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Role of media information in managing mass emotions in social communications of modern Ukraine (a brief overview as a statement of the question)

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ABSTRACT

The study's main objective is to prove the presence of practical attempts in managing the third component of the mass communication message in modern Ukrainian social communications. It is the mass-emotional component. In previous studies, the author proved that the nature of social communications in the modern digital society is based on the unity of mass information, mass interpretation, and mass emotions. Therefore, it is essential to find actual attempts on the part of the organizers of certain political discourses to manage mass emotions in social communications with the help of the media.

The main conclusion of the study is that the scientific assumption regarding the presence of attempts to manage mass emotions through audiovisual and digital domestic media in social communications was confirmed. However, it is vital for further investigations of the scientific problem of how to manage the mass emotions functioning in social communications.

The methods used during the research to achieve the goal were content monitoring, comparison, generalization, and analysis of texts.

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Мета дослідження – довести наявність в українських сучасних соціальних комунікаціях практичних спроб у керуванні третім компонентом масовокомунікаційного послання – масовоемоційним. Адже у попередніх дослідженнях авторка доводила, що в основі природи соціальних комунікацій в сучасному диджитальному соціумі лежить єдність масової інформації, масової інтерпретації та масових емоцій. Важливо віднайти реальні спроби організаторів певних політичних дискурсів керувати масовими емоціями в соціальних комунікаціях за допомогою медіа.

Головні висновки дослідження: підтвердилося наукове припущення щодо наявності в соціальних комунікаціях спроб керування масовими емоціями через аудіовізуальні та диджитальні вітчизняні ЗМК. В українських соціальних комунікаціях медіа мають ознаки використання комунікаційних технологій. Для того, щоб утворився рід колективної душі під час комунікації, комунікатори послуговуються традиційними медіа (телебачення та телешоу), адже вони забезпечують масову поінформованість у комунікаційному ланцюжку: зрозумілість знаку, зрозумілість тексту, всенародну інформованість через ЗМК, всенародну інтерпретацію, всенародне розуміння та розраховують на масову реакцію у вигляді масової емоції. Тому важливою є подальше завдання поглиблено дослідити наукову проблему функціонування масових емоцій у сфері соціальних комунікацій та глибше дослідити соціальні комунікації як сферу функціонування масових емоцій.

Методи, що були застосовні під час дослідження для досягнення мети, - метод контент-моніторингу, порівняння, узагальнення, аналізу текстів.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: соціальна комунікація, масові емоції, масова інформація, індивідуальна та масова інтерпретація в соціальних комунікаціях

Introduction

Today in the world and in Ukrainian social communications, there are many signs of operating with mass emotions. They are an essential part of social communications. Media messages have many signs of using mass-emotional communication technologies. The development of information technologies today has led to the fact that every participant at any moment of social communication can express his opinion on any occasion. It becomes available to a mass audience in a few seconds. A new community has been created in the world, aptly called the "Internet community" (internet-community, internet-audience, internet-media audience). When the information society is digitized as much as possible, the community (internet community) ceases to be a passive consumer of information, a patient of the activity of social communication institutes. Understanding this, not only the media but also bloggers on social networks, film directors, producers of TV shows, and editors of TV programs trying to impersonate the audience.

Moreover, media push them to "correct" behavior, thus stimulating social changes. However, from time to time, emotional synchronization occurs in society. That is, among different emotions, some emotional setting becomes dominant and captures the majority of this society.

This study aims to prove the hypothesis of the presence in modern Ukrainian social communications of practical attempts to manage mass emotions as the third component of social communications. After all, in previous studies, we proved that the nature of social communications in the modern digital society is based on the unity of mass information, mass interpretation, and mass emotions. Therefore, it is crucial to find actual attempts of media participation from the organizers of certain political discourses guided by mass emotions in social communications.

Our previous studies have shown that the nature of social communications in today's digital society is probably based on the unity of mass information, mass interpretation, and mass emotions.

Therefore, an urgent task is to investigate social communications as a sphere of mass emotions functioning.

