

Artículo de investigación

Game cyberreality as an implement of conflict impact on the national security of the Russian Federation

La ciberrealidad del juego como instrumento de impacto del conflicto en la seguridad nacional de la Federación Rusa

Jogo ciberrealidade como um implemento de impacto de conflito sobre a segurança nacional da Federação Russa

Recibido: 10 de mayo de 2018. Aceptado: 11 de junio de 2018

Written by:

Andrey V. Ivanov¹

Timur Z. Mansurov¹

Ella A. Metsker¹

Natalia A. Shibanova¹

¹Kazan Federal University, Institute of Social and Philosophical Sciences and Mass Communications. E-mail:timur-man333@mail.ru. Tel.: 89872849616

Abstract

The research objective is the identification of the negative image of the Russian state in computer games of the western developers. The characteristics and tendencies are given in the development of virtual game space from the first person (shooters) where the image of the enemy of the Russian origin is created. Virtual game communications are considered as a special form of social interaction on the Internet where technologies of political convictions and increase in level of hostility of rather specially chosen object are approved.

The research has cross-disciplinary character. When studying virtual game network space authors used structurally functional and sociocultural approach.

Computer games can serve as platform for the information wars, first of all, directed against the Russian youth.

Destructive communicative strategy is used in the computer games devoted to World War II where the role and value of participation of the Soviet Union in a victory over fascist Germany is leveled. It is reached in fictional images of Russia in virtual reality which do not relies on objective reality of historical process and carries a negative connotation.

Computer games are time the tool which can put motives of political and ideological hatred, xenophobia or hostility concerning any social group or the country.

Resumen

El objetivo de la investigación es la identificación de la imagen negativa del estado ruso en los juegos de computadora de los desarrolladores occidentales. Se dan las características y tendencias en el desarrollo del espacio de juego virtual de la primera persona (tiradores) donde se crea la imagen del enemigo del origen ruso. Las comunicaciones de juegos virtuales se consideran como una forma especial de interacción social en Internet donde se aprueban las tecnologías de convicciones políticas y el aumento en el nivel de hostilidad, especialmente, del objeto elegido. La investigación tiene carácter interdisciplinario. Al estudiar el espacio virtual de red de juegos, los autores utilizaron un enfoque estructuralmente funcional y sociocultural. Los juegos de computadora pueden servir como plataforma para las guerras de información, en primer lugar, dirigidas contra la juventud rusa. La estrategia destructiva de comunicación se usa en los juegos de computadora dedicados a la Segunda Guerra Mundial donde se nivela el papel y el valor de la participación de la Unión Soviética en una victoria sobre la Alemania fascista. Se alcanza en imágenes ficticias de Rusia en la realidad virtual que no se basa en la realidad objetiva del proceso histórico y conlleva una connotación negativa. Los juegos de computadora son la herramienta del tiempo que puede poner motivos de odio político e ideológico, xenofobia u hostilidad con respecto a cualquier grupo social o país.

Keywords: Conflict, cyberreality, computer games, communications, Internet space.

Palabras claves: Conflicto, ciberrealidad, juegos de computadora, comunicaciones, internet.

Resumo

Objetivo de pesquisa é a identificação em jogos de computador dos desenvolvedores ocidentais de projetar a imagem negativa do estado russo. A característica é dada a características e tendências de desenvolvimento do espaço de jogo virtual da primeira pessoa (atiradores) onde a imagem do inimigo da origem russa é criada. As comunicações de jogos virtuais são consideradas como uma forma especial de interação social na Internet, onde tecnologias de convicções políticas e aumento no nível de hostilidade de objetos especialmente escolhidos são aprovadas.

A pesquisa tem caráter interdisciplinar. Ao estudar o espaço da rede de jogos virtuais, os autores usaram uma abordagem estruturalmente funcional e sociocultural.

Os jogos de computador podem servir de plataforma para as guerras informativas, antes de tudo dirigidas contra os jovens russos.

A estratégia comunicativa destrutiva é usada nos jogos de computador dedicados à Segunda Guerra Mundial, onde o papel e o valor da participação da União Soviética na vitória sobre a Alemanha fascista são nivelados. Ele é alcançado em imagens fictícias da Rússia em realidade virtual que não se baseia na realidade objetiva do processo histórico e carrega uma conotação negativa.

