PHENOMENON OF TOLERANCE IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Vera Abisheva[*]**, Shara Mazhitayeva, Gulja Khairova, Lazzat Kozhahmetova and Bolat Khassenov**

Karaganda State University, Mukanov street, 1-8, Karaganda, Kazakhstan

Abstract

Nowadays tolerance as one of the phenomena of moral and spiritual values that were formed in society has become the most discussed issue. This is determined by many reasons, and above all by the fact that tolerance as a factor of interrelated personality traits, and media organizations that inform, educate, entertain, influence on the perception of the world and the behaviour of the recipient, plays a significant role in the life of a democratic-minded multi-ethnic society. This work is devoted to the fundamental problems associated with media organizations' coverage of various forms of tolerance. Criteria of tolerant and intolerant information do not appear in the same format for different media organizations. Therefore, during the development of the information society, in a multilingual, multicultural environment of the population, when reality gives researchers a lot of positive and negative examples for the analysis of socio-economic and political processes, the study of this topic in the Kazakhstan journalism is more relevant than ever.

1. Introduction

Study of the problem of tolerance in the context of globalization is the object of interest of various sciences in connection with its counterpoint. This fully corresponds to the realities of the modern world, and even more, according to some scholars – to path finding challenges of development in order to minimize conflicts. The concept of tolerance is controversial and complicated enough, a multidimensional concept, for which among researchers there are different points of view.

We would like to express personal views on the phenomenon of tolerance in the media that triggered our scientific interest after reading the article of a graduate university student titled 'Coverage of tolerance in the activities of CTC channel' from one of the websites.

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[*]E-mail: vera.abisheva@mail.ru

The author strongly believes that "*in modern journalism, there is no and can be no 'tolerance' as generally accepted concept,* just as well as forbearance and compromise. Firstly, tolerance must be associated with humility and forgiveness. But do we have to endure everything? Is this the true purpose of journalism, which is used to aggravate the problem and expose conflicts? These processes underlay in journalism functions" [http://www.ipk.ru/index.php?id=2223].

We would like to say that we cannot agree with some of the young researcher's judgments on this issue. Nowadays mass media greatly influence on the formation of tolerant attitude of the addressee all over the world.

In the era of globalization, the concept of 'tolerance' indicates that the world is multidimensional and diverse. Today Kazakhstan represents a unique model of good-neighbourly, peaceful country that managed to establish constructive relationship between the people of various religious beliefs living on its territory. Since ancient times, tolerance and solidarity as spiritual guidance have been recognized as the basic principles and the essential characteristics of national consciousness within the vast lands of Great Steppe. Collectivism, along with basic human values like kindness, humanity, justice, assisted to overcome difficulties in rather harsh living conditions. In a multi-ethnic society these qualities are the key ones in the process of our national foundation. At a time when the world is experiencing the growth of aggression and widespread violent ways to solve socio-political, religious, ethnic problems, when some of our CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States, founded in December of the 1991 immediately after dissolution of the USSR) neighbours are faced with inter-ethnic hatred, intolerance and the resulting sad consequences, tolerance in the spiritual sphere, inherited from the cultural ethical traditions of the Kazakhs, has become a huge advantage in the modern world.

One of the central problems of the Kazakhstani policy is not only preservation and strengthening of inter-ethnic harmony and peace among multi-ethnic population, but also strengthening of religious tolerance and interfaith understanding, ensuring full religious freedom to all Muslims, Orthodox, Catholics, Protestants, Jews. In recent decades there have been significant changes in the activities of religious institutions, both in terms of quantity and quality. For example, religious holidays Kurban Ait (Eid al-Adha) and Christmas are declared as holidays in the Republic. Upon the initiative of the Head of the state N.A. Nazarbayev, congresses of the leaders of world religions are held in Astana. The Republic of Kazakhstan is a good example of how representatives of many faiths, nationalities and ethnic groups, preserving different cultures, religions, values and traditions live, work, create in peace and harmony.

Republican newspaper 'Kazakhstanskaya Pravda' notes: "The difference of religions is the unifying factor of all Kazakhstani people, instils confidence, calmness, peace and harmony in people" [Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, 22 April 2014]; "The question how Kazakhstan has managed to unite under its shanyrak many ethnic groups and religions remains open for many countries. It would be

naive to believe that it was an accident or a coincidence. It requires a lot of work and effort to solve many complex and highly pressing issues. And this experience is generously shared by Kazakhstan, making Astana the centre of peace and harmony, a platform for dialogue between representatives of different faiths and nations." [Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, March 1, 2014]

Media analysis shows the necessity of a thorough understanding and interpretation of tolerance in different contexts of philosophical and worldview social and scientific reality. The phenomenon of tolerance is the subject of special attention in Psychology, Pedagogics, Political science, Ethnology, Sociology.

