

ISCKMC 2022**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****MENTAL SPACE OF THE REGION IN THE MEDIA DISCOURSE
OF GLOBALISM ERA**

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Abstract

The relevance of the study is due to the peculiarities of modern vertical globalization, which implies the ideological and cultural dominance of one of the parties in the dissemination of the world certain picture through the media. The purpose of the paper is to identify the structural components of the mental space of the territory, objectified in the media discourse in the context of preserving the historical and cultural specificity of the region, to reveal their role and characterize them taking into consideration the world cognitive picture of the author and consumer. The study is carried out within the framework of a sociocultural approach in assessing the mass media, focused on the integrative potential of the mass media and the transmission of values that contribute to national identification. The outcomes of the study reveal that the region mental space in the media discourse is a complicated mental reality that reflects the representation features of the territory gestalt, a certain set of internal images of events, values and concepts that are characteristic of the region worldview of the. An efficient media discourse is constructed using a single cognitive toolkit of the author and addressee, which is involved in the process of perception and reflection of the real world and is addressed to the cultural code of the region: concepts, archetypes, national stereotypes, narrative as a fascinating format for presenting traditionally significant information.

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1. Introduction

Modern vertical globalization owing to the interests of individual superpowers, determines not only the general agenda and themes of the world media, but also the artificial imposition of the world certain picture, the cult of a set of prescriptions and views that are acceptable to the globalism actors (Penzina & Parhitko, 2019). The given process unifies the cultural and historical features of countries and regions; however, historical memory is organically linked with a person, his ethnic or national picture of the world. It is physically impossible to force an organism to have other ancestors and adopt a various cultural code. Moreover, it is cultural diversity that reveals the undoubted value of modern civilization. The relevance of preserving the mental space of the region as a mental reality of the internal representation of primordial images is obvious.

Despite the intensive evolution of information technologies, a modern person prefers to live in an understandable harmonious society in which there are constructs and values that are well-established in time and space, the ideal and desirable items are recognized as a reflection of the guiding principles of being. The surrounding world is relative to the configurators and constructs of the layout and distribution of information in the world picture of the author and consumer of the media discourse. In the process of processing a texture that is significant for a person, a mental space is constructed, within which both individual views on the surrounding reality and the concepts of ethnic/national worldview are presented.

2. Problem Statement

In the information society, the dominant needs, ideas, meanings, and concepts of a person are formed under the influence of a system of norms and rules that are broadcast on a large scale by the mass media. Media discourse concentrates, stores, and reproduces the cultural values of certain society in adequate socio-political conditions, it accumulates national memory. Constructs that are vital for a person are being transformed to please the content-funding subject in the era of geopolitical hybrid wars, as well as inevitable market competition. Researchers formulate the actual “centaur-problem” of contemporary consciousness, within which the incongruous items are synthesized. Consequently, we have a massive ambivalent world picture of a person who is able to profess opposite attitudes and adhere to mutually exclusive judgments and values (Zolotova, 2016). Accordingly, the information space created and perceived in the special conditions of psychic reality is changing radically. Modern media are able to “undermine biological, social and cultural differences” (O’Connor, 2019, p. 43). The instinct of national self-preservation, namely, human biology, the mental aggression of mass communication in this direction awakens the protective resources of the body, turning into extreme forms of nationalism and chauvinism, characteristic of the last decade.

The mental space of the region as a represented set of images and ideas about the world is formed due to the media. Undoubtedly, media discourse is aimed at reflecting the facts of the real world, but the value angle of presentation, the level of interpretation and comprehension of the world, involved by the author in the process of constructing a media text, emphasize its virtual essence. The work of the consumer to decipher the content enriches meanings of the mental space owing to the coincidence of background knowledge and the range of interests of the author and the addressee. Meanwhile,

professionally woven media discourse, as an essential part of spiritual production, effectively translates not only traditional, but also new socio-cultural values. Scientists are faced with an urgent problem of formulating feasible models of productive work with traditional constructs of the mental space of the residence territory.

3. Research Questions

The problem of mental space as a psychic reality is quite actively represented in various areas of modern scientific knowledge: philosophy, philology, cultural studies, political science, pedagogy, etc. The term “Mental Space” was proposed in 1980 by Fauconnier (1985). Later, the scientist, together with Turner, formulated the theory of conceptual integration or Blending Theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008). According to researchers, the mental space consists of elements that represent conceptual integrity. Borrowed from reality and the experience of communication “spatial language” is applied in the mental space construction; the external space determines the intrapsychic. The mental space characterizes the spatio-temporal continuum of phenomena and states or chronotope (Osorina, 2017), demonstrating particular spatio-temporal forms of information structuring.

