



MEDIA ECOLOGY AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES IN MODERN SOCIETY

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Based on the Review of Huseynova Abira Amonovna

Annotation: This article describes the main features of the Internet media ecology, the transition from media technologies to media ecology, reveals its impact on the ecosystem of society.

Keywords: ecosystem society, media environment, media ecology, media technology, media, information, social construction of technologies (SCOT), digitalization.

МЕДИА ЭКОЛОГИЯ ЗАМОНАВИЙ ЖАМИЯТДА МЕДИА ТЕХНОЛОГИЯЛАРГА АЛЬТЕРНАТИВА СИФАТИДА.

Аннотация: Ушбу мақолада Интернет медиа экологиясининг асосий хусусиятлари, медиатеchnологиялардан медиа экологиясига ўтиш ёритилган ва унинг экотизим жамиятига таъсири очиб берилган.

Калит сўзлар: экотизим жамияти, медиа мухити, медиа экологияси, медиа технологияси, оммавий ахборот воситалари, ахборот, технологияларнинг ижтимоий қурилиши (SCOT), рақамлаштириш.

МЕДИА ЭКОЛОГИЯ КАК АЛЬТЕРНАТИВА МЕДИА ТЕХНОЛОГИЯМ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ

Аннотация: В данной статье описываются основные черты медиаэкологии Интернета, переход от медиатеchnологий к медиаэкологии, раскрывается ее влияние на экосистему общества.

Ключевые слова: экосистемное общество, медиасреда, медиаэкология, медиатеchnологии, медиа, информация, социальное конструирование технологий (СКОТ), цифровизация.



Introduction

The changes in media and journalism brought about by the Internet are often discussed in terms of new business models and technologies. According to Stinsen [1, pp. 311-327], the discourse of technological innovation dominates online journalism research. Lewis and Westlund [2, pp. 19-37] argue that over the past two decades, journalism research has focused on the role of technology in news production. In addition, the emphasis was on the editorial side of news organizations, and broader socio-technical considerations were ignored. Particular attention in future studies is paid to the topic of the social consequences of the media.

Indeed, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the new media culture and the social consequences of the "media revolution" given the central role of the media and journalism as institutions in society. The new values and social functions of media and journalism may turn out to be the most fundamental issue of the new media environment. Siles and Boczkowski [3, pp. 1375-1394], for example, argue that "considerably more energy should be devoted to the empirical study of the social, cultural and political consequences of the newspaper crisis".

According to Shadson [4, pp. 95-106], the underdevelopment of research on the social consequences of media disruption is partly due to the difficulty of measuring the social consequences of newspapers in democratic life. The same applies to the media and society as a whole: it is difficult to empirically study such broad and abstract phenomena as the relationship between the media and society. However, futures studies, with their exploratory, anticipatory, holistic, and system-oriented methodological and theoretical approaches, can provide a suitable vehicle for studying the social consequences of media change.

Literature Review

The "Digital Age" as a whole is characterized by the blurring of boundaries between different spheres: between nation states, national markets, local and global, public and private, mass communication and interpersonal communication, professional and amateur, production and consumption, and between different professions. In journalism research, this phenomenon is marked by the concepts of "blurring of boundaries" in media and journalism and "media convergence".

In futures studies, possible futures are often explored through technological innovation. New technologies are generally seen as central drivers of social and especially economic change. Media technologies, in turn, can be seen as a major force for cultural change, and thus, according to Cornish [5, pp. 124-139], they point to a transformative future. Indeed, the digitalization of the media should be studied as a transformational change, but only if and if the values and logic of the work of society also change. The whole society must change if we call change "radical", "subversive", "transformational" or "revolutionary".





However, it should be borne in mind that technologies do not determine social change, but are introduced and developed in the context of certain social, cultural, political and economic conditions. Thus, the most important question of the media discussion may turn out to be the question of what the digitalization of media and journalism means for society as a whole: how are changes in media and journalism related to general changes in society? The socio-cultural aspect - values, lifestyles, economics, politics, etc. - is a prerequisite for a deep understanding of the media revolution, since the critical turning points of the media have historically always occurred in association. links to wider social change.

Research Methodology

In media studies, such complex social issues are studied, in particular, within the tradition of media ecology. Media ecology considers media not only as a means of communication, but rather as a social environment akin to any other social environment. Other research traditions, such as cultural studies, also look at the relationship between media and social change.

Perhaps the most notable tradition in this regard is the mediatization approach, which studies the consequences of mediated social relations, especially in politics. Mediatization theories share with media ecological approaches the fundamental notion of "communication as the basic practice of how people construct the social and cultural world". According to Clarke, "both mediatization and media ecology are concerned with how we might discuss the role that communication technologies have played in shaping culture and, conversely, the ways in which we might consider how cultural practices shape communication technologies".

The "strong forms" of mediatization theories are often criticized for being technologically determined, as are theories of media ecology. The social construction of technology (SCOT), in turn, studies the interaction between people and technology and how human actions shape technology. An example of media research focused on SCOT is social informatics, which "is a body of research that studies the design, use and consequences of information and communication technologies in ways that take into account their interaction with institutional and cultural contexts" [7, pp. 217-232].

