-Shmidt, E.O. Leont'yeva, Kategoriya "neobuchayemykh" studentov kak sotsial'nyy fenomen universitetov (na primere dal'nevostochnykh vuzov) // Sotsiologicheskiye issledovaniya. 2015. No. 9. S. 86-93.

[9]   A.K. Polyanina, Limitations of Creativity: Social Control over Advertising in the Context of Children's Information   Security.//Vestnik   Tomskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Filosofiya. Sotsiologiya. Politologiya. 2019. No. 51. S. 140-148. DOI: 10.17223/1998863X/51/14

[10]   V.I. Ignat'yev, Informatsionnaya peregruzka sotsial'noy sistemy i yeyo sotsial'nyye posledstviya // Sotsiologicheskiye issledovaniya. 2017. No. 7. S. 3-12. DOI: 10.7868/S0132162517070017