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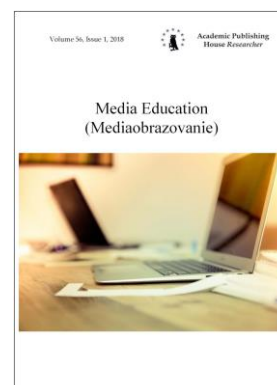
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## Self-Management of the Net On-line Associations: Structure-Functional and Organizational Factors

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### Abstract

In the article it is considered the net on-line associations, which can be interpreted as a new form of sociality from the point of view of structure-functional characteristics of the net on-line societies, of organizational forms of the net on-line societies as factors of self-organization and self-management of the net on-line societies. The main research goal of this article is to study the self-management of online communities, which, in our opinion, is based on a new type of social subjectness – virtual subjectness on the coordination of network community relations, their horizontal self-organization and fundamental trans-borderness as well as on such specific forms of global information – communication interaction, as matrix-cellular network links between the actors, members of network communities which expresses their decentralization. The main thesis of this article is the following: a lot of networked communities are a form of information society manifestation, i.e. a new kind of sociality, digital, virtual, information and communication sociality, which self-organize and self-manage. One of the conclusions is that a poly-haul structure is typical for multiple networked communities in which each node (cell) is connected by a number of information highways while each information highway includes a multitude of alternative logistic vectors of actual and virtual information interaction.

**Keywords:** on-line communities, network communities, self-organization, self-management, computer; information.

### 1. Introduction

The relevance of online communities self-government study is associated with a variety of theoretical and practical aspects that are due to the fact that on the basis of innovative information technologies at this stage of the formation and development of the global information society, the all-encompassing planetary forms of information and communication exchange and interaction, have created social practices qualitatively new in the human history civilizations, in fact, created a new type of society - global information and communication society. A new type of society can be represented by different functions in different hypostases. First of all, new forms of social global information and communication, new forms of human self-presentation and identity –

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informational self-presentation and digital identity, new forms of social subjectness – virtual subjectness, a new form of civil society – civil digital society, a new type of culture – digital underground culture, new forms of human activity in the global network – educational, cultural, political, leisure, etc. It is important that all new forms of relations and interactions are formed on the basis of a new type of social structure: it is the multiplicity of network information structures that are commonly called network communities.

## **2. Materials and methods**

Network communities are treated by modern researchers as network constructs, digital phantoms, new kind of informational-communicational and digital sociality. The methodology of researching network communities is due to the fact that it is the material of such research, its object and subject. In our opinion, such material can be represented by two fundamentally different, albeit interrelated approaches.

The first approach characterizes network communities from the content-qualitative and quantitative side as it is connected with the understanding of network communities as phenomena of the information world. This is an ontological approach, the implementation of which should lead to a comprehension of the phenomenal side of this new type of sociality and to answer the questions of information specifics, content characteristics, statistics, informational and technological basis of network communities, understanding them as global social media in all their diversity.

The second approach is connected with the understanding of network communities as social constructs, namely, social concepts that are the product of a particular society, including the emergence of its culture, science and established social practices. Such an approach, with respect to the first ontological one, can be called epistemological, but due to the too wide prevalence of this term, let's call it the conceptual approach.

Whereas the ontological approach characterizes the qualitative and quantitative existence of the phenomena of the information world – network communities, the conceptual approach characterizes the essence of this being, which, in our opinion, is manifested in the formation of a new type of social subjectness – global information subjectness, which is formed on the basis of a new type of sociality - network sociality. This is one of the manifestations of the essence of a new type of society. It is based on the fact that the global network Universe is self-organizing and self-governing (Kurbatov, 2018: 64-65).

This is a brand new characteristics of the society in the history of human civilization which requires its conceptual comprehension; since its self-management and self-organization of network communities, in our opinion, is a quintessence in understanding the essence of a new type of a society – a global information society, proceeding from the premise that this problem is multifaceted. It includes the information and communication self-presentation of people, in the construction of their virtual identity, in the forms of the emergence of a new type of social subjectivity of the informational type – virtual subjectness, and the comprehension of the formation of the subculture of the computer underground, which represents a new type of sociality in the form of a set of network communities that are informational expression of a virtual civil society, and self-government of a given society, which should be expressed in the features of its constitution of the formation (formation), construction (explication in the social theory), functioning (real information being) and its structuring (self-organized differentiation of elements) as well as conceptual comprehension of the multifactority of these relations.

The main research goal of this article is to study the self-management of online communities, which, in our opinion, is based on a new type of social subjectness – virtual subjectness on the coordination of network community relations, their horizontal self-organization and fundamental trans-borderness as well as on such specific forms of global information – communication interaction, as matrix-cellular network links between the actors, members of network communities which expresses their decentralization.

Selection of the methodological paradigm for the study of self-management and self-organization of the networked communities as the essence of a new type of informational society, as noted above, is due to the identification of the two principal approaches – ontological and conceptual (epistemological) and their discussion.

From the point of view of the first approach, the phenomenal being of the informational

society is connected, as noted by such authors as B. John, E. Laing, S. Hatzinanguos and other authors, is an expression of global social media (Laing, 2017; Hatzipanagos, John, 2017). In accordance with this, network communities as global social media are explicated in research approaches from the point of view of the content parameters of studying this information phenomenon. In particular, as noted by researchers (Shea, Bidjerano, 2018; Hatzipanagos, John, 2017), this refers to the information interaction of networked communities in the field of educational, professional development, which is explored by J. Novakovich, S. Show, S. Miah, T. Trust, D. Krutka, J. Carpenter (Novakovich et al., 2017; Trust et al., 2017), social contracts, politics, protest activities and public opinion, such scholars as M. Kasra, K. Martin, S. Gonzales-Bylon, N. Wang, R. Dunbar, V. Ariabaldi, M. Conti, A. Passarella (Kasra, 2017; Martin, 2016; González-Bailón, Wang, 2016; Dunbar et al, 2015).

Phenomenal characteristics of the information life of network communities provide meaningful grounds for qualitative parameters of interaction of network communities but do not lead us to a conceptually essential assessment of the new quality of a network society. An essential characteristic, as G. Reingol points out, is related to the fact that a new type of a society in the form of a set of network communities that arise and function in the global information network, then and only when a large number of people for a sufficiently long time construct their social, professional and individual-personal information and communication links and relations, that is, they realize through their new relations their personal and social subjectness (Rheingold, 2000: 113).

Conceptual approach in the study of self-management and self-organization of networked communities in our work is related to the methodology of social constructivism (Baksansky, Kucher, 2012; Berger, Lukman, 1995; Lectersky, 2009; Lenk, 2009; Tokareva, 2001; Raskin, 2006). In particular, principles of the explication of reality (social, consensus and media reality), understanding of construct as a model for explaining reality, methods of institutionalization, legitimization and the characteristics of the informational environment are used as methodological principles of social constructivism. To characterize the information and communication functioning of networked communities, the principles of N. Luman's communication interaction, from the point of view of his self-reference, structural conformity and selection as well as its systemic nature in society (Lumann, 1995; Lumann, 2005; Lumann, 2007).

Methods of structural analysis and functional analysis, structural and organizational forms of networked communities and the intensity of their communication, information, personal, professional, social and civic interaction expressing the functioning of networked communities are also used as the main methods of analysis. This also involves resource and dynamic approaches that analyze the information, personal and professional resources of actors in the network communities that characterize personal self-development of actors and their self-presentation and self-presentation in the virtual space (Zayonts, 2010; Konoplitsky, 2004; Lupanov, 2001; Nazarchuk, 2011; Buch-Hansen, 2014).

In our view, self-organization, voluntariness, self-management, cross-border network online communities, this is primarily expressed in the elimination of territorial, state, national and other boundaries, in their horizontal coordination. Being an information and technological product of the society and thanks to its network connections, network communities spontaneously form new network social associations in which interested actors are united, who share the network thinking, network language, network morality and network ways of discussing and solving socially significant problems.

### 3. Discussion

The issues of organization, management and self-management of networked communities are of particular interest. In the opinion of many researchers, among which it is necessary to outline A.A. Vittikh, A.V. Egorova, M. Kastelsa, L.A. Saenko, O. Elikhman (Vittich, 2011; Egorov, 2016; Castells, 2004; Saenko, 2014; Aleahmad, 2016), the organization, management and self-management of network communities represents a new type of social management and self-management. The study of this issue is the main research task of this article. The importance and urgency of such research is due to the fact that networked communities, representing a new type of sociality – virtual, digital, information and communication sociality, generate new qualities of the global information society.



The main thesis of this article is the following: a lot of networked communities are a form of information society manifestation, i.e. a new kind of sociality, digital, virtual, information and communication sociality, which self-organize and self-manage. The grounds for such an assertion are the following arguments:

- network communities are characterized by specific functions that constitute them as special social phenomena of the information world;
- network communities have a specific flexible, decentralized, integrative matrix-cellular structure;
- network communities interact with each other on the basis of information and communication exchange of information;
- network communication is a new kind of social communication and a new kind of social connections;
- they are characterized by specific types of relations and special mechanisms of functioning;
- network communities are characterized by such ways of organization and formation for which decentralization, horizontal connections and relationships are characteristic, which generates their inner essence, forms and mechanisms of self-management.

The above listed features of network communities, in particular, their specific functions, decentralized matrix-cellular structure, network information-communication interaction, network processes and relations and forms of organization are called as the characteristics of self-management of network communities.

Functions that are characteristic of networked communities are the conditions by which they are constituted as special social phenomena of the information world. The following ones can be distinguished among such functions:

- communicative function, which serves as a means of information exchange, diverse communication and expansion of its scope;
- function of personal and professional development of actors in network communication;
- epistemological function, through which the actors learn to communicate their partners and themselves;
- informational function, which is the essence of network communication, through which the receipt, transmission, storage and targeted use of information, as well as information acquaintance, notification and information;
- civil-social function that gives an opportunity to express their social and civic positions and adherence to a particular ideology;
- personal function, which is expressed in postulating your own personal position, your views and values;
- supportive function associated with the information retrieval of their like-minded people and the value and positional solidarity with them;
- function of self-presentation, self-determination and self-presentation, through which by constructing one's personal "Self" and representing it for information interaction;
- a function of digital virtual publicity, through which all forms of personalization are transformed into a public information network resource.

All these functions implemented by the network communities constitute the network communities themselves, as special social phenomena of the information world, which are the development of new forms of social interaction, through which the digital virtual society is developed, through the development of personal, civil-social and professional subjectivity.

