

# Metaphysics of Cognitive Processes in the Formation of Media Reality

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The article deals with the metaphysics of cognitive processes in media reality formation. Metaphysics reveals being and nothingness. Processes and discourse practices are regarded as cognitive processes. There is a distinction between media reality, hyper reality and virtual reality. The relationship between reality and information processes is being explored. The metaphysics of media-reality influences the existence of man and society, touches upon the value foundations of being and introduces the way to transform them. The metaphysical dimension of cognitive processes opens up new forms of media reality impact on society. It is considered to be an integrative form uniting the representatives of different groups in achieving a specific goal.

**Keywords:** cognitive processes, media reality, metaphysics of cognitive processes, projected media reality influence on society, value bases of media reality

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## INTRODUCTION

Modern society – a society of risk (Beck 2010) – needs control over changes. Verbal processes in the media are important sources of information. The transformation of verbal processes into cognitive processes becomes relevant. It is not only about the consumption of information by individuals. It is about control of changes in being.

Verbal processes are considered in the media sphere as information presentation processes. Cognitive processes are revealed in the media sphere as psychological (Shrum 2002: 57), as representing mental processes (Shrum 2002: 84) and as embodied (Fingerhut 2021: 2).

The question arises as to how the presentation of negative or positive information in verbal processes affects the cognition of objects as being. The formulation of the problem presupposes the consideration of verbal processes as cognitive processes. This makes it possible to explore cognition at the level of ontology.

Distinguishing metaphysics of cognitive processes makes it possible to identify and explore new forms of information impact on society and man. The metaphysics of cognitive

processes suggests the relationship of being and nothingness with respect to the objects and events that are highlighted in media activity. Defining metaphysics of cognitive processes makes it possible to explore controversial political, legal, and other institutional discourses as verbal processes of media reality institutionalisation.

There are different metaphysics that explain cognition. The research of metaphysics reveals the importance of the metaphysical dimension of cognitive process study. This links the metaphysics of research programs with language (Lakatos 2008: 218) and epistemology metaphysics development (Sellars 2017: 375).

Verbal processes are revealed as processes of understanding (Gadamer). The veritistic values direct their attention to journalistic investigations and democratic discourse. 'True belief' (Goldman 2002: 1) characterises the form of the combination of knowledge, cognition and aspiration for truth and belief in its existence which characterises all social practices. Mass media is considered as a construction of reality, through the function of mass media and publicity (Luman 2010: 108, 128, 137). The role of cognitive processes and social representations to establish mental reality is revealed (Rubanets 2018). Cognitive processes beyond the border of science, particularly in cinema, are explored (Chornomordenko 2010: 360).

It is proposed to consider the metaphysics of being and nothing, the study of how objects of knowledge are revealed as a representation of being. The metaphysics of being and nothing reveals how the objects of knowledge are revealed as a representation of being.

The study of verbal processes in the formation of media reality as cognitive processes involves figuring out the peculiarities of their influence on contemporary transformations in a democratic society:

- Identification of peculiarities in a contemporary media reality;
- Revealing the role of the metaphysical dimension of cognitive processes to establish the interconnection and differences of media reality, hyperreality (Baudrillard 1988; Debord 2005) and virtual reality.

The relationship between ontology and phenomenology, outlined in the studies of the founder of phenomenology E. Husserl (Husserl 2002: 134–149), has become the basis for the phenomenological method development.

## **THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE METAPHYSICS OF COGNITIVE PROCESSES**

Media reality formation is carried out in continuous discourses under the influence of information processes. Cognitive processes mediate the relationship between social information and judgment (Shrum 2002: 51). In cognitive processes, information that is available to a person is processed. The role of accessibility as a cognitive mediator of media effects is considered (Shrum 2002: 57).

Cognitive processes affect the formation of social perceptions and political communications. Political communications are related to phenomenology (Castiglione, Pollak 2019: 20). These communications have their own ontology, which is different from people's ideas.

In cognitive processes, objects appear as beings. Sartre shows that there is being-in-itself and being-for-itself (Sartre 1956: 172–179). Ontology describes Being itself (Sartre 1956: 632). Being-in-itself is transpersonal. Being-for-itself is in consciousness.

Sartre reveals the connection between being and values, as well as the being of value (Sartre 1956: 84–94). Through negations (Sartre 1956: 6–11) nothingness appears as a loss of value.

The metaphysics of being and nothingness makes it possible to show how cognition of objects takes place in verbal processes under the influence of positive or negative information. Metaphysics makes it possible to understand the knowledge of objects as being or the transformation of these objects into nothingness as a result of negative information.

