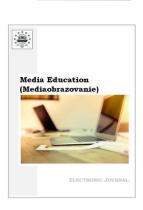
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Twentieth Anniversary of the *Media Education* Journal: Main Trends in Research

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Abstract

In 2025, the *Media Education* journal has its twentieth anniversary since its founding (2005). And this is a good reason for the content of this article.

The purpose of this article is to identify through the analysis of publications in the *Media Education* journal the main trends in media education that characterize modern research areas of the last four years.

To study in detail the main directions and trends in current development of scientific research in media education area, the entire pool of articles has been divided into the key groups united by problem range considered by their authors: 1. changes in the media sphere; 2. media literacy; 3. media manipulations; 4. theoretical models of effective media educational activities; 5. media discourse; 6. history of cinema.

From the discussion it becomes clear that the pace of change in media sphere has quickened considerably since the 2020s, and that the role of media education in providing ideas and methods has come under increasing academic attention and community scrutiny.

The fact that modern people live in an increasingly media-intensive environment means that they need to acquire certain media skills andabilities, and media education becomes the basis of a strategy for improving their competency profile.

Keywords: media education journal, media literacy, media manipulations, media discourse, history of cinema.

1. Introduction

The educational implications of media remain to fully manifest themselves. But there is already growing concern that the involvement of a modern person in the media environment reflects and compounds existing problems of social communication the digital era. This situation has already provoked widespread anxiety among scientists: the research in the realm of media pedagogy/media education an actively developing area of scientific knowledge. In order to identify current trends in this field of theoretical thought, we turn to the analysis of publications that was made during the last 4 years in the Peer Review *Media Education* journal.

We organize our research around the most pressing issues that received coverage in the *Media Education* journal since 2020 till the end of 2023. During this period 249 articles were published, respectively 2020 - 67; 2021 - 73; 2022 - 54: 2023 - 55. The themes raised in the *Media Education* journal are very diverse and mirror fundamental debates in media pedagogy as a part of pedagogy as it is. The exploration of the articles shows that the academic subject of media

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education is permanently developing in its content and implications; it tends to involve aspects of wide array.

2. Materials and methods

Methods that are used in this study are: analysis, synthesis, comparison and generalization. Using the induction method, we move from the particular to the general, summarizing the facts and trying to come to generalizations and conclusions about the main trends that determine the current situation. The comparison method is the basis for establishing common features (or differences), identifying and comparing essential features that helps to answer the main questions of the scientific research, and therefore, it leads to an understanding of the basic patterns of reality development. The named methods are interrelated, organically complement each other, and meet the objectives set in ourresearch.

To study in detail the main directions and trends in current development of scientific research in media education area, we divided the entire pool of articles into the key groups that are united by problem range considered by their authors. Thus, we have identified the following set of topics:

- 1. Changes in the media sphere
- 2. Media literacy
- 3. Media manipulations
- 4. Theoretical models of effective media educational activities
- 5. Media discourse
- 6. History of cinema

Next, according to this continuity, we take a closer look at the most promising and important research findings presented in the *Media Education* journal.

3. Discussion and results

The concept "media education" is applicable both to the theoretical part of the academic discipline "Pedagogy" and to the process of acquiring the media competency themselves. Understanding of the best ways to organize the process of media education begins with studying and identifying the problems and contradictions inherent in the use of digital technologies. It is also important to consider the impact of digital transformation on the educational environment.

A clear and detailed account of innovations in the global and Russian media industry and media education is that by G. Melnik and K. Pantserev (Melnik, Pantserev, 2023). They claim that profound changes in the media sphere are caused by digitalization (For a detailed discussion of the issue, see the article: Melnik, Pantserev, 2020), artificial intelligence, active implementation of AI-based technologies, etc. As main innovations, the experts indicate: contact with content creators through likes, comments, etc.; "edutainment" – presentation of educational content in an entertaining form; targeting; processing information in seconds; strategic planning of media enterprise activities; collecting a database of readers and others. Consequently, the researchers conclude that innovative teaching of journalism should be based on "the process approach", considering educational innovations not from the point of view of the final result, but as a technological process. A judgment about the features of Russian media literacy schools can be found in the conclusions of the article: "Unlike Western ones, universal values prevail over means in the Russian educational high school. The most attractive in terms of innovation for representatives of this school is the synergetic paradigm, which assumes open education in combination with the entire amount of means of cognition" (Melnik, Pantserev, 2023: 461).