The analysis of the structure of the on-line communities has been conducted by such researchers as S.V. Bondarenko, Yu.G. Rykov, O.Y. Koltsova, P.A. Meilahs, N.K. Baum, A. Grazd, J. Roy and others. It is established that being a special social phenomena of the information world, network communities have a specific flexible, decentralized, integrative matrix-cellular structure based on social links between actors and community members that are formed from a set of information interactions of individual digital virtual objects as subjects of a qualitative new social-informational formation – network communities (Bondarenko, 2004; Rykov et al., 2016; Baym, 2013; Gruzd, Roy, 2014).

The structure of networked communities is characterized by the following parameters:

- decentralization and horizontal links;
- being a multi-core network, among which are the integration of various goals, personal,

professional and socially-significant projects;

- multilevel structure of networked communities, which allows to integrate a variety of activities and interactions;
- flexible structure of the network communities, which allows to coordinate an adequate response of the matrix structure to any change in the external environment;
- structure of network communities is characterized by the absence of intra-organizational barriers;
- main structural principle of forming network communities is a branched network of horizontal links that are expressed in numerous intersections of cells (nodes) of the network (Ivanchenko, 2008; Nazarchuk, 2008; Kosichenko, 2012).

On the basis of the foregoing, it can be concluded that a poly-haul structure is typical for multiple networked communities in which each node (cell) is connected by a number of information highways while each information highway includes a multitude of alternative logistic vectors of actual and virtual information interaction.

The next argument, designed to justify the self-management of networked communities, is a specific network interaction. Networking is a system of established and constantly developing links between elements of the network community structure, through which already established links are maintained, new links are created that allow the network communities to function, support their structure, develop, evaluate, test, make public and implement different models positioning and self-presentation of a personal, professional or socially significant position, expressing the joint use of information resources.

The main principles of network interaction are the following:

- information cooperation, which is expressed in the formulation of unifying goals based on the interest of the participants in the interaction, in particular, the interest in the joint use of information resources for the implementation of cooperation;
- multilevel network interaction (personal-personal, professional, social-civic);
- multiplicity of goals of network interaction that are associated with various functions of networked communities: virtual communication, information interaction, personal development, digital publicity and self-presentation, etc.;
- voluntariness of network interaction, which by its nature is an independent activity and the realization of personal-personal interest;
- independence of actors in network interaction;
- lack of a common vector for prioritizing network interaction;
- multiplicity of leaders who can determine some form of network interaction, the status of which is determined solely by the fact that they are carriers of the information resource for this network interaction.

Network communication is carried out through network communication, which is characterized by the following features: it is multi-channel, characterized by high density of information saturation, the multiplicity of information transfer paths, presence of a multitude of alternative paths which relativizes the information interaction.

Networking is a mechanism for the functioning of networked communities. As it is noted by S. Borgati, E. Mehra, D. Brass and J. Labinka, the mechanism of functioning of the network communities is characterized by the following basic parameters:

- direct transmission and direct access to information, according to which information links are established within the information network, through which information “blood flows or nerve impulses” are realized, expressing the essence of existence of the entire information network;
- information adaptation, which expresses the emerging equal attitude to information resources: freedom of personal access, freedom to interpret and use information resources, freedom to enter any network community, subject to the adoption of its rules, freedom to choose one's own position;
- linking which is expressed in the fact that the information network (or part of it) can (or cannot) function as a single actor, under certain conditions (a common goal), interested in linking all the nodes of the information network (or part of it);
- exception that is a specific amateur mechanism that allows you to eliminate some information links that make achieving common goals difficult or even impossible (Borgatti et al., 2009).

Network communities are characterized by specific network processes which also act as characterizing factors of self-government. These include: results orientation, structural and information mobility, consular procedures based on the interest of actors in information interaction, decentralization, expressed in the constant formation of a set of equal centers, which differ not in authority but in the availability of information resources, access to information and the availability mechanisms for achieving consensus goals, overcoming limitations and boundaries (linguistic, territorial, state) as well as borders between formal and informal relations (Bresler, 2014: 121-122).

Formation and organization of network communities in the form of coordination of information and communication activities, expressing personal, professional and social-civic self-presentation, self-affirmation, self-realization and self-development, is a form of unlimited expansion of information interaction by including new information nodes (cells), self-developing and decentralized process (Nevesenko, 2011).

The functions of networked communities described above, their structure, forms of network interaction, ways from formation and organization, being the characterizing factors of their self-management, form the internal essence of network communities, as a kind of network civil society. In our opinion, the main features of the internal essence of networked communities are the following: decentralization of information flows, a new type of relations - network self-organization of information interaction, a new type of social solidarity - voluntary coherence of goals and connections between all subjects of network interaction, a new type of social development - amateur expansion of the information field of interaction and a new type of social management - amateur formation of network communities, self-organization and self-administration (Egorov, 2014; Kazakov, 2014; Orlov, 2008).

Network organization and network self-management makes it possible to realize meaningful and purposeful actions of many actors of network interaction to achieve voluntarily set goals, self-organized coherence of connections between all actors of a network interaction. In this way, a self-governing network community is emerged, expressed in the informational interaction of a multitude of actors implementing in their actions the need for affiliation to the global network community (Zatonsky, 2007: 13-14).

Global network is a set of interconnected points of intersection of multidirectional information flows, which are the most important factor in uniting people on the basis of the coincidence of needs, interests, values and intentions. This voluntary and interested association of people, free from vertical power relations, a self-organizing and self-governing association that is transforming into a global networked information society is transformed into a networked civil society. As it is known, civil society is a social form of self-realization of free citizens, which are united in societies, associations, organizations and specific voluntary social structures that are characterized as independent of direct influence on the part of the state and all branches of state power (Buryak, 2011).

Network civil society is the virtual hypostasis of a real civil society, a modern network social morphology based on modern information technologies, characterized by new social hierarchies, new forms of adaptation, mobility, mobility, functionality, coordination, structure, self-organization and self-government, decentralized in its essence, capable of self-development due to unlimited expansion, inclusion of new nodes, networks, which is subordinated not to the external commands but to its network, information logic (Shakula, 2006).

#### **4. Results**

The following results can be determined as the main results obtained in the study of self-management of network communities. Network civil society is a means and result of the self-organization of the global information space through new forms of self-government. The main forms of networked self-government are the following:

- self-activation, as a way of voluntary inclusion of actors of information interaction in the global information exchange on the basis of personal, professional and social-civic interest in achieving agreed goals and needs;

- organizational self-regulation, which is expressed in the flexible implementation of organizational functions by members of networked communities as a form of organizing collective action with a view to more successful achievement of common goals;



- collective self-control, which manifests itself in real self-analysis by the bodies of network self-government and individual organizers (actors of network interaction) of their activities, which allows achieving such goals by more effective methods on the basis of such self-organization;
- interest of the network community in finding the meaning and role of its existence, on the one hand, in self-realization and in the self-development of each member of the network community, and on the other hand, in understanding that this is possible only if self-organized and mutually agreed common goals;
- comprehension of networked self-government as a social action that is basically multifactorial, i.e. taking into account the maximum number of factors in making decisions and implementing actions that organize and form common rules that constitute and construct the information life of network communities, the basis of which should be trust, the orientation towards the optimal achievement of goals by the actors in the network interaction and their interest in such interaction;
- conformity of methods of technological improvement (specific programs, projects, new forms of technical support) to forms of network self-management.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the results obtained, the following conclusions can be made:

- network self-management assumes the independence of members of network communities, the plurality of leaders that are characterized by unassigned powers, access to information resources, voluntariness of information links united by a common interest and a multiplicity of levels of informational interaction;
- self-management of network communities is manifested in the informational and communicational self-presentation of people, in the design of their virtual identity;
- self-management of network communities, is expressed in the forms of the emergence of a new type of social subjectivity of the informational type - virtual subjectness;
- manifestation of the self-organization of network communities is reflected in the formation of the computer underground subculture, which represents a new type of sociality in the form of a set of network communities that are the informational expression of a virtual civil society;
- self-management of a network society should be expressed in features of its formation, functioning and self-organizational structuring.

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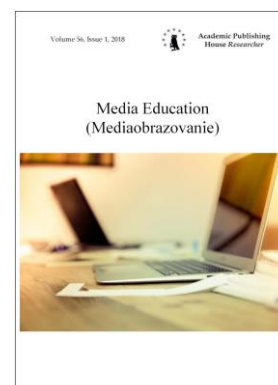
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## Verbal Crime: The Problem of Insult in the Media Text

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### Abstract

The article is devoted to verbal crimes, the qualification of which requires the cooperation of lawyers and linguists. Linguists are directly involved into qualification of verbal crimes such as conspiracy, incitement, threat, insult, etc. The use of language always contains the potential of "natural insult", a violation of conventional rules. This violation effects not the same perlocutionary result. The legal definition of insult is essentially an appeal to linguistic flair. Insult is mostly associated with the use of a particular obscene (invective) lexicon. Any media text that contains allegations about people or institutions can be challenged in court, that is, it can be considered as an insult. Therefore, any media text that is not initially intended as a conflict can cause a conflict. This is supported by the language itself. The specificity of the studied problem area led to the hermeneutic approach, focused on interpretation and explanation; the method of linguistic deduction and induction. Interpretative approach, based on the assumption that the values do not exist in isolation, are not contained in words and sentences, not extracted from them, but understood by the recipient on the basis of the speech features and context, was extremely relevant.

**Keywords:** obscenism, invective, insult, verbal crime, law, perlocutionary effect, manipulation, persuasiveness.

### 1. Introduction

Any media text that contains allegations about people or institutions can be challenged in court, that is, it can be considered as an insult. Therefore, any media text that is not initially intended as a conflict can cause a conflict. The experience of criminal and civil cases connected with insults, protection of honour, dignity and business reputation has shown that the bodies administering justice often arbitrarily interpret the terms by which the essence of such cases is presented. The stumbling block in court proceedings is that the opposing parties treat differently relevant terminology (sometimes diametrically contrary ones).

Since there are such crimes as slander, incitement, threat, insult, etc., directly related to the language, linguists are directly involved into their qualification. It is well-known fact, that *"the use of language in a social life of a person always contains the potential of "natural insult" (Golev,*

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2000: 5). Until recently, there was the article 130 "Insult" in the Criminal Code of Russian Federation.

The term "insult" was defined in it as "Insult, that is, humiliation of the honour and dignity of another person, expressed in an indecent form". That is, insult as a criminal offence had two features: firstly, the statement by its content should humiliate the honor and dignity of another person and, secondly, should have an indecent form. As we can see, the interpretation is given through the terms that the jurisprudence refers to the category of "evaluation", and therefore requiring special legal commentary.

