Media School "Media Education and Media Literacy for All" as a System Model of Continuous Mass Media Education

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Abstract

The article presents an overview of modern educational platforms for media literacy in the context of mass media education prospects. The authors define the main directions of mass media education which are reflected in scientific conferences, round tables, competitions on media education issues, festivals, forums, etc. Purposeful work carried out within the framework of open media schools can be considered as one of the promising systemic vectors of continuous mass media education in modern conditions. The article describes five-year experience of the all-Russian open media school "Media Education and Media Literacy for All" which successfully operates in Taganrog Institute named after A.P. Chekhov (branch) of Rostov State University of Economics and the scientific and educational centre "Media Education and Media Competence". The model of the open media school includes learning and discussion platforms, creative workshops in the following areas: media club associations, filming and filmmaking, animation in media education, children's and youth journalism and the blogosphere, festival movements, integration of film pedagogy and media education in schools and universities; master classes by media experts; practical media education.

Keywords: media, media education, media school, scientific and educational centre, media research, media projects.

1. Introduction

The virtualization and mediatisation have affected almost all spheres of a modern person's life: education, culture, socio-cultural processes are inconceivable today without these concepts. For example, virtualization "is provided by remote and mixed formats in which schools and universities currently operate. We do not live only in the conditions of virtual reality (or "new normality"), but also in virtual art which effect and perception are regulated by the distance from the work, the specifics of its "screen" perception, thus transforming many factors of the artistic and aesthetic impact on the personality" (Bodina, 2021). In connection with the transformation taking place today in these areas, the goals associated with the search for new forms, ways and methods of media education for the younger generation are being updated. Promoting and popularizing film and media education is an important factor in the success of this process at school and university. This is largely determined by digitalization of modern education in general and socio-cultural activities, in particular, since "the dynamics of digitalization has significantly accelerated the dynamics of the resources of socio-cultural activities" (Zharkova, 2021), which are represented today by numerous media platforms and media portals. Currently, a large number of scientific conferences, round tables, workshops are being held on digitalization, mediatisation and media

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education; their participants are school teachers, psychologists, teachers of universities and colleges, teachers of kindergartens, children's health centres, students, graduate students, media researchers. However, these events, as a rule, are not of a systemic nature, they serve as a means to familiarize their participants with some particular segment of media education, for example, a media club, integrating media education into academic subjects, a media project, etc. Unfortunately, the main factors hindering mass media education in our country have not lost their relevance. Following A. Fedorov, we note that they are connected, as before, with several factors: 1) a clear lack of purposefully trained media educators; with a certain inertia of universities, teacher training colleges, schools (as is known, universities are given ample opportunities to introduce new subjects as a regional component and elective courses into their curriculum, but the academic councils of Russian universities are still extremely timidly allocating hours for media studies that are so necessary for future teachers); the traditional approaches of Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation concentrating their attention on supporting training courses in computer studies and information technologies in education with much less attention to the current issues of media education" (Fedorov, 2007).

In recent years, there have been certain shifts in the direction of integrating media education in higher education, and media education has been included in professional teacher training. So, for example, there is a master's program "Media Education" for psychologists, intending teachers, and organizers of work with youth in Taganrog Institute named after A.P. Chekhov (branch) of Rostov State University of Economics as well as in Moscow State Pedagogical University and Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University.

Recently, the processes associated with the system information about media education including its history, theory, practice, and some local media education projects have been more and more actively updated.

One of the productive ways to hit this target is to create such a format that would provide informational, methodological, and practical support for familiarizing the mass audience with the main trends of media education as an interdisciplinary aspect.

2. Materials and methods

The main materials of our research are scientific works on systemic mass media education in Russia and foreign countries (on the example of the USA, Canada, Great Britain).

The research methods include analysis and synthesis of scientific literature (monographs, textbooks, scientific articles, etc.) on promoting systemic mass media education, theoretical synthesis and generalization; abstraction and classification, content analysis, generalization of practical experience.

3. Discussion

Attempts to arrange such systematic work in media education by organizing teacher training courses in recent years have been actively undertaken in foreign and Russian media education. An example of this is the British Film Institute where such activities have been carried out for many years by teachers and university professors (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2021), in the USA (Fedorov, Novikova, 2007), Canada (Fedorov, Novikova, 2007), and in Russia (Chelysheva, Simbirtseva, 2021).

As our research shows, seminars devoted to various issues of media education have been increasingly held in Russia in recent years. For example, online workshops for teachers are organized by the Crimean Film and Media Center. At these events, issues of methodology, theory and practice of media education, organizing film clubs at schools are discussed. In the Republic of Crimea, over the past few years, systematic work has been done to integrate media education in academic subjects, organize film clubs, and launch festivals on film and media education. The experience presented by the Crimean media educators is a serious help for educators from different regions of our country.

