Psychological peculiarities of Internet communication
(based on the Internet blogs articles)

Abstract: The article describes a psychological aspect of the analysis of computer-mediated communication, articles and comments of Internet blogs. Based on the analysis, the author emphasizes specific features for the given communication type.

Keywords: Internet blog, Internet addiction, blogosphere, emoticon.
Becoming an integral part of real life, internet environment is not only an important source of information, but also a way of communication between people. If earlier the main means of communication on the Internet was electronic mail, modern virtual world offers users various forms of communication, the choice of which depends on a pursued goal. Internet blog or a virtual diary takes a special place among such forms.

The idea of a blog lies in the fact that any user registered in the program can write messages in their diary, leave comments to the posts of other bloggers as well as reply to the comments of other users. Also, the blog can be used as a source of information and a means of socialization, which presupposes new friends and communication with them. The specified parameters made this service popular among Internet users, which, in turn, attracted the attention of researchers.

Out of all directions of the research of specific features of Internet communication through virtual diaries, a psychological aspect of the course of such process stirs up considerable interest. We attempted to point out a range of such peculiarities on the basis of our research that was an observation of two experimental groups of bloggers, each of which consisted of fifteen users recently (with regard to the commencement of the experiment) registered with the Russian version of Livejournal.com — «Zhivoy Zhurnal». The first group included the blogs of anonymously registered people and the second group consisted of Internet diaries of real people. The observation lasted for 11 months (from November, 2013 to August, 2014).

The topic of blogs varied. Blogs-contemplations related to, as a rule, latest political events prevailed in every group. Also, cultural news was actively discussed; there were Internet diaries dedicated to personal travels of an author. Two Internet diaries were an archive of author’s essays on different topics.

A big freedom of expression was typical for the first group of anonymously registered bloggers. Communicants were categorical when expressing their position on this or that issue. Eleven out of fifteen people often used foul language. The reason is, in our opinion, an attempt to draw attention to their personality and be heard by others. It enables us to speak about such psychological peculiarities of anonymous communication, offered by blogosphere, as self-liberation and irresponsible behavior. Essentially, such behavior is a peculiar way of fighting with complexes through living a «parallel life», which gives an opportunity to compensate for personal failures in real life. Or, it can be an attempt to try on someone else's mask and live someone else's life. Due to this peculiarity some researchers compare Internet communication in the whole and blog communication in particular with a phenomenon of carnivalization by M. M. Bakhtin, which represents a medieval carnival «as a second life of people». Just as during carnival performances in the Middle Age, abolition of hierarchic relations between people in modern virtual world creates a special type of communication that is impossible in everyday life, which doesn’t acknowledge any distance between free and usual norms of behavior and decency of communication that has a certain form of speech [1].

The group consisting of fifteen real people was, in the whole, presented by people with a certain level of education, cultural background and quite developed language abilities. We concluded it on the basis of analysis of articles in the blogs of these authors.

However, after five months of our experiment, three bloggers stopped contributing to their Internet diaries and four users gradually reduced the activity of their diaries. We believe that the main reason of this phenomenon is an ambiguous nature of an Internet blog. Unlike a paper diary, where people usually write their most sacred thoughts for themselves exclusively, electronic diary is created in order to express one's convictions and ideas and justify one's position on certain issues in front of unfamiliar people, who are often and mostly strangers to the author. In this respect, bloggers who fail to get frequent readers around themselves lose interest in this activity. Herewith, it is about popularity of a diary and not about the selection of an appropriate number of the like-minded. It is confirmed by the fact that three political blogs earned a high rating only due to sharp criticism in the comments to the political position unpopular at the given period.

This ambiguous nature of an electronic diary lies in the sincerity of the author on the one side, and open orientation to being read and discussed by unfamiliar people on the other side; it defines another psychological peculiarity of blog communication — «a desire to write beautifully» [2, 105]. In this case, spontaneity and natural aspect of expressing a thought typical for a paper diary starts competing with a certain stylistic editing required for the author to impress the audience. Analyzing texts of articles and comments in blogs of anonymous bloggers, one cannot but notice a big number of mistakes (grammar and punctuation) and misprints, absence of upper case etc. All this, of course, can be referred to conscious deviations from the norm typical for the genre of Internet communication. However, compared to this group of tested people, these phenomena occurred less
often in the blogs of real people.

Due to the fact that communication in Internet diaries is of conceptually verbal nature, in spite of the typed form of a message, the ability to render emotional component requires a separate attention. In this case, phonetic-graphic means of text formation comes to the fore, which fixes the peculiarities of pronunciation and intonation and graphic means of text formation, which renders emotions through graphic objects, smiles offered by the program. Expressing positive or negative emotions, emoticons (smiles) compensate for the absence of visual contact between communicants and serve as addition to verbal elements of the text, participating in construction of integrity of the idea of a statement. It should be noted that the reason of appearance of graphic symbols was the appearance of «on-screen» form of texts created with the help of a keyboard typing on the screen [5, 129–132].