Os jogos de computador são o momento da ferramenta que pode colocar motivos de ódio político, ideológico, xenofobia ou hostilidade em relação a qualquer grupo social ou ao país.

Palavras-chave: Conflito, ciberrealidade, jogos de computador, comunicações, espaço na Internet.

Introduction

From eightieth years of the 20th century computer games begin active entry into public life. Their influence and a role in life of the certain person still cause heated discussions among researchers and experts of various spheres: philosophies, psychology, sociology, conflictology, political science. The politological science considers computer games as the instrument of formation of political culture and designing of virtual communications. Also it is necessary to mention about a particular interest of researchers in a subject of influence of computer games at political choice of the player. The gaming platform can correct and form political convictions and views. As subject of the analysis allocate communication of computer games which it becomes frequent politically engaged.

The term "political communication" has very ambiguous definition for the reason that covers spheres of two sciences - sociology and political science. Nevertheless the essence of a phenomenon can be brought to the following: political communication is a set of means of processing, classification, transfer and report of this or that information having concrete political value.

The cyber playground incorporates hundreds of millions people from around the world today (Grishin, Iglin, 2015). In 2011 in the USA computer games began to be associated with art. It can be connected with the beginning of grant support of the game computer industry on an equal basis with theater, cinema and other spheres of art.

Since the beginning of the 21st century computer games become more difficult according to the scenario of passing, beauty, showiness. In too time process on transformation of game simulators into the propaganda tool in the countries producers amplifies.

Methods

In the cybergame sphere all values, norms, traditions which are standard by this society in real life undergo changes and, often, cardinal. The virtual space forms the scale of values and ideas of norm.

The main feature of game cyberreality consists that unlike other types of "art", there is purely subjective factor here - an element of personal presence and partnership. Having come to theater or reading the book, the person cannot

affect events. He only beholds, empathizes and watches the events. In a computer game the individual can make the decision and then say: "I made it". The gamer associates himself with the character and creates, "lives" history of the hero (Martin, 2009). The player the action carries out the scenario conceived by developers who in turn could create not just a game, and special technology for distribution of the engaged political cliches and ideological stamps.

Computer games can exert even stronger impact, than traditional mass media, books and movies. Besides it is about a role as instead of the passive observer we accept a role of the active player and we live events, we take all virtual game facts for granted as the original facts of the world around. Success of any promotion consists that the most part of audience of gamers are children and youth. They are most subject to perceive the facts of a virtual game as the true, not demanding confirmations. The previous social experience, the accumulated knowledge and also ability to critically think and not to take everything on trust is important that gives the chance to the individual to understand illusiveness and absurdity of game elements of the virtual world (Dzhokich, 2018).

It should be noted that at the expense of graphics immersion level in a game became much higher. Not only graphics, but also the contents changed, it became similar to the movie on a plot and emotional capture. The subject depends on a type of games, the main which today three. The most widespread include: fighters, strategy and role-playing games (Flanagan, 2009).

Results And Discussion

The specifics of the gaming industry consist today that such historical events as military operations become often subject line. Events of World War I and World War II of wars are most often interpreted. It is presented naturally as really happened facts, offering various historical documents which can also represent absolute fiction in "proofs". Stamps of "cold" war are often used.

It is very difficult to not only teenage gamer, but also adult to define where true statements and where fiction. And business even not only in computer games, "fake" is the main cultural achievement of the present and becomes the powerful instrument of manipulation in information society, first of all in a number of media. The adults having skill of critical thinking

are capable "to filter" this information stream when children and youth only develop it and therefore get into difficulties for determination of the validity of virtual content (Shevyakhova, 2018).

Computer games can be used for the purpose of a rising of patriotic sentiments. The game "Call of Duty", especially among military, a game essence that Americans liberators and defenders of innocent people are popular in the USA. In 2002 also in the United States the game "America's Army" or "Army Game Project" appeared. The teacher of the American military academy colonel Kasey Vardinski, for the purpose of inflow of recruits to army, suggested using computer games for promotion of positive image of troops. Players passed missions before real fighting. The project lasted seven years and became thus the first example of political military propaganda with use of computer games (Mark, 2008).

In Russia there was the alternative - a game "SILT-2: The attack plane", released in 2000. The player becomes the participant of the Great Patriotic War, and underwent all its key fights. It should be noted that she became happy with popular and found the players not only in the Russian Federation, but also abroad.