Content and Method

In this research we used the method of content monitoring of the Google search engine for the keyword "LibertyReport.ai research". This method proved that the information of sociologists from the LibertyReport.ai platform about the state of mass emotions in Ukraine becomes media information within the TOP-20 search engine results for a given keyword. Furthermore, the method of content monitoring made it possible to prove the prevalence of the negative modality of media materials in the Google search engine. It enabled us to make assumptions about the pragmatic intention to manage mass emotions in this way in the social communications in modern Ukraine.

The comparison method revealed a change in the positioning of the Open Mind Foundation in 2022. This made it possible to point to a change in the organizational form, to declare the impossibility of a commercial component of the institution, and probably to hide the pragmatic goal of the organizers of this discourse.

The analysis of scientific literature made it possible to review scientific opinion for a general exploration of the topic and to put forward one's hypothesis regarding mass emotions in social communications. The application of the method proved the absence of even a single theory regarding social communications as a field of mass emotions development.

The topic of controlling the audience through individual emotions entered the scientific discourse through the works of Aristotle. His "Politics", as the first treatise on the state, contains the beginnings of the management theory in this domain. Next, we consider the role of emotional speech in communication between people: "Man is a social being to a greater extent than bees and all kinds of herd animals ... only a person with all living beings is gifted with speech. The voice conveys sadness and joy. Therefore, it is also inherent in other living beings (since their natural properties are developed enough to feel joy and sadness and convey these feelings to each other). Nevertheless, only speech can express what is useful and what is harmful, as well as what is just and unjust" (Aristotle, 2016).

Signs of the theory about controlling the audience through individual emotions can already be found in the first book of humanity - the Bible. Research has shown that the word "heart" is used more than six hundred times. The organ itself is a metaphorical symbol of an unconscious, defenseless human organ against external influence (forces of evil): "As Jesus Christ teaches, "from the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adultery, theft", (Matthew 15:19), the heart is the source of all mental and emotional, moral, and volitional, mysterious and mystical life of a person. Therefore, the task of the Christian life is to purify the heart: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Lepakhin, 2022). Perhaps that is why a whole stream of so-called theologians of the heart - Isachists (sparingly criticized by opponents) arose in Christianity, who minimized emotions in their lives through "smart-heart" prayer, thus achieving a minimization of the emotional impact on themselves from the side of functionaries from Christianity. After all, the Christian church, as an ancient institution of public opinion management, knew how to ensure the supremacy of the heart over the mind (emotions over the ratio), thereby effectively influencing the flock, and the Isachists, as adepts of "smart-heart" prayer, tried to limit this influence - they reduced emotions to a minimum, concentrated on the ratio in continuous prayer.

The single components of the new theory regarding mass emotion in social communications should be sought in the classical theory of mass communication, namely in its behavioral aspects. Thus, the D. McQuail theory (McQuail, 2010) is based on the following scientific view on the issue of mass information in mass communication. Information moves through mass media channels from the sender to the recipient with feedback from the audience (it is provided, in particular, by the media of collective participation - the Internet). This scientific view of intersubject communication resonates with the views of the authors of the theory of linear

communication H. Lasswell (Lasswell, 1946), the inventor of the theory of hot and cold media, M. MacLuhan (MacLuhan, 2003), the author of the theory of active audience W. Schramm (Schramm, 2003), domestic theoretician and practitioner of mass communication prof. V. Rizun (Rizun, 2008). According to the Ukrainian scientist, a significant role in the effectiveness of communication is played by "a certain physical, the emotional-volitional or mental reaction of people", and "the goal of mass communication always lies in the plane of the communicator's behavior" (Rizun, 2008, 57).

The classic theory and methodology of human understanding of information and, as a result, its reactions to communication phenomena were confirmed by hermeneutic scientists, who introduced the concept of information interpretation into scientific circulation.