The growing role of cognitive processes in establishing media reality is due to the proliferation of normative standards of veritistic values as regulators of information exchange and information processes. The controversy of verbal processes characterises the struggle of opposing forces. Media reality, as such, reflects the objectivity of facts and events. The metaphysics of cognitive processes reveals the connection between media reality, its objects and events with being and nothingness. Media reality exists as ever-changing. Verbal processes shape the composition and structure of media reality, add details, reveal unexpected circumstances, etc. Verbal processes turn into exploratory ones. The interests hidden by the verbal processes get the research ahead, opening up new facts.

The introduction of metaphysics opens up the dimension of being, the truth is found, the features of events are revealed, and the ways of objective situation development are exposed.

The issue of metaphysics was introduced in the days of ancient philosophy. The study of the essence of being (Aristotle) enters the architectonics of metaphysics.

Metaphysics reveals the deepest substantive foundations.

The classic comes to an end when the Mirror of Nature breaks (Rorty 1979). R. Rorty considers verbal processes as social practices. This is, primarily, a verbally recorded communication of participants in a cognitive process.

The importance of social factors in cognitive processes is revealed. First of all, it is about the social status of experts and social parameters of communication between them. But with all this, cognition becomes central to the formation of a new cognitive social form. This is tacit knowledge (Baumard 1999) and its role in the development of the organisation; it is also a cognitive capitalism that depends on cognitive processes and communication (Fuller 1999: 8).

Revealing the peculiarities of the concept of E. Goldman, S. Fuller, D. Bloor and Yu. Malyshena emphasises the importance of measuring the truth in cognitive processes (Malyshena 2015: 47–54). They fill up the educational space, investigative journalism and the discourse of democracy.

## **COGNITIVE PROCESSES IN THE FORMATION OF MEDIA REALITY**

The linguistic turn expects the transition to the study of discourses and narratives. At the same time, science is being displaced to the periphery of social consciousness (Nora, Minc 1981: 186). For several decades (since the late 1980s), science has reduced presence in the minds of society. Instead, there is a proliferation of cognitive processes in virtual reality and hypertext. In today's context, the image of reality is formed by the media, virtual networks and communications. Media reality is becoming an integral structure shaped by verbal processes. In social networks, verbal processes reveal the influence of the personal thought with an average person. It can be constructed, imagined and rigged.

The main thing in the study of these cognitive processes is to establish the reliability of information sources. The fullness of virtual reality through artificially constructed processes is becoming a powerful factor in the ideological and political influence on the mass consciousness, feelings and thoughts of people. Establishing the reliability of the sources and

the reality of what they are reporting opens up the importance of establishing being/nothingness. In the study of the ontology of consciousness, metaphysics with the categories of being and nothingness comes to the fore. The variability of processes influences the metaphysics of media reality.

At the same time, the significance of the idea of constitutivity (Baumeister 2010: 10) in ontology remains. And it even intensifies. In verbal processes, we are talking about the constituency of being or non-being. The constitutive nature of being or non-being is characterised as the provision of ontological status to various subjects, the discussion of which is included in various types of discourse. In this case, the aspect of meaning (Baumeister 2010: 16) often becomes decisive.

The advancement of scientific analytics in the cognitive processes, the study of experts' opinions and other scientific aspects are intertwined in a special form of the discovery of being in cognitive processes. It is to open the contours of being and form the ways to influence its change.

### **PECULIARITIES OF FORMING THE WHOLENESS OF BEING AND NOTHINGNESS IN MEDIA REALITY**

Due to the metaphysics of cognitive processes, media reality ceases to be a mere reproduction of social reality. 'It also means that not all the objects of the information space that are broadcast daily through TV channels are becoming the objects of mental reality. Only what is involved in the intense interaction that exists between social and mental representations is becoming the object of mental reality. This interaction of mental and social representations characterises the stress of human being' (Rubanets 2018). Establishing the boundaries between being and nothingness in cognitive processes is becoming a constitutive element of not only the media reality itself, but a means of constructive formation of political, legal, economic and socio-cultural reality as well. Metaphysics in its manifestations of being and nothingness is becoming an expression of active desire to influence the change of events and processes.

Verbal processes, in which the experience in the formation of media reality is embodied, go from scientific practices and statistics to eyewitness accounts. Eyewitness accounts as a social practice aimed to establish the truth and expand it (Goldman 2004: 11–22) is replaced by eyewitness accounts as an expression of subjective experience.

Verbal processes, that fill up media space and create media reality, are overflowing with the evidence of personal experience. In fact, these are cognitive constructions that are based on mental representations and personal values. The peculiarity of the cognitive structure of the experience opens up the possibility to bring individual memories, reflections and images of memory as the images of being and nothingness into media reality.

The excess of information and the power of information flows are also accompanied by the constant incompleteness and insufficiency of important information. The need to create integrity is realised through subjective additions, value-driven subjective insertions, etc.