A useful discussion of "the presence of risk zones in the process of forming students' media competence may be found in the article by E. Frolova and O. Rogach (Frolova, Rogach, 2022). Among risks they name is "insufficient attention to evaluative/interpretive and practical-operational skills of working with information". Further on the authors take a broad look at the structure, elements, and measures of media competence and go on (based on students' survey results) considering ways of working with students that can help to develop their media skills.

Media education is inextricably bound up with mass media, digital media, media resources, interactive multimedia types of communication, and other media formats. Media education itself involves attempts to change current reality in one way or another, and therefore assumes that a person will be able to demonstrate media literacy. Many studies have proven that ilteracy is crucial means that can prevent substantial negative political and social consequences. At the same

time media illiteracy can provoke a negative situation for its owner, making the person a victim of misinformation (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020).

To show the digital threats, challenges and problems that Internet users may face today the researchers (Muzykant et al., 2023) turned to the experience of Indonesia, which is quite justified, since this country is the fourth largest Internet user globally in 2020, with more than 202 million users (73.7 % of its citizens). The figures given by the researchers convincingly show that in Indonesian society media use is constantly growing. Among the benefits of digitalization, experts drew attention to the obstacles and dangers for network users such as data security, terrorism and crime, privacy concerns, social disconnection or anti-social digital data manipulation, copyright and plagiarism, hiding identity and others." A large number of active ICT users are associated with a low digital civilization index, hoaxes, fraud, digital intimidation, and others. It can easily breed in Indonesia without further intervention. The main issue here is digital literacy, where government policies can be resolved. Most Internet users with low digital literacy pose a significant risk from a security perspective. The netizens are vulnerable to false and fraudulent reports that can significantly affect Indonesia, especially because of their poor understanding of personal data protection, and can make malicious statements through fake news" (Muzykant et al., 2023: 101). The authors conclude that to reduce the destructive impact of technology on behavioural, sexual, reputational, and personal levels the efforts should be organized around digital literacy education from early childhood to higher education, including character-building training and state defense.

B. Bulus, M. Yilmaz, M. Isik and U. Bulus (Buluset et al., 2022) presented the results of the analysis of the adult digital literacy in South Korea and Turkey. Their findings are interesting from the point of view of a comparative analysis of the overall picture of digital literacy practices among adults and show how the content and scope of digital literacy is understood and structured in both countries. Differences in adult digital literacy practices are described in detail. At the same time, scientists point to converging perspectives and directions of development:

• creating a safe and accessible environment for children and adolescents in Turkey and South Korea;

• building opportunities that promote learning that is flexible in time and space, thereby creating a learning society for all;

• shaping each stage of digital literacy implementation regardless of the current political and economic policies of each country (Buluset al., 2022: 543).

There is no one agreed and established definition of what media education is. There are a lot of publications that explores this notion and shows how it emerged, what it used to be, how it was interpreted in time (Ivanova, Verbitskaya, 2018).

The scientific apparatus of modern media education reflects new areas of development of media pedagogy. The question of how the media impacts upon a person and especially a child has long concerned academics. And there are a number of important articles in which the authors of the period under review approach this issue.

E. Lomteva, N. Vorobyeva and A. Demidov (Lomteva et al., 2022) explore the capabilities of the media center in the development of students' general competencies. They pursue important themes and issues of media education through the framework of youth policy and additional education of youth. Data obtained during a sociological survey of 2321 people give the authors the right to assert that a media center can be an effective platform for implementing the process of developing students' general competencies. In their next publication (Lomteva, Demidov, 2023), the authors develop the idea of teaching media literacy skills through the system of secondary vocational education. This is explained by a recently emerged new trend associated with the growth of film production in Russia, which leads to a shortage of necessary specialists. It is noted that the trend of growth in the volume of films produced in Russia is already constrained by the lack of necessary specialists. As sociological data shows in August 2023, over the past six months, the number of vacancies for actors in Russia has increased by 17 %, and for film production specialists by 77 % (Lomteva, Demidov, 2023: 553). The experts also predict further development of the creative industries market in Russia: in 2022, its amount was up to 6.9 trillion rubles, by 2025 this figure will grow to 9.2 trillion rubles.

So, from the discussion it becomes clear that in Russia creative industries has quickened considerably since 2022. It means that the role of media education will continue to increase becoming one of the priority means of preserving and developing the spirituality and moral values of the population. It is obvious that media literacy is designed to help a person understand the information flow and distinguish facts from opinions, which is very important in conditions of information confrontation and, in fact, information wars.