After all, communication is interpersonal: everyone reads the media by himself, watches TV himself, and interprets the information he receives. The classic of hermeneutics, H.-G. Gadamer, emphasized the two-sidedness of the communication process (Hadamir H.-G., 1988), and the Ukrainian researcher of mass hermeneutics in journalism, prof. V. Vladymyrov identified the unique role of media information in forming a hermeneutics chain from individual pre-understanding to the creation of mass understanding (Vladymyrov, 2003, 43). However, in all these theories, the logical chain from mass information through mass interpretations formed with the help of mass communication had no development and completion to the theory of the functioning of mass emotions in social communications.

Philosophers of the main philosophical fields and schools of the 20th century (hermeneutics, formalism, structuralism, poststructuralism, neopositivism, relativism, and practical communicative philosophy) laid the foundations without which it is impossible to start researching large-scale and universal phenomenon as mass emotions in social communications. The correlation of emotions and information can be traced in the writings of Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Hobbes, and the structuralist M. Foucault substantiated through his theory of thinking about the change of humanity in the perception of information, giving reasons to explain the modern phenomenon of "post-truth", developed his theory of lies as an alternative opinion postmodernist philosophers M. Luther and S. Kierkegaard (Beletska, 2018).

Having determined the foundations of the study of the role of a person in social communications, these researchers have not reached (and could not reach through another subject frame) the research of the pragmatic essence of mass emotional states in communication processes. However, social psychologists coped much better with this objective.

The theorist of mass psychology, G. Lebon, believed that it is information that excites certain feelings of individuals and turns them into masses. It was G. Lebon who defined the term "spiritual crowd" (Lebon, 1999), where emotions prevail over information.

Thus, the existence of mass information (classical theory of mass communication), mass interpretation (theory of hermeneutics of mass communication), the fact of the informational nature of modern Internet society in post-truth times (Kotlar, 2017) with the pragmatic goal of ensuring mass understanding gives grounds for talk about the possibility of the existence of the third element and a new interpretation of the nature of modern social communications: just the mass emotions in social communications.

We have now to clarify what we mean precisely by mass emotions in social communications: "Mass emotions in social communications are the emotional response of large masses of people to the appearance of socially significant information" (Beletska, 2016), Social networks, news media, television shows provide the audience with sensuality and are tools the embodiment of communication through mass information, mass interpretation, mass emotions, which should lead to social changes conceived by the organizers of the discourse.

Results

It is worth noting that the fundamental research of social communication theorists did not cover the problem of the media's role in the formation of mass emotions as a sphere of social communication. "Researchers were based on different ideas about the essence of mass communication, the process of information perception by a person, and the patterns of formation of public opinion. However, it should be noted that the majority of scientists who dealt with these important, still unsolved issues were sociologists, philosophers, psychologists, and not journalists (...) journalism was considered, and it continues in our time, as a purely practical field, that only representatives of other fields can investigate", reveals researcher of mass communication problems prof. V. Ivanov (Ivanov, 2010).

As the current study of the Ukrainian media space has shown, Ukrainian managers-communicators are engaged in measuring mass emotions in society, forming a specific political discourse, and organizing social communications using the sociology of emotions. The example below analyzes the presence of the sociology of emotions in media information generated by order of the Open Mind Foundation and attempts to create mass emotions in social communications using the media.

"Open Mind Foundation is an international non-profit public institution for the study of group and mass emotions and their impact on everyday life", this is a quote from the website of this international research organization, as it positions itself from the second half of 2022 (International Research Foundation Open Mind Foundation, 2022). Here it is worth noting that we will return later since the positioning of the fund at the specified time changed along with the political situation in Ukraine - the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine.

Among the fund's announced prospective studies, a close connection with the political discourse in Ukraine and the social communications that shape and feed it can be traced: "...The study of mass emotions in a single territory will tell a lot about the emotional state of its population. Such research will help to clarify the causes of mass mistakes and predict violent mass protests. This knowledge will save thousands of lives. If we aspire to build a free, responsible, and liberal society, then we must monitor the development of basic mass emotions, such as hope, fear, humiliation, and anger, and also be able to determine the moment when a mixture of these emotions can lead to an explosion" - Savik Shuster, the President of this Foundation, says (International Research Foundation Open Mind Foundation, 2022).

