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VIRTUAL PERSONALITY AND THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN ITS EVOLUTION

The article analyzes the virtual personality -a significant part of the virtual reality, and the role of language in its evolution. It compares the forms of manifestations of personality in the real and virtual worlds. A virtual discourse, which is the backbone of the virtual communication, is analyzed. The article also studies the possibilities of personality authentication in the virtual environment and determines the role of language in these issues. The article explores the perspectives and opportunities as a result of the study of the characteristics of the virtual personality for the management of the virtual environment in the future.

Keywords: *virtual personality, virtual discourse, online communication, social media, social scoring.*

Introduction

The psychology proves that the personality issue has been in the focus of attention of researchers for many years. In the era of information technologies, a completely new aspect of personality problem has emerged. This is a problem of virtual identity. The study of this problem in various aspects is of crucial importance. Many processes occurring in the information society and the decisive management of the trends in the electronic information environment depend on the profound knowledge of the characteristic features of the virtual personality.

In fact, the studies on the forms of representation of the "I" in electronic communications have been initiated the origin of these tools. The first scientific initiatives in this field have been observed in the telegraph epoch [1]. However, this issue has caused the great interest of researchers over the past decades due to the widespread use of the Internet around the world.

The problem of virtual personality

One of the key aspects of the problem of virtual personality is the fact that the concept of "personality" is more closely related to the etymological meaning than in real life. Thus, the word 'personality' is drawn upon the same etymology across many languages, including Azerbaijani, Russian and English. The word "personality" in the Azerbaijani language derives the root from the Arabic word *shakhs* (person) which denotes a particular "figure". In Russian, the word "personality" is also related to the word "image" and "face". In English, the word "personality" is derived from two Latin words - "per" and "sona", which denotes "speaking through". Later, in ancient Greece and the Roman Empire, this word was used as an actor's "mask" in theatre performance. In the ancient plays, the "mask" was usually changed depending on the scenes, the actor played the role and the word was related to it. Eventually, the word 'persona' has gained the contemporary meaning - 'personality'. [2].

In a virtual environment, personality is closer to its ancient meaning as the virtual identity, in fact, is a mask of a man. A person participating in the virtual communication generates his/her mask through various means, and this mask forms the main characteristic of the virtual identity.
In the real world, human personality is directly and indirectly perceived as an image and face; a person cannot conceal his image for a long time in this environment. The features of the human face, its physiological characteristics differ from others, and his/her identity is directly determined. Indeed, a human personality shows itself as a manifestation of "soul" and all individual-psychological characteristics. All these features, including individual communication styles, behaviors, thoughts and ideas, enable a clear identification and predictability of the future behavior of a person. In fact, the virtual personality is a continuation of the identification of personality in real life. However, the role of the means of indirect identification of personality here is even

greater. At the same time, virtual environment grants better opportunities for generating a person's identity rather than in real life. Here, the direct manifestation of virtual identity is not the real "I", but the main features of the mask hidden behind it. An Internet user can add features to this mask or form a number of masks.

Characteristic features of the virtual personality

Who is a virtual person? What is the essence? According to the current approach, any communication on the Internet is of virtual nature, and any Internet user can be considered as a virtual person. In some cases, the term "virtual personality" is used as the synonym of the terms "clicking person" or "post human".

Virtual identity is not monolithic. Therefore, it is difficult to provide a precise analysis of the virtual identity.. It covers the most diverse options of subjectivism in the electronic environment [3].

Nevertheless, the main characteristic features of the virtual identity can be summarized as follows:

Non-materiality. A person does not materially exist in a virtual environment. His/her physical features, voice in this environment can only be imagined through various audiovisual facts. Therefore, there is no guarantee that these facts are related to the prototype of the virtual personality in real life. Thus, in a virtual environment, a person disappears in its semantic act.

In real life, a person has an object based on the quality of the subject. Virtual personality also has a subject-oriented object. However, the status of the presence here has not been defined. Virtual world is expressed here as a reality and unreality. Virtual personality is made up of signs and actions on the one hand and, images, thoughts and feelings in the brain of an observer on the other. Thus, at this point, virtual world stands against the reality.

Anonymity. *The New Yorker* illustrated a cartoon about the virtual personality, and after that, the aphorism was popular: "On the Internet, nobody knows you are a dog" [4]. Virtual identity is anonymous; however, the anonymity here does not mean the absence of the name. Although, the virtual person has a specific name, in many cases its real name is hidden or semiotic.

