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Media Education Model for Studying Images of Family and Family Education in Russian Feature Films (1920–2020)

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Abstract

The article presents the structural components and the content of the media education model for studying the images of family and family education in Russian feature films (1920–2020). The author analyzes the main theoretical approaches, methodological and practical aspects of reflecting the images of family and family education in Russian cinematography in media education of university students. The construction of a media education model is based on the synthesis of methodological approaches to media education, including cultural, semiotic, ethical approaches, and the theory of critical thinking. Reliance on these theories is predetermined by the main tasks of media education for the younger generation, consisting in expanding the socio-cultural framework of media education and enhancing the ability to independently search, select, analyze, interpret and create audiovisual media texts, use media resources for personal self-development and professional self-improvement. One of the key factors determining the relevance of this model is the psychological and pedagogical possibilities of using feature films in youth education. The educational function of Russian feature films is of great significance in the professional training of future teachers, psychologists, and organizers of work with youth. The inclusion of media education is aimed at teaching university students understanding and assessing what is seen on the screen and creative perception of media reality. This process plays a special role in analysing films on family issues, since it preserves and strengthens the family institution, family traditions of upbringing, and family values. In this regard, the study and analysis of feature films about family and family upbringing, which are imbued with the best ideas and ideals, can become an important tool for introducing the younger generation to a value-based attitude towards creating and strengthening family relationships, increasing the level of parental responsibility for the younger generation.

Keywords: media, media education, Soviet and post-Soviet feature films, family, family education, media education model.

1. Introduction

The theme of analysing feature films in education has become increasingly relevant in recent years. Discussion and analysis of films for different age categories is an important means of ethical and moral, patriotic, aesthetic education, and is a key factor in studying media in education and the development of media competence of the individual.

In our opinion, the use of Soviet and Russian feature films in studying family and family education is vital. In different years, the screen presented models of families with different values, but the main family values such as trust, loyalty, understanding, and care for children, always

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constituted the key idea of family, which origin is laid in the folk traditions and mentality of the Russian people.

The study of images of family and family education in feature films actualizes the issues of understanding a cinematic text. The concept of the cinematic text has been examined for many decades from different points of view. In the context of our study, we will turn to the cultural approaches of O. Aronson, who repeatedly notes that “a cinematic text is always a text in which two planes coexist: the plane of the depicted reality and the plane of mistrust of the image. There is always some sense of technology, even if we seem to be completely emotionally involved in the film. This moment of technology included in the image is extremely important both for us to be able to deal with the cinematic text and – I am not afraid of this word – for us to believe the image” (Aronson, 2012: 23).

In the study by N.V. Lavrentieva, a cinematic text is understood “as a set of references to cinema and the elements that make up its space: actors, the roles they played, films, special terms. The use of such “quotes” allows you to expand the space of the work, add new shades, and force the reader to “join the game” (Lavrentieva, 2022: 9).

Speaking about feature films, let us turn to the definition of the film text given by G. Slyshkin and M. Efremova, who present the structure of the latter as follows: “the film text consists of images, moving and static, speech, oral and written, noises and music, specially organized and in an inseparable unity. In the film text there are two semiotic systems – linguistic and non-linguistic – operating with signs of various kinds” (Slyshkin, Efremova, 2004: 21-22).

Cinematographic texts include various artistic signs, images, symbols, which make up the multi-layered nature of films in the context of time and space. According to the definition by Yu. Usov, sound-visual images of the audiovisual media text are considered as a dynamic system of “plastic forms that exist in screen conditions, spatial-temporal dimensions, and audiovisual means conveys the sequence of development of the artist’s thoughts about the world and about himself (Usov, 1980: 17).

T. Mozhaeva states that “the cinematographic nature of a fictional text is based on the ability of words to indirectly convey specific and unambiguous audiovisual images, the montage and dynamic nature of objectified narration, the author’s free handling of the fictional time and space of the text, and the special role of the historical present in creating the “illusion of immediacy” in a fictional work” (Mozhaeva, 2006: 10). Also, as A. Chizhik and A. Sadokhin note, “the most important factor governing the perception of a film text is the degree of significance of the work for the perceiver, which is expressed in the corresponding discursive practice. The perception of a film text is filtered through a system of attitudes and the significance of the content, the information contained in it. Under the influence of these factors, the work is refracted through the prism of culture, transformed on the basis of individual perceptions of a person. At the same time, the work is perceived not spontaneously, but through an established system of views, beliefs, cultural traditions, moral values, prejudices and stereotypes” (Chizhik, Sadokhin, 2020: 11).

