Conceptual Framework of Mass Media Manipulative Models Forming

Yulia Valerievna Puiu[1]*, Daria Anatolevna Puiu[2], Ilia Vladimirovich Sablin[3], Elena Savova Georgieva[3], Aleksey Yuryevich Bykov[3]

[1]Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, 191186, St-Petersburg, Naberejnay Moiki, 48, Russia, [2]Saint-Petersburg State University, 199034, St-Petersburg, Universitetskay Naberejnay 7/9, Russia, [3]Saint-Petersburg State University, 199034, St-Petersburg, Universitetskay naberejnay 7/9, Russia. *Email: dgudi-spb@yandex.ru

ABSTRACT

Nowadays mass media operate, transform and limit information thus becoming the main mechanism of influence in the modern society. State-of-the-art information technologies are used in order to increase the efficiency of government strategies. They help to turn the audience into an object of manipulation. Many theories studying mass media are focused on the influence the media has on its viewer or reader. Development of satellite television and some other media types that have almost unlimited coverage has increased the opportunities of cultural and information expansion. Mass media is extremely necessary during social development, because without its activity it is impossible to evaluate political consciousness, value system and purposes of all levels of the population and to gain public support of social changes. Nowadays there are two basic theoretical models of studying mass media political influence. The first one studies the influence of mass communications on individual behavior and social life in general. The second one has been developing for the last 30 years under the influence of cultural anthropology, structural theories, semiotics and other cross-disciplinary scientific fields. It was focused on perceiving the connections between "texts," individuals and big social groups. In this article we study "influence studying" model and "text analysis" model.

Keywords: Mass Media, Manipulation, Mediacracy, Media Theories
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1. INTRODUCTION

Public consciousness manipulation can be treated as a complex manipulative activity of a group of people (parties, government, etc.) or individuals who express opinion and desires of a social group. This activity is conscious and goal-oriented (Ryumshina, 2003).

Mass media helps to manipulate public mind. Moscow researchers define it in a following way: "Mass communication (MC) is a process of distributing information (knowledge, spiritual values, moral and legal norms, etc.) by technical means (print press, radio, cinema, television) over numerous, scattered audience" (Matveeva et al., 2000). This definition underlines class features of MC as a communication variety. MC as any other communication can include manipulations. Deliberately or not but journalists can

serve as conductors for this ideology. For example, using the following methods:

- Holding back (hushing up the information, half-truth);
- Selection (selective edition of some information only);
- Misrepresentation of information (depreciation, exaggeration, proportions infraction, protrusion);
- Information designing (inventing non-existing false data) (Scherbatikh, 1997).

Nowadays mass media is the most important agent of political socialization. It is press, radio, television, cinema, video recording, and computer networks. MC tools accomplish a mission of introduction the norms of dominating political culture to a human mind. Television and radio exert the most profound influence on political personal becoming. Besides, MCT could be used for the purpose of political manipulation - implicit control over political

consciousness and people's behavior intended to force people to act contrary to their interests. Mass media affects the process of forming the public opinion about the most important and topical political problems.

2. METHODOLOGY

Basic theoretical approaches of studying the mass media (media) influence on public opinion are covered in this research. To basic approaches we refer "agenda-setting" theory, "needs employment and satisfaction" theory, "employment and dependence" model (Williams, 1989), "dependency" theory by Ball-Rokeach (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, 1996). We used the following scientific methods: statistical analysis, political planning and forecasting, look-back and comparative political analysis, content analysis, discursive method, perception analysis method.

3. MAIN BODY

Mass media plays a defining role in agenda and priorities setting that are one of its most significant strengths in the process of influencing the society. Far in 1968 McCombs and Shaw have conducted the research on this subject and held an opinion poll during the presidential run in North Carolina. Respondents were asked to name the key events of presidential electoral campaign. Researches compared their answers to the information from newspapers, magazines and TV news and found out very high coincidence degree. The main result of this research was the idea that "mass media did not tell voters what they should think but they told what voters should think about" (Williams, 1989).