It should be stressed that national journalism generally advocates principles and norms of tolerance. The result of journalist's work can be judged through analysing his or her work.

2. Methods

The methodological basis of theoretical understanding of tolerance as a multi-faceted and multi-factor phenomenon is based on the principles of thinkers from antiquity to the present time: the philosophical and ethical concepts (L.N. Tolstoy [1, 2], A. Kunanbayev [3], etc.); theories of formation of relationships in the structure of the media personality (L.S. Vygotskiy [4], A.N. Leontiev [5], etc.); theses of modern Humanistic sciences about the objectives, principles, methods of communication (S.G. Korkonosenko [6], S.K. Kozybaev [7], etc.). The essence of tolerance as a sociocultural phenomenon is revealed in terms of civilization and anthropocentric approaches. The complex analysis of primary (Media Law, journalist's Code of Ethics) and secondary (scientific publications, op-ed pieces and other periodical press materials, internet materials, speeches of influential politicians on tolerance issues in the media) statistical sources, existing views on the problem is conducted. The research confirms the thesis that the ability to a dialogue as a prerequisite for intellectual and personal development of the individual is achieved only if there are different points of view, in the process of understanding the world. This work is based on the historical, comparative, structural and functional methods.

Our media texts' research methods system is determined by the initial concept: development of new worldview approaches, the system of ideals and values of the individual, coverage of phenomena, events, narration of the facts interpreted by an author takes place within the framework of cultural, social and economic conditions. In the era of globalization due to the radio, television, Internet, the forms of world perception are becoming significantly diversified than in the recent past. Tolerance is a special type of cultural orientation where values related to spiritual needs of the individual are dominant. Subgoals and mercenary interests and goals in a spiritually sound society are ousted by specific factors formed due to the peculiarities of mentality, upbringing and education and to a large extent due to mass media. Therefore, there is no doubt

that tolerance, mutual respect, understanding, universal milestones formed through school, university, mass media must become universal values.

Coverage of phenomena, events, presentation of the facts through the author's interpretation within the framework of cultural values, social and economic conditions are determined as the initial concept in the system of media discourse research methods. The synthesis of the mentioned components can be regarded as one of the most important methods of scientific knowledge that forms the discourse structure and creates the content in the form of context. The study of the materials of the most popular public and private media during the last five years shows that the most essential methods that facilitate the identification of specific topics and publications in a particular source of information with ethnic or social conflict colouring are discursive, synoptical and continuous methods of analysis. Selective, qualitative and quantitative analysis and content analysis of local television and radio programs, as well as other methods of historical-cultural and comparative nature demonstrate that a poly-intentionality of discourse is determined by informative impact that reflects its purpose of media communication.

During the analysis, our attention was drawn not only to the activities of a generic, impersonal communicator (newspaper, TV, radio), but also to the personalized communicator, i.e. a certain author, who has a direct contact with the audience: an anchor of the channel, correspondent, commentator, and others. This approach has allowed finding out that the sociological characteristics of the media professional, such as gender, age, particular party membership, and ability to address to the recipient and justify his or her position are essential in the process of optimizing informational influence of the communicator on mass audience.

Analysis of the functioning of the editorial, the study of the material selection criteria for publications and programs has confirmed that mass audience's information perception, popularity of the periodical, the channel and the level of trust in them is largely influenced by the position of employees of periodicals, channels or programs, their value systems, interests of the addressee expressed through them, the quality and objectivity of materials.

3. Results and discussion

In the era of globalization, there is a significant upgrade of the mass media and, as a result of the creativity, expanding of the communicative space. Its novelty is that the media inherit the traits of everyday verbal communication, and borrowings. Traditionally, the main channel for dissemination of information and development of language are the media. The situation of the establishment and maintenance of contact leads to a communicative innovation. Rhetoric creativity is a characteristic of all language levels, especially clearly manifested in the vocabulary of media text. The new medium of language existence has had a significant impact on the communicative processes [8]. Today the level of technologies for creating a media product allows realizing

any creative idea. Multimedia is one of the most successful concepts of development the media industry and the relationship between media and audience. Experts define it as "integration of two or more communication means and channels with computer" [9].