I. Chelysheva and G. Mikhaleva tackle many of the media education issues through the teaching process in universities and family education. In their numerous articles (Chelysheva, 2021; Chelysheva, 2022; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2020; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2021; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2022; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023) the authors review the main trends and changes in patterns of media educational activity and concentrate on the importance of forming family values and tolerance. Future professional's and students' readiness for teaching media competence is of special interest in the articles of these authors. The results of practical experience are used to illustrate important conclusions in the technique and methodology of media education, tasks for mastering the modern information field, "creating amateur media products, creative tasks based on media texts of various types and genres, and independent search work on audiovisual material, making filmographic lists on certain educational topics, and much more (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023:19).

G. Mikhaleva also examines the question of educating university students for civic engagement using the material of Russian feature films. Along with the importance of creating university students' civic-minded culture by means of film education the researcher resumes that very few feature films about youth and for youth about friendship, mutual assistance, volunteering, charity, tolerance, youth movements are being shot in present-day Russia, although these issues are widely represented in contemporary Russian documentary films (Mikhaleva, 2021: 679). However, it should be noted that since then the situation has changed somewhat. In recent years, the films which content can be analyzed with young people in order to cultivate important moral qualities have begun to appear. Among them:

– patriotic feature films/ historical dramas;

- films about famous Russian historic personalities;

- film adaptations of classic Russian literature;

– films about love for the "small" homeland including films about "ordinary" people of different professions;

- films about national heroes or famous citizens of various professions who made a great contribution to the development of our country;

– films about real military or professional exploits of heroes, etc.

Basing on the comprehensive review of current Russian and foreign publications, N. Khilko and N. Genova produced the structure of students' media literacy of culture and arts universities in the context of key competencies (Khilko, Genova, 2023). According to the authors the media literacy structure includes four components: perceptual, cognitive, interactive and value. Thus, the authors presented a model for the formation of media literacy, based on identifying the relationship of these components with methods for analyzing media value practices and methods for mastering media literacy.

The problem of meaning formation is under the consideration of I. Erofeeva, G. Melnik, N. Prostokishina (Erofeeva et al., 2021). They characterize pedagogical technologies in modern higher education for teaching text construction using conceptual ideas about society and its cultural memory, guaranteeing effective interaction with the target audience, with its value preferences and behavior patterns. The main interest of the authors lies in the cognitive and linguistic tools of the media text, which allows its creator to signify local identity and show it in certain semantic frameworks, as well as in bright and interconnected images that are attractive to the audience. As a starting point for constructing lesson design, the authors use the methodology of A. Fedorov onhermeneutical analysis of the cultural context, which allows to compare cultural tradition and reality. Presenting a strong and coherent arguments for meeting a multi-vector manner in the analysis of media products the researchers describe the package of practical exercises used in teaching students to master cognitive and linguistic resources when modeling a media text.

The issue of involving children of preschool and primary school age in the sphere of media education is under consideration in the article of N. Pavlushkina and A. Teplyashina (Pavlushkina, Teplyashina, 2023: 139-147). The authors attract attention to the necessity of studying the peculiarities of content consumption by younger children. As a means and resource of media education scientists offer children's magazines (paper and online editorial products) that suggest

new, entertaining, popular science content and a special digital reading model.New term is used – "edutainment environment" (learning through entertainment technology).

Media competence (MC) as a component in the curriculum of 33 countries in Latin America is analyzed by E.G. Rojas-Estrada, R. García-Ruiz, I. Aguaded (Rojas-Estrada et al., 2023). After systematic review of the literature published since 2012 the experts identified the number of publications made on the topic by Spanish-speaking authors. The amount of published articles on the topic of media competence is expressed as a percentage: Brazil (21.4 %), Argentina (14.3 %), Spain (11.9 %), Mexico (11.9 %), Ecuador and Colombia (both with 9.5 %), less than three manuscripts by authors from Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile, Dominican Republic, Peru, and Costa Rica. The researchers determined that the region lacks studies analyzing the issue of media competence in educational curricula, and their number has decreased over the past two years. This allowed the authors to conclude that it is necessary to establish cooperation between institutions in different countries as an important component aimed at consolidating a common project for the study of MC and its development in Iberoamerican level. Thus the authors encourage addressing future studies, projects, and curricular proposals that guarantee the development of critical, operational, and social competences, to face the socio-cultural demands and phenomena of the new media system with the dimensions of the presence of MC, media education, and media literacy in the curriculum at different stages and levels: initial education, adult education and education of indigenous populations.