The existent dependency theory admits the interactive nature of mass media, its audience and society. This theory is more popular than those based on causes and effect principles. The dependency theory also assumes that urbanized, industrial society is highly dependent on media and during any social changes and conflicts this dependence on mass media increases.

The dependency theory distinguishes mass media effects which could influence society as well as media. Ball-Rokeach emphasizes tree types of effects: cognitive, affective and behavioral. Cognitive effects include: (a) Overcoming the uncertainty; (b) forming the attitude; (c) defining priorities; (d) opinion subject expansion; (e) clarifying the value system. Affective effect is an emotional reaction to indirect information which can arouse strong feelings towards representatives of some social groups or can make people insensible to violence (cruelty) by means of excessive display of corresponding materials. Behavioral effects are expressed by accepting the new course of actions or by refusing the former one. All these effects influence only those people who rely on the data given by mass media.

Needs employment and satisfaction theory focuses on the influence of audience on mass media. According to this theory the mass information consumer chooses actively what to read and what to watch depending on his/her own practical purposes. This approach is based on the statement that a reader or a viewer is responsible for choosing a mass media that corresponds to their psychological and social needs. William says: "In his research Kats has distinguished general schemes assuming that a consumer chooses different mass media to satisfy different needs" (Williams, 1989). Human needs that are under investigation of needs employment and satisfaction theory proponents include the need for entertainment and for information. Kats treats MC as "a ramified system of cultural, social and psychological services" (Williams, 1989). After three decades of studies in this direction the theory was systematized and included the attitude formed according to expectations of media services consumer and his/her evaluation of these services. Thus, a person wants to satisfy his/her needs and relies on his/her expectations from a mass media source. As soon as one need is satisfied the more and the better is expected, it is the so called cyclic effect. Opponents of this philosophy Roberts and McCoby stated the following objection in their work "MC effects" (Roberts and McCoby, 1998) - ambiguousness of the "need" concept. A survey of world researches on this subject distinguishes four basic groups of needs: Self-identification, social contact, entertainment, information and knowledge about the world. Majority of needs correspond to one of these categories.

Generally speaking there is a considerable amount of scientific researches that study more narrow subjects. It is worth mentioning that despite the fact that these researches gave answers to many questions they failed to become a generalized behavioral subject that pioneers of the sphere believed it to become. In 1941 Lassuel in the first chapter treated the research of MC media as an "administrative research" (Lassuel, 1998). According to this approach the similar social science researches focused first of all on mass media effects were to be conducted at the premises of some official institution. However despite the fact that government financed studies helped to make some important revelations in this sphere, they were not as effective as researches conducted as a part of marketing and advertising projects, because in television and radio broadcasting industry these researches play an important role at decision making. Besides, it is impossible to analyze the researches of mass media influence apart from sociocultural studies which we will discuss further. Only comprehensive approach gives opportunity to complete the research objectives.

Recently there were conducted many researches that claim media messages to be polysemantic that is why their influence on audience is unclear. Subject can be also active during its interaction with the media. However this does not exclude the manipulation: polysemy connected to coding and decoding information could be used for these purposes as well. The notion of noopolicy enters the political vocabulary. It is an informational strategy of manipulating the international processes through mass media by forming positive or negative public attitude towards foreign and domestic policy of a country or a group of countries aimed at shaping positive or negative image of ideas and popularized moral values (Nikonov, 2013).

Idea of treating mass media "texts" as semantic structures that integrate the encoded text with a meaning attributed to it by "readers" is very effective. The notion "discourse" is introduced which is close to the notion "semantic structure." Multiplicity

of meanings (polysemy) of mass media texts is their essential feature that conditions their popularity among different social layers. The more "polysemic" the program, the more "open" it is, the less "preferable" meanings it has and the more different texts and alternative meanings can viewers make on its basis. "Pleasures" received by audience are structured in the same way as the "message" or the implied "content." "Polysemy" can create the possibility of a double meaning one of which can be manipulative. Thus the variety of manipulative methods performed by the media can be really wide. But all of them follow one purpose: They create certain emotional state and use other manipulation conditions in order to pass some information (even truthful) to human mind and to keep another kind of information away. Thus they form ideas about reality, ways of behavior and attitude towards it which are beneficial to those who manipulate.