2. Materials and methods

The material underlying this research is contemporary Russian and foreign scientific publications on images of family and family education in Russian feature films of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods in the context of identifying the main prospects for media education. Research methods are analysis and synthesis of scientific publications on the research problem, generalization and classification, content analysis, abstraction, and modelling.

3. Discussion

In our study, we analysed both Russian (Aronson, 2007; Chelysheva, Sapozhnikova, 2024; Chizhik, Sadokhin, 2020; Fedorov, 2016; Khilko, 2011; Lavrentieva, 2022; Mikhaleva, Lozovitskaya, 2024; Mozhaeva, 2006; Salny, Katrich, 2023; Slyshkin, Efremova, 2004; Usov, 1980) and foreign scientific findings (Bazalgette, 2009; Bitney, 2022; Bruzzi, 2005; Callister et al., 2007; Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2013; Levy, 1991; Lloyd, 2014; Potter, 2022; Silverblatt, 2001; Silverblatt, 2016; Tanner et al., 2003; Zurcher et al., 2018) devoted to the analysis of family and family education in feature films.

As evidenced by the analysis of scientific literature on the topic of the study, the reflection of family and family education in Russian feature films of various genres has an interdisciplinary

nature and is reflected in a number of philosophical, pedagogical, psychological, sociological, political science, and historical studies.

Our analysis of publications written during the Soviet period on media education ([Baranov, 2002](#); [Usov 1980](#)) has shown that the main emphasis in them was on the theoretical justification of an aesthetically oriented concept of media education associated with the ideological tasks of forming a comprehensive development of the individual; the foundations of cinematography analysis were laid, which were reflected in later Russian models of film and media education.

In the post-Soviet period, the range of issues related to the study of the family and mass media has expanded; interdisciplinary studies of the theory and history of media education, including the analysis of family models have appeared. For example, a philosophical analysis of anthropological and socio-cultural approaches to the study of cinema and media culture is considered in Russian dissertations ([Chernyshova, 2001](#); [Lubashova, 2009](#); [Postnikova, 2007](#)). Among pedagogical studies A. Fedorov was one of the first to consider the possibilities of a comprehensive study of screen arts in the training of future teachers ([Fedorov, 1993](#)). A. Goncharuk studied the attitude of the younger generation to performing arts from a pedagogical standpoint ([Goncharuk, 2000](#)).

Sociological issues of cinema are presented in the dissertation written by K. Tarasov, who examined the influence of on-screen violence on young people ([Tarasov, 2000](#)). A sociological analysis of Russian films was carried out by K. Vorobyova ([Vorobyova, 2011](#)). T. Leontyeva presented a characteristic of the visual image of the family in animation ([Leontyeva, 2022](#)).

Recent art history and cultural studies dissertations also partially touched upon the topic of the reflection of family models in films. The works closest to our topic are those of K. Ognev, who presented the main models of cinematographic art in a historical and artistic retrospective ([Ognev, 2003](#)); Yu. Tyurin, who examined cinematographic creativity through the prism of historical and ethical traditions ([Tyurin, 2006](#)) and G. Abikeeva, who studied the art history aspect of family images in forming identity based on the cinema of Central Asia ([Abikeeva, 2010](#)).

4. Results

Based on the comprehensive analysis of theoretical and methodological approaches to the problem under study ([Chelysheva, 2024a](#); [Chelysheva, Sapozhnikova, 2024](#); [Kurtov, 2011](#); [Lozovitskaya, 2024](#)), we have attempted to build a model for studying the images of family and family education in Russian feature films (1920-2020) in the context of media education.

In our research, we understand a model as “an auxiliary object, selected or transformed for cognitive purposes, providing new information about the main object” ([Novikov, 2007: 107](#)).

For our study, we stick to the definition proposed by T. Danelyan, who defines the modelling process as “the study of objects of knowledge on their models; the construction and study of models of real-life objects, processes or phenomena in order to obtain explanations of these phenomena, as well as to predict phenomena of interest to the researcher” ([Danelyan, 2014: 167](#)).