Finally, media effect research is mentioned here, which analyzes the short-term impact of certain media content on the social world. Unlike media ecology and approaches to mediatization, media effects research focuses on media content rather than media technologies. Accordingly, media effect studies consider media content as a source of social change.

Outside the field of media studies, especially the theories of the information society, post-industrialism and the network society, the connection between the media and social change has been explored. These concepts and theories are closely related to each other - they describe the same social changes using slightly different concepts and points of view.



All of them depict a society organized around the production of information and human capital. In all of them, the production of ideas is the path to economic growth, and services replace material production as a mode of production. All three of these concepts point to a postmodern culture that emphasizes the construction of reality through language, and a pluralistic, individualized culture with multiple interpretations, values, and styles. David Harvey makes fundamental connections between postmodernism and neoliberal economics. According to Harvey, the flexibility of postmodern culture supports the flexibility of neoliberal economics. Harvey's observation is important because it emphasizes the central role of economic relations in all areas of society.

In this article, we implement media ecology perspectives to explore the current relationship between media change and societal change. While "information society" theories operate at the abstract level of information and networks, media ecology is better able to relate the structural level to the level of individuals. To avoid the technological determinism often attributed to the tradition of media ecology, this article emphasizes the interactive features of new media and social constructivist approaches to media technologies (see Cautions-Technological Determinism and "Inbuilt" Power Relations).

Compared to other traditions in the study of media, information technology, and social change, media ecology is especially relevant because it considers media as a social environment, by analogy with the physical social environment. As people are constantly connected to interactive social media platforms through mobile devices, the media environment may be becoming as central a social space as the physical space.

Analysis and Results

We associate the ecosystem metaphor with the tradition of media ecology. In this respect Marshall McLuhan's concept of the global village and Harold Innis' concept of oral tradition is particularly useful. McLuhan's global village refers to a society defined by electronic media, where social relations are again beginning to resemble those of pre-industrial communities. As in these communities, the different spheres of life are once again intertwined in the global village. One of Innis's central ideas was that, since written language inevitably reduces and simplifies human thinking, the spread of the written word impoverishes culture. In addition, since the written text is not an interactive medium, it promotes differentiation and separation through collaboration. On the other hand, oral "media" allows for a fuller and more holistic expression and thought compared to writing. This article argues that the hypertextual and interactive nature of the web brings written expression closer to oral tradition and thus contributes to the revision of "oral culture".





As in McLuhan's global village, in Innis' oral culture, institutions and areas of life are no longer as separated from each other as they have been since the Industrial Revolution.

The media is still often defined as a means of communication. Joshua Meyrowitz [8] argues that the most common media metaphor is a ship or a channel (a vessel, a conduit). This metaphor sees the media as a neutral means of delivering information and thus focuses the analysis on the content of the media rather than the media itself. The disadvantage of this approach is that neutral, technology-focused definitions are not enough to study social impact and media relationships.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the media-as-medium metaphor became a separate research agenda. Media studies have been approached through the concept of media ecology, in particular through the influence of media theorists Harold A. Innis, Marshall McLuhan, and Neil Postman. As the name implies, media ecology expands the definition of media from a means of communication to encompass the entire living environment. Innis, McLuhan, Postman and other media ecologists were interested in how different media technologies offer a social environment for society and all human existence, and not so much in the content or "messages" that these media delivered. As the Internet becomes more and more widespread, the view of media as a vital and social environment becomes more relevant than ever.

The tradition of media ecology considers media as a structure in which society and culture develop, as an environment in which people act and live their lives, through which reality is perceived. Culture and social and community relations are created through human interaction. That is why the media technologies of each era, that is, the means by which people communicate, to a large extent shape culture, ways of thinking, values, social and power relations; in short, human existence. More precisely, it is not technology that forms culture, but communication that takes place in certain media.

The observation of media ecology gained momentum from the 1960s to the 1980s, when electronic media became more and more commonplace and filled everyday life with information. However, according to Paul Levinson, the tradition of media ecology only became truly useful with the advent of the Internet. Only the Internet managed to create its own alternative media environment comparable to physical reality - a symbolic environment filled with abstract experience.

Conclusion

In summary, the features of the Internet bear close resemblance to Marshall McLuhan's concept of the "Global Village" and the "oral tradition" of Harold A. Innis. In the "global village" different spheres of life are intertwined, primarily private and public. It is a world in which "everything is connected to everything else."





Innis describes speech as a medium that can express human thought more fully than writing. Like hypertext, speech is also an interactive, conversational, and non-linear medium.

The blurring of boundaries between different spheres of life is a common feature of the tradition of media ecology described by Meyrowitz. In journalism research, the same phenomenon is marked by the concept of "blurring of the boundaries" of journalism and "media convergence". In the literature on business and management, a similar phenomenon is understood as business ecosystems. In business ecosystems, individual firms begin to merge (informally) with each other and with the rest of society through open communication and collaboration.

Thus, this article argues that the media ecology of the Internet points to a future in which the entire society itself organizes itself around ecosystem principles. Such a society forms an organic whole in which various factors and spheres of life are intertwined in a new way through the information flows of digital media.

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