

REFLEXIVE PARASOCIAL RELATIONS AND CREATIVE INTERNET ACTIVITY AS MIL INDICATORS

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Nowadays, in the era of digital technologies, parasocial relations have turned out to be common (indispensable) elements of our everyday life. A virtual hero created by mass media becomes a part of person's social relation diversity, especially in reference to the youth. The abovementioned virtual hero can cause a kind of emotional affinity and friendship to some extent. The depth of parasocial relation is defined by reflexivity forms (situational, affinity, identity). The main task of this research is finding the connections between parasocial relations and creative Internet activity as MIL indicators.

The method of mass-survey for MIL of the population of Ukraine was applied. 1997 adults, 399 schoolchildren (14-17 year olds), and 410 university graduate students were interrogated in 2009-2010 within the frames of the all-Ukrainian survey for comparative analysis of media culture. The quota sample was identified by gender, education level, urban/rural home place and region of residence. The methodology of mass-survey for rating parasocial relations (Hartmann, 2008) was adapted.

The results of the survey revealed negative modality of the situational level of parasocial relations at 32% of high school students, 30% of schoolchildren and 30% adults. The index of positive modality of the asocial affinity is much lower – 11%, 15% and 18% respectively.

Thus the existence of inverse correlation between parasocial relation and Internet creativity is proved. Positive modality of parasocial relations (situational and affinity levels) occurred at least half as often in the case of respondents who have a blog or a personal web-page. The direct connection between positive modality of parasocial relation of the youth and willingness to engage in film-making was revealed.

The conclusion is that the peculiarities of parasocial relations should be taken into account when implementing media education programs for teenagers and adults. Recommendations for an experimental media education project were made. The project was approved by the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sport of Ukraine in 2011 and consequently launched at 113 schools, 5 universities, 7 postgraduate pedagogical institutes.

Reference

Hartmann, T. (2008). Parasocial interaction and paracommunication with new media characters. In E. A. Konijn, S. Utz, M. Tanis and S. B. Barnes (Eds.). *Mediated interpersonal communication* (pp. 177-199). New York and London: Routledge.

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