In this study, our attention is drawn to the educational model, which is understood as “a really established practice that, at its inception, did not proceed from any particular theory, but gradually acquired a clearly expressed qualitative originality. This method of activity, now considered theoretically, is a model in the sense that it represents a special example of setting up the educational matter” ([Gusinsky, Turchaninova, 2000: 25](#)). Accordingly, for our study, it is important to rely on the features of pedagogical models identified in the findings of V. Pisarenko: “focus on research, availability of information, connection with reality, objective or procedural essence, reproducibility in new conditions. The main meaning of developing models is the possibility and necessity of disseminating pedagogical experience, its development and improvement” ([Pisarenko, 2024: 60](#)).

As the analysis shows, at the present stage there are a number of media education models that are differentiated by goals, objectives, media sources, age categories of the target audience, etc. As a rule, the content and structural components of the models represent a synthesis of several foundations, among which the most important for constructing a model for studying the images of family and family education in Russian cinema (1920–2020) in media education are: education and information models, including the study of the theory and history of media; educational and ethical models that consider moral, philosophical problems; models of developmental learning, implying the development of creativity, imagination, independent thinking, etc.

The foundation for designing a model for studying the images of family and family education in Russian feature films (1920–2020) in the context of media education were the media education models of a number of Russian and foreign researchers (Baranov, 2002; Bazalgette, 2009; Bazhenova, 2012; Chelysheva, 2015; Eco, 2005; Fateeva, 2007; Fedorov, 1993; Khilko, 2011; Muryukina, 2019; Potter, 2022; Sharikov, Cherkashin, 1991; Silverblatt, 2001, 2016; Usov, 1980).

Thus, the fundamental approaches used in this study are based on the socio-cultural concept of media education, including cultural, semiotic, critical, ethical approaches to media education:

- 1) Cultural approaches (Baranov, 2002; Bazalgette, 2009; Fedorov et al., 2018; Khilko, 2011; Sharikov, Cherkashin, 1991; Usov, 1980);
- 2) Ethical approaches (Baranov, 2002; Bazhenova, 2012);
- 3) Developing critical thinking (Bazalgette, 2009; Chelysheva, 2015; Chelysheva, 2024b; Fateeva, 2007; Fedorov et al., 2018; Gálik et al., 2024; Gáliková Tolnaiová, Gálik, 2020; Muryukina, 2019);
- 4) Semiotic approaches (Eco, 2005; Silverblatt, 2016; Usov, 1980).

The model for studying the images of family and family education in Russian cinematography (1920–2020) in the context of media education includes a number of interconnected components, among which the following stand out: “target, content, procedural, control and evaluation” (Kotlyarova, 2019: 15). At the same time, the methodological approaches to constructing the model are ensured by the unity of theoretical and practical approaches to studying the family theme in feature films; a comprehensive, systemic study of audiovisual media texts through the hermeneutic analysis of Russian feature films on the issues under study; a study of transformational changes in the images of family and family education in historical retrospect using feature films from different periods within the chronological framework of this study.

In defining the target component of the media education model, it seems possible for us to formulate its target guidelines, which include teaching value attitudes about traditional family values to the younger generation. The main material for study in media education is Russian feature films.

Among the main objectives of the presented model, we can highlight:

- 1) Educating the younger generation in respect for family, family traditions, family education as key guidelines for the well-being of modern society through Russian feature films on family issues of different time periods;
- 2) Developing media competencies related to the ability to select, analyse, interpret and evaluate audiovisual media texts on the topic of family and family education;
- 3) Expanding the university students’ knowledge about the possibilities of using media education methods and technologies in teaching school students using feature films about family and family education.

The content component of the model is determined by the goals and objectives associated with the university students’ ideas and target attitudes about traditional family values during media education.

When studying the theme of family and family education reflected in feature films, several content blocks of media education can be identified:

- 1) Study and characterization of the main concepts related to the family theme in audiovisual media texts in feature films of different time periods (family, models of family education, the image of the family on the screen, constructive and destructive models of behaviour in the family, parental responsibilities, responsibility for raising children in the family, family values, family traditions, etc.);
- 2) Analysis of scientific research related to family issues in audiovisual media culture (including pedagogical, psychological, cultural and other approaches to the problem); a comparative analysis of media critical reviews based on materials from films about the family of different years;
- 3) Study of audiovisual media texts of Russian media culture on the theme of family in historical retrospect in order to determine the main key trends in the reflection of family images in feature films at different stages of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

The content of media studies includes a set of lectures and practical classes, creative assignments (projects, essays, oral and written work on course topics, etc.), discussions, round tables, strategic sessions, etc. based on feature films about family and family upbringing, independent assignments on given topics, studying and analysing literature on the course topic, etc.

