

5-dimensional Virtuality Model (Media Culture Research)

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ICP 2008, Berlin, 21 July

Introduction

- Mass media are an important part of the modern culture, significance of which is being increased during societies` transition to digital era.
- Media have potential to create virtual worlds in recipients` minds. They become the part of everyday life as post-virtual reality and play the same role as the natural and the social reality.
- Virtuality investigation is the way to understand the regional diversity of the media culture.
- Research focus is on the regional diversity of media culture in Ukraine

1. Virtual reality (VR)

- VR is an artificial environment, which simulates real world by computer tools.
- VR is the special daughterly, actual, autonomous, interactive reality, which has the same status of the reality and the truth like the generative (*N.A.Nossov, 2001*).
- VR is the psychological phenomenon of attribution the status of thru reality to some artificial (frequently false) element of the informational environment, including it into personal life space.

2. Virtual reality and media

Mass media produce virtuality as a certain event or an information product though this is only prologomen (a foreword, an introduction) of the virtuality. In fact the information product is only an intermediary between the virtual world of a producer and the virtuality created by an audience. A viewer (a listener, a consumer) finishes building his own virtuality while perceiving the information product and extends the world across the screen boundaries. So, this completed by means of an additional thinking world becomes his/her actual psychological reality of his/her life and its status does not differ from the reality, building of which is finished on the basis of what has been seen through a bus window or on the basis of the conversation with a friend about something new.

Heterogeneity of the world we live in enables us to call it the post-virtual one since the technologically created virtual (in contrast to the psychic as a form of the virtual) is intertwined with the generating constant reality thus much that the subjects do not accept the task of separating those worlds. As it is known the information about the information source is the first one which is lost, accordingly it is the psychological world that is the post-virtual one. According to its source the virtual becomes the part of our constantized life world.

Potential opportunity to get into contact with the other subject, to express personal position towards the mass media product confirms that the latter exists as the part of the outside reality but not of an inner fantasy. Reality of the certain virtual formation by the first subject makes this virtuality truly real for the second subject. Patterns of correlation of this subject ontology have been observed for long already.

5 dimensions of Virtuality

Theoretical analyses of above fifty media culture indicators made it possible to construct 5-dimensional compositional model of the virtuality (accordingly, 5 parameters of evaluation of the youth TV-audience)

- **Contextuality** – creation of the effect of constant presence of virtuality, finishing its building up to the continuity;
- **Realistic Effect** – authenticity of the simulation (reflection) of the constant reality from the point of view of communicants;
- **Activity** – expansion of the virtual world into the interpersonal communication space, interactive nature of the virtuality;
- **Controllability** – submission of the virtuality to the will of a communicant, independency and autonomy;
- **Resource Power** – potentiality of delivering resources that can be used by a communicant, a constituent of the potential motivation.

1. Contextuality dimension

- **Contextuality** – creation of the effect of the constant presence of the virtuality, finishing its building up to the continuity – is operationalized in the following way:
 - frequency of contacts and time of exposition;
 - presence of topics that are more or less constantly monitored;
 - additionally (as a criticism display) – fixation of the fact the journalists forget their earlier statements (for this intellectual operation it is necessary to keep the continuity of the virtuality);
 - additionally (as a resource power display) – recognition of the necessity to monitor changes in the information space for having profit (the intention to monitor is stressed).

2. Realistic Effect dimension

- **Realistic Effect** – authenticity of the reality simulation from the standpoint of communicants – is operationalized as a pole opposite to the critical perception of the virtuality that imparts to it the status of hypocrisy, something not genuine, something artificial:
 - belief in the truthfulness of the reality reflection;
 - lack of hypocrisy, manipulation and lie fixation (lack of critical thinking).

3. Activity dimension

- **Activity** – expansion of the virtual world into the interpersonal space that demonstrates potential interactive nature of the virtuality is operationalized through
 - inclusion (penetration) into the communication nets;
 - demonstrating preference to media sources at distinct to the direct communication;
 - modeling effect (setting standards).
 - Activity may be evaluated also in terms of integrity or detachment of youth media-practice from adult practices in community.

4. Controllability dimension

- **Controllability** – submission of the virtuality to the will of a communicant, independence, is operationalized through the taking into account following factors:
 - planning, predictability of the contacts with the mass media;
 - selectivity, presence of filters;
 - ability to express an attitude, ability to evaluate;
 - independence in the information comprehension.