Also of considerable interest is a series of seminars for the winners of all-Russian media education competitions for teachers organized by the independent non-profit organization "Media Literacy in the Information World". At these seminars, school teachers exchange views, highlight their experience in media education and media literacy, and hold discussions. During the seminars, the best Russian practices recognized as the winners of such all-Russian competitions as "MediaStart", "Such different lessons, but there is a master's hand in every lesson", and others are presented.

A number of thematic seminars on narrower topics of media education are conducted by the staff of the Research and Education Center "Media Education and Media Competence" at Taganrog Institute named after A.P. Chekhov (branch) of Rostov State University of Economics. For instance, in the period from 2019 to 2021, a series of seminars on promoting interethnic tolerance among university students through media education were organized here. The online seminars and workshops "Media Education in a Multicultural Space" were also devoted to this theme. During this period, "more than 100 teachers from universities, colleges, schools, additional education organisations" (Chelysheva, 2020: 5) have become the participants who got acquainted with the challenges of interethnic tolerance in the context of overcoming the risks of the contemporary media space, including integrated media education in the lessons of music, foreign languages, etc.; with issues of ensuring information and psychological security of the modern digital generation in a multicultural environment; with the possibilities of fostering interethnic tolerance in the cinema club; with the reflection of the interethnic theme in some Internet publications, etc.

It should be noted that the systematic work has allowed the organizers I.V. Chelysheva and G.V. Mikhaleva to familiarize the participants with the legal framework for interethnic tolerance of young people including the state national policy of the Russian Federation, the role of interfaith and interethnic dialogue in ensuring cultural diversity. Of great interest to the teachers was a discussion of the main theoretical approaches to using media education in promoting interethnic tolerance of the younger generation. Aesthetic, sociocultural, and semiotic media education concepts as well as developing critical thinking were discussed during the workshops. The prospects for using media education methods and technologies in preventing and overcoming the risks of xenophobia, inciting ethnic hatred among the youth were highlighted at the seminars.

The existing media schools, media centres and film clubs aimed at developing media competence of the younger generation, including interethnic communication, analytical thinking, and ensuring the information security of children and youth also excited much interest. The forms, methods and techniques of media education for promoting students' interethnic tolerance were considered on the basis of cinematographic works of various genres (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2022). Besides working with teachers a number of classes, workshops and trainings for university students were also held. So, for example, the workshops were aimed at developing students' and undergraduates' critical attitude to media production concerning interethnic tolerance and at developing their skills in critical analysis of ethnic stereotypes, national and racial stereotypes in the media, the language of interethnic intolerance and racial discrimination (on the basis of Russian and foreign press) including methods of promoting interethnic intolerance in political discourse (Mikhaleva, 2020).

Media education issues are also actively considered in a number of media education forums. Among them is the International Forum "Media Education in the Pedagogical Sphere: Experience and New Approaches to Management" organized by Moscow State Pedagogical University (Current issues…, 2017) and others.

In recent years, holding round tables on media education issues has been carried out in Moscow and Yekaterinburg. For instance, the round tables organized at Moscow State University. The participants of the round table "Media Education: Problems and Ways of Development" held at Moscow State University, among the most urgent tasks, singled out the participation of faculties and departments of journalism in promoting media education as an important objective in raising a media-competent audience prepared for life and work in information society (Extract…, 2008). Several panel discussions were organized by the Ural State Pedagogical University: "Media Education Today: Views of Students", "Media Education: Traditions and Innovations in Modern Culture", etc.

In order to foster interethnic tolerance among young people, specialists from the educational department of the British Film Institute regularly arrange workshops and seminars on racial and ethnic discrimination. For example, in October-November 2019, Professor Rona Murray conducted several seminars for teachers and students; she taught them the techniques of critical analysis of the cinema language, including a seminar on critical analysis of representations in cinema, during which she explained how the genre of a media text is associated with representation and how historical, cultural and technological aspects are reflected in films. The audience analysed the film episodes that touched upon the issues of gender, racial and ethnic relationships. A rich arsenal of films from different genres, periods and countries is at the National Archives of the British Institute which can be appreciated by media experts, teachers and students in the media library of

the British Film Institute. At the same time, critical analysis of media texts traditionally relies on such key concepts of media education as "media language", "media representation", "media categories", "media technologies" and "media agencies" (Bazalgette, 1992). The critical approach involves analyzing genre stereotypes in media texts as well as historical, social, political and cultural contexts. Similar seminars and workshops are being developed to prepare school leavers for the exam in media studies.