J. Minna and co-workers aimed at analysing first of all the process of creation of the author's text, and secondly, how this text is perceived by the reader. In other words, a professional journalist should look at the text from the 'outside', see it through the eyes of the reader. The author's task is to analyse, evaluate and improve the text in accordance with the communication goals, conception, perception of the reader. It is necessary to ensure that the potential reader perceives the idea of the author fully and without much effort, in accordance with the communication goals. The reader does not just perceive the text, but also determines his or her attitude to it, and it largely depends on the style, the rational use of linguistic resources [10].

Despite much interest towards the raised issue in the process of globalization era and current relevant publications, domestic and foreign theorists and practitioners have not formed a unified interpretation of 'tolerance' phenomenon. Representatives of different social groups, professions, academic schools put different meaning in it. In Medicine, this term is defined as 'endurance', 'ability without significant damage to the body to endure pain and other adverse factors'. In Psychology, it refers to the ability to understand another person, to realize one's feelings. Thus the nature of tolerance can be revealed in opposition with aggression, malice and impatience, using the idea of friendliness, tranquillity, and peaceful disposition. For political scientists the tolerance is the ability of a person, community, state to respect and listen to the viewpoints of others. In a common representation of the concept it conveys the ability to be patient to the actions of other people, to respect other person's opinions, be enduring to conflicts.

Modern Dictionary of Foreign Words [11], Dictionary of Foreign Words [12], Great Encyclopaedic Dictionary [13], Philosophical encyclopaedic dictionary [14], and other reference books interpret the concept of 'tolerance' nearly the same: 'tolerance for the opinions of others, different views, indulgence to anyone or anything'. It should be noted that these scientific sources are based on the human's moral quality to understand another human, harmonizing different interests, perspectives, worldviews, beliefs, behaviours, without any pressure from outside.

In many cultures, the concept of 'tolerance' is synonymous with the concept of 'toleration': Latin - tolerantia - patience; English - tolerance, toleration; German - toleranz; French - tolerance. In Chinese language, 'to be tolerant' means to allow, be generous towards others; in Arabic means 'forgiveness, indulgence, gentleness, forbearance, compassion, benevolence', in Persian means 'patience, endurance, and readiness to reconciliation'.

The print media, radio, television, the Internet, in fact, today often offer the audience (readers, listeners, viewers) texts that can be classified as intolerant on the basis of this or that methodology, or variants of diagnosis: about the

display of intolerance, violence, nationalism, extremism, terrorism, human aggression, lack of the desire to understand the situation. In this regard, there is a convincing point of view suggested by a professor E.P. Prokhorov, who strongly believes that "tolerance is not being indifferent to others. As freedom implies the recognition and creative use of objective necessity on the basis of humanism, so tolerant relations are admitted and necessary between social groups, by public associations representing their interests and their ideological concepts as well." [15]

Michael Walzer in his book 'On toleration' writes that the subject of his research is the tolerance, or rather, what makes tolerance possible, namely, peaceful coexistence of groups of people with different history, culture and identity. This book is a brief but elegant and articulated reflection on the problems of multiculturalism [16].

Thus, tolerance is a set of norms and principles formed in society, rather than passive submission to the opinions, attitudes and actions of others, and, of course, is not a demand of constant patience of injustice and unconstructive restrictions. Instead, it assumes the quality of an active moral position and psychological readiness to cooperation, fellowship, participation, creativity. It is as thriving for mutual understanding and interaction between citizens, various social groups, people of different cultural, ethnic, religious, or social environment.

Modern scholars consider a number of areas of problems that attract or should attract the attention of journalists. Y.Y. Zhmyrova distinguishes nine types of tolerance (intolerance):

- tolerance to other views, ideas and opinions (intellectual);
- for another nationality (ethnic);
- for another faith (faith based);
- for another culture (intercultural);
- for the other sex (gender);
- for another sexual orientation (sexual);
- for another state of health (medical);
- for another age (age);
- for another social group/stratum (class) [17].

T.P. Skripkina proposes to distinguish personal positions, which differ in the degree of acceptable tolerance:

1. tolerance as an internal attitude, acceptance and tolerance for different, alien;
2. tolerance as a cultural norm (in other words - tolerance for the external expression);
3. tolerance as impartiality, as an indifference to the other;
4. tolerance to someone who harms us [18].