Interpretation of insult in the law has been changed: crimes under articles 129 and 130 of the Criminal Code were decriminalized and included into the category of administrative offences provided for by article 5.60 "Slander" and 5.61 "Insult" of the Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offences (hereinafter – the Administrative Code) by the Federal Law on December 7, 2011 № 420-FL "On Amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and Certain Acts of the Russian Federation". "Slander" then was returned to the Criminal Code, and "Insult" not yet: in the former formulation now it lives in the Administrative Code (Levontina, 2014).

It is impossible to objectively describe the legal and linguistic problem of "insult", limiting only in the linguistic or legal space of the study. The scholarly problem of insult and perlocutionary effect in language and law has not yet got adequate coverage for a number of reasons, the most important of which is that linguistic methods of legal diagnosis of insult are not defined with an adequate degree of accuracy. Insult is a deliberate violation of conventional rules. The problem, however, is that this disruption causes different perlocutionary effect. Obviously, the solution lies in the frequently statistical space. If many texts, homogeneous in their linguistic nature, produce the same pragmatic effects, this indicates a general pattern determining the relationship of the form and function of certain language signs.

## 2. Materials and methods

The study is based on the general scientific principle of dialectics, considering things in their interconnection and interdependence. The most important methodological postulate was the position about the empirical method of cognitive linguistics, which is to follow all the nuances of the language forms and to find their ultimate explanation in the cognitive structures device (Kibrik, 2008: 75). The specificity of the studied problem area led to the hermeneutic approach, focused on interpretation and explanation. The method of linguistic deduction and induction was used as well. Interpretative approach, based on the assumption that the values do not exist in isolation, are not contained in words and sentences and are not extracted from them, but are understood by the recipient on the basis of the speech features and context, was extremely relevant.

## 3. Discussion

Many researchers – S.G. Vorkachev, E.I. Galatina, N.D. Golev, V.I. Zhelvis, A.V. Koryakovtsev, K.M. Rudkova, A.P. Skovorodnikov, V. Himik, B.J. Sharifullin, and others investigated linguistic and legal aspects of abuse. Ethno-culturological peculiarities of the formation and functioning of invective vocabulary in different linguocultures are investigated; observations on the peculiarities of the linguistic picture of the world related to the functioning of zoo-invective in different linguocultures are made (Malashchenko, 2003, Arévalo, 2018, etc.). Many authors analyzed concepts such as verbal aggression, communicative pressure, suggestive influence (Kulikova, 2004; Brusenskaya, 2016; Issers, 2003; Kulikova, Kuznetsova, 2015; Kulikova et al., 2016; Brusenskaya, Kulikova, 2016; Kulikova, Brusenskaya, 2017; Brusenskaya, Kulikova, 2017; Shcherbinina, 2004). Of particular interest is the practice of conducting court cases to protect the honor, dignity and business reputation (Brinev, 2010; Matveyeva, 2004), analysis of ethno-cultural peculiarities and frame components of the concepts of "resentment", "insult", "defamation" (Levontina, 2016; Shakhovskiy, 2013). Linguists participating in the Work of the Guild of linguists-experts on documentary and information disputes (Moscow) and the Laboratory of legal linguistics (Barnaul) took into consideration the theory of insult diagnostics in conflict texts (during the linguistic expertise). As part of this work, the use of offensive words involved into the broad linguistic context was analyzed. The conflict text from the point of view of the interpreter, from the point of view of intentions ("criminal intent") of the sender of the text was investigated.



Attention was drawn to the most frequent tactical moves leading to a communicative conflict (Bezmaternykh et al., 2017) – resentment, insult and defamation. The analysis of the complex of ethnic, psychological, moral and ethical components of the concept "insult", based on the general conceptual model of insult, which in its turn is based on the norms of morality, ethics, human behavior in society, is carried out in the works of V.I. Zhelvis (Zhelvis, 2001, 2002, 2004).

The legal definition of insult is essentially an appeal to the linguistic sense (for example definition "a rude form", "indecent form") of the native speakers. Manifestation of "acute" reactions to irony are possible. For example E.I. Sheigal's idea (Sheigal, 2004) that irony is one of the means of verbal aggression, though the least rigid ones. Irony is often used in media texts for the purpose of insult. According to Quintilian, irony means the something opposite to what we say; *"this is also called mockery, which can be understood either by the pronunciation of the voice, or in the face, or by the feature of the thing, of which it is said. When words do not come to them, it also means that the intention of the speaker is to show this opposite one"* (Quintilians, 1909). Irony is akin to such categories as grotesque, parody, wit, humor, mockery. At the same time, the main difference between irony – in its veiled nature: although the negative assessment is darkened in it, but at the same time it borders with neglect to the object of irony, its actions or qualities, which allows to consider it, with some limitations, to the "soft" type of speech aggression. The irony is distanced from the object of irony and indirectly demonstrates its superiority.

However, there is such a thing as self-irony, that is, irony can be directed onto the speaker as an object. The ironic meaning is a situational implicature – the conclusion to which the recipient comes interpreting the pragmatic content of the statement in communication. Language means of irony expression (including implicit ones) are studied, in addition to linguistics, by a whole complex of Humanities, such as aesthetics, ethics, psychology, philosophy, logic. Many researchers (Khazagerov, 2006; Akimoto, 2014; Brusenskaya et al., 2017; Alba-Juez, Larina, 2018; Brusenskaya, Kulikova, 2018, etc.) note the characteristic for the present expansion of the irony into public sphere, dominated by pathos before (due to reasons of socio-political nature). Irony is evaluative, as a metaphor, but if the metaphor assessment is on the surface, on the "ground" part of the figure (because of connotations is associated with its direct meaning and metaphor only implements these connotations), irony as a speech act is a more complex, sophisticated formation. It is formed as a result of the interaction of the illocutive force of a simple speech act with the ironic intention of the speaker, the ironic speech act is characterized by greater complexity and ambiguity.

There is a special verbal "ironic convention" – a set of rules governing normative ironic communication. There are ethical restrictions on the use of irony in society as a whole or in some social groups, as well as rules for the relevant and effective use of irony in changing situations of communication. In the textbooks on the speech culture and speech etiquette there are restrictions on the use of irony such as irony is not relevant in the context of ritual actions (not only on funerals, but on weddings, too), it is not relevant to strangers, to senior people or to people standing higher in the social hierarchy, etc. Thus offensive potential of irony is *a priori* admitted. Presence in the text of rude vernacular, abusive nominations and "obscene words" necessary for the legal recognition of abuse, is not necessary for perlocutionary effect of insult of the addressee of the speech. Example of I.B. Levotina (Levotina, 2014): if anybody asks you a question – whether you have written your thesis yourself or paid someone to write it for you, then, of course, such a question will be offensive, although it does not contain any "insulted" language units. For a legal solution of the problem of abuse of particular importance is the question of what is the main object of analysis: verbal means of insults (words, grammatical forms and syntax) by themselves, their functioning in the mind of the sender of speech or they produce perlocutionary effect in the mind of the recipient.

For a legal solution to the problem of abuse it is important to answer the question: what is the main object of analysis: verbal means of insults (words, grammatical forms and syntax) (Marlangeon, 2018), their functioning in the mind of the speaker or produced by them perlocutionary effect in the mind of the recipient (Yus, 2017; Wierzbicka, 2018). On the one hand, the insult is a result of the use of some "non-legal" words, which now either remain outside of lexicography, or get the appropriate pragmatic (stylistic) notes, and these notes should help to regulate speech behavior (vocabulary notes, of course, do not warn about legal liability, but inform about limitations in the regulatory communication). On the other hand, as the analysis of actual

conflicts related to insults shows, the situation itself is not exhausted by the use of verbal means as a source of the insult itself; such a source is a mental feeling of insult, i.e. the linguistic and ethical consciousness of the addressee, who feels humiliation and insult. For example, the information contained in the media text may be "offensive" to the honour, dignity and business reputation of the person in question. That is, the decisive factor in the qualification of verbal crime is the reaction of the addressee.

A statement of fact of abuse and degree of psychological and moral damage from abuse is a function of linguistic and ethical consciousness of the addressee, which evaluates them on the base of own notions about normativity (which, in turn, is caused by a lot of social and linguistic factors). However, the insult is mostly connected with the use of a particular obscene (invective) lexicon. The use of obscene lexicon has not been a special object of linguistic studies before, but now investigations in this sphere become more and more popular. There are numerous works in which obscene lexicon are associated with the concepts of catharsis, investigated as a way of relaxation, as a means of establishing a particularly trusting relationship and even elimination of social hierarchy.

A.V. Koryakovtsev emphasizes the invective function *"as special and specific one with its own means of expression, along with the rhetorical, emotive, aesthetic, fatal, nominative, referential and other functions of the language"* (Koryakovtsev, 2003: 229). Reference to the "civilizing" role of obscenism in diachrony is significant: *"the savage, who was first in expressing their emotions of indignation instead of hitting with cobblestones used the expletive, invective, marked the beginning of civilization, and at the same time and inventivization of linguistic personality"* (Shahovsky, 2013: 53). And also: *"the Swear promoting allocation of endorphins and androgens, renders antistress action, reduces pain, promotes healing of wounds and sharp improvement of well-being and mood"* (Moskovtsev, Shevchenko 2009: 65).

The following provision is extremely important: human speech is not a fully controlled process (which is especially true in relation to emotionally loaded speech: in extreme circumstances, there is an almost unconscious reflective nature of the use of obscenity). This fact is emphasized by numerous jokes in which a person in an extreme situation speaks emphasized literary language, which causes a comic effect. In a lot of studies are devoted to an analysis of the special function of obscenisms reflected in folklore genres, the function of the amulet. For example it should be noted that obscene language in some cases turns out to be functionally equivalent to a prayer. Thus, in order to escape from the brownie, the devil, etc., it is prescribed to the person either to read a prayer (at least, to overshadow him or herself with a sign of the cross), or to swear obscenely (Uspensky, 1994: 62). Or *"Swear, as a kind of life aggression, was endowed with the ability to disperse the road undead"* (Shchepanskaya, 2003: 230). On the role of obscenism as a talisman in particle cycles (Fateyev, 2010: 400-408).