In theory mass media - press, radio, television, cinema, audio and video recording and during the late decades multiple satellite communication systems, cable television systems, regional and global computer networks belong to technical tools of communication. Their purpose is to collect information through their channels, to code it according to styles peculiar to these very channels and finally its transmission to users (viewers, listeners, readers). However even the method of information coding influences its consumers in a different way. Any event reflected in journalist article, radio cast or TV spot has different coding and therefore represents different ways of influence on the audience. Thus, if a radio messages let alone newspaper (magazine) articles about a strike, demonstration or military clash have direct commenting that reflects the journalist's point of view or editors "line" then a video plot about the same events despite the fact that it is being commented and often edited represents drastically different information coding method, because it transfers the event to viewer's house creates the presence effect and makes the information more authoritative and truthful (often quite illusive). Video plot can create a stable isolated impression from the event by selectively "tearing" certain moments from the process. Further comments often fail to change this impression.

Newspapers and magazines in their turn can code information and manipulate it by means of title sizes, types, style specific character, placing, etc. Therefore taking into account such factors as the variety of information sources and its coding methods, complex and contradictory nature of the world we can make a conclusion that reality distortion and its inadequate presentation is almost inevitable in the communication process regardless of communicators' intentions. A. Litvinenko touched upon this subject in his works (Litvinenko, 2012).

Information institutes provide social connection and also modify the consciousness of their audience and control its behavior. Nowadays newspapers, radio, television, computer networks claim to directly manage social and political behavior, mental approach and even the way of thinking of the audience.

In this regard there appears a notion of information power which is connected to governing communications, their content and orientation by means of information manipulation. This power can influence people's behavior in two ways:
- Encouraging people to certain actions by imposing them a purpose;
- Preventing or blocking undesirable (antisystemic) social movements, protests, actions.

Researchers single out the following most important social and political functions fulfilled by media:
- Informational - receipt, processing and distribution of information about the activity of all essential elements of political system. A constant informational connection to the world and social medium is the most important factor of the normal life for a person. General trend of the modern social development is predominance and sharp increase of information received from media as opposed to the first-hand experience of the individual or from interpersonal communication;
- Educational - conveying information that complete knowledge about policy and political process that citizens receive in educational institutes of different levels;
- Political socialization - learning political norms, values and behavior samples that correspond to normal functioning of political system;
- Criticizing and controlling - form opinions and views about the current political situation. Criticism and control also encourage articulation of different public interests and mobilization to political participation.

Political role of media was increased first of all due to the fact that mass media especially electronic ones "have stolen" from the parties the function of political socialization which is now divided between family, school and television and the function of political mobilization especially during electoral campaigns. What is more, media is more effective in fulfilling these functions than parties. Therefore television becomes the strongest competitor of public parties marginalizing party activists. The most dramatic forecasts foretell the decline of "age of parties" as "organizations of fellow-thinkers, united by similar political principles," they will be replaced by teams of political strategists who use television for promoting political goods to the market. However if the significance of information is defined and evaluated by its marketing qualities then the gap between the real world and the world "on stage" introduced by media increases. Authors and producers of programs want to make them more entertaining, that is why they "dramatize" political process, set aside important but unamusing problems and change facts, people and events respectively.

Speaking about the modern concepts of mediacracy it is worth mentioning the gradually increasing interest to this theory from the aspects of manipulation and influence of MC media on the process of formation political institutes and their interplay with social medium.

History of political science has evidence about comparison and sometimes even confrontation of these ideas, because the notion "mediacracy" became a concept in two parallel branches of political and media theory.

According to the classical communication scheme the basic diagram of mediacratic interaction implies the interaction of three elements: Political field (or political actor), journalism as a system and media audience of the full legal age, i.e., the age when an individual has a right and wants to take decisions by oneself, to make social choice and to control authority apparatus. The difference between the approaches to mediacracy phenomena evaluation lays in understanding the essence of interaction between the first two elements and reasons of their influence on the third one.