The width of identification opportunities. The virtual person can be customized with any set of characters. They include pictures, thoughts and ideas shared, materials expressing their outlook, cultural level, interests, writing style, and even scope of friends.

Opportunity to create multiple virtual personalities at the same time. As it is mentioned above, a person can create not only one, but several virtual personalities depending on their intentions, and they may differ dramatically from one another.

Virtual communication factor. The evolution of the personality in the real life is a product of the communication process. Communication guides the development of the human personality. It is in the process of communication that a person recognizes himself, reviews own "I", compares him/herself with others. Virtual identity is also directly related to the virtual communication. At the same time, it should be noted that the events taking place in the virtual environment also affect the real life of the participants of the virtual interactions. These effects are sometimes pleasant, constructive, or negative and destructive in some cases.

The complex of signs. In narrow sense, the virtual personality consists of a complex of signs. These signs are available in an electronic environment, and this environment acts as a carrier of those signs. However, the realization and perception of these signs occur within human intelligence. In this sense, virtual identities act not only as a complex of signs, but also as a complex of ideas and minds.

Emotions. The virtual identity consists of signs, images, presentations, and emotions that create certain impressions in an observer's consciousness. S.I.Vigonski believes that it is necessary to speak of the virtualization of human psychology and virtual reality as a volume of hallucination.

The specific features of the virtual identity distort the image of traditional thinking and lead to the pathological results [5].

If the virtual identity is recognized this way, it should be a subject matter of psychology rather than linguistics. Many researchers consider relevant computer programs as the virtual personality [6]. The diversity of these programs varies from simple signs. They are derived from pseudo-thinking loaded texts through re-combining elements. The information stored in the database, the texts of various complexity, the ability to communicate, identifying the questions of the interviewer, the nature of the character, the ability to move, the mimics and the artificial intelligence bring these programs closer to virtual personality [5].

Nevertheless, despite the rapid development of information and communication technologies, the programs imitating the virtual identity are not perfect yet. They have a specific fund of typical and recurring expressions. These phrases are not always adequate to one or another replica, and their imitation character easily unveils. From a linguistic point of view, such virtual personalities are not suitable for scientific research. Nevertheless, those programs may be useful for defining the frequency of the words used by user and defining the user's goals based on the number of words used. Drawn upon such analysis, it is possible to reveal what issues are relevant for a particular person, his/her personal taste and interests, and concerns.

Virtual discourse

Virtual communication is based on a virtual text (discourse). This text is loaded with virtual reality in a communication situation and acts as a specific model of reality. Virtual discourse appears due to information technology and is realized on the basis of the interaction of communication images. Sociolinguistics reviews all the texts used in course of the Internet communication as a virtual discourse.

The general nature of virtual discourse appears in the main communication tools of the Internet. Therefore, there are various types of discourse that have never existed before: computer (electronic) discourse, network discourse, Internet-discourse, and virtual discourse.

Any type of discourse, first and foremost, is determined on the basis of its own constitutive signs. The discourse can not exist without these features per se. These signs are based on the postulate of speech communication and presented as one of the principles of normal human communication. When speaking about the constitutive features of the discourse, first of all, it is necessary to mention the participants of the communication, their goals, values, strategies, genre of speech and the examples used. Most researchers focusing on this field are trying to study different discourses that the participants have included. There are virtual personalities who use different verbal symbols to present themselves thoroughly, which also help to comprehend the speech product [7].

In this sense, the participants of the social network support their own virtual identity with the texts they write. Any user of social network wants to talk about himself/herself, his/her interests, thoughts and feelings, and wants to be heard. They form own image through the content of the materials shared and communication style. The medium of communication provided by the Internet is the world of people who consider themselves ideal in their own world. They present themselves as they wish, and they want others to accept them. The goal is to be distinguished from the majority for any superior feature in the virtual environment, as in real life. In this sense, social networking is the perfect tool for promoting personality. However, as M.B.Berggelson points out, there is a special cognition among the users of the virtual discourse. They are never completely convinced of who they really are [8].