Generally, the mental space analysis of media discourse is performed within the framework of cognitive psychology and linguistics in terms of identifying and characterizing constructs, frames, scripts, and concepts (Semenova, 2020; Tsvetova, 2021). The mental space of the residence territory is of particular significance for a citizen of society. The given topic is directly related to the process of modeling the media image of a region or country (Dinnie, 2008; Francesco, 2006; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). From the point of view of Malysheva and Gridnev (2016), a media image is an episode of the media space represented in media texts; relatively stable, continuously evolving virtual model of an object/phenomenon of reality, constructed by the media, which both reflects and reframes or forms the knowledge and ideas of the addressee.

The conceptual component of the mental space includes a system of crucial meanings about substantial categories of life in the region, and launches the mechanism of social identification being fundamental for a person (Semenenko, 2008; Tipton, 2009), the required sense of belonging to the geography of residence, expressed, among other things, in terms of value. The sense of identity allows one to appreciate own belonging and awakens the self of the individual through close connection with others in a particular space and time. According to a number of scientists, it is integration that is a significant model underlying collective action and identity (O'Connor, 2019), it implies a target for the public good (Birkner & Donk, 2020).

The complicated process of identification with the historical and cultural space includes the coordination of a person's thoughts and actions with the social system functioning. The integration of meanings, views and values of people as carriers of the world certain picture of is ensured as a result of a sense of harmony and balance. Within the framework of ethnic psychology, the displacement of the most considerable component of social identity from the structure – ethnic, provokes the integrity loss of the self-image, and leads to the destructive eradication of the personality and the absolute feeling of facelessness and namelessness – “I am nobody” (Khoroshilov, 2018). Identification with the cultural code

is a core component of mental representations, it is a strong social archetype based on historically established connections: object – feeling – action.

According to Khochunskaya (2013), a media image is an encoded value representation of the author about a media object in a media text, which has a dialogic (polylogical) character and causes the addressee to a value reaction. Axiological living of facts guarantees a close connection of a person with real social processes, actively supports his territorial identity. It is no coincidence that Vyzhletsov (2016) writes that “values allow us to see the culture of the people and society from the inside, from the depths of social and individual life” (p. 18). However, according to the scientist, the possession of values is the result of the intensive work of a living human spirit; it is impossible to simply join the values, they must be created independently, recreating anew through overcoming mental weakness in value reflection on specific situations of life. Therefore, the axiological component of the mental space of media discourse is not only the ability of the author to comprehend and broadcast the generalized ideas of society regarding the goals and norms of existence, it is also the spiritual and moral potential of the consumer, who is able to use the spiritual inventory in deciphering the texture.

Every era, with its political, social and economic situation, is characterized by a certain system of value orientations. In the information space of the late 20th century, new heroes of the time appeared – successful rich people, criminal personalities. Semilet (2014) notes that the above trends are dictated by the lowering of the cultural level, and the landing and vulgarization of the ideal of a perfect personality.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the paper is to reveal the structural components of the territory mental space, objectified in the media discourse, to identify their role and characterize them considering the world cognitive picture of the author and the consumer, as well as the preservation of the historical and cultural specificity of the region, which is extremely essential in the globalism era. The outcomes of a sociological study of the media image of the Trans-Baikal Territory are applied as an empirical base.

5. Research Methods

The authors adhere to a socio-cultural approach in evaluating the mass media, focusing on the integrative potential of the mass media, which manifests itself in the transmission of values and meanings that contribute to national identification. The main conclusions are drawn on the basis of the linguoculturological approach, which affirms the unity of culture and language in the process of media representation of ideas about the world. Accordingly, the characterization of the mental space is carried out in the paradigm of values of traditional culture. Cognitive analysis is focused on identifying the relationship between the perception of reality and its cognitive/semantic media presentation.

Data from an online survey conducted in 2021 in the Trans-Baikal Territory, as well as the survey outcomes of 48 journalists from the region using various communication channels, are applied in the research.

6. Findings

The region mental space in the media discourse is a complex mental reality that demonstrates the representation features of the territory gestalt, certain set of internal images of events, values and concepts that are characteristic of the region worldview. The mental space reflects the typical schemes of information processing by the author linguistic personality of the media discourse. Considering the fact that the media text is focused on demand and keeps the audience appearance, the mental space also accumulates cognitive tools for deciphering the text by the consumer. An efficient, rating media discourse is constructed using a single cognitive toolkit for the author and addressee, which is involved in the process of perception and reflection of the real world.

The axiological content of the mental space is conditioned by the value priorities of the media discourse creator, as well as external factors – for instance, information policy and the type of media founder. According to the survey outcomes of 48 journalists from the Trans-Baikal Territory in 2021, 74.5% of correspondents believe that the objectivity of reflecting reality depends on the media policy, or on the form of the media ownership. Meanwhile, almost half of the respondents admit that they rarely, but embellish or sharply negatively interpret the events and facts they work with. 42.9 % of survey participants do it for rating or in order to influence the audience opinion.

