

Edutainment – A Fashion Trend or A New Way of the Museum?

By

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Abstract

The relevance of the problem under study is due to the lack of consensus in the scientific socio-humanitarian community about the content of the concept of "edutainment". The article is aimed at identifying the variety of terms used, identical to edutainment and theoretical understanding of the processes taking place in the field of museum communication. The research method is comparative analysis, which allows to compare definitions and highlight their common and specific components. The main results of the article present the approaches in modern education to determining the content of the edutainment technology in the museum space. The materials of the article can be useful in preparing lecture materials for students in a wide range of socio-humanitarian programs, when choosing a methodological approach in pedagogical, museological and cultural studies.

Keywords: museum, edutainment, recreation, education, technology.

1. Introduction

The expansion of the functions of the museum took place throughout its entire activity. Today, among the main functions of the museum, along with educational and enlightenment, an entertainment (recreational) function is named. This can be clearly seen in the definition of the International Council of Museums (ICOM): a museum is "a permanent non-profit institution serving society and its development and open to people, acquiring, preserving, studying, popularizing and exhibiting in educational and entertainment material evidence of mankind"(ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums).

In this definition, the main functions of museums are clearly indicated: along with educational and enlightenment, an entertainment function is named.

In modern Russian legislation, a museum is defined as "a non-profit cultural institution created by the owner for the storage, study and public presentation of museum objects and collections (Federal Law" On the Museum Fund of the Russian Federation and Museums in the Russian Federation "). In this definition, there is no mention of a number of

the most important functions of a modern museum, such as educational, communicative and recreational. Meanwhile, the recreational function comes to the fore in the activities of many leading museums in the West and Russia, generates new forms of communication.

2. Methods

The theoretical and methodological basis of this study was the conceptual provisions of the polyparadigmatic approach to the study. One of the main research methods is the method of comparative analysis, aimed at comparing definitions, highlighting their general and specific components. This was facilitated by the use of comparative and typological methods, which made it possible to identify groups of similar phenomena and processes. The principle of the systems approach was also used, in particular, the system-structural and system-functional.

3. Results and Discussion

The first to speak about the recreational function of the museum (in the absence of the concept itself) were American museum figures. Back in the early twentieth century, studying different categories of visitors, museum specialists from the United States formed various types of museum programs. One of them was the program "for the rest and entertainment of the public." Later, A. Parker, considering the museum as a social institution associated with life and contemporary values, came to the conclusion that visiting a museum is a certain type of organized recreation. At the same time, American museums began to implement entertainment programs (Stolyarov, p.21).

In European and Russian museum practices, the idea of introducing playful, entertaining forms into work with a visitor, and even more so into the educational process, appeared later.

The combination of educational and entertainment practices as applied to children and later other audiences is accepted today by not all representatives of the museum community. The expansion of the recreational function in the activities of a modern museum causes concern among some specialists. In their opinion, it cannot exist without the implementation of the basic function - educational and upbringing, which will lead to an unacceptable change in the status of the museum. At the same time, experts admit that a significant part of society already perceives the museum as a universal institution designed to serve leisure and entertainment (Budko, p. 33-34). However, the implementation of any of the museum functions cannot be sterile. The very construction of the museum space, the scenario of the exposition carries an educational component that is present in any program, be it an excursion, quest or other activity. The increase in the share of interactive programs that allow visitors to act independently, was the beginning of the development of the recreational direction in Russian museums.

The concept of "recreation" in relation to the museum still does not have a clear definition. The term "recreation" is derived from two Latin verbs: "renew" and "restore". Russian scientists I.V. Zorin and V.A. Kvartalnov offers the following definition: "Recreation is an expanded reproduction of the physical, intellectual and emotional forces of a person; any game, entertainment, etc., used to restore physical and mental strength; the fastest growing segment of the leisure industry associated with the participation of the population in active outdoor recreation, mainly on weekends; restructuring of the body and human

populations, providing the opportunity for active activity under various conditions, the nature and changes of the environment; civilized recreation, provided by various types of prevention of diseases in stationary conditions, excursion and tourist activities, and also in the process of exercising "(Zorin, Kvartalnov, p. 64). Travel and excursions for pleasure are named among the areas of recreation. Thus, museum activities are included in the recreational circle.

Researchers consider recreation as an activity that takes place in free time, is enjoyable and has socially acceptable qualities. Recreational activity in the context of this article includes constructive, positive and socially justified types of activities (Cultural and leisure activities, p.58).

The issue of the public purpose of museums and its functions has been considered by museum specialists for several decades. According to a number of researchers, the museum is also historically inherent in the function of organizing free time or recreational, which is due to social needs for cultural forms of leisure and emotional relaxation. This function is implemented in a hidden form by museum institutions, if only for the reason that visiting museums is associated with the use of leisure (Ravikovich, p. 112). The recreational function is able to relieve production fatigue, restore lost strength. Here the main problem is solved - psychological relaxation and rest. And this is what museums do for the most part.