On the role of obscenisms as a talisman in particle cycles: (Fateyev, 2010: 400-408). As V.I. Zhelvis writes, today invective language has finally come out of scientific shadow and has become no less worthy object of study than other manifestations of the national language (Zhelvis, 2001: 18). Obscene lexicon (invective) is the national part of the language, which is strictly forbidden (taboo) and at the same time well known for all adult native speakers (unlike jargon, professionalisms, dialect, etc.). The basis of obscene language in each language is made of some well-known roots, the periphery is blurred, its boundaries are contingent, but possibilities of derivatives formation from these well-known roots are unlimited. It is an ancient lexical layer in all languages, and its additional period is much longer than the written one. Y.I. Levin pointed to the proximity of obscene expressions to performatives. When we say that a person cursed, we mean not only that this person uttered certain words, that is illocutionary act was created, but also that this person did some specific action, that is, there was a illocutionary act, intentionally abusive. No wonder in the Russian language "the word "to express" acquired an independent status, it is like the word "break", which deliberately is connected with some action *"I postulate the existence of specific – abusive – illocutionary force and appropriate illocutionary acts. Their peculiarity is that as a rule they are associated with other illocutive acts (requirements, vows, etc.) and in their pure form, perhaps, act only in abusive interjections, being a special case of expressives"* (Levin, 1998: 809-810).

As T.A. Kudinova (Kudinova, 2011) writes, the performative (effective) character of invective is connected with the fact that it violates social taboos, which historically is a religious or moral

prohibition, and in the life of a particular person they act as an unconditional imperative. Obscenism, which is stylistically marked as highly rude and vulgar (that is why they often remain out of the doorstep of the printed text), break a taboo. V.V. Kolesov considers that obscene lexicon is not the "third world" of Russian culture, but "connected with the life processes system of distortion and decreases in quality, with the aim to allocate (break) the individual or the socially narrow group from the total environment of culture and its language. It is a carnival with a proper antisocial game into antibehavior; all censorial restrictions on the use of invective vocabulary are removed during the carnival (Kolesov, 2004: 197).

Obscenisms are akin to such social phenomena as alcoholism and drug addiction (it is significant that the language of drunks and drug addicts is swear and offensive words; the union of these spheres is natural and organic, because it reveals the emptiness of consciousness, lack of morality, degradation of mind, and ultimately the destruction of personality (Grechko, 2009: 10-11). The emotional content of obscenisms is highly diffuse: often they not differentially represent emotionality, specified just in the broad context of not only linguistic but also socio-cultural situation. As a result, *"Swear usurps powers of Basic-Russian, this practical means of facilitating primitive communication"* (Devkin, 2005: 213). And also: *"Search for the right word takes effort, and you do not need to look for swear, it is always close to you as saliva to lick the wound or to remove the speck. Swear is persistent, not worn out (despite congestion) expresses. It is the eternal engine" with a perpetual guarantee of strength for all the time while there are ethical prohibitions"* (Devkin, 2005: 216). N.A. Jews writes about desemantized obscenism, which are used as a card Joker, able to perform any desired function, (Jeuce, 2008: 17). See also: (Kudinova, 2011).

In the list of many properties of obscenism researchers find out a lot of "useful" ones: they are a password, a cathartic tool, perform a contact-establishing function and function of interpersonal distance removal (Devkin, 2005: 211). However, their main property is to express negative evaluation, for example: *"despite the breadth of their semantic spectrum, obscene expressions are used mainly to express "negative" meanings in the broadest sense of the word, i.e. containing sema "negation", without difference between negation as a logical operator, negation of any "positive" or "normal" quality, absence or elimination (lack causation) of something"* (Levin, 1998: 816). A society with detaboization of obscene lexicon, is like *"a world where people steal and deceive, beat and fear, where everything is plundered, betrayed, sold" where people fall down but not stand up, take but not give, in which either work to exhaustion, or moonlight – but in any case relate to work and to everything around with disgust or with profound indifference"* (Levin, 1998: 810).

About offensive power of obscenism write even those who generally support not strict attitude to non-normative layer of language: *"People use numerous rude, insulting and humiliating terms to express a negative attitude towards something, as well as to assert themselves, to show superiority over the interlocutor. These words painted everything as if into a dirty tone, downplaying not only the subject of the speech, but also a person they talk to"* (Moskovtsev, Shevchenko, 2009: 53). The same authors made such observation: the more authoritarian society and the state, the stricter it monitors compliance with standards in speech, because strict monitoring of compliance with the dogma of morality and speech is another important way of controlling people. The harsh regimes forbade to swear seriously, there is the word was equated to action. Accordingly, condemnation was real, even cruel, and not just moral or carried out through the broken book laws, as now in our country (Moskovtsev, Shevchenko: 79-83).

A new form of speech aggression, reflecting a high degree of interpersonal and social aggression is the so-called trolling. It is a product of its time, which did not exist in the pre-Internet era. It is in the Russian – speaking segment of the Internet – in Runet now in its entirety the modern language is reflected, this language is characterized by coarsening, the constant formation of the "image of the enemy" and often – the evil asocial aggressivity. Technological progress, which led to the emergence of virtual communication – Internet in the second half of the XX century, allowed to create a qualitatively new sphere of communication, and as a result electronic technology caused its total spread. The availability of free, comfortable, high-speed Internet access and new information technologies allows the average person has the opportunity for dialogue in the global network. As you know, dialogue strategies are divided into cooperative and non-cooperative. Non-cooperative strategies include dialogue, the basis of which is a violation of such

rules of communication as friendly cooperation, sincerity. Trolling is one of the elements of non-cooperative speech strategy that violates the favorable microclimate of dialogue (polylogue) space, it is actively used in the framework of modern Internet communication. This network behavior is based on provocative, mocking, offensive messages for the purpose of forcing the atmosphere of conflict and confrontation. Freedom of expression, anonymity, focus on direct dialogue, on the one hand, allow the writer to reveal the creative potential, to speak very directly and sincerely, and, on the other hand, many taboos, generally accepted in public communication, are removed. It is non-representation, equality and anonymity that make trolling possible. Trolling is bullying and abusive behavior in the form of messages, fueling conflict between communicants in chat rooms, forums and blogs. This is a socio-psychological and linguistic phenomenon that appeared on the Internet in the 90s of the XX-th century. The use of trolling leads to the loss of cooperative strategy of the polylogue and consequently – to the loss of the main topic of communication.

Trolling can cause significant damage to communication and destroy the sense of mutual trust in the Internet community. There is an opinion that the word itself is borrowed from the sphere of fishing, in which the troll is called the bait on the hook (compare: trolling is fishing for bait). However, in the mind of a Russian-speaking person there is another image. It is an evil mythical Troll (Troll in Scandinavian mythology is an ugly, unpleasant, malicious creature). In the Internet, a Troll is called the initiator of such offensive communication; a Troll in the Internet is a troublemaker, an aggressor, an instigator; it does evil and causes harm. Thus Troll satisfies the need for recognition and superiority over the interlocutor. O.N. Ankudinova ([Ankudinova, 2009: 21](#)) characterizes the Troll: *"a person who places rude or provocative messages in the Internet, for example, on forums to prevent discussion or insult its participants, crudely, roughly criticizes users' photos, inscriptions"*. If we take into account the peculiarities of the Troll's behavior in the network (whose communicative purpose is to influence the potential victim so that he or she would pay attention, react to a provocative message, incitement, that is, "caught on the hook" – "swallowed the bait"), we have to admit that the analyzed concept is based on a clear and transparent image. According to another opinion, the term "trolling" is formed from "trolling for newbies" (from the English word "newbie").

Of course, the word "trolling" is still difficult to attribute to linguistic terms with established semantics and neutral pragmatics: its slang origin is bully felt by native speakers, but there is no other name for this phenomenon. Trolling is characterized by a violation of the principles of traditional forms of communication described by P. Grice. As you know, the development of communication takes place in accordance with the principle of cooperation, which P. Grice represented in the form of four maxims. For example, according to the Maxim of quality, one should not speak about things that are wrong or inadequate in a given communicative situation; according to the Maxim of communication, one should formulate such judgments that are related to the purposes of the current communication; according to the Maxim of quantity, one cannot overload speech with a message of excessive information; the Maxim of good manners assumes clarity, not ambiguity or ambiguousness. That is, according to Grice, the sender of the speech must be truthful, adequate, informative and understandable ([Grice, 1985: 217-237](#)).

Trolling violates the maxims of politeness, which include: 1. Maxim of tact, prescribing not to touch potentially dangerous topics (private life, religion, personal preferences); 2. Maxim of generosity, according to which it should not be a burden on the interlocutor and try to dominate in communication; 3. Maxim of approval, prescribing not to judge, not to condemn; 4. Maxim of consent: its essence is the rejection of conflict communication (mutual correction).

According to maxim of politeness, trolling is a destructive phenomenon. Techniques used in trolling, are described in detail today. This is an arbitrary change in the topic of dialogue, the active introduction of invective and obscenisms, excessive categorical statements, manipulative use of the concept of "own – alien", the strategy of provocation, discreditation and hyperbolization. Many publications are devoted to the phenomenon of trolling (as a type of network communication). Trolling is not homogenous phenomena. It is differentiated by the following parameters:

1. by number of recipients: person-oriented; mass-oriented;
2. by communicative purposes: promotional; usual;
3. the sphere of spread in the global network: chat; forum; site; news; in Live Journals; blogger;



4. by quality of activity: intentional, which is characterized by conscious functional base; unintentional, which is characterized by spontaneous, unplanned activity; false (the result of an attempt to pass off their activities for trolling, despite the fact that it is not).

The word "trolling" settles in and outside the network and even acquires derivatives, compare: the verb to troll which indicates the actions of a Troll: to troll somebody.

There is another phenomenon of the same kind – flaming. Trolling is the action associated with verbal aggression, and flaming is the interaction associated with verbal aggression, that is, flaming is mutual trolling, and trigger of flaming is often remark of a Troll, that is flaming is the result of effective verbal provocation (Vorontsova, 2016: 114). The flames are message of different genres, which are provocative texts of usually mocking, insulting, ironic type. By their intention, these are sarcastic, inflammatory messages, statements of a sharply critical nature, passing to the person, often rude and cynical messages. Aggression, actualized in flames-texts, is not disguised and not motivated desire to dominate in networked community. Flames-texts actualize the counteraction within the opposition "own – alien". Ignoring the formulas of etiquette, the use of offensive names and epithets, derogatory assumptions about the mental abilities of the opponent, etc. – typical techniques of such "communication". It is rightly noted that the breeding ground for trolling is anonymity. Often users communicate in the virtual space anonymously. *"in the Internet world, where no one apologizes to anyone, whose memory is like a hamster's memory – for a couple of days, and there is, alas, the most modern and vibrant society, in which while there is a little tact, little desire for the truth and a lot of detestation"* (Vorsobin, 2017).