The result of an activity of a journalist can be investigated and evaluated based on the analysis of his or her work and according to more general classification: 1) interethnic tolerance, 2) social tolerance, 3) verbal tolerance.

It must be noted that in modern society it is the mass media that fulfils the function of one of the main mechanisms of influence on the formation of a tolerant or interethnic conflict mass consciousness, its rapid mobilization, and ultimately to the regulation of interethnic relations. It is one of the interesting phenomena from the scientific and social points of views. It is well-known that by means of mass communication the following is possible:

• generate massive positive or negative attitudes;
• initiate interethnic or civic consciousness of people;
• disseminate international beliefs or biases, national images, ideas, ideals, national dignity, values, etc.;
• support national mythology, history, spiritual and material culture, ideology.

Diagnosis of social tolerance, as well as the evaluation of information through its main criteria allows monitoring the use of such structural elements of the text, as consciously selected facts of reality, stereotypes, ideologemes, myths, lexical units, illustrations with tolerant painting, etc. The analysis showed that, in the official and a number of commercial media the following techniques are concentratedly reflected:

• 'emotional dominance of calmness' about the reality of a stable reality and positive scenario of the future of the country;
• 'emotional dominance of pride for one's own achievements' in the context of a stable situation;
• 'emotional dominance of optimism' conditioned by understanding of the possibility of ending the crisis;
• 'emotional dominant of justice', etc.

On the other hand, in a number of popular non-state periodicals parties, parliamentary parties, politicians often appear to the reader in a hyperbolically funny way: activists are often portrayed as helpless, and their activities as meaningless. One can observe a certain degree of aggression in the publications designed for the general reader, one way or another dealing with the problems belonging to the domain of tolerance and intolerance. The recipient is forced to deal with images of 'others' portrayed in a negative light. Stereotype of the 'rich', 'tycoons', 'financial magnates', 'owners' is exploited, the moral corruption of whom, make a large number of population suffer according to the description and the authors of the publications. Often, those in the print media appear to be officials - major and minor officials.

A number of researchers dealing with the language and the style of media ascertain increasing subjectivity in journalistic discourse lately, which, of course, can be regarded as one of the sides of an ethical dissonance of communication. The other side of it is the failure to comply with the basic postulate of verbal communication – respectful attitude for the character of publication. "In recent years, the determining factor in the choice of linguistic means proved to be the general tone of modern media - very often ironic, sceptical, sarcastic, and sometimes mocking - notes L. Ratsiburskaya. As the result journalese language acquired the character of hostile rhetoric [19].

Garcia-Gutierrez Antonio's study raises the question about the procedure of a pragmatic analysis of the actual data of journalistic interview [20]. Journalistic texts involving reliance on documentary materials, not always meet the criteria of accuracy and objectivity, and sometimes not in all respects comply with the requirements of users. In this regard, the author believes that in the information society we must approach analysis and results of media texts impartially and rationally, taking into account peculiarities of the genre.

It is known that hostile rhetoric leads to hostility, unfriendly relations and misunderstandings between interlocutors. Most often, this behaviour can be caused by a lack of professionalism, low intellectual level and, as a rule, low speech culture of the addressee. Therefore, it is unacceptable and inadmissible in ethic and communicative relation. Currently, there are a lot of studies, research papers and publications with practical recommendations for overcoming hostile rhetoric. Verbal tolerance is represented by a set of linguistic resources, implementing targeted tactics, within which one must adhere to moral principles. Negative assessment of the events described by the author may be reduced due to the use of euphemisms, it is possible to construct a sentence and find words so that there will be minimal losses that defuse verbal conflicts. Not only direct, dictionary meaning of the word, but sometimes meaning that emerges from the context of the publication, precedent texts, titles, concepts, acquiring ethical attributes become important in the communication component of the media space (Figure 1). Mass media can contribute to the establishment of a dialogue, in which the voice of the 'other' must always be heard. Spreading tolerantly coloured information in different socio-political situations, into different historical periods and in different regions, media creators can alleviate social and interethnic tension, make this space tolerant.
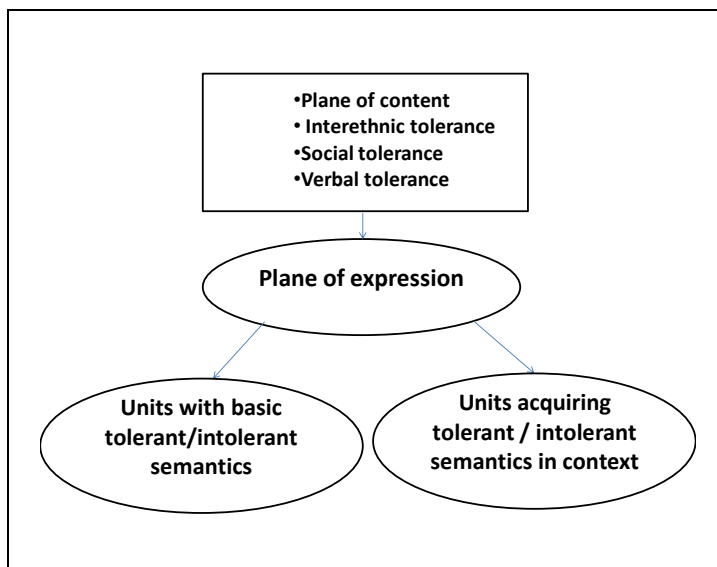