Traditionally, verbal, problematic, heuristic and other methods of analysing audiovisual media texts are actively used in media education practice. The choice of specific methods depends on the purpose and objectives of a certain lesson, the degree of their complexity is based on the degree of readiness of the audience for media education.

Depending on the objectives and lesson topic, various methods, forms, technologies and approaches to media education activities can be used in studying feature films. Creative forms and techniques for working with feature films on family issues can include games, simulation, training exercises, solving situational tasks and problem-solving activities, preparing scripts, studying professional analytical media criticism, writing compositions, essays, stories on behalf of the main or secondary characters of a particular film, preparing posters, comics and collages on a given topic, organizing discussions based on the watched film, a brainstorming session, group media projects, etc.

The means and main material for broadening the younger generation's notions and target settings about traditional family values via media education is the use of audiovisual media texts on family issues. The study of feature films is carried out with the help of the hermeneutic analysis of Soviet and post-Soviet feature films about family and family education, based on key concepts of media education: media agencies, media categories, media technologies, media languages, media audiences, and media representations.

The procedural component of the presented media education model involves preparing university students for future professional media education activities in schools, leisure centres, children's health camps, institutions of additional education, etc. This component helps to identify the possibilities of media education and their use in the future professional activities of university students, as well as their learning about the methodological and practical aspects of media education from the point of view of using its educational, upbringing and developmental potential. Moreover, the procedural component includes preparing the university student audience for media studies based on Russian feature films on family issues, involving film discussions, completing creative tasks on audiovisual media texts, as well as integrating elements of media education into school subjects (literature, history, etc.).

In addition, this component includes university students' preparation for working with the parent community in order to promote media education in the family, discussing family education with parents in order to improve their level of pedagogical culture, forming ideas about responsible parenting, etc.

The control and assessment component of the media education model involves carrying out activities aimed at assessing the university students' competencies in accordance with the set goals and objectives. This component includes monitoring university students' knowledge of the studied topics, the completion level of tasks for independent study, etc.

The application of the model for studying images of family and family education in Russian cinema (1920–2020) in media education is higher education, including the training courses “Pedagogical education”, “Psychological and pedagogical education”, “Organization of work with youth”, etc.

5. Conclusion

As a result of the analysis of scientific research in pedagogy, psychology, cultural studies, and sociology of the last years of the twentieth century on the topic under study, we identified and analysed the main conceptual foundations, methods, forms, technologies, and approaches to media education that study audiovisual Russian media texts of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods about family and family education.

In this study an attempt to construct a media education model for studying images of family and family education in Russian feature films (1920–2020) was made.

Methodological approaches to designing the media education model are provided by the unity of theoretical and practical approaches to the study of family issues in feature films; a comprehensive, systematic study of audiovisual media texts based on the hermeneutic analysis of Russian feature films on the topic under study; a research of transformational changes in the images of family and family education in historical retrospect in feature films from different periods within the chronological framework of this study.

The target guidelines of the presented media education model include teaching attitudes about traditional family values to the younger generation. The main material for study in media education is Russian feature films.

This goal involves solving the following interrelated tasks:

- 1) Fostering students' respect for family, family traditions, family education as key guidelines for the well-being of modern society through Russian feature films on family issues created in different years;
- 2) Developing students' media competencies related to the ability to select, analyse, interpret and evaluate audiovisual media texts about family and family education;
- 3) Expanding the students' knowledge of the media education possibilities based on analysing feature films about family and family education.

The content blocks of the media education model include the study of basic concepts related to the topic of family and family education, feature films, etc.; university students' analysing scientific research on these issues; analysis of audiovisual media texts on the topic of family and family education.

The procedural component of the media education model is important in the professional sense, as it allows to prepare university students for future media education activities with the school audience by organizing and conducting media studies in educational organizations of various types, as well as to use the acquired knowledge in integrating elements of media studies into general education. In addition, the possibilities of future professionals' collaboration with the parent community, aimed at using media education in family upbringing and raising the level of pedagogical culture are considered.

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