The expert in the field of the game industry V. Valeriano claims that according to statistics of 40 percent of adult inhabitants of America own consoles, most of players of the woman have. The game industry has big annual revenues than sales of tickets at cinema.

First of all he paid attention to process of creation of an image of the enemy at audience in computer games. The list of the most sold games among the most popular genre - First Person Shooters (FPS) or shooters from the first person in whom the player has to kill the enemy with the weapon was created. The rating list was made of 57 games which are released during the period from 2001 to 2013, each of which was sold more than 1,5 million times.

The analysis of games was carried out by the following criteria: the identity of the main character, a context and the place of the conflict, the identity of the opponent in each game. The last category was divided into eight groups: person and humanoid; aliens, monsters and zombie; terrorists from the countries of the Middle East and Latin America; professional

soldiers, ultranationalists and separatists from Russia; fascist Germany and their allies in World War II; natives of Iraq and North Korea. So, 21% (12 games) of the presented games in the scenario create an image of the enemy from Russia. It is one percent less, than the leader of statistics - people both humanoid, and one more aliens. Even if to take results on terrorists from the Middle East (5 games) and Latin America (6 games) as one, all the same will be less indicator, than at Russia (Valeriano, 2018).

In spite of the fact that times of Cold War with the USSR ended long ago, echoes of that era remained still. Gamers of the western countries still meet image of "Russians" as enemies. Here Russia bypasses even terrorists, fight against whom is conducted today on a global scale. Tension between the West and Russia in connection with participation of the last in the internal conflict in Syria played a role.

The computer game of "Company of heroes" became Russia which is the most politically engaged in connection with designing of negative image (Zorina, 2018). After a game exit, impassioned reaction of a part of the Russian gaming public as developers showed excessive partiality in the scenario with the anti-Russian moods immediately followed. As the reason for that rough substitution of historic facts, including belittling of a feat of the Soviet people and sympathy for fascist aggressors, creation of a negative image of the Soviet soldiers and citizens served, representing them as savages who are ready to kill even the compatriots, etc.

The first part of a game represented strategy in real time, describing events of times of World War II on the Western front where Americans with all bravery and courage exempted Europe from Nazis. But "problems" began with the second part of "Company of heroes" which release took place in 2013. Actions of a game were thrown from the western front on east. Passed literally month from the date of release as the public paid attention to some details of a plot in a single-user mission. Evgeny Bazhenov known to Internet users under a nickname of BadComedian was one of the first. He made the review on a game and laid out it on the channel in Youtube then the main wave of criticism began. The company IC stopped delivery of a game to Russia, but copies which already were in the territory of the country were not withdrawn from sale, and even today they can be found in free access. For example, the Steam service

openly provides copies of this game to the users. Developers and on it could win, such agiotage of public only raised ratings selling this game - everyone wanted to look at what tell about others and therefore a game held a leader position of the whole three months from the moment of release.

So, action of the second part begins with a scene in GULAG where the main character, the imprisoned former officer Lev Abramovich Isakovich, tells the investigator of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs about east front. In a game the protagonist throughout all mission repeats that the Soviet soldiers do wrong, killing the Germans who already gave up to them. And commanders especially conduct the wrong policy, sending soldiers to war which "is not necessary to them".

The second mission describes actions of the Soviet soldiers who desperately try to stop advance of Germans in the territory of the Soviet Union. It is not devoted to heroism of soldiers, on the contrary, the full negligibility, callousness and cruelty of the Soviet soldiers is shown. The colonel of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs Churkin conducts a campaign for extermination of the civilians, soldiers enclose mines on roads for Germans, besides setting fire to houses with civil the population inside to stop advance of fascist troops far inland. Between scenes slip so-called "historical information" in which it is said that it is the real facts which took place to be in World War II.

The third mission is devoted to defense of Mtsensk. Here the emphasis is placed on an ideological message that only thanks to a frost the Soviet Union could win against. Climatic conditions promoted it, "as well as in 1812". This stamp is key in a game.

History of a game comes to an end with capture of the Reichstag. The protagonist claims that he is thrown long ago, but the Soviet soldiers go forward, only to take the picture with a flag.