Figure 1. Interrelation and interdependence of two social phenomena.

The study of interrelation of these phenomena is considered to be more relevant in multi-ethnic countries, and modern Kazakhstan is multi-ethnic in particular.

Thus, tolerance as one of the fundamental features of civilization presupposes respect of the author to the characters of publications. Conscious tolerance must be the basis of ideological and political correctness, understood as the art of compromise, tolerance to other forms of behaviour and opinions. Tolerant consciousness is aimed at preventing conflicts and searching for a mutually acceptable compromise solution in the process of constructive dialogue and, most importantly, at collective responsibility in achieving an agreement. Consequently, mass media should promote spread of principles and norms of the culture of tolerance in society, high human values, preaching goodness and justice that, in general are characteristic of Kazakhstani journalism. This can be certified by the analysis of media publications of the republic, besides other well-known actual measurements.

The following concept of specific, principled ground of the quality mass media which we would like to express deserves respect: if people seek and find compromises, often say, read and hear texts with positive connotation in the mass media, see examples of generosity on the screen, inspiring performance of humanitarian deeds there will be less cruelty and aggression on the Earth.

A number of codes of ethics and other relevant documents, which declare norms and principles of the activity and professional conduct of journalists, have been developed by the world community. They prescribe that, being aware of his duty to society, author must make every effort to ensure peaceful solution of all the contradictions and misunderstandings in a constructive dialogue, and not lead to conflicts, so that journalistic work does not harm peace and harmony in society if for some reason they appear between fellow citizens.

Adopted at a joint meeting of the Union of Journalists of Kazakhstan and the Club of chief editors on the 30 October 2012, the Code of Ethics for journalists of Kazakhstan was developed at the suggestion of the head of state focused on the strengthening of key professional and ethical principles of Kazakh journalism and is a tool of self-discipline and moral and ethical guide of journalist [http://inform.kz/rus/article/2506438].

As journalist due to his or her profession is called upon to be a mediator between people, separated by physical, social boundaries, social systems, generations and epochs, along with other qualities, should possess social skills, internal culture and tolerance, closely related to human rights which is an essential part of democratic society.

4. Conclusions

Attainment of the status of an independent state, organizing social and political, economic and social reforms in Kazakhstan in the context of multilingualism, multiculturalism and polimentality of the population contributed to the emergence of different media, in directions and formats, on

material medium, and the quality in the information market. Media organizations, undoubtedly, influence on the formation of mass consciousness. The notion of 'tolerance' in its historical development has come a long way from religious tolerance. However, in the information society, the term 'tolerance' is understood as an active position of the individual, we would like to emphasize - not patience in virtue of moral-psychological state, but the position of the parties, aimed at achieving mutual agreement and finding a compromise, freedom, that consists in the right to adhere to certain opinions or ideas, in a way that does not negatively impact the other parties of the process. Tolerance in polimental and polylingual society is represented by its basis of self-preservation, being a significant factor in the coexistence of individuals under religious, ethnic, social and political transformations. The timely and objective awareness of the population, in which a special role belongs to the system of the mass media contributes to the development of principles of tolerance. Harmony, stability, peace in the country and its regions, to a large extent depend on the journalist's ability to set priorities correctly, clearly and accessibly formulate a thought.

In our opinion, it is necessary to consider tolerance as one of the central concepts in media system. In terms of freedom of speech, it is especially important to implement speech acts carried out in the area of verbal communication, in the broadly understood field of policy, with a high degree of responsibility and professionalism.

The most important task of the media is to help people hear each other.

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