One could consider such a practice in the sociology of emotions as an imitation of the school of social psychologists G. Tard and G. Lebon if it were not for the fact that the President of the Fund - Savik Shuster - is one of the most experienced journalists, the host of the popular talk shows "Svoboda slova" and "Shuster-live" (each of which has an audience of several millions of viewers) in Russia (2001-2004) and Ukraine (2005-2021).

Officially, the Open Mind Foundation's goal is analyzing the situation with mass emotions of large groups of people as a psychological phenomenon. But first, sociologists helped Savik Shuster to obtain figures on the mass emotions of Ukrainians. Later sociological data appeared in the news discourse of Ukraine with the help of modern Ukrainian media and the TV program "Svoboda slova", broadcast in Ukraine until 2021.

Here is an example of such management: a study conducted in June 2021 by sociologists of the LibertyReport.ai platform commissioned by the Open Mind Foundation showed the emotional state of 23,400 Ukrainians who took part in the survey. "The emotional state of Ukrainians has improved. In 9 months, the level of hope of Ukrainians increased by 6%" (International Research Foundation Open Mind Foundation, 2022).

This information was interpreted in the Ukrainian media as follows: "Young people hope, the elderly are afraid". It is the title given to the material about this sociological study in the analysis

of the UNIAN News Agency (Petrenko, 2021). "Humiliation due to the conditions in which you live" - this emotion is felt most by Ukrainians aged 45-59. In general, 19% of all respondents called humiliation their "dominant" emotion (in September 2020, there were 21%), - the author of the UNIAN article, Iryna Petrenko writes. She emphasizes the response of Ukrainians that the primary source of humiliation is "what is happening in my country". Compared to the primary source, the analytical material allows for an evaluative judgment by an expert in this material.

The fact of such a free choice of modality for submitting the material prompted the idea to monitor all news materials with statistics of LibertyReport.ai sociologists acting on behalf of the Open Mind Foundation. In January 2022, we conducted research using the content monitoring method of the Google search engine on the keyword "LibertyReport.ai research" according to the following mechanics:

- carried out a sampling of research units on the keyword "LibertyReport.ai research". 34 links were included in the sample because that is how many materials contained the subject of the research - texts about the results of the work of sociologists of the company "LibertyReport.ai", which officials ordered from the "Open Mind Foundation";
- carried out an initial analysis of the modality of information in the search engine regarding data from LibertyReport.ai and their media interpretation;
- made a temporal analysis of the appearance of publications regarding the moments of the appearance of messages about sociological surveys of the emotional states of Ukrainians, organized by LibertyReport.ai in 2020-2021;
- revealed the relationships and identified the sources that publish the most negativity about the results of sociologists;
- verified the original source of the publications - LibertyReport.ai and made assumptions about the pragmatism of the probable "customers" - the Open Mind Foundation and the possible ultimate beneficiaries of the management of mass emotions in social communications through the media;
- assessed the likely consequences for the discourse of the pro-government political discourse from the appearance of a negative issue in the information space of the Google search engine about the sociology of emotions from the "Open Mind Foundation".

As a result, we can claim that the information of sociologists from the LibertyReport.ai platform about the state of mass emotions in Ukraine, published on the website of the customer of these sociological studies - "Open Mind Foundation" has become part of the information space of the Google search engine. We received 34 Internet links, of which 19 were of a news nature, and 12 materials had negative semantics in the title. Here are examples of the negative modality of media information: "More than half of Ukrainians are afraid that Putin will seize new territories. Research LibertyReport.ai" (More than half of Ukrainians fear that Putin will seize new territories". Research. LibertyReport.ai, 2021), "Almost half of Ukrainians are concerned about the Sternenko lawsuit, - survey" (Almost half of Ukrainians are concerned about Sternenko's lawsuit, 2020), "How many Ukrainians want to leave Nenka [Homeland] to live abroad?" (How many Ukrainians want to leave Nenka to live abroad? 2020).