Coming to the forefront of metaphysics means that establishing the wholeness of being and nothingness is not always based on scientific information. It is not the metaphysics of epistemology which Sellars wrote about (Sellars 2017: 375), but the metaphysics of the direct perception of being and nothingness comes to the fore. Due to this, the continuity of the verbal processes gets completed.

## PERCEPTION OF MEDIA REALITY

In each verbal process that makes up media reality, a certain being and a certain nothingness are established. The audience has no means of verification. It is guided by feelings of trust and distrust. Trust and distrust deal with not only information sources. They relate to what a person says – whether it really exists or it does not exist at all.

The metaphysical intuition of being and nothingness is only partially based on a speaker's knowledge. No one can ever be sure that they really know the speaker. New facts, new evidence and circumstances are constantly being discovered. The audience often do not know the sources of the information and cannot determine the autonomy and independence of the person who provides it.

The implementation of the metaphysics of being and nothingness creates the opportunity to compare the quality of cognitive processes, link the verbal processes with cognitive ones. The deviation of verbal processes from cognitive ones becomes the basis for the implementation of manipulative strategies and practices in the construction of media reality.

## MEDIA REALITY AS A SPECIAL KIND OF REALITY

Media reality is no longer hyper-reality. Hyper-reality is the reality of simulacra (Baudrillard 1988; Debord 2005). At the same time, it differs from the metaphysical principle of methodology of scientific research programs. 'What acts as an *external* metaphysical influence on science for Popper, Watkins, and Agassi, here becomes an *inner* one...' (Lakatos 2008: 218). The footnote here refers to the impact of metaphysics and its scientific status (Lakatos 2008: 218). Hyper-reality creates fictional objects that, however, affect people's consciousness and thinking, their feelings and emotions. It is a perceptual, emotional channel of influence.

The metaphysics of cognitive processes in media reality does not operate with the dimension of the non-existent – whether it is simulacra or idealised scientific abstractions. The metaphysics of the cognitive processes of media reality reveals the dimension of the reality of what exists and what does not exist. However, unlike the historicism criticised by Popper when considering an open society, the dimension of reality is not an expression of law. The laws of nature in the cognitive processes that shape media reality are not considered as a rule.

Media reality, due to infernalism and communication, is becoming a space for different approaches. This opens up the possibility of political consensus and civil society unity establishing. Unlike hyperreality, media reality, based on cognitive processes and discursive practices, leads to real objects.

But unlike media reality, hyper-reality and virtual reality do not have a clearly metaphysical dimension. The mechanism of hyper-reality creation is the substitution of real objects and simulacra. The mechanism of virtual reality creation is in reduplication of the world, transition to a new virtual plane (e-commerce, virtual universities). The transition to hypertext and a new kind of communication creates the possibility of directly involving the ontic – individual consciousness of many people, as well as artificially created virtual personalities, in the creation of objects that exist in virtual reality.

The inability to recognise what really exists or is artificially created, true and fake is one of the facets of a modern virtual reality. Fake news, bots and misinformation in critical periods of social life are overwhelming virtual reality. This is an information barrage that hinders the ontological dimension of virtual reality. Polyontic and polyontology are interrelated in

virtual reality (Nosov 2000: 69). The ontic of many consciousnesses defines the boundaries and frameworks of the ontology of virtual reality. But this ontology does not touch the metaphysical dimension – the real being of people and society. Virtual reality has its own ontology that is independent of the existing world. This new ontology is realised through the creation of objects that do not exist in the real world, new visual images and a new visual culture.

### **ONTOLOGICAL IMPACT OF MEDIA REALITY ON SOCIETY**

The ontological impact of media reality on society is determined by the fact that the verbal processes that carry a certain new information and create a certain representation of what is happening have a powerful effect on people. Mass communication theory states the impact of messages on the audience. McLuhan (McLuhan 1964: 359) notes that the impact of communication on the audience is not limited to the impact on the individual mind. It is noted that television has a practical impact.

The true magnitude of this practical impact becomes clear when exposing the impact of media reality on being or nothingness. Announcement of something that corresponds to its existence, or announcement that something no longer exists; or, on the contrary, it exists, without corresponding to the essence of being some institution or position, creates a projecting influence on the institutions of society. This influence is not limited to the formation of public opinion. Verbal processes in their constitution of being or nothingness are now a factor of social and civilisational development. The projective action of verbal processes appears as an explanatory, cognitive and argumentative action.

The cognitive process, together with the constitution of a particular being or nothingness, characterises the verbal process as establishing truth. It is not about *logos* to *verbum*. The evolution of language from *logos* to *verbum* (Gadamer 1988: 471–485) characterises the transition to the horizon of hermeneutic ontology and the discovery of language as an experience of the world (Gadamer 1988: 508–528).