There is a large number of network communities, which are characterized by the manifestation and spread of aggression. For example, there are several such groups in social network "VKontakte", for example, the community "Aggression", numbering about 84 thousand users. The group places information consisting of pictures with fights, physical mockery of people with comments in the form of obsenizms. Y.M. Konyaeva (Konyaeva, 2015: 140-149) believes that this phenomenon has gone beyond the limits of the network communication, it is specific communicative practice, which is typical for the media in general, not only for electronic ones. In fact, the communicative phenomenon of trolling is a special way to reduce the assessment of the subject of speech, it is a mechanism of crossing out the positive information in the media text. Trolling, according to Y.M. Konyaeva, is a way to indirectly identify a point of view that allows to sow doubt in the recipient.

However, the examples by J.M. Konyaeva, do not contain elements of explicit verbal aggression and, rather, manifestate strategy of discreditation which is well documented on the material of the media. The main feature of trolling is offensive replicas. The procedural practice of the early XX<sup>th</sup> century, for qualification the saying or action as offensive, required a mandatory intention to commit an insult. But as insults on a imputed mental way of relating to a illegal act is divided into conditionally and unconditionally offensive, the guilty person must prove that he (or she) had not the intention to insult, qualifying unconditionally offensive one, in relation to words or actions, conditionally offensive, offended (insulted) person was obliged, accordingly, to prove that those who spoke the words (or made offensive action) was aimed to insult him. The fact that the communicative intention was defined as a qualifying sign of insult by the legislation of the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> century, is connected with the speech nature of this social phenomenon, the source of which was the ancient Russian meaning of "insult", which semasiologically preceded the modern term "crime".

#### 4. Results

Traditionally, representatives of the elite speech culture are responsible for preserving the variability in the language at a certain constant level: one of the most important principles of sociolinguistic stratification is the resistance of the upper layers of society to linguistic transformations "offered" by the lower layers. This is due to the fact that for the upper classes language is a social marker, an indicator of their social status, high social status, which they cherish. Today, however, that statement requires corrections. According to fair thoughts of G.G. Khazagerov on the rights of the journalistic koine in our media a special variant of thieves' jargon with addition of teenagers' lexicon and phraseology operates today. In this language, it is inconvenient to argue that it is impossible to discuss anything seriously; in fact, it is a "trap for the



speaker" (Khazagerov, 2006). Within the framework of modern legal linguistics there is raised the question of possibility of "legal regulation of obscene words" (Golev, 1999: 26).

However, the legal regulation of the obscene lexicon is faced with the difficulty that the invective function of the language often considers as one of its natural functions, and one of the useful functions (obscenisms are not just an indicator of aggression, but are able to "drain" aggression). In addition, many obscenisms are semantically and pragmatically ambivalent, and the ambivalence of emotions transmitted with word gives rise to the ambivalent perception of the word by the addressee. It is well known fact that the same saying, addressed to different people and in different socio-cultural conditions, can produce not just a different, but the opposite effect, *"that is rational in a single speech act may not be rational for the functioning of the system as a whole, and what is rational for one addressee may not be rational for another one"* (Kulikova, 2004: 263), *"perfectly normative speech psychologically creates a feeling of dryness, brevity, it does not hurt emotional strings"* (Valgina, 2001: 48).

And it turns out that the "language of the bottom" in modern communicative situations often becomes the most appropriate means of transmitting emotionality. M.A. Krongauz wrote about useful functions of obscenism: these words can be used for its intended purpose, that is, for the naming objects associated with sex and bodily love taboo in Russian culture; through these words it is possible to insult the person, and call the trust; in some situations they are used naturally, and sometimes they are necessary, for example – *"in closed male communities (prison, army) the disuse of the swear causes mistrust; in Soviet times, the swear was used for the destruction of the officialdom, the ritual use of language... Swear can be used as a kind of speech connections, pause filler, and the speech of some people almost entirely consists of such connections"* (Krongauz, 2008: 159). However, even taking into consideration and partly agreeing that obscenisms are able to perform some positive functions, it should be noted that the use of invective in modern communicative conditions often threatens the "environmental safety" of the language. Supported by lexicography "increase" of rough vernacular words became usual, that forms undesirable getting used to such vocabulary.

Traditionally (from the very beginning of the formation of legal linguistics), the such lexicon was in the focus of attention of specialists in legal linguistics, however, recommendations of a legal nature have not been developed yet. Especially valuable for legal linguistics those works, where classification of obscene words according to their degree of invectives are justified (with experimental data and surveys of speakers, typological description of the scope and situations of use of language units and frequency, the study of the traditions of their use in Russian linguistic culture). *"Psycholinguistic study of the impact of the language in its perception by different layers of native speakers could played a special role for legal linguistics – this determines its qualification in the aspect of linguistic ecology, linguistic discrimination, and – ultimately – the very possibility of legal regulation of obscene words"* (Golev, 1999: 26). The problem of offensive sounding of the word has acquired a special significance in legal terms, however, Russian lawyers, as V.I. Zhelvis writes (2004: 9), still have very little means that would help to clearly define the legal boundaries of this phenomenon: what is undoubtedly offensive word consumption (Mackenzie, 2018), and what is limited by certain conditions of place and time, etc. "These are questions of context and skill" (O. Kushanashvili "I and Put in. How to win the good"). The most acute problem for the Russian language of the last decades is the detabooization of gross obscenities, which forms the habituation to such lexicon (in part this habituation is supported even by lexicography, not only aspect, but also general one). Even a word like *fuck*, in the dictionary of the late XX<sup>th</sup> century by G.N. Sklyarevskaya has a mark "colloquial", that is, the general explanatory dictionary records a significant decrease in the level of permissible in the literary language. Attempts to include the invective into common explanatory dictionaries most often cause a negative attitude. I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay wrote: "Full lexicographic objectivity requires to include so-called "indecent" words, "profanity", "curses", "the abominations of vulgar slang," etc. into serious dictionary of "living language". Lexicographer has no right to cut and castrate the "living language". As known words exist in the minds of the vast majority of the people and freely pour out, the lexicographer must put them into the dictionary" (Baudouin de Courtenay, 1963: 236). These ideas he implemented, editing the 3-rd and 4-th revised and enlarged editions of the "Explanatory Dictionary of the Live Great Russian Language" by V.I. Dahl. However, the editors of subsequent editions of the dictionary abandoned "innovations" and kept the dictionary in the form

in which it was prepared for publication by the author. Compare evaluation of innovations by Baudouin de Courtenay: *"As the editor of the 3-rd edition (1903-1909). the Dahl's Dictionary, I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay arbitrarily included into the Dictionary a large number of abusive, even swear words, thereby violating the cultural tradition of Russian classical lexicography <...> Dahl, from his youth observing and recording living great speech, heard and knew these words, too? But, as a man of high moral principles, ... he decisively eliminated obscene. Up to our "democratic" time this act of Baudouin did not find followers"* (Grechko, 2009: 10-11).

For example, however, the curious ideas of V.K. Kharchenko about "partition linguistics", the meaning of which is that monolingual dictionaries have always been the result of very rigorous selection. Compare: *"Dictionaries of the Russian language remind icebergs, as soon as their surface is 1/8 or 1/7 of what they could be. From the fundamental point of view, it is necessary to "clean" the vocabulary of the dictionary, whereas from the applied, general lexicographic one it is in some way defective...Completeness is better than purity"* (Kharchenko, 2008: 110). Of course, the cited author took into consideration not only obscenism, but numerous groups of non-central lexicon (terms, professionalism, archaisms, etc.), but the idea about the inferiority of the constraints in the dictionary it is very significant. M.A. Krongauz believes that it is particularly interesting attitude to obscenities in the Internet (Sánchez-Moya, Cruz-Moya, 2015), where it seems to be no censorship, everything is permitted, and this vocabulary can to prosper. And the more valuable the emergence of spontaneous cultural prohibitions, carefully and correctly formulated. These are the rules in Live Journal in a book communityru\_books that publishes book reviews. According to these rules, reviews that contain foul language are deleted. The drafters of the rules explain that this is not snobbery, but compliance with basic decency and respect for readers. If the reviewer believes that the book deserves only unprintable words, otherwise thinking about it is impossible to express, a review can be published, veiling the whole posting under lying at and saying that under lying is swearing. In this case, the review is not deleted (Kronhaus, 2008: 162). This is a good example of how public communication space can be efficiently cultivated.

## 5. Conclusion

Linguistic and legal description of substandard is important perspective of linguistic conflictology and legal linguistics. Language objectively and inherently has the functions of negation. Pragmatics of linguistic units is not confined to the scale of "good/bad": in addition to the scale of "good/bad", language presents many other gradations, which are in an ambiguous relationship with an ethical scale. Pejoratives in the language is an objective reality which can be investigated not only in linguistics, but also in a various combined epistemological fields. Any legal phenomenon is the legislative act, the judicial process is always a text phenomenon, the phenomenon of speech communication, and hence the phenomenon of language. Today, the question of linguistic law is rightly raised, consisting of several components, among which the right to linguistic ecology is the most important, according to which a person should have a comfortable linguistic environment. If a person feels humiliation and stress due to the invective vocabulary, the law is obliged to protect his / her right to a cultured linguistic environment.

At the same time, the right to a linguistic environment is inseparable from the right to the protection of human honour and dignity. In connection with activation of the genre of invective speech, based not only on acceptable in the cultural environment means to discredit the opponent, but also on the taboo speech, because of frequency of lawsuits about the insult of honour and dignity, and defamation close practical cooperation between lawyers and linguists is inevitable.

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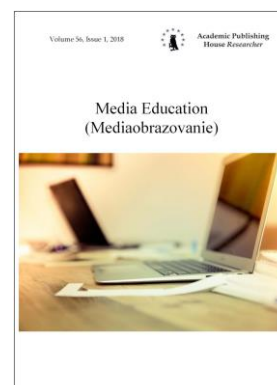
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## Hermeneutical Analysis of Feature Films of English-Speaking Countries About University Students

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### Abstract

The article is devoted to a hermeneutic analysis of English-language feature films about university students. For this purpose, the article presents an interdisciplinary review of scientific publications on the problem under study, investigates the results of scientific works of researchers in the field of cultural studies, sociology, film criticism, and media criticism. The analysis is based on scientific works written by C. Bazalgette ([Bazalgette, 1995](#)), A. Silverblatt ([Silverblatt, 2001](#)), U. Eco ([Eco, 1998, 2005](#)) and the key concepts of media education: “media agencies”, “media categories”, “media technologies”, “media languages”, “media representations”, “media audiences”. The study outlines the main trends and transformational processes that occurred during the development of English-language films. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of the main stereotypes presented in audiovisual media texts, key story models characteristic for different development stages of cinematographic art of the 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> century, representative models of the most typical characters in terms of ideology, value and life orientations, etc.