Discussion

If we apply these results to the famous mass communication formula developed by the American scientist H. Laswell and look for the place of mass emotions in it, we get the following:

"Who reports? – Foundation founded by international journalist Savik Shuster and sociologists hired by him.

"What does it say?" - about the emotional moods of Ukrainians, presenting it as a sociological study.

"What channel?" - through the TV show, which positions itself as talk show No. 1, authored by Savik Shuster, "Svoboda slova" on the Ukrainian TV channel; through popular internet media

such as the RBC-Ukraine News Agencies, UNIAN News Agencies, the Obozrevatel internet portal, and Ukraine's most popular internet news service ukr.net. Most of the publications from this info drive have negative semantics in their title complex, forming a negative modality of the Ukrainian information space.

"To whom reports"? - to the readers of these internet media and for viewers of the TV show «Svoboda slova». These are very popular and readable media, so their audience can be called a mass audience (in 2021, TRK Ukraine declared its leadership in the Ukrainian television space, citing the number of viewers of Savik Shuster's talk show at 15 million Ukrainians ("Ukraine" is channel №1 in 2021", 2022).

"With what consequences?" – in order to massificate the audience against the current Ukrainian government, which in 2019 was in a confrontation with the Ukrainian oligarch Rinat Akhmetov, the owner of the Ukraine channel, where journalist Savik Shuster works; for the management of mass emotions in social communications of Ukraine.

Another indirect proof of the pragmatic nature of the Open Mind Foundation's communication in this discourse is the change in this organization's positioning after the Russian Federation's invasion into the territory of sovereign Ukraine. As of February 2022, the Open Mind Foundation has positioned itself as "an international research foundation on individual, collective and mass emotions" (Open Mind Foundation, 2020). However, in July 2022, we already see a change in positioning: "This is an international non-profit public institution for the study of group and mass emotions and their impact on everyday life" (International research foundation Open Mind Foundation, 2022). Let us say the new positioning hides the institution's commercial component and the pragmatic goals of the organizers of this discourse. After all, with the appearance of a new positioning of this organization, headed by the famous TV journalist Savik Shuster, the material with the title disappeared from the website. Nevertheless, it partially explains the goal of the initiators of measuring the emotional moods of Ukrainians: "People's feelings influence their choices more than logic" (People's feelings influence their choices more than logic, 2020).

According to the Ukrainian researcher G. Pocheptsov, the media has almost the most important role in modeling the modality of public opinion: "The world given to us by the media only partially coincides with ours. Everyone has their interests: the government has its own, the population has its own... The media must combine these interests in a single picture of the world, which is probably their main function. However, the media often adapts to the main player, promoting his picture of the world to everyone" (Pocheptsov, 2022).

Conclusions

First, there are clear signs of attempts to manage mass emotions as part of social communications in Ukrainian social communications. The media demonstrate manifestations of mass emotional communication technologies. The communicators use traditional media (television and TV shows), fill Internet sites to create a collective soul during communication, and search engines with derivative news from the primary source. All of them provide mass awareness in the communication chain: intelligibility of the sign, intelligibility of the text, mass awareness through mass media, mass interpretation, mass understanding, and assume the presence of a mass reaction in the form of a mass emotion (as the first step). Mass emotion is part of the social communication space. It is a tool for increasing mass information impact on the audience and has become an influential management resource.

Suppose it is established that media information fulfills its role programmed by communicators in managing mass emotions in modern Ukrainian social communications. In that case, it is essential to investigate further its nature, real abilities, the resources of growing effectiveness in this process, and the effectiveness of communicators' actions.

Further research on the mass-emotional component of a mass information product is socially significant. Because new knowledge about the structure of mass emotions will count to the modern

theory of social communications and a deeper understanding of its nature, the mass media institutions will be given new knowledge to improve the effectiveness of working with a mass audience and knowledge about the risks of becoming participants in specific political discourse and given communication technologies.

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