

THE COMMUNICATIVE CATEGORY OF TOLERANCE AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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Annotation

This paper identifies a set of criteria and attributes that characterize category of tolerance as a crucial component of political discourse in a climate of democratic development. There is described the social-psychological and information-communication properties of category of tolerance in its theoretical and empirical characteristics. It is proven that in policy tolerance toward the views of others may incorporate heated public discussions, criticism and counter-criticism between two, or more, opposing parties, including focusing the attention of the audience on destructive social phenomena. Here is identified a set of attributes of tolerant communication in audiovisual mass media as well.

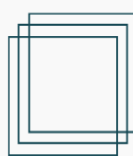
Keywords: category of tolerance, intolerance, communication properties, information war, audiovisual mass media, political correctness.

The term “tolerance” comes from the Latin word ‘tolerantia’, signifying “acquiescence in evil” and “voluntarily enduring suffering”. During the Renaissance era, this definition was extended to incorporate “being reserved” and “permission”.

In the 16th century, the concept of “tolerance” gradually acquired a juridical meaning, although it was perceived in a legal sense only with respect to certain religious beliefs (Habermas, 2006).

Today, tolerance is a multi-faceted and broad concept that is employed not only in journalism but also in a number of crucial communication areas, like education, politics, public and charitable activity, and other areas engaged in the communication process. From the social-psychological perspective, tolerance is governed by an array of personal human factors: one’s upbringing, manners, and communication ethics and aesthetics. Tolerance may be viewed as one of the basic qualities of the communicator conducive to the development of his professional skills, which helps form his personality in its professional expression.

Under the current democratic conditions, in the polyphony of political ideologies and diversity of opinions, tolerance in representing and covering reality is taking on special relevance with respect to such areas as politics, religion, ethnic relations and the development of media systems (Georgieva, Danilova, Bykov, Smolyarova, & Labush, 2015). The need to devote attention to them is governed by the fact that it is in these areas of intergroup and interpersonal social communication that contradictoriness and conflict proneness are manifested most acutely.



From the political perspective, a lack of experience realizing the principle of information pluralism tends to cause difficulties with effecting tolerant communication in transitional regimes. This often shows in the specific reaction of subjects of communication to acute, unresolved, and at times decades-old issues in social interaction, i.e. gives rise to a quality that is the opposite of respect in dialogues and discussions – intolerance. Political intolerance conveyed through mass media may be construed as the public, rude depreciation of the opinions of one's opponents and attempts to undo other political ideologies and views, calls to political and physical violence, justifying and employing it, discriminating by gender, profession, age, political and partisan preferences, and abasing the human dignity of one's opponents.

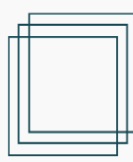
Political intolerance is verging on, and may now already actually be, trampling on moral principles; manifestations of intolerance in mass media are also testimony to journalists committing a serious violation of the principles of professional ethics and professional conduct.

The study of tolerance as a principle and quality of the activity of audiovisual mass media in a climate of democracy cannot be carried out without having in place a certain scientific methodological base. This study is grounded in the following general scientific methods:

1. The historical method, which helps analyze the interpretation of a phenomenon under review at different historical stages. The authors' desire to employ this method is based on that tolerance or intolerance in communication has a close association with a specific historical period, a specific spatial-temporal context, and specific historical events.
2. The summarization method is employed to generate a most complete characterization of general trends through the identification of particular facts of reality and concretization of factors determining the state and development of the subject of the study.
3. The analysis method is utilized to establish the formal-logical associations between the elements of the object under study. In particular, the phenomenon of tolerance is considered in the aggregate with the following concepts: information war, political intolerance, and hate speech. The method helps define the relationships and formal-logical links between such categories as forbearance, tolerance, and political correctness.

For the purposes of this study, it appears to be most worthwhile to make the integrated use of the above methods so as to obtain credible results and chart the prospects for further research in the field.

This paper is a continuation of a line of research into the phenomenon of political tolerance in audiovisual mass media, the results of which have been published in leading international scholarly journals and monographs and tested as part of a number of international conferences.

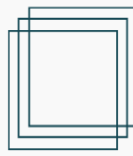


In developing the concept of political culture, scholars G.A. Almond and S. Verba defined political tolerance as one of the major principles of pluralistic democracy (Almond & Verba, 1963). Afterwards, Russian researcher E.P. Prokhorov suggested that pluralism acts as one of the attributes of tolerant communication: “Pluralism and tolerance are mutually complementary when there is a multiplicity of forces, including in the area of mass information. There will be informedness to the maximum extent possible only when “your own” point of view will be seen against the backdrop of that of “others” and you will be willing to take them into consideration, not ignore them” (Prokhorov, 2009). Political tolerance has been viewed from the standpoint of the “us–them” dichotomy by scholars S.M. Eliseev and I.V. Ustinova, who maintain that political tolerance consists in having regard for the views of “political others” (Eliseev and Ustinova, 2010). T.V. Romanova considers this thought in an extended form, suggesting: “Being tolerant means being able to give up not just prejudice and hatred but something more complex – give up the desire to eliminate, destroy the views of “others”, while retaining the notions that have actually brought that desire about” (Romanova, 2015). Thus, radically opposite, extreme public behavior, expressed in being unwilling to engage in respectful dialogue with an opponent, may lead to intolerance and aggression and is capable of deforming a political discussion into an all-out political confrontation, including in forms of an extremist nature as extreme manifestations of direct democracy.

The most accessible channels for the use of the various techniques of political intolerance are audiovisual mass media. The TV screen has an integrated effect on the viewers’ subconscious: it keeps their attention focused through the dynamicity of the picture in an audiovisual show, its special effects, tempo, and rhythm. Radio broadcasting remains one of the most efficient types of mass media, as it lets the audience listen to the radio without disrupting their daily routine and can be a powerful means of influencing their consciousness.

In the largest measure, tolerance in communication is crucial to public debate in discussion TV and radio shows and talk shows. The attempt to seek a social consensus normally shapes the aims of discussion aimed at realizing the principle of tolerant interaction between the various segments of society. In this regard, promoting nonstereotyped thinking, restricting hate speech, providing each side in the discussion with equal opportunity to have their say, and preventing calls to extremism are among the major components of preparing and airing this kind of shows.

As a conclusion we can say the tolerance as a quality of discussion shows is not limited to just the verbal conduct of discussion participants but has many more aspects to it. It may be realized on two different levels. First of all, it is the structural level, i.e. the way the show is organized (correctly establishing the topic of the discussion, deciding on the choice of guests, and establishing upfront the extent of audience engagement in the upcoming discussion). Second of all, it is the content level (establishing the extent to



which the topic is to be brought to light, the degree of equality or inequality in terms of the amount of time and opportunity the show's participants are provided with, the ethics of verbal communication among debate participants and members of the audience, and whether or not speech aggression techniques will be employed). Being tolerant in political dialogue means being able to properly explain and defend your point of view and convince others using relevant facts, arguments, generalizations, and conclusions.

Reference

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