A special role in media education of Canadian citizens belongs to the Canadian Center for Digital and Media Literacy – "MediaSmarts" which promotes media literacy in schools and universities, families and society, carries out systematic work to develop media culture of the audiences. The issues of interethnic, racial and interethnic tolerance are also dealt with in this media education centre, including the analysis of racial and ethnic stereotypes on television, in the cinema and in the press; combating racism and hate speech on the Internet. In this regard, special media education programs have been developed to help educators teach students to think critically about issues related to racial or ethnic identity and online content containing the language of interethnic hatred and intolerance. These workshop programs were designed to provide educators with powerful tools for teaching how to combat racism, interethnic intolerance, as well as to introduce students to analytical methods of deconstructing interethnic, racial or ethnic online hatred and to teach students to recognize subtle (or overt) prejudice, racism and hatred.

In the USA, systematic professional development workshops concerning tolerance for current K-12 classroom teachers, administrators and counsellors, and for anyone who coaches classroom teachers and administrators are held on a regular basis by "Learning for Justice" (USA). These virtual interactive workshop programs provide the participants the opportunity to learn strategies for creating supportive learning environments for students, to interrupt online and offline bias or injustice, etc.

The issues of promoting mass media education are widely discussed by media experts in the world who organize special programs with workshops and seminars for teachers and students (Buckingham, 2013; Buckingham, 2015; Fedorov, 2018; Gálik, 2020; Gálik, Oprala, 2021; Gáliková Tolnaiová, 2019; 2020; 2021; Gorelova, Khilko, 2020; Joldoshov, Bekbolsunova, 2018; Kačinová, 2019; Kellner, Share 2007; Kourti, Androussou, 2013; Lebid, Shevchenko, 2020; Livingston, Wang, 2013; Manabat, 2021; Rasi et al., 2021; Scull, Kupersmidt, 2011; Semali, 2018; Silverblatt, 2016; Tess, 2013; Vrabec, Bôtošová, 2020).

4. Results

As evidenced by the development of mass media education in Russia in recent years, among the main conditions in of organizing mass media education, the following should be taken into account: 1) targets for personal development; 2) the components of the system are teachers (school teachers, lecturers) and students (schoolchildren, university students, adult audience); training and education means (media texts, audiovisual equipment, etc.); a pedagogical model (development and perception levels of media culture of a particular audience; stimulation of creative abilities (through creative activity in the media), a holistic perception and analysis of media texts (taking into account the specifics of a particular type of media – press, television, radio, cinema, the Internet, etc.), creative and critical thinking, acquaintance with the history of media culture); 3) the interconnection of the system components, the logical validity of the model stages, which, in particular, is that practical creative classes are ahead of theoretical classes, which gives the audience the opportunity to develop a holistic perception of media texts without the inherent traditional teaching of arts (literature, etc.), the predominance of the intellectual over the emotional; 4) functionality (substantive part, heuristic, problematic, role play and simulations); 5) communication (correlating the model, program, methodology with the current socio-cultural situation, with the dominant psychological aspects of media perception (compensatory, therapeutic, recreational, etc.), with the capabilities of the media, etc.); 6) practical implementation and effectiveness (Fedorov, 2014).

In this regard, in addition to trainings, workshops, round tables, conferences and other events on mass media education, it is necessary to implement a systematic approach to media education. In this regard, the scientific and educational centre "Media Education and Media Competence" on the basis of Taganrog Institute named after A.P. Chekhov (branch) of Rostov State University of Economics since 2017 has been conducting systematic activities on media education in the format of an open all-Russian media school "Media Education and Media Literacy for All" for teachers, students, undergraduates and

young researchers in media education. The moderator of the media school is the head of the scientific and educational centre "Media Education and Media Competence", Vice-President of the Russian Association for Film and Media Education, Ph.D. Irina Chelysheva.

The purpose of the media school classes is to popularize the best practices of film education and media pedagogy, exchange practical experience and consolidate teachers and researchers in media education. This event is aimed at promoting mass media education and is not aimed at training professionals in the media sphere. The target audience of this event are young teachers, psychologists, culturologists, sociologists, organizers of work with young people who are interested in introducing media education into their professional activities. Accordingly, among the participants of the media school are researchers and media practitioners from different regions of Russia, as well as our foreign colleagues from France, Egypt, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Belarus.