In the works of A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya media competence is considered not only as a practical necessity for maintaining the informed community but also as a theoretical phenomenon. In their numerous publications in the *Media Education* journal the scientists provide an expert analysis of the theoretical models of effective media educational activities of (future) teachers that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience. The articles of these authors are an indispensable source of information for those interested in the theory of media education.

A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya offer a theoretical model of media competencies' development, which includes 3 components (diagnostic; content-target; efficiency) and markers of the effectiveness of media educational activities (motivational, contact, informational, technological, evaluative, creative, practical and operational) (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021, 2021).

Another field of the researchers' interest is the problem of media manipulations. Some authors (Fedorov, 2022; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021; Frolova et al., 2022; Kulikova et al., 2021; Kusheva, 2020; Levitskaya, 2022; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021; Novikov, Fedorov, 2022; Tselykh, 2021; Tselykh, Levitskaya, 2022) in their articles argue that in modern situation we increasingly collide with fakes and destructive content This means that the issues of media literacy should be viewed with much more urgency and importance than it currently is.

In this regard it is worth mentioning the analysis of the role of professionals in media discourse. In broad study funded by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) "Media education of pedagogical profile students as a tool to resist media manipulation" A. Fedorov and his co-authors revealed the fact that today the media spectrum has expanded dramatically compared to the situation in the twentieth century, when only professional paper, radio and television could have a mass audience. Today, many online bloggers have millions of readers, which exceed the circulation of most traditional newspapers. This fact has significantly changed and complicated the situation because ordinary audiences may uncritically perceive false media messages created by manipulators. In this regard, it is worth mentioning scholars' analysis of how the work of media journalists is presented in cinema art. "Cinema largely portrays the media (press, television, Internet) as an agent of manipulation and fraud, and the work of media journalists is often shown as a technology of deception and manipulation of the mood of the mass audience in favor of certain influential groups" (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021: 67).

Based on the analysis of numerous scientific sources, A. Levitskaya and A. Fedorov developed and presented not only the theoretical model of the development of media competence of students of pedagogical universities in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences, but also the theoretical models of effective media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media's manipulative influences, as well as media educational activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the process of analyzing the reliability of media texts. More details about the model and its structure can be found in the *Media Education* journal (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021). According to the research of 180 materials of 2021 on the Russian-language website of Radio France Internationale relating to Russia for the period of 2021 the experts found out that they contribute to the overall negative image of Russia as a country which foreign policy and domestic affairs should be questioned and judged (Novikov, Fedorov, 2022). An analysis of 752 materials related to Russia published in Russian on the *Euronews* website over the period 2021 allowed the scientist to conclude that most of the materials contain signs of media manipulation. A. Fedorov found out a set of manipulative techniques used by *Euronews* journalists in their materials associated with Russia. Among them are omission, selectivity and appeal to authority (Fedorov, 2022).

A. Levitskaya applied anti-manipulation media education model to analyze 70 articles on Russian topics in French and Swiss newspapers over the period 2018-2021. Her study proved the predominance of manipulative techniques in most publications (Levitskaya, 2022). In her next research of 87 articles from American and British newspapers relating to Russia A. Levitskaya also focuses upon signs of manipulation, propaganda clichés and techniques in modern American and British Press related to Russia (Levitskaya, 2022). Criticizing the main media manipulative techniques on the audience (stereotyping, labeling, plain folks, least of evils, scapegoat, distortion of data, framing, selection, weak inference, etc.) the author covers the ways of text filtering that can help the reader not to be deceived (reasoned selection of facts versus opinions in media texts, clearing information from "glittering" and "labeling" by comparing with actual facts, etc.; clearing out the halo of "typical", "common people", "authority", a critical analysis of the goals, interests of the media agency, that is, the source of information) (Levitskaya, 2022: 263).

E. Frolova, O.Rogach, A.Tyurikov (Frolova et al., 2022) argue that the ability to select, analyze and interpret data in the modern context of intensified information flows is crucial. However, the survey conducted by scientists revealed that university students do not have sufficient competence in assessing the source of information in terms of its adequacy, completeness and reliability. It was also ascertained that official channels of information, such as the press and television, are losing their popularity among students. "Young people show a higher level of trust in digital channels of network interaction" (Frolova et al., 2022: 381). These data served as the starting point for the authors to conclude that there is a need for special pedagogical practice that promotes the development of skills in evaluating information sources, assessing the reliability of the sources, the adequacy and completeness of information. According to the experts, all these are good tools to counter information manipulation.