The tradition of considering the *logos* as law (Heraclitus) provides a rationalised construction of the verbal process. Introduction to the rationalised construction of text and discourse also implies the development of discursive rationalised argumentation.

Consideration of cognitive processes that appear in the formation of media reality as verbal processes does not always fit into a clear articulation of concepts and rationalised constructions.

Verbal processes are an expression of subjective aspirations and realisations. They provide different ways of being representation. Disclosing the relationship between verbal processes and ontology becomes essential for mass communication (Kittler 2009: 23–31). The continuity of verbal processes creates the possibility of increasing their ontologically projective influence. It is not just about a certain way of presenting events, a certain look at an event, etc. The definition and method of presentation as components of the cognitive process detail, clarify and reveal the existence of what is happening. Instead of being that is unchanged as the basis of all things, being introduced by Parmenides, media reality creates being that is mobile, verbalised, constitutive and ever-changing.

In a democratic society, an influence on the formation of being in people's minds is becoming an important constitutive element of the society's development. Talking streams are not only verbal. They transform ontology. No voting date is required to identify this ontological project. The ontological dimension of cognitive processes is of importance.

## CONCLUSIONS

The cognitive processes that establish being as the moment of truth within media reality obtain a new form and a new way of its being. Verbal processes and narratives become a form of cognitive process implementation. Discursive practices and a discursive rationality become the way of cognitive process existence. This new field of rationality operates under conditions of constant continuity of information flows; in the conditions of detail redundancy and unnecessary information; in the conditions of insufficiency or absence of information regarding the essence of being.

The metaphysics of being and nothingness makes it possible to reveal the representation of being in verbal processes. Verbal processes as cognitive processes reveal objects as representations of being at the level of ontology. They also create, generate the idea of nothingness as the loss of being. It is not only about physical existence. In ontology, value-semantic negation of existence becomes important.

The metaphysical dimension of media reality – establishing something as being or nothingness – is the main characteristic of media reality. The presence of metaphysical influence defines the framework of the projecting effect of media reality on social processes. This distinguishes media reality from hyper-reality and virtual activity, which, like media reality, depend on public institutions and infrastructures, as well as technological platforms.

Media reality appears as a communicative reality. It is created by cognitive processes and information interactions in the media space and virtual space of social networks and communications. Media reality creates the preconditions for an internal dialogue in society. Communication occurs between the expert environment and the leaders of the information influence and the audience.

The presence of a metaphysical dimension of media reality reveals the ways of its impact on the existing society.

The formation of the rule of law state is accompanied by the introduction of the idea of the fourth power, the right to access information and the need to protect human rights. The metaphysical dimension of cognitive processes in the creation of media reality has the most profound influence, i.e. the influence on being as the basis of everything that exists and does not exist (that cannot exist under any condition). At the same time, something can continue its physical existence, but if it has already turned into nothingness in media reality, with no ways of its coming back. The metaphysical influence of media reality on being touches the deepest value foundations of human and society being.

Received 16 October 2022

Accepted 16 January 2023

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## Kognityvinių procesų metafizika formuojant medijų tikrovę

### *Santrauka*

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama kognityvinių procesų metafizika formuojant žiniasklaidos realybę. Metafizika apima žiniasklaidos realybės ontologijos problemas. Kalbėjimo procesai ir diskurso praktika laikomi pažintiniais procesais. Nagrinėjamas skirtumas tarp medijos realybės, hipertikrovės ir virtualiosios realybės. Tiriamas tikrovės ir informacijos procesų santykis. Taip pat atskleidžiamas žiniasklaidos realybės formavimo kognityvinių procesų ypatumas. Išanalizuotas ontologinės žiniasklaidos realybės dimensijos vaidmuo sprendžiant socialines problemas. Medijos tikrovės metafizika daro įtaką žmogaus ir visuomenės egzistavimui, paliečia būties vertybinius pagrindus ir įveda būdu juos transformuoti.

Metafizinis pažinimo procesų matmuo atveria naujas žiniasklaidos realybės įtakos visuomenei formas. Žiniasklaidos realybė veikia ne tik mąstymą ir sąmonę. Ji taip pat suartina skirtingų socialinių grupių atstovus tam, kad būtų pasiektas konkretus tikslas. Kognityvinių procesų tęstinumas formuojant žiniasklaidos tikrovę sukuria nuolatinį informacijos spaudimą socialinėms institucijoms.

**Raktažodžiai:** kognityviniai procesai, žiniasklaidos tikrovė, pažinimo procesų metafizika, numatomos žiniasklaidos realybės įtaka visuomenei, žiniasklaidos realybės vertybiniai pagrindai