The open media school includes three main modules consisting of classes (autumn, winter, and spring sessions); leading Russian and foreign researchers, festival organizers, heads of media clubs and media laboratories, leaders of all-Russian and regional media projects for schoolchildren are invited as speakers and students.

In the process of realizing the goals and objectives of the open media school, we have constructed a model for supporting media education activities of the participants. The model is a permanent program that includes several modules and inter-module blocks, involving training, monitoring, mutual learning, and self-education.

The main principles of the open media school are consistency, progressive development, support of media education initiatives. In addition, an important principle of the open media school "Media Education and Media Literacy for All" is an interdisciplinary approach including the study of pedagogical, psychological, sociological, cultural, and journalistic aspects of media culture and media education.

The key objectives of the open online media school "Media Education and Media Literacy for All" correspond to the main goals implemented by the scientific and educational centre "Media Education and Media Competence", among which are the following: development of theoretical and methodological foundations for media education; expansion of the scientific and methodological base for media education and media competence of various age groups of the population; ensuring the training of qualified specialists and highly qualified scientific and pedagogical personnel on the basis of the latest pedagogical technologies, together with interested organizations; development of new, progressive forms of innovative activity, cooperation with scientific and educational institutions related to media education and media competence; scientific, educational organizations, and foundations to jointly meet the most urgent scientific and educational challenges; expansion of international scientific and educational cooperation with educational institutions and organizations of foreign countries in order to expand participation in the global system of science and media education; development of the financial basis for research and development through the use of extra budgetary funds and innovative activities (Fedorov et al., 2020).

In order to create a systematic approach to ongoing activities between existing modules in the work of the open media school "Media Education and Media Literacy for All", intermodular tasks are being implemented, consisting in launching creative film or media education projects, film forums, pedagogical skill competitions for participants in the media school, etc. The main goal of the intermodular activities is the transition to a higher level of media competence and readiness to study the program of the next module (level).

Within the framework of the model, the theoretical, methodological and practical aspects of preparing participants for media education activities are implemented. All three aspects are steps in a permanent modular program.

Throughout all modules of the program and inter-module periods, media school participants are accompanied and supported in mastering theoretical, methodological and practical tools for using film and media education in educational, extracurricular activities, additional education, socio-cultural activities, integrating film and media pedagogical potential in subjects of the school curriculum, etc.

As a support for the activities of the media school participants, scientific conferences and seminars, active promotional activities related to film and media education, acquaintance with scientific and methodological literature on film and media education are also carried out.

When working with students and undergraduates participating in the open media school, an examination of projects in film studies, media education, media culture is carried out thus identifying future regional leaders in the film and media education and creating innovative regional sites for film and media education. At the same time, the potential of educational organizations in film and media education is being expanded (providing the training of qualified specialists and highly qualified scientific and pedagogical personnel at the bachelor's and master's levels).

As evidenced by the open media school, the constructive forms of collaboration within the model developed by us can be:

– educational and discussion platforms (round tables, strategic sessions, etc.);

– creative workshops in the following areas: media club associations, filming and filmmaking, animation in media education, children's and youth journalism and the blogosphere, festival movements, integration of film pedagogy and media education in academic subjects;

– reports and workshops given by media experts;

– presentation of practical experience in media education, etc.

5. Conclusion

So, in the current situation of active development of mass media education, the search for forms and methods of a systematic approach to media education in solving strategic problems related to promoting critical thinking, an analytical attitude to media production, analysis and interpretation of media content is being significantly updated.

By now, Russia needs to create conditions for integrating media education in the Russian and international research space and establish partnerships with Russian and foreign partners in the context of disseminating best practices in media education.

During the course of the all-Russian open media school "Media Education and Media Literacy for All," we used many publications by our research team in our work (Chelysheva, 2020; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2021; Mikhaleva, 2022; Chelysheva, Simbirtseva, 2021; Fedorov et al., 2016; Fedorov et al., 2017; Fedorov et al., 2018; Fedorov et al., 2020; Fedorov, 2007; Fedorov, 2012; Fedorov, 2014; Fedorov, 2015; Fedorov, 2016; Fedorov, 2017; Fedorov, 2019; Fedorov, 2020; Fedorov, 2022; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2016; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2017; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2018; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2019; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2020; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021; Fedorov et al., 2016; Fedorov, Mikhaleva, 2020; Gilbert, Fedorov, 2004; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021 and others).

One of the best ways to create a systemic cluster of media education, which has an interdisciplinary nature, is arranging open media schools aimed at disseminating the best experience in theoretical and practical aspects related to promoting media education and media literacy, constructing a community of like-minded people interested in spreading media education as an important driving force of contemporary digital society.

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