There are a number of authors that publish in the *Media Education* journal the results of their research in the sphere of media discourse. By means of cognitive science philological hermeneutics, linguopragmatic and linguoculturological analysis, methods of sociolinguistics and contextual analysis scientists seek understanding:

- "transformations" of language norms in media (Brusenskaya et al., 2023);

– language means that makes it possible to express different connotations in media texts (Brusenskaya et al., 2023; Kulikova et al., 2021);

- general criteria for the necessity of anglicisms in Russian media texts (Kulikova et al., 2023);

- conflictogenic units in modern media communication (Brusenskaya et al., 2022);

- the phenomenon of tolerance in relation to the lexical, grammatical and ethical-linguistic standards of the modern Russian language (Kulikova, Barabash, 2022);

- communicative practices of commercial corporate media (Semashkina, Khovanova, 2022);

- the role of archaic lexis in the creation of figurativeness and expressiveness (Kulikova, Tedeeva, 2022);

- the dynamics of pragmatic connotations depending on socio-cultural conditions (Kulikova, et al., 2023);

- the pragmatic component of semantics and its role in media texts (Kulikova, et al., 2023);

- rhetorical techniques through which the sender of a multimodal message seeks to attract the attention of the audience (Tyazhlov et al., 2021).

Researchers' findings regarding the development of discourse in the media in Russia show that the modern language material is changing due to both linguistic and extralinguistic factors. Experts consider media discourse as a generalized model of the national language used by the majority of the population. This section of the *Media Education* journal is of particular interest because it presents in the most accessible form specific results in a hybrid scientific research area

of linguistics, psychology, political science, and media education with an emphasis on the role of media in the modern communication.

Articles on the history of cinema occupy a special place in the Media Education journal's publications. Numerous works of A. Levitskaya, A. Fedorov and other scientists (Kazakov, 2021; Kostogryz, 2021; Tselykh, 2021) are devoted to this topic. An interesting study on the coverage of issues of history, sociology and ideology of Russian and Western cinema art of different time periods on the pages of the magazine Soviet Screen (since 1925 till 1998) and the Cinema Art journal (since 1931 till 2021) belongs to A. Fedorov and his co-authors. In a series of articles the researchers present extensive analytical materials on the nature of the publications of the Soviet Screen magazine and Cinema Art journal (Fedorov, 2022; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2023). From the material under conceptualization the writers draw out elements of concepts' changein theoretical film studies. At its heart is the key philosophical idea on the connection, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and social in knowledge. This is exactly what the authors point out: theoretical concepts in film studies are fluid and often subject to fluctuating courses of political regimes (Fedorov, 2022: 576). Thus it is understandable that the topics of the Media Education journal articles have changed over time, depending on ideological and sociocultural trends, as well as the political context inherent in each historical period. The researchers offer their own classification of the evolution of concepts in theoretical film studies through comprehensive content analysis and comparative interdisciplinary research. It allow the scientists to reveal the features, place, role, and significance of the evolution of theoretical film studies concepts and graphically present the main theoretical models of film studies concepts. These findings are critical because they make it possible to predict future developments of theoretical concepts in film studies.

4. Conclusion

It is clear from the discussion that the pace of change in media sphere has quickened considerably since the 2020s. The main changes in the media sphere that researchers point to – are its intensification. A media-intensive environment creates complex issues and challenges, such as a lack of media literacy and the need to find effective ways to improve it. We cannot but agree with the authors that the field of media education presents opportunities and challenges for professional training of specialists acquire specific media competencies. Media education must be the foundation for any strategy to improve the competencies profile of workforce as a whole and of ordinary people. The issues of media literacy as we collide with fakes and destructive content should be viewed with much more urgency and importance than it currently is. It proves that media education is too important to be ignored. This suggests that in the future more and more people will have to learn new media literacy skills in order to keep their jobs, not to be deceived or manipulated in digital communication.

Indeed publications of the research results in the *Media Education* journal offer the promise of upgrading the media education training, and facilitating moves between academic and educational streams which are still sometimes difficult.

To summarize, it is time for media education to broaden its traditional focus, and to view new concerns and modern challenges with the seriousness that they deserve. Without a doubt, the role of media education in providing ideas and methods for solving the problems of modern society will continue to be the subject of growing academic and public attention.

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