5. Resource Power dimension

- **Resource Power** – potentiality of delivering resources that can be used by a communicant:
 - getting new information, orientation, satiation, ideas;
 - pragmatic usage (for the profit);
 - Self-produce of media production;
 - Using media for professional choice and development.

Main goal of empirical research

- To verify 5dV model
- To find a regional diversity of youth media culture in Ukraine on the base of 5dV-model

Ukrainian regions

Prolonged investigation of the public opinion polls made it possible to single out regions having the most noticeable differences in comparison with the others and those being most of all similar to each other. The traditional for the representing population of Ukraine regional division includes four groups of regions:

- **West:** Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivno, Ternopil, Chernivtsi regions;
- **Center:** Vinnytsja, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Kirovograd, Poltava, Ssumy, Khmelnytsk, Chekassy, Chernigiv regions and the city of Kyiv;
- **East:** Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhja, Lugansk, Kharkiv regions
- **South:** the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Mykolajiv, Odessa, Kherson regions.

Description of the Sample

	Total	West	Center	East	South
• N of RESPONDENTS	816	154	266	264	123
• Women (%)	51,35	50,00	51,50	54,17	50,41
• Average age	17,5	17,5	17,5	17,4	18,1
Range (years)	13-27	14-24	14-25	13-24	13-27

The survey had been conducted in October, 2007, covered all the regions of Ukraine, cities, towns and villages.

RESULTS 1: Contextuality (exposition as frequency of contacts)

% of the total sample	Total	West	Center	East	South
Those who usually spend their free time watching TV or video	65.44	79.22	65.68	65.92	47.15
Those who watch TV every day	51.23	66.88	53.51	49.43	32.77
Contextuality level		High	Middle	Middle	Low

1.1. Contextuality (constancy, renewal of the regularity)

%, those who agree to the statements	Total	West	Center	East	South
There are topics that I monitor in the mass media more or less constantly	50.98	59.74	51.10	50.38	42.50
I don't like that our journalist forget their own earlier statements	11,89	21,71	11,81	9,02	6,56
Contextuality level		High	Middle	Middle	Low

RESULTS 2: Realistic Effect
(absence of distinctions fixation, lack of critical thinking)

<i>%, those who agree to the statement</i>	Total	West	Center	East	South
I believe that the television in general reflects the life in a correct way	21.45	25.97	26.47	15.79	17.36
Those who single out manipulative moments (a beautiful child... is usually demonstrated in ads in order to manipulate)	33.58%	40.26%	29.41%	30.71%	41.32%
Those who notice hypocrisy (I can feel the false intonations of a commentator)	25.00%	33.12%	20.22%	23.31%	30.00%
Those who state untruthfulness (everyone lies but in his/her own way)	45.10%	61.69%	40.44%	41.73%	43.70%
Those who possess filters (there are programs that I would never watch)	24.39%	31.82%	22.14%	20.75%	29.66%
Realistic Effect		High	Middle	Lower than the Middle	Higher than the Middle

RESULTS 3: Activity (Media Penetration into the Friendly Communication Nets)

<i>%, those who agree to the statement</i>	Total	West	Center	East	South
They do not speak of the watched TV-programs at all	20,83	12,58	21,72	20,23	34,78
They watch TV-programs in order to have topics for friendly talk	22.18	44.81	25.74	9.74	13.33
They choose TV-programs according to their friends advice	22,55	26,49	23,51	22,56	17,07
Total estimate		High	Middle	Lower than the middle	Low

RESULTS 3.1. Activity (Modeling Effect)

	Total	West	Center	East	South
There are such TV-characters that I would like to resemble	40.93%	63.64%	44.98%	29.46%	33.33%
It would be interesting for me to become a character of a TV-program	51.47%	66.23%	59.04%	36.70%	50.42%
Total estimate		High	Middle	Low	Lower than the middle

Activity: prevalence of the media-news over the news from interpersonal communication sources



RESULTS 3.1. *Activity (prevalence of the media-news over the news from interpersonal communication sources)*

<i>%, those who agree to the statement</i>	Total	West	Center	East	South
Those who do not watch TV together with their parents	17,5	19,1	16,2	17,3	19,7
Those who do not talk over TV topics	28,4	45,1	25,9	24,2	27,6
Those who take into account their family advice	5,8	2,0	7,8	6,8	4,1
Detachment estimate		High	Middle	Middle	Middle