Thus, analyzing texts of articles and comments of both groups, we took into account their phonetic-graphic and graphic formation. In our case, both groups of users actively used both types of graphic components to make their statements more expressive in both positive and negative direction. However, it was mainly seen in the group of anonymous users. In our opinion, it is related to the fact that the initial goal of anonymous bloggers was to draw attention of the surrounding virtual audience to the texts of their comments or their page.

Another psychological peculiarity that stands out in blog communication lies in the voluntarily nature of communication with other users. The author of an Internet diary can switch to direct communication with any user or stop this communication at any moment by ignoring or deleting a comment. In our groups this feature was often observed in the blogs on politics and in blogs, the authors of which posted their literature pieces. In every diary there were comments under the author’s text, which exclusively supported the position of the diary’s author. Such organization has an effect on readers, because there is a false impression that the author is right due to the support of virtual public. Same can be said about the diaries where authors published their literature works. Exclusively positive or neutral reviews of readers were observed. In contrast with Internet diaries of the given topic, the examples of other bloggers presented a balance of both positive and negative opinions.

Expression of positive and negative emotions through communication in Internet blogs inevitably leads us to the conclusion about psycho-therapeutic function of an online diary. A desire to speak out and find support from the readers with similar experience was the goal of most articles of the officially registered bloggers. Herewith, the topic of diaries here did not have particular meaning. The given psychological feature was almost absent in the anonymous diaries. Their articles were not less emotionally colored; however, this emotionality did not have a purpose to share feelings and concerns with readers. Rather, there was intent to provoke an emotional response from a reader. This tendency was clearly expressed in the diaries on politics by anonymous bloggers.

In the whole, observing thirty users of Internet blogs for nine months, we concluded that keeping of an electronic diary is a unique, typical for virtual environment only, combination of the diary keeping itself (regular posting of text information on a page) and communication (comments of unfamiliar articles and response to the comments of an own blog). Keeping an Internet blog presupposes the dedication of a big amount of time, replacing traditional form of human communication with a virtual model with typical psychological peculiarities of communication, self-expression and self-presentation.

Anonymity of communication in blogs provides wide opportunities for self-presentation of a person, allowing the construction of a new identity, becoming somebody one wants to become and creating a desired impression. Thus, communication in blogosphere can be considered as not an inter-personal communication, but as communication of virtual images created by real people.

Emotional openness of communication, which is clearly observed in comments to blog articles, search for new contacts in this environment, desire to be able to draw attention to oneself at any cost and be heard compensate for emotional poverty of life of a contemporary man surrounded by loneliness and a big number of stressful situations. In this regard, a parallel life in virtual world becomes a norm of existence for most people, causing different mental disorders such as Internet addiction, which, in turn, certifies about the need to study the problem of psychological peculiarities of the given process in detail.

References:

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Crisis intervention for children and adolescents experienced a situation of disaster

Abstract: Good social practices for overcoming the consequences of disasters (natural disasters like earthquake, flood, thunder storm, etc. and crises caused by human acts such as manufacturing damage, poisoning with toxic substances, accident, fire, acts of terrorism, violence, war, conflicts, etc.) include psychological help and support as an inevitable part of the health care and immediate survival of the person. Throughout the last 15 years it has been established as one of the most rapidly developing branches of practical psychology. The aim of the report is to reveal the role and essence of psychological help and support in situations of disaster. The emphasis is on applying it to one of the most vulnerable groups — children and young people. The paper includes strategies of psychological influence in the conditions of a disastrous situation that are successful both in theory and in practice.

Keywords: psychological help and support, disaster, strategies for coping

Introduction

As an activity aimed at overcoming the consequences of the experience of disaster, crisis intervention is required in parallel with the activities of medical and rescue teams, volunteer corps of Red Cross and Red Crescent, specialized state structures to protect the population from disasters and catastrophes, complementing system of emergency care for victims. We use the terms more psychological help and support in situations of distress and psychosocial programs for early interventions in situations of disaster.

Yet there is no single theory or a specific model for psychological crisis intervention. On the basis of good social work practice and case studies in different countries it appears that it is necessary in the first minutes and hours after the traumatic event. [1; 3]

According Soloveychik 2002 it is a method of providing psychological assistance to a person located in a state of crisis. Ehly 1986 defines it as urgent, immediate first aid aimed at mental health. It is believed that psychological crisis intervention provides effective support to front line victims of various types of critical events and in particular the strong stressors that can lead to psychological trauma. Every, Flanery and Michel, 2000. The main purpose of psychological intervention reorganization of human behavior, his feelings, actions and thoughts in a constructive plan. According to its sub-objectives are Soloveychik:

— stabilization or interruption of the growing distress as a result of the critical event;
— alleviate the acute symptoms of distress;
— restore adaptive functioning independently of man from before the tragedy;
— prevent further negative impact of trauma and referral to specialized professional help in necessary. [1; 5]

Tasks associated with the organization of time and space to conduct psychological work, creating an atmosphere of trust with an emphasis on interpersonal contact, providing social and emotional support. Object of work in providing psychological crisis intervention mental state of the person its current problems rather than the formation of his personality. This is one of the major differences between the psychological crisis intervention and psychotherapy.

Psychological help and support is increasingly necessary due to the nature of the experience. It combines theory and practice of successful patterns of behavior. The term received popularity among the International