Except the main subject line, it is possible to allocate the separate episodes connected with russophobia. For example, the image of the Soviet soldier who does not wish to battle for the Homeland and to go to be at war against fascist Germany, and is at war only because of execution threat. In one of episodes of the second part of a game it is told that the Red Army did not exempt Europe from Nazis, and on the

contrary only attacked and exterminated them. The reliability is confirmed by what between scenes is slipped by pages from the diary of the main character, the historical information in which there is no line of the actual truth. The player, ignorant real actual story of World War II can perceive virtual stamps and a cliché in such games as the convincing truthful story about history which can become a part of outlook of the younger generation over time.

So, computer games are created on similarity of movies fighters, as an example it is possible to cite the known game Call Of Duty. It only entertainment, no more than that. But here, as well as everywhere there are exceptions so to perceive all games as especially conflict content is not necessary. Many games with a high box office affect quite important universal spheres such as humanity, tolerance, toleration.

Summary

The most frequent and popular belief concerning negative impact of computer games is charge of the rendered harm on mentality of the person, in formation of codependent behavior. Arguments that there is a transfer of aggressive behavior from the virtual world to real are given, there is a permissiveness and desire to realize the destructive skills acquired in a game.

There is an opposite point of view where a game is understood as transaction that is interrelation of people during all course of life. The idea is that the person in forces it is autonomous to learn to make decisions, to make the analysis of the actions, to use the acquired skills in practice. As well as in a game, and in life everything depends on what the player will undertake at this or that moment (Bern, 1964). In other words, the person always has a choice to be bad or good. In relation to a subject of computer games - here too, as well as in life a certain behavior model, behavior model of the specific character in the set situation recoups. Each decision both in life, and in a game has the consequence in the future. It is one of the main arguments against those who insist on harmful value of computer games which subordinate people and have negative effect on mentality of players.

Computer games, especially network can shortly become one of means of lobbying and justification of various political directions. It is connected with the fact that computer games are designed for mass audience where use of technologies for introduction of this or that

political concept, ideologies can happen most effectively and quickly.

Conclusion

The information conflict expressed by the anti-Russian promotion in a number of computer games of the western developers exists and is potentially dangerous to national security of the Russian Federation.

Under the threat of the conflictogenic influence there is first of all a youth as the main target audience.

The cybergame space represents today successful technology for creation of negative image projects which can lead to reputation losses of this or that state.

The cybergame space is qualitatively new technology which is not realized today by many gamers in difference from traditional media as the possible instrument of manipulation of their consciousness.

Acknowledgements

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University

Reference

- BadComedian [An electronic resource] - access mode:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6cqazSR6CnVMCIY0bJl0Lg>, free - Reference date 06.05.2018
- Bern E. (1964). *Games People Play*, Grove Press, New-York, p. 37
- Dzhokich. A. (2018). Computer games as the instrument of promotion / A. Dzhokich [An electronic resource] - access mode: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/100526.html>, free. - Reference date 06.05.2018.
- Flanagan M. (2009). *Critical play: radical game design*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Grishin O.E., Iglin D.A. (2015). Computer games as element of mass political culture and communication. *PolitBook*. No. 1, pp. 127-138.
- Martin P. (2009). *Art and Aesthetics. The video game theory reader 2*, Bernard Perron, Mark J. P. Wolf (ed). NY, London, p. 334.
- Shevyakhova N. (2018). Computer games as the territory of promotion / N. Shevyakhova [An electronic resource] - access mode: <http://argumentua.com/stati/kompyuternye->

igry-kak-territoriya-propagandy, free. -
Reference date 10.05.2018

Valeriano B. (2018). Which country is the most frequent enemy in violent video games? / Century of Valeriano, PH. Habel [An electronic resource] - access mode: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/04/21/do-video-games-change-how-we-think-about-our-enemies-we-investigated/?utm_term=.6dcf5e190524, free. - Reference date 08.05.2018

Video games recognized as an art form in the USA [An electronic resource] - access mode:

<https://lenta.ru/news/2011/05/10/gamesart/>, free - Reference date 06.05.2018

Wolf, Mark J. P. (2008). The Video Game Explosion: A History from PONG to Playstation and Beyond. - ABC-CLIO, p. 380.

Zorina E.G. (2018). Computer games as a source of the anti-Russian promotion (on examples of the games "Company of Heroes", "Operation Flashpoint", "Command&Conquer: Red Alert") [Electronic resource] / E.G. Zorina//Information wars. - 2016 No. 1 of Page 81-86. - Access mode: http://media.wix.com/ugd/ec9cc2_cb10c68319014a9e8df82d435ac53e9e.pdf, free. - Reference date 08.05.2018