The absence of serious theoretical grounds did not interfere with the development, and to some extent generalization of the practical activities of museums. Many principles of what would later be called edutainment were present in Russian museum and pedagogical activities as early as the first third of the twentieth century. The first children's museum in Russia, the Toy Museum, was founded by N.D. Bartram in 1919. Its exposition was built taking into account the child's perception of toys first, then play theatrical forms and, finally, books. The unifying element of the exhibition halls was play, which was perceived as the main instrument and link between all stages, and as an opportunity to comprehend the world through play.

Unlike the realized concept of N. Bartram, the model of the Museum-Palace of the Child by A.U. Zelenko did not receive its embodiment. Based on the experience gained in the United States, he proposed innovative forms of organizing the education and leisure of children in the first post-revolutionary years. The scientist did a lot to study the means of influencing the museum visitor, using the capabilities of the sensory sphere of the child's personality. He emphasized the need for an even development of all senses in the traditional education system: "While the old school used most of all auditory reactions, and the new one increasingly relied on visual ones, the other three sense organs are almost never used and are not sufficiently developed" (Zelenko, with. 174; Changzheng & Zhenghao, 2022; Chen & Woodley, 2021).

4. Summary

Currently, the implementation of the museum's recreational function is closely related to such a concept as "edutainment" (from English: education - training and entertainment - entertainment). The content of the term has not yet settled down. The term originally originated in Western film companies that produced educational cartoons and TV series. Later, digital and media educational technologies began to play an important role, as well as the possibility of wide access to educational resources that they provided. The next step was the emergence of a number of organizations and programs that combine educational and

leisure (entertainment) components - children's and interactive museums, science museums, quests, master classes and science shows, creative clusters.

This term has already taken root in foreign pedagogy, including museum. However, in Russia it is only just beginning to be used. At the same time, practitioners have already accumulated a wealth of experience in the use of interactive and integrative techniques in the museum, which are the most important tools for edutainment. There are theoretical studies that summarize the accumulated experience in the development of informal educational and recreational forms of museum activities (Karamanov; Galkin). It can be assumed that this is the reason that most of the publications on the study of edutainment technologies in Russia are related to the field of school and university pedagogy, the use of digital teaching materials, as well as the study of new models of edutainment using European and American experience.

Foreign and Russian researchers offer a number of definitions of the concept of "edutainment". C. De Vary emphasizes that edutainment is an effective balance between information, multimedia products, psychological techniques and modern technologies. (De Vary Sh., P.41).

Professor Mikela Addis focuses on subject-object relations within the educational system. She believes that "edutainment" is a specific activity based on "the simultaneous learning and satisfaction of one's own curiosity." Learning or receiving information is the result of interaction between a subject (student) and an object (product, event, thought, personality). Edutainment differs from the traditional teaching scheme in that in this case the subject takes an active part in obtaining information, expresses personal preferences characterized by a subjective reaction. The object, in turn, is not static. He is in motion, conveying to the student partly information, partly entertainment content (Addis Michela, p. 1-3).

The authors also differ in their assessment of the relationship between educational and entertainment components in edutainment. I. G. Khangeldieva brings to the fore the entertainment element. "Educational entertainment is a form of information presentation, created for an entertainment purpose, with the inclusion of a learning component. Educational entertainment presupposes that its participants must receive pleasure (not only intellectual, but also aesthetic) (Khangeldieva, p. 54).

Speaking about edutainment, A. V. Popov uses the concept of "learning as entertainment". According to the author, learning as entertainment is "effective cognition of the world in a playful form", since through entertainment not only creates awareness of a certain subject, but at the same time establishes an emotional connection between the student and the subject being studied A. V. Popov also introduces the term "playing" - communicating one important idea, creating dynamic stereotypes, precedents that allow students to take actions automatically in a situation of real choice (Popov, p.102).

Researchers have identified a number of features of edutainment N. Nikitina makes an important observation about the change in the process of applying the methods of edutainment the traditional positions of the student and teacher - the absence of a consumer position on the one hand and pedagogical tyranny on the other (Nikitina).

Another feature of the use of edutainment technology is the active introduction of various methods of influencing the sensory sphere of the personality. The process of museum

interaction with the audience includes such expressive means as music, light, multimedia, sound, smell, taste, tactile sensations, etc. (Shlyakhtina, p. 209).

The researchers note that the technology of edutainment is characterized by the presence of a number of features. This is the direct interest of the student, which leads to the development of new skills and the accumulation of knowledge; entertainment as the main motive that leads to pleasure, while simultaneously removing the psychological burden from the educational process; play as a universal method; use of the current capabilities of modern technologies, such as video and audio materials, didactic games, educational programs in multimedia format, which enhances the attractiveness of the educational process of students (Karmalova, Khankeeva, p.68).

To this series, you can also add a convenient learning format associated with its informal nature and the use of information technology.

The analysis of Russian organizations and projects working in the field of edutainment was carried out by the staff of the Higher School of Economics in 2018. This made it possible to identify the main models within which edutainment develops in Russia. In the first place are large platform organizations («towns of professions», «interactive» science museums). They are followed by the large science show franchisees. And, finally, small copyright projects working in various fields (excursions, quests, art studios, career guidance organizations, career guidance camps) (The current situation in the development of the "edutainment" sector for children in Russia, p.8-11). It should be mentioned that museums have been named as one of the main platforms for implementing edutainment technologies in Russia. In addition, author's projects are sometimes also implemented in museums, which act as "friendly organizations".