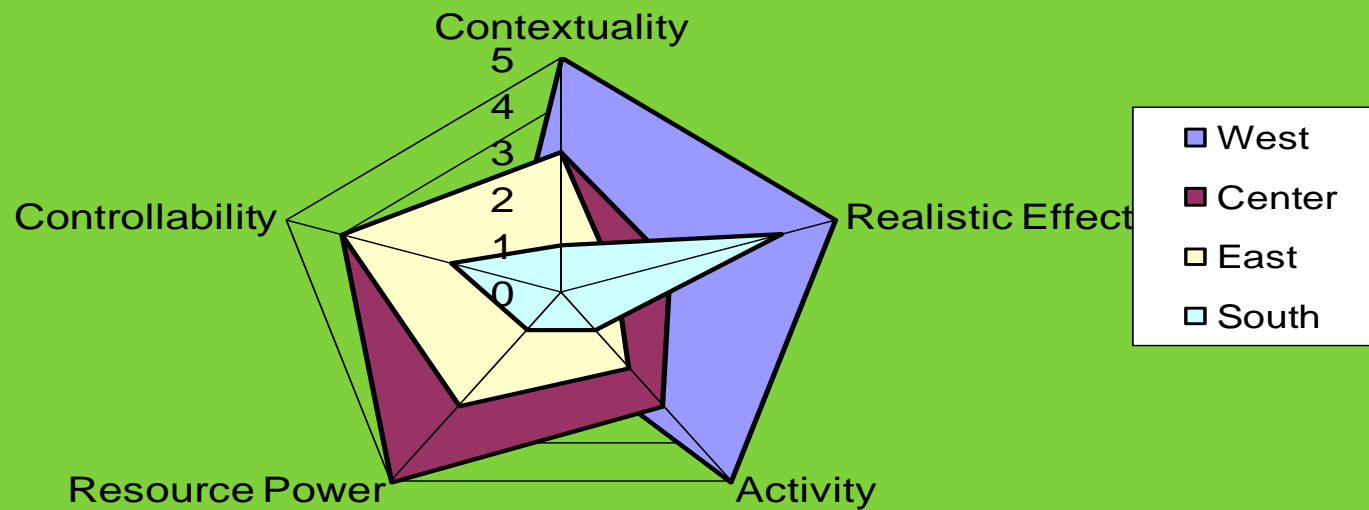
RESULTS 4: Controllability (planning and independence)

	Total	West	Center	East	South
Planning daily	15,81	9,21	17,41	18,49	15,70
Planning weekly	9,44	9,21	10,74	9,81	6,61
Non planning	73,77	81,58	71,85	71,70	77,69
I forget any difficulties if I set near TV.	19.00%	14.29%	25.00%	16.10%	18.18%
Total estimate		Low	Higher than the Middle	Higher than the Middle	Lower than the Middle

RESULTS 5: Resource Power

	Total	West	Center	East	South
TV inspires with new ideas	41.18%	42.21%	50.18%	36.33%	31.67%
It is important to monitor changes in the information space because it can serve my profit	36.40%	22.73%	40.81%	41.13%	35.29%
It would be interesting to produce film on my own	59.56%	57.79%	68.63%	53.93%	54.92%
Resource Power Level		Low	High	Middle	Low

Regional differences of media culture on the base of 5dV model



Conclusion 1

- Regional Distinctions of the youth media-culture have been revealed
 - the media culture of the Western region is characterized by the shift towards the higher contextuality, lack of critical thinking and activity;
 - the South is characterized by the shift to the lack of critical thinking along with the low contextuality and activity;
 - the Center shows inclination to the higher resource power and controllability;
 - the East demonstrates the higher level of the controllability along with the most evenly expressed indexes of different scales.
- Regional specifying of media education is wishing.

Conclusion 2

- 5dV model is empirically verified, its limits as research perspectives are
- **In Contextuality** – to single out the heavy exposition respondents;
- **In Realistic Effect** – to include other indexes of critical thinking;
- **In Activity** – to account the connection with adults media and communicative practices;
- **In Controllability** – to add indexes of the moral evaluation and selectivity;
- **In Resource Power** – to expand the resources diversity including regulation of one's own states, coping-strategy;
- **Future research is needed, as usually ;)**

5-dimensional Virtuality Model

Thank you!