The first approach is represented not only in works of famous scientists it is also popular in English "user" on-line dictionaries where definitions of new words are given by means of wiki-tools: first, users phrase suggested variants of definitions and then web-site visitors vote for the most exact and understandable definition. We introduce this example in order to show that mass audience understands the first approach and it is much deeper in public consciousness then the second one. The essence of the first approach could be detected from the definitions of mediacracy in user dictionaries. Thus, according to the dictionary from the web-site Unword.com "mediacracy - government (usually indirect one) by popular media and often it is the result of democracy distortion. A system in which politicians stop thinking and listen only to mass media in what concerns the important problems of the agenda and methods of their solving" (Mediacracy, www.unword.com 2015). Urban Dictionary gives the similar definition: "mediacracy - government by the media; a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the corporations and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents" (Mediacracy, http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=mediacracy 2015). According to these definitions the first approach treats mediacracy as the media power and can be defined as etymological.

Such conception has its own historical roots in political science as well as in media science; it has multiple supporters and respectively few opponents in English-speaking communication science. The approach was formed as a part of framing theories and audience theories. Framing theories were introduced in works by McCombs and Shaw (McCombs and Shaw 1972) in 1970th. These theories study forms and objectives of mediacontent management and provide mediacracy with two important premises. First of all, they claim that one of the media major functions is agenda setting in a public sector. This major premise has led to different conclusions for more than thirty years of agenda setting theory development (Rogers and Dearing 1988). Thus, for example, the theory function of "setting" was submitted by the more complex function of agenda "building." There was also introduced a "gatekeeper theory" according to which the fact which is not included in the media agenda is omitted and is not presented to the audience. Thus the editorial office has an exclusive right for public agenda setting (Yakovlev, 2004). The second important premise is the notion of event frame, i.e., a cognitive frame limiting the interpretation of a fact.

Audience theories study the perception of news content by the media consumers and also the media influence on audience behavior. Sum of two theories represent a solid cluster "the media content - audience behavior", both parts of which could be governed by setting and changing the agenda.

Interest groups, political parties and leaders set the "agenda" and determine the most important questions discussed in the society by means of MC media. This is the way they attract attention to their programs and slogans and establish a dialog between political elite and the mainstream population (Pugachev and Soloviyov, 2000). Media and political system is an institute that supplies government with tools of political leverage on the society and on certain political subjects as well.

Today there are two main theoretical models of studying the media political influence. The first one concerns the MC influence on individual behavior and on social life in general. The second one has been developing for the last 30 years under the influence of cultural anthropology, structural theories, semiotics and other cross-disciplinary scientific fields. It was focused on perceiving the connections between "texts," individuals and big social groups. In scientific literature these models were called: "influence studying" model and "text analysis" model.

"Information revolution" of XX century has encouraged the introduction of modern technologies and technical tools of information collection, processing and distribution. Technical development in its turn revolutionized political communications sector. Social changes caused by the development of information and communication technologies can have the following outcome: creation of the society of a new type – global and informational, where informational exchange will have no time, space and political limits. However it is only one possible variant.

Political institutes cannot operate properly without immediate media messages about any significant event that has positive or negative influence on the wellbeing of a civil body or groups included in it. For example in modern democratic state mass media helps to set (spontaneously or purposefully) an "agenda" and to determine the most important questions discussed in the society; interest groups, political parties and leaders attract attention to their programs and slogans and establish a dialog between political elite and the mainstream population.

The government is interested not only in displaying information about its activity but also in the way this information will be presented to the public audience because it conditions the level of public confidence in the policy pursued by the authorities. Therefore the media is used as a tool for influencing the public consciousness. Moreover the government is aware that the media has great opportunities in the field of political manipulations and influence on public consciousness by forming a certain public opinion about an event, person or fact. "But in the result of this informational policy large sections of the public stop to participate in political process. Citizens become spectators in the conflict of interests and have no opportunity to express their opinion. Chasing the profit mass media loses its initial mission – to inform population about the events that take place in the country in an objective and unprejudiced manner; the media becomes speakers of the government or opposition. The worst fact

is that the media can manipulate public conscious in almost any manner and it actually does it in all spheres especially in political communication. Nowadays people cannot do without information and in fact they become victims of the informational product they consume and easy objects of mass media manipulating technology" (Zimin, 2005).