A. Sakoyan divides the modern sphere of edutainment into two large parts - active and passive. The first involves a way of communicating information and skills to those who are not overly motivated to do so. The second is "when information and skills can be extracted from a variety of sources, including those that were not originally intended as educational materials" (Sakoyan). The first, accordingly, implies a passive perception of information specially prepared on different media and entertaining educational materials, and the second - an active independent search for information in the online and offline space.

Prospects for the application of edutainment technology in museum activities are seen as the development of two directions. The first is its application in traditional museum institutions. Using this format provides an opportunity to find the optimal balance between learning and entertainment. It allows you to make the information and educational component of museum programs interesting, entertaining, filled with practical actions. "A child of the first to fifth grades is already internally gamified," notes A.G. Boyko. Therefore, it is much easier to concentrate his attention with the help of game and multimedia techniques (the Russian Museum has fallen into the digital abyss).

The experience of Russia shows that a wide range of diverse methods are used in children's interactive museums and museums of science and technology. These are games, quests, master classes, a mosaic or group puzzle method, brainstorming, performances, workshops and much more. This methodological diversity allows attracting children and youth audiences to museums. New digital services appearing in museums, such as, for example, "Augmented Reality" in the Russian Museum.

The second direction is the creation of new museums and museum-type institutions. In Russia, these are interactoriums, houses of entertaining science, laboratories. Now in Russia there are more than 90 science museums, including network ones. Modern interactoriums appeared in Russia in 2011. The most famous of them is Experimentanium, the first private science museum in Moscow.

Opening interactoriums is associated with lower economic costs, with the possibility of their creation on the basis of museums and other structures, and, as a result, with the fastest payback. Today there are six interactive museums in Moscow, so it is in St. Petersburg. There are interactive museums in more than 60 cities, that is, in almost every regional capital.

The widest network of interactive museums in Russia is the EinsteinIUM Interactive Park. These parks are located in almost twenty cities of Russia, including not only large ones, such as Nizhny Novgorod, Volgograd and Omsk, but also in small, remote from the center of Chita, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, Salekhard, Vologda, Syktyvkar.

The second place is taken by the park of miracles "Galileo", operating in six cities: Yekaterinburg, Chelyabinsk, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, Nizhny Novgorod, Samara (Current situation of development of the sector "edutainment" for children in Russia, pp. 8-9).

In addition, other forms of interactive museums that practice edutainment technologies are successfully developing. In Kazan, this is the Laboratorium (House of Entertaining Science, located in one of the shopping and entertainment centers). It has an interactive exposition, children's laboratories, studios, excursions, master classes of various formats.

The experience of using edutainment methods in Russian museums testifies to the expansion of its base. Initially, edutainment technologies were used primarily in children's museums and museums of science and technology, but in recent years they are also used in museums of other profiles. Then there were examples of similar activities in the Museum of Fine Arts. A.S. Pushkin (a series of games "Art Lotto"), the museum-reserve "Kulikovo Pole" (role-playing game reflecting the main stages of preparation and conduct of the Kulikovo battle), the State Museum of the History of Religion (museum board game "At the Crossroads of Cultures") (Sholkina). Thus, edutainment plays a significant role in the formation of a new recreational and educational function of the museum, which L.M. Shlyakhtin (Shlyakhtina, p.210).

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, a number of concerns that researchers express when reflecting on the realities of educational and recreational activities in modern museums. The fears are primarily related to the "aggression of the entertainment industry." It can lead to the loss of the museum's status as a treasury of public human memory, a radical change in its image in the minds of visitors. At the same time, the emergence of new players in the recreational field will intensify the competition and complicate the position of traditional museums next to new museum models.

Educational researchers S. Walden and A. Soronen rise another threat. A likely consequence of the spread of edutainment, in their opinion, will be a shift from vertical deep systematized knowledge to horizontal breadth of views (obtaining unrelated scraps of information) (Wallden S., & Soronen A.). And this will lead to a lack of integrity and

consistency in the perception of museum knowledge.

New opportunities and real successes provided by the use of edutainment technologies do not allow abandoning it in museum practices. Edutainment is an effective means of overcoming "museum fatigue". Thus, it will contribute to the expansion of the museum audience, increasing the circle of "repeat" visitors, especially important for the museum. The format of "learning through entertainment", which is more flexible and liberal in comparison with the traditional one, will contribute to the actualization of the museum heritage, its perception by children and youth audiences. Methodological diversity will also contribute to this: games, theatrical excursions, quests, master classes, brainstorming, performances, workshops, etc. It is important that in the process of real and virtual communication there are wide opportunities for the socialization of schoolchildren, which is also one of the tasks of a modern museum. Finally, along with the growth of competition, there is an opportunity to find new partners.

The material of the article is of interest to specialists who teach in the system of higher education in a wide range of socio-humanitarian programs, as well as for museum educators and specialists in the field of museum communication.

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