Therefore, the communication actor accepts the conditional image of his/her partner in virtual communications rather than the real image. This image is formed on the basis of a set of associative signs that characterize the person. Riva G. and Galimberty C. observe in their research that, in this case, in fact, no one can guarantee that the communication actor is not a fictitious

person. However, at the same time, it is not possible to deny the conformity of that person with his real identity [9]. Since, the fictitious image used by the virtual person may also not limit his/her realistic image, and his/her virtual and realistic identities can coincide. This is the case when the person wants to emphasize his/her true character, life principles, and tastes in the course of communication. The interesting point of the study is not the real personality, but the virtual personality and his/her behavior. However, the virtual identity is not always typical for all types of discourse. Only one of these discourses–the virtual discourse presented by the text itself, is characteristic for virtual personality. The realization of communicative images in the interaction domain is one of the main conditions for the formation of virtual discourse. Namely, in this case, it is possible to approach this or another participant of the discourse in his/her own conditional image. At this time, virtual discourse presents itself as a set of realistic and associative personality attributes.

The language as a tool for identifying the virtual personality

The virtual personality has two fundamental qualities: 1) specific names, 2) independent behavior. All the other signs of virtual personality are reproductive. The absence of a specific name makes it impossible for the object to differ from other objects. For example, even if original ideas are put forward and display individual features in anonymous notes in the virtual discussions, it is still regarded as non-individuality. However, when all this is represented by any name, the identity factor becomes stronger. This situation can also be observed when the lifeless objects and animals are named. Granting a certain name and nickname gives them the quality of personality.

Gender aspects of the virtual personality and its manifestation in any language are also one of the most interesting aspects of the problem. Obviously, the semantics of male and female names in real life differs. The male names represent bravery, determination, endurance, and courage, while the female names denote elegance, nobility, and beauty. All of this is also observed in the names of virtual personalities. In addition, men and women do not have the same style of language in real life. Compared to men, slangs, jargons and vulgarity is less observed in women's language. These norms also are represented in the use of language by the virtual personality.

As it is mentioned above, each virtual person shapes opinion about himself/herself through the language used by him/her or other material he/she shares with others. He/she creates a certain picture about his/her outlook, cultural level, interests, the social groups they belong to, the ideas they support, the values they represent, behaviors, habits, what situations a person is more sensitive to. Thus, the virtual account of each social network user reflects his/her character, and the analysis of the characteristic details may provide the psychological portrait of that person. The recognition of this portrait is essential for making certain decisions about the individual in real life.

This method called "Social Scoring" is widely used to identify the credit risks of the customers in banking. Human resources professionals also benefit from a social scoring for recruitment. Social scoring - is a method of research by evaluating the social character of a person based on his/her behavior in the social network. This research is largely based on *Big Data* technologies. Social scoring involves textual and audiovisual material, language literacy, including friend list, favorite movies, music samples, even frequently visited groups, sites, and places [10].

Even the length of e-mail address used by the virtual person and the date of creating the corresponding email address can also form certain conclusions during the social scoring. For example, social scorings conducted in banks infer that the use of a long email address by a client signifies a higher credit risk. Otherwise, if the e-mail address is short, it means that the customer has created this address a while ago and uses for a long time, and credit risk of such loyal customers may be lower. In the field of human resources, the following criteria for evaluating the virtual personality of the candidate are identified. First of all, the positive percentage of the criterion that dominates the candidate is as follows:

- Weighty statuses and comments - 46%;
- Representation in specific groups on specific professional occupation - 67%;

▪ Sharing articles on professional topics - 54% [11, 12].

The negative percentages of the shares that adversely affect the image of the candidate are as follows:

▪ Swearing in social networks - 41%;
▪ Grammatical errors in statuses and comments - 8%;
▪ Sad statuses - 12% [11, 12].

It should be noted that not all of the materials in the accounts have the same effectiveness to expose the virtual identity. In this sense, sometimes,10 out of 100 contents shared by an individual can better characterize the virtual person than 100 key points out of 1000 shares.

Conclusion

Many processes occurring in the information society are dependent on the behavior of the virtual personality. Therefore, it is extremely necessary to investigate the characteristic features of this identity for the purposeful management of the multidimensional trends in the information environment.

The language plays a very important role in the creation of the virtual identity. The analysis of the relevant language units used in the communication process helps to visualize the portrait of a virtual person and make the right decisions about the individual in the real life. Therefore, the extant studies predominantly explore the relationships between the language and virtual identity.

There is a significant need for scientific researches and relevant scientific projects related to the virtual environment and language relationships in order to manage the information environment, to adapt the behavior of virtual personalities to social norms, and to eliminate the existing problems in virtual reality.

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