State authorities and mass media have efficient levers of mutual influence. Mass media employs its rich informational resource, direct communication to population and opportunity to form public opinion even using manipulating technologies. State in its turn has rich administrative and financial potential and attempts to create its positive image by means of partial financing or buying control of the media which has the greatest influence in state or in the region.

The way the media covers government activity excite regular conflicts between parliament and the media. Activity of Russian state and non-state media is significantly connected to lobbying quite certain interests. Politically loaded capital caused the privatization of mass media communicative resources. Print and electronic press and the Internet as well often become a means of manipulating public opinion or tools for propaganda instead of being informational tool. There is no optimal model of public mass media in our country; there are no political and legal, economic and technological regulators that can protect an ordinary citizen from unprincipled mass information.

Press commercialization leads to "washing out" of commercially unprofitable but socially important information. Such inadequate presentation of social economic and political situation by media is a social life reality. It results in deformation of public image of the modern political process essence.

Role and functions fulfilled by the media are ambiguous. They are determined not by their real power and influence but by those who have the primary access to them, own and control them. The present-day mass media has an extremely ramified system of information channels which actually transformed it into an opponent of conventional political institutes. That is why the problem of their ownership and control becomes the most significant one.

4. DISCUSSION

In comparison to 1940-1950th among the present-day researchers dominates the idea that mass media does not exercise the direct control over the society. That is why present-day researchers focus their attention on the more subtle relations between the media, social groups and the process of development and implementation of political programs and decisions. For example Russian researcher Nikonov explicitly states that the media does not control the government and does not handle the liaison between the government and the society (Nikonov, 2013). Atkin one of the most known researchers of manipulation processes has stated in his work "Information campaigns efficiency in mass media:" "As a rule an information campaign introduces to public attention a series of stimulating messages based on a certain tactics. Mass

media delivers these messages to the members of target groups and influences their behavior" (Atkin, 1987). Jowett and O'Donnell in their work "Propaganda and conviction" say: "Considering the variety of forms of impact a research should be aimed at the creation of the complete picture of MC media employment in propagandist campaigns" (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2006). According to the authors in order to achieve this goal it is necessary to monitor the way information is transmitted from one media agent to another and then to separate social groups and individuals. As for Russian researches there is also a great variety of those studying the methods of political manipulation in information field. Here are some of the most popular works: By Fiyer "Methods, strategies and tactics of electoral competition" (Fiyer, 2001), by Mironov "Methods of the modern soft propaganda" (Mironov, 2002), by Morozov "Psychological war" (Morozov, 2000), by Pocheptsov "Psychological wars" (Pocheptsov, 2004). Every researcher provides more than hundred different methods of manipulative influence. It is also worth mentioning that researchers develop their own classification systems of political manipulation methods, which are often quite similar and possess general characteristics. All researchers divide political manipulation methods into two basic groups: (1) Methods of defense and (2) methods of attack. Some researchers, for example Fiyer, present a more detailed classification, which also includes: (3) Methods of concealment (4) methods of reinforcement (5) methods of attraction and keeping attention (Fiyer, 2001).

5. CONCLUSION

It turns out that information society fits the best for political life mythologization (Gorbatov and Stankevich, 2001), because one of the main functions of mythologic outlook is to remover or to cover up contradictions, to replace radical oppositions to others less extreme and more acceptable for the consciousness. Information technologies used in the media and international information networks and systems, fulfill one of the major function of forming the mythologic outlook.

The scheme of policy shaping and development was a restricted area for general population. It resulted in political apathy of the society and in a low level of its political culture. Conventional methods of political and ideological manipulation their priority over economy, social and cultural life have significantly weakened the social progress and in many respects caused the crisis state of economy and crisis of the political system.

Technologies in policy is a notion that can include not only political components but also a wide range of organizational, diplomatic, military, financial, information, psychological, manipulative, computer, technological and other forms and methods of activity aimed at accomplishing political objectives.

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