**Keywords:** hermeneutic analysis, audiovisual media text, media criticism, USA, UK, film, students.

### 1. Introduction

University students have been the most active and progressive part of youth at all times, and it is no accident that films about university and college students evoke constant interest – both among the mass audience, media experts and researchers. This article is devoted to a hermeneutic analysis of feature films about students created in English-speaking countries (including analysis of stereotypes, ideological analysis, identification analysis, iconographic analysis, plot analysis, character analysis, gender analysis, etc.). Following A.V. Fedorov, we believe that a hermeneutic analysis involves comprehension of a media text through comparison with the historical, cultural tradition and reality; penetration into its logic; analysis of a media text through a comparison of media images in the historical and cultural contexts. The technology of this analysis is based on a combination of historical, hermeneutic analyses with structural, plot, ethical, ideological, iconographic / visual analyses, analysis of media stereotypes and media text characters ([Fedorov et al, 2018](#)).

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## 2. Materials and methods

The analysis presented in this research is based on English-language feature films about university students. The research methodological basis is the study of modern scientific works by Russian and foreign authors exploring this topic. The hermeneutic analysis of the English-language films is connected to the concepts worked out by C. Bazalgette ([Bazalgette, 1995](#)), A. Silverblatt ([Silverblatt, 2001](#)), U. Eco ([Eco, 1998; 2005](#)). We also rely on key media education concepts: media agencies, media/media text categories, media technologies, media languages, media representations and media audiences.

The following methods were used in this research: hermeneutic analysis of audiovisual media texts, comparison and classification, descriptive and analytical methods, and historiographical methods.

## 3. Discussion

Various researches have been devoted to different aspects of English-language feature films about university students. For example, B. Osgerby's studies concern representations of the younger generation in the media. His analysis reflects the socio-cultural changes that took place in the British mass media including films about youth made in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The author notes that the media representation of the younger generation reflects social changes in society as a whole; it has an invariably metaphorical structure – “a metaphor for both the perceived hopes and fears of society. ... They are the recollections of youthful experience seen through a lens of popular discourse and subsequent life events” ([Osgerby, 2005: 422](#)). Positive images of young people of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for whom youth was “eternal pleasure” ([Osgerby, 2005: 422](#)), prevailed in feature films of that period but gradually lost their carelessness.

Though screen images of university students presented in feature films of the 1960s and 1970s were rather positive, such enthusiasm was not universal, even in the midst of the teenager consumer cult the concept of “youth as an eternal pleasure” was accompanied by more gloomy images of youth – representations associated with the worst excesses and the most negative consequences of social changes ([Osgerby, 2005: 426](#)).

In later periods of the cinematography, images of student youth acquired an increasingly negative color. For example, British students' remonstrative attitude towards political events and the economic recession accompanied by unemployment and growth of social injustice caused a situation where a new counterculture was perceived as a direct breakdown of law and order in the country. University riots and demonstrations against the war in Vietnam were presented by mass media as an activity of subversive elements that seek to completely destroy the social and moral order in the country ([Osgerby, 2005: 429](#)).

During the 1980s and 1990s, active development of a new consumption society accompanied by displaying such negative youth phenomena in the British mass media as racial problems, negativism, drug addiction and juvenile delinquency contributed to creating media images of students as rather idle and negative young people. Gradually, this image was significantly transformed: contemporary cinematography increasingly began to focus on issues concerning relationships, changes in life values and worldview.

These trends can be observed both in British and American cinema that quickly and confidently took a leading position in the Western film distribution of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Though initially the “Dream Factory” presented images of idealized students who experienced no financial difficulties and were absorbed with complex personal relationships with the opposite sex, later viewers could see quite different characters living in the adult world which is not always fair and full of contradictions.

Thus, D. James, considering the peculiarities of the American cinema in the 1960s, emphasizes the influence of social and political events on the representation of media images: the Beat Generation, Students for a Democratic Society, Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement, hippies and the counterculture, the war in Vietnam, the Weathermen, the New Morality and the Women's Equality Movement. These are just some of the influential movements and social phenomena in the US that arose as a result of the diverse, ever-changing, continuous process of political and cultural activities ([James, 2002](#)). All these phenomena, in some or other way, were reflected in films created in English-speaking countries.

An extensive analysis of the teacher's image represented in Western films is given in works by T. Brown (Brown, 2011, 2015). The author singles out five major social roles of teachers represented in the cinema in different periods of its development. In the first four categories, according to T. Brown, the teacher acts as a key character in an audiovisual media text, and whatever errors of his activity are portrayed on the screen, the viewer can see that the teacher is doing everything possible to help his students improve and occupy a worthy place in life in the end. But in the modern cinema the role of the teacher has changed: teachers become more inert and formal; they stick to bureaucratic obstacles and disappointments instead of a noble role of preparing students for joining the adult society (Brown, 2015). A striking example here is a character from the movie *Irrational Man* (2015) – Lucas, Professor of Philosophy, who has little interest in life except for his own disillusionments and failures.

D.A. Korosteleva studies the theme of youth protests in the American cinema of the 1960s and 1970s (Korosteleva, 2002). Considering these issues of American cinema in this time interval, D.A. Korosteleva also addresses the transformational processes taking place in the representation of student youth under the influence of the counterculture, noting that “marginal culture has saved its hero from the necessity to be a bearer of positive traits, a role model, an ethical and aesthetic guide. In the 1960s, an absolutely unprecedented type of hero appears in American cinema that rejects all the traits traditionally interpreted as heroic. The counterculture abandoned upbringing based on giving positive examples (which did not exist in reality) and turned primarily to satire, grotesque or a mere statement of facts” (Korosteleva, 2002).

A study conducted by A. Artyukh revealed that “youth issues, sex, violence, rock and roll in the late 1960s and early 1970s were simply a salvation for Hollywood that seriously distraught in the face of significant demographic and social changes brought by the 1960s” (Artyukh, 2010). Later, in the 1970s, new trends emerged in American cinema related to commercialization and simultaneous transformation of the youth image on the screen: “craving for breaking the generally accepted norms, novelty and shocking behavior significantly decreased; there was a taste for art which gave pleasure and did not impose moral problems (television series and melodramas became popular, abstractionism and conceptualism lost their popularity). In short, there was born a paradoxical effect: the counterculture began to be regarded both as a source of “neo-conservatism” and as a reason for all the subsequent changes in American cultural and social life based on the fear of the social movements of the 1960s” (Korosteleva, 2002).

In modern conditions, Hollywood has taken a dominant position in the film industry about students since “most of the world's film hits belong to US cinema. Hollywood film makers create lifestyle values and attitudes in the minds of masses” (Bosov, 2017: 70).

Considering the thematic-genre structure of an American youth film, V.V. Zharikova comes to the conclusion that “a youth film is determined by the age of its main characters and a definite system of characters' dramatic relationships (conflict with parents and / or other adults, first love, peer misunderstanding, need for self-affirmation in the community); at a formal level it must reflect a vivid trend in the culture of mass or counterculture” (Zharikova, 2015: 8).

In fact, English-language film production about students, one way or another, raised the “eternal” themes of adolescence throughout all stages of its development – search for oneself in the adult world, love experiences, preparation for an independent life, professional growth, etc. These issues found reflection in the very first films about students such as, for example, *Student Prince in Old Heidelberg* (1927) telling about a strong romantic feeling of the Austrian prince to an ordinary barmaid; a tragic fate of a college girl-student in the drama *Confessions of a Co-Ed* (1931) who got pregnant by the man she was in love with, but circumstances prevented their marrying and she had to marry her fellow-student. Another film image – Sabrina, the main character in the film *Confessions of a Sorority Girl* (1994), who aspired to achieve the position of a college leader by lying, cheating, blackmailing, seduction and manipulation. Later, these challenges associated with the growth of student youth were reflected in the film *The Student Teacher* (1973) telling about intending students; the film *How I Got into College* (1989) telling a story of a young man whose beloved girl inspired him to go to college with her.

Student world reflected in English-language films at different stages was rather changeable – carelessness of wealthy and prosperous students of the 1930s-1950s gave way to the rebellious spirit and emergence of the youth counterculture in the 1960s and 1970s, and later on, the

themes of lawlessness, racial discrimination, sexual minorities, and drug addiction found reflection on the screen.

Another topic increasingly used in modern Western films about studentship in recent decades is the problem of the so-called “special man”. According to Y.G. Voronetskaya-Sokolova, this term characterizes “a person with a disability and maladies that disrupt the human life activities determining his special needs” (Voronetskaya-Sokolova, 2016).

It should be noted that this topic has been exploited in English-language cinema since the early 1930s: films *Life Begins in College* (1937) and *The Miracle Worker* (1962) are also devoted to it.

According to Y.G. Voronetskaya-Sokolova, the image of the “special man” in later feature films changed significantly under the influence of the political and socio-cultural context and “also certain changes in the film aesthetics. Present-day images of “special people”, like never before, turn into iconic figures of the screen, and this has become a natural response to the query of time. In this case, the meaning of the image is revealed only in the communicative situation – through the viewer’s perception of it, and the outcome of these subject-object relations depends on the perceiving personality, his goals, momentary mood and general culture context” (Voronetskaya-Sokolova, 2016).

In fact, there are a lot of English-language films about students with disabilities, young people with various physical and mental disorders. Among them – the film *Mask* (1985) telling about brave and resolute Rocky Dennis who manages to find his place in society and deserve people’s respect despite a serious illness; the film *Won’t Back Down* (2012) is a story about a bureaucratic approach to students with serious health problems; another story about a responsive speech college teacher falling for a beautiful yet deaf girl in a small school is told in the movie *Children of a Lesser God* (1986), etc.

#### 4. Results

*English-language films about university: place of action; historical, sociocultural, political, and ideological contexts*

*Historical period of media texts*

English-language films about university and college students, to some extent, reflect social, economic and moral challenges characteristic of a particular stage in the development of film making. For example, the cinema of the 1930s-1950s opposing the “Great Depression” and the first time of the “American dream” that opened boundless opportunities for every young person regardless of origin and material wealth was characterized by a desire for a relatively light image of student life full of romantic adventures, music and entertainment (*College Humor*, 1933; *College Swing*, 1938; *Hold That Co-ed*, 1938; *Good News*, 1947; *She’s Working Her Way through College*, 1952; *The Affairs of Dobie Gillis*, 1953; *Bright Road*, 1953; *The Student Prince*, 1954; *Merry Andrew*, 1958, etc.).

Films showing student issues of the later 1960s-1970s, at any rate, touched upon the theme of youth protest and countercultural manifestations involving students. These phenomena are reflected in the films of this period as a violation of the generally accepted norms of behavior by young people, their shocking behavior and demonstration of social independence (*Pretty Maids All in a Row*, 1971; *Why Shoot the Teacher?*, etc.). These trends were dictated by social challenges of the time (the Vietnam War, the economic crisis, the sexual revolution, etc.).