Nevertheless, the most productive dialogue between the author and the consumer is possible when using constructs based on metavalues that reveal the specifics of typical collective experiences of the region. The list of cognitive markers that point to the primary meanings and prototypes of culture includes concepts, archetypes, ethnic/national stereotypes – as units of collective consciousness and constructs of “layout and distribution of information”, narrative as a fascinating format for presenting the cultural and historical interpretation of the world (Erofeeva & Muravyov, 2021). The cognitive toolkit correlates with the people’s experience of a human, allows in the media discourse to process, store, and transmit information being crucial for the culture of particular society.

The axiology of the region mental space is built on multilevel values that are significant for the territory life, and includes: Spiritual and Moral, Cultural and Historical, and Natural values. The axiological dimension of facts in these planes creates communication of the Co-Being of a person, his involvement in the cultural code of the region. Spiritual and Moral values reveal the proper and desirable, reflect the inner essence of a person, the spiritual vector of his aspirations, thoughts and actions. Working with value tools in assessing facts and events is one of the most complicated in the practice of mass media. Thus, the problem is not even in the technological training and professional competence of the media text author, but in his spiritual and moral potential and cultural and educational viability: in the ability to choose a truly considerable information occasion, to see the fact essence, its root causes and consequences, and in the mental ability to formulate the event meanings. Nevertheless, the level of the author’s moral culture directly depends on the sincerity of his dialogue with the audience, making his published materials more influential.

The spiritual inventory of cultural and historical values can be focused on artifacts, sights of the region, bright and famous personalities, traditional holidays, beliefs and customs, and national cuisine.

The outlined component of the region axiology reflects the ideological and practical potential of regional identity, and contributes to the cohesion of residents.

It has been noted, mental space is a single space-time continuum. Thus, the mental space of the Trans-Baikal Territory is determined by the specific location of the region. This is a large-scale territory in the south of the Asian part of the Russian Federation, stretching for almost 1000 km from north to south and in the same dimension from west to east, up to the border with Mongolia and China. In Transbaikalia, there is a world watershed of the rivers' basins of the Pacific and Arctic Oceans; the region is with the richest diverse nature. Fifteen thousand lakes, taiga and larch forests, abundant berry bushes, steppe, rocky tundra, mountains, and extinct volcanoes are located on the territory. The mineral resource base is represented by various types of minerals (iron ore, copper, coal, uranium, gold, silver, etc.). Archaeological research is actively carried out on the territory; the oldest cultural monuments belong to the early period of the late Paleolithic. The development of the land beyond Baikal began in the 17th century by pioneer Cossacks who moved to the East "to meet the sun." For 400 years, various ethnic groups and peoples have felt like real Transbaikalians. Currently, more than 100 ethnic groups, including the original inhabitants – Buryats, Evenks and Russians, live in the territory.

In 2021, we conducted a large-scale survey of residents on the topic "Media image of the Trans-Baikal Territory", in which 911 people aged 16 to 60 years and older took part. 86.8% of respondents had lived all their lives in the territory of Transbaikalia. The survey outcomes allowed us to identify the crucial constructs of the region's axiosphere, being significant for the region worldview. A list of sought-after spiritual and moral values, cultural and historical attributes and historical figures was summarized. In the list of the main advantages of the Trans-Baikal Territory, 71% of respondents singled out rich natural resources, and especially noted the natural complexes of Alkhanai and Kodar, the Charsky sands, the Heetei Cave (translated from Buryat as "patterned"), as well as the wild rosemary bush (rhododendron) blooming brightly with purple-pink flowers (rhododendron Dahurian).

However, recently the Trans-Baikal Territory has been facing a large outflow of population to other regions of Russia. In our study, more than half of the respondents (55.6%) sometimes think about changing their place of residence, and 22.9% of the survey participants plan to move in the near future. Naturally, the policy of authorities plays a decisive role in the processes of population migration. Besides, one should keep in mind the importance of the professional activities of journalists and other authors of media discourse, who are able to objectively see and interpret reality in a variety of ways, as well as create an adequate mental space of the region with the involvement of the cultural memory resource.

7. Conclusion

The region mental space, represented in the media discourse, is a complex multi-level sphere that reflects the ambiguous process of the author's creativity and the specifics of the consumer's perception. This is a kind of mental reality of the internal representation of images, events, and values of a particular territory. The cognitive tools involved in the perception and reflection of the world are a number of constructs: concepts, stereotypes, and archetypes. The axiology of the mental space includes spiritual, moral, cultural, historical, and natural values that have a regional identity.

Thoughts and actions of a person are conditioned by his worldview; people get most of the information about the region from the mass media. Often there is an overabundance of information, the desire for prompt and rated presentation of the media text does not allow media workers to concentrate and isolate most significant points from the abundance of information flows. Accordingly, it is impossible to define the cornerstone tasks that are set before the material preparation; it is not possible to formulate meanings based on the region cultural code.

Nevertheless, it is precisely the preservation of regional identity that is extremely substantial in the globalization era, when an aggressive dominant ideology suppresses the world cultural diversity. The region mental space, professionally built in the media discourse, is focused on the accentuation of cultural memory and the unification of people of various generations, which will allow them to interact and live harmoniously on the basis of a common semantic perspective.

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