Some time later, the era of avoiding acute social problems, numerous comedies and melodramas revealing relationships of young people and understanding the inner world of student youth replaced these trends (*French Postcards*, 1979; *Some Kind of Wonderful*, 1987; *How I Got into College*, 1989, etc.). There were stories about romantic or even mercantile teacher-students relationships among similar plots of the 1990s (*Foreign Student*, 1994; *Tina and the Professor*, 1995; *Foxfire*, 1996, etc.).

At the same time, the themes of youth crime, violence, drug addiction, freedom of manners, racial hatred and negative value orientations of the younger generation became more frequent in films about student life (*Foxes*, 1980; *Student Bodies*, 1981; *They’re Playing with Fire*, 1984; *Dangerously Close*, 1986; *Heathers*, 1988; *Stand and Deliver*, 1988; *The Chocolate War*, 1988; *Lean on Me*, 1989; *Politically Correct University*, 1994; *Foreign Student*, 1994; *Confessions of a Sorority Girl*, 1994; *Higher Learning*, 1995; *One Eight Seven*, 1997; *Notes on a Scandal*, 2006; *Bouquet of Barbed Wire*, 2010, etc.).



*Sociocultural, ideological and religious contexts**Ideology, trends, objectives, world outlook, concepts of these media texts authors in the sociocultural context; ideology and culture of the world depicted in media texts*

English-language films about students created in the 1930s-1950s are permeated with optimism and carelessness of student youth. It is no coincidence that there are so many musical films and comedies among them: *College Rhythm* (1934), *Life Begins in College* (1937), *Hold That Co-ed* (1938), *College Swing* (1938), *Merry Andrew* (1958), etc. The university teacher in the films of this period appears to the audience as a wise and fair mentor who defends students' interests (for example, professor from the comedy *She's Working Her Way through College*, 1952).

Speaking of the films shot in the 1960s and 1970s, according to D.A. Korosteleva, cinematography increasingly appealed to the "universal model of alternative behavior mainly composed of heterogeneous external manifestations (drugs, violence, alienation, denial) which gradually turned into some archetypal phenomenon firmly embedded in all forms and kinds of art. The external attributes of the counterculture in films, books, etc., even without any relation to the problems, is subconsciously associated by viewers with characters' belonging to an alternative social strata, and they consider the characters' behavior as a conscious or unconscious protest against some generally accepted norms regardless of whether the characters are actually bearers of this protest or not" (Korosteleva, 2002).

The representation of the teacher's image in film production also underwent a significant transformation. Real characters solving various professional and personal challenges replaced idealized images. Films of that period reflected the desire to reform the existing system and presented a new look at teacher-student relationships.

As for gender representations, unlike films about schools, most university teachers in the films (with some minor exceptions) are men. The student community is represented by both young men and girls.

*Characters' world view in media texts*

Students' world outlook concerns love, optimism, aspiration to achieve a high position in society. The dominant ideological values presented in the films about studentship are love, friendship, mutual understanding, search for like-minded people, belief that the brightest dreams will necessarily come true.

Life of most student characters is often associated with entertainment (not always within the law), love adventures, romance, and much less attention is paid to college or university studies.

The outlook of marginal representatives of the student community that often appear on the screen especially in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as a rule, is deprived of the desire for high life motives: life is full of betrayal, deception, negativism and injustice, and personal time is occupied by empty talking about sex, drugs, and "easy money".

If we turn to the world outlook of university teachers presented in the analyzed English-language films, their life values are focused not only on professional issues. Alongside with pedagogical challenges, they pay much attention to personal well-being, family life, struggle with internal contradictions and experiences.

*Structure and narration techniques in media texts**Place and time of action*

The time frame for most English-language feature films about students corresponds to the period displayed on the screen. Action most often unfolds not only at a university, campus or college. The most traditional places for students' pastime include cafes, bars, dance floors, parks, streets, highways or roads, etc. D.A. Korosteleva notes that "characters are almost never isolated from the environment: along with the aesthetics of the machine world, cinematography focuses on the permanent fixation of mass gatherings (discos, bars, clubs, institutions, busy streets), that is, spaces where there is always disunity with the appearance of community" (Korosteleva, 2002).

*Typical environment and household items*

Most films about university students present a comfortable environment of a prosperous and financially secured student's world. Well-off characters have a well-organized private space: they live in well-furnished rooms, have everything necessary for living and entertainment, get to the

university on private cars, and do not spare money for cafes and bars. A stereotyped image of the living conditions of negative characters represents a different picture: shabby furniture, unsanitary living conditions, bad taste and kitsch. At the same time, both positive and negative characters are often found in the same leisure places - in public gardens, youth clubs, discos, etc.

#### *Genre modifications*

Genre typology of feature films about university students is represented by comedies, dramas and musical films. The later periods are characterized by a significant increase in the number of dramas and melodramas, horror films, thrillers and erotic films.

#### *(Stereotyped) narrative techniques of representing reality*

As V.V. Zharikova rightly notes, “most of youth films characters are stereotyped; they pass from one narrative to another for many decades” (Zharikova, 2015: 12). In fact, very often one can define images of characters of several types in student-themed films, among which there is a positive character who is most often opposed by a sufficiently strong rival (marginal, criminal, etc.); a “bad guy” or a loser who often becomes a real hero after coping with severe life challenges; a romantic and helpless beauty; representatives of youth subcultures or countercultures; fans of music trends, etc. Representatives of various ethnic groups (Asians, Afro-Americans, Mexicans, etc.), followers of various religious faiths; representatives of a non-traditional sexual orientation joined these typical film characters in later English-language films (*In , Out*, 1997; *When Night Is Falling*, 1995; *The Seminarian*, 2010, etc.).

Very often one can see an image of a benevolent and creative teacher who is opposed to a dictator educationalist. Alongside with these types of teachers we frequently meet instructors – organization men or bureaucrats on the screen; also disappointed teachers suffering from professional burnout; teachers striving to combat the existing system of education and established models of teacher-student relationship. It is increasingly possible to meet a university teacher in the films of recent years who is not always able to resist cruelty and violence among students (*One Eight Seven*, 1997; *Murder 101: College Can Be Murder*, 2007; *April Showers*, 2009; *Dead on Campus*, 2014, etc.).

#### *Types of characters*

*Character’s age*: the age of the student audience, as a rule, corresponds to the age category of late adolescence. The age of university teachers can be different.

*Level of education*: students represented in the analyzed English-language films are school leavers or college graduates. University lecturers, as a rule, have higher education degrees. The education level of other characters may be different.

*Social status, profession*: the majority of students come from well-off families with no financial problems. As a rule, students’ parents occupy a rather high social position. Among them you can meet professors, teachers, judges, directors and owners of large companies, police officers, etc. However, in many student-themed films, students’ families do not reach the attention of the audience, and the student appears as a completely independent young man for whom friends and fellow-students are the closest associates.

*Character’s marital status*: a significant part of the students do not have a family yet and are actively searching for a life partner.

As far as university teachers are concerned, their family life is also far from idyllic. Loneliness, disappointment or lack of mutual understanding in family life is a frequent phenomenon in the representation of a university educator image in English-language feature films.

*Character’s appearance, clothing, constitution, temperament, and vocabulary*: the appearance and vocabulary of the majority of students in the films created in the 1930s-1950s were in the framework of external decencies and did not violate the generally accepted rules of social behavior. Student images shown in films of later periods are quite different: they often have an evocative appearance (especially members of some youth counterculture), tattoos, hairstyles and clothes indicating that they belong to a certain youth subculture, etc.

The vocabulary of the student community is also ambiguous: alongside with characters who speak a good literary language there are students who use not only youth slang but also profanity in their speech (although, to a much lesser extent, than in English-language films about school). Students often prefer discussing personal relationships and their well-being to talking about education issues.

Most students are rather fit and comply with the generally accepted canons of youth, adolescence and beauty. If there are obese characters with excess weight in the films, as a rule, they are represented as outcasts, losers or objects of mockery and jesting.

The most characteristic features of the modern student community are pronounced individualism, purposefulness and aspiration for career growth. Sometimes the attainment of a goal determines the choice of any means regardless of their moral component (*Tina and the Professor*, 1995; *The Student*, 2017, etc.).

The appearance of teachers is also presented ambiguously. In the films of earlier periods the image of a university teacher was more reserved (a classical costume, a strict dress, a neat hairstyle, etc.); in contemporary films the image of the teacher is getting more and more democratic, and in comedies it is often comical.

*Significant change in characters' life and the problem that occurred (violation of the usual mode of life):*

*Variant № 1 (students):* the character finds himself beyond a standard, habitual life due to some new conditions or events. The most typical situations are the following:

- fellow-students or friends reject the character or the character aspires to join a sufficiently closed group at any price (*Confessions of a Sorority Girl*, 1994; *Dead on Campus*, 2014, etc.);
  - the character is becoming mature thus adapting to the new role of an independent person.
- Often, the character has to sort out internal contradictions, to resist the majority, or revise own views on life values (*Foxes*, 1980; *Just One of the Guys*, 1987; *Heathers*, 1988; *Saved by the Bell: The College Years*, 1993; *Higher Learning*, 1995; *Good Will Hunting*, 1997; etc.).

*Variant № 2 (teachers):*

The character goes beyond the generally accepted social framework of teaching or behaving:

- the character chooses innovative or non-traditional methods of teaching or behavior, usually in the name of justice (*Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, 1977; *Children of a Lesser God*, 1986; *Stand and Deliver*, 1988; *Lean on Me*, 1989; *Waterland*, 1992; *One Eight Seven*, 1997; *Good Will Hunting*, 1997; *Lesson 21*, 2008; *The Perfect Student*, 2011; *The Student*, 2017; etc.).
- the character chooses incorrect or immoral models of interaction with students (*They're Playing with Fire*, 1984; *The Chocolate War*, 1988; *Tina and the Professor*, 1995; *Irrational Man*, 2015; *Killer Coach*, 2016; etc.).

*Solution to the problem (students):* the characters have to overcome a number of obstacles, undergo self-cultivation, learn to win and find a way out of a difficult situation to achieve their goal.

*Solution to the problem (teachers):* the teacher tries to correct the existing state of things using a tactful and confidential approach to students, new teaching methods and different treatment of students. Far from always (especially in films of the last two decades) the teacher-student relationships acquire the generally accepted model of a teacher and a student. In some cases, they acquire a romantic color or indicate a violation of moral and social standards.

## 5. Conclusion

The hermeneutic analysis of English-language feature films about university students has enabled us to draw the conclusions that this theme has always been popular in audiovisual media texts:

- film makers have invariably turned to problems concerning higher education, students' entry into adulthood, teacher-student interaction, promotion of value priorities for young people at all stages of cinematography from the silent cinema to the present stage of its development;
- genre specificity of feature films about students has expanded significantly with the development of the film industry. While the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was presented by dramas, melodramas, comedies and musical films, later on horror films, thrillers and science-fiction films prevailed;
- representation of student life, as a rule, is based on a stereotypical depiction of reality characteristic of a particular sociocultural stage. Changes in the social, cultural and ideological spheres are reflected, to some extent, in audiovisual media texts;
- the image of a student at different stages of English-language cinematography is essentially changing: this is a reckless but at the same time a rather modest young man who values romantic relationships in the films released in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; later representatives of youth subcultures, morally and behaviorally liberated young people come to replace this image; many of

them are ready to violate not only moral but also legal norms including disorderly love connections, use of alcohol and drugs, criminal actions for the sake of personal success;

- images of university teachers have also undergone a significant transformation. Alongside with highly professional and erudite teachers there appear exhausted and indifferent teachers on the screen; their behavior and appearance became more relaxed, their conduct sometimes does not comply with the norms of pedagogical ethics and morality;

- the content of English-language feature films underwent significant alterations depending on sociocultural changes: shifting of social, economic, political and moral priorities, one way or another, influenced the representation of student life. Nevertheless, the key vectors in many student-themed feature films have remained unchanged: the theme of love, friendship, justice, pursuit of a dream.

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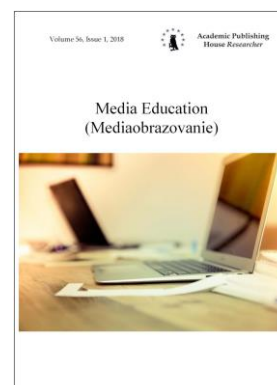
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## Film *Love, Simon* (2018) as a Gay Manifesto in Cinema on School Theme

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### Abstract

In the course of the hermeneutic analysis of the audiovisual media text, the author draws the following conclusions: 1) Western media took several decades to legalize non-traditional sexual orientations in general and in the school environment, in particular; 2) comedy drama *Love, Simon* (2018) is the pioneer film produced by a major Hollywood studio, featuring a gay protagonist being an underage school student; 3) homosexuality of the protagonist is presented by the film authors with the maximum degree of attractiveness for the audience (the synthesis of genres of comedy and melodrama, a charismatic performance, storyline following the key recipes of the most popular films on the school theme of the past), which provided impressive box office success; 4) the positive feedback of the American media critics on the film illustrates that political correctness of the Western society now extends not only to a tolerant attitude towards homosexuality among adults, but also among schoolchildren: this is eloquently expressed by the low age rating assigned to this the film (PG13); 5) the film *Love, Simon* contains signs of propaganda of non-traditional sexual orientation among minors, which formally falls under the Russian law No. 135-FZ (2013).

**Keywords:** film, school theme, student, media, media text, cinema, USA.

### 1. Introduction

In this article, we draw upon the hermeneutic analysis of the film *Love, Simon* (USA, 2018) that plays a role of a gay manifesto in films on school topic. As in our previous works (Fedorov, 2017; Fedorov, Huston, 2017; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2017; 2018; Fedorov, Levitskaya et al., 2017; 2018), we rely on the technologies developed by K. Bazalgette (Bazalgette, 1995), A. Silverblatt (Silverblatt, 2001), W.J. Potter (Potter, 2001) and U. Eco (Eco, 1998; 2005).

### 2. Materials and methods

The research material is an audiovisual media text on the school theme is the film *Love, Simon* (USA, 2018). The main method is a hermeneutic analysis (including ideological, identification, iconographic, plot and character analysis, etc., using the technologies developed by K. Bazalgette (Bazalgette, 1995), A. Silverblatt (Silverblatt, 2001: 80-81), W.J. Potter (Potter, 2001) and U. Eco (Eco, 1998; 2005). We have also analyzed American media's response to this film (Chang, 2018; D'Addario, 2018; DeMara, 2018; Frosch, 2018; Goldstein, 2018; Jenkins, 2018; Kenny, 2018; Morgenstern, 2018; Travers, 2018; Truitt, 2018; Wiegand, 2018, etc.).

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### 3. Discussion

In 2013 the Federal Law prohibiting propaganda of homosexual relations among minors (No. 135-FZ, 2013) came into force effecting some other legislative acts with the view to protect children from information propagating the negation of traditional family values (Federal Law "On the Protection of Children from Information Detrimental to Their Health and Development" No. 436-FZ dated 29 December 2010 (as of 2 July 2013). Article 5. Types of information detrimental to the health and(or) development of children). This Law interprets such propaganda as the dissemination of information aimed at forming non-traditional sexual attitudes among minors, attractiveness of non-traditional sexual relationships, distorted image of social equivalence of traditional and non-traditional sexual relationships, or the forced imposition of information of non-traditional sexual relationships, which can attract interest to such relationships. If these actions do not make up a criminal offence, offenders shall entail the imposition of an administrative fine in the amount of 4,000 to 5,000 rubles for citizens; in the amount of 40,000 to 50,000 rubles for officials; and media agencies can be fined up to 1,000,000 rubles or get administrative suspension of activity for up to 90 days.

In this regard, the liberal model of homosexual relations among high school students, that was shown without any consequences in the Russian remake of the Spanish TV series "Physics or Chemistry" in 2011, is now facing legal challenges. The context of Federal Law No. 135, explains why a recent American hit on school theme, *Love, Simon* (2018), which with the production budget \$ 17 million grossed \$ 57.2 million in worldwide box office (of which \$ 40.8 was in the US box office) and for the first three weeks consistently ranked among the top ten American box office films ([Box Office, 2018](#)), has not come out on Russian screens.

*Love, Simon* is far from the first film produced in the US and in the Western countries on the whole, with minor characters of homosexual orientation. Over the past quarter of the century, there have been quite a lot of media texts featuring young homosexuals: *Edge of Seventeen* (USA, 1998), *The Mudge Boy* (USA, 2003), *Summer Storm* (Germany, 2004), *Curiosity of Chance* (Belgium – USA, 2006), *North Sea Texas* (Belgium, 2011), *G.B.F.* (USA, 2013), *Geography Club* (USA, 2013), *Monster Pies* (Australia, 2013), *Boys* (Holland, 2014), *Date and Switch* (USA, 2014), etc. However, *Love, Simon* was advertised as the first ever American film about school homosexuality, delivered by a large studio (in this case, 20th Century Fox), which provided screening in 2434 American cinemas with an age rating of PG-13.

Moreover, this comedy melodrama not only brought money three times its budget, but also received good reviews in press – 92 US reviewers on average gave the film 7.4 points out of ten possible.

The screen adaptation of B. Albertalli's popular novel *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*, directed by Greg Berlanti, tells the story of the first love of a handsome high school student, Simon, who discovers his homosexuality. He tactfully scoffs at his old-fashioned forty-year-old parents, happily married for twenty years, "they still look like they've toppled off the top of a wedding cake" ([Roeper, 2018](#)), smiles at his younger sister, who's really into cooking. At the end of the film, Simon kisses his (also teenage) African American boyfriend (racial political correctness in action) on the Ferris wheel in the amusement park, with the enthusiastic applause of classmates, some of whom now seem to even envy his unconventional sexual orientation ...

Of course, it would be absolutely impossible to imagine such a story in American cinema, not only during the time of Hays Code (1930-1967), but also in much more liberated 1970s-1980s. After all, even in the daring by the standards of the 1960s, the drama of W. Wyler's *The Children's Hour* (1961), the theme of (unrequited) sexual attraction of a female teacher to her friend was shown extremely chastely and timidly. The theme of homosexual relations erupted in full view in American cinema about school only in the comedy *In , Out* (1997), released by one of the major studios – Paramount Pictures, but it was focused on the homosexual orientation of the teacher, not students. Later on, gradually, gay teenage characters, even without the help of large Hollywood studios, won their place in the sun, step by step contributing to social acceptance to non-traditional orientation of not only adults (by the 1990s it was practically a norm in European and American cinema), but also of secondary school students.

Thus, the release of the film *Love, Simon* in 2018 was targeted at carefully prepared ground. Hence, it is clear that, according to the leading American film critics, this *silvery romantic, stunning, exciting, charming, sweet, fresh, warm, humorous, cordial, tender, sensitive,*

*sympathetic, friendly, good-natured and, most importantly, life-affirming* story of a seventeen-year-old gay school student (Chang, 2018; D'Addario, 2018; DeMara, 2018; Frosch, 2018; Goldstein, 2018; Jenkins, 2018; Kenny, 2018; Morgenstern, 2018; Travers, 2018; Truitt, 2018; Wiegand, 2018) "is so honest, funny and real that it never ceases to capture your imagination and uplift your spirit" (Reed, 2018). According to Bruce DeMara, the film has a high-quality casting and a well-thought-out script (DeMara, 2018), and Doreen St.Felix, a columnist for the prestigious New Yorker, admits that the emotional impact of the film's coda "made the theatre roar. And it was their cheering, not the kiss, that made me emotional" (St. Félix, 2018).

Some American reviewers have clearly emphasized the propaganda direction of Greg Berlanti's picture, since it "should also attract LGBT teens starved for onscreen representation, while older gay viewers will likely wish there had been a coming-out movie this buoyant back in their day" (Frosch, 2018), and *Love, Simon* is precisely the kind of movie its main character so desperately needs – which means, Simon is about to become the model for an entire demographic that has had to do without, until now. ... For the longest time, gay audiences had to content themselves with being relegated to best friend roles... A film like this will be analyzed, critiqued, and debated from countless angles (homophobes will accuse of it "turning people gay," while queer advocates may fault it for casting a straight-identifying actor in such a high-profile gay role), but there's no question that it's a start" (Debruge, 2018). Peter Debruge points out that "if this pioneering film is a success (a big "if," since the young men who need it most might be too self-conscious to see it in theaters), expect more female-friendly gay-male love stories marketed at teens – the ultimate upside of which will be a chance to show those struggling with oppression, suicidal thoughts, and the other trappings of the closet that they are not alone, and need not feel ashamed"(Debruge, 2018).

There are very few skeptical reviews of the film *Love, Simon* in the US media. Incidentally, it was noted that the film has "the thin gloss and one-thing-after-another rhythm of a pleasant but lightweight TV show", with teenage characters who "carefully and conveniently self-censor their language to stay comfortably within the confines of a PG-13 rating" (Hassenger, 2018).

However, many American critics (Goldstein, 2018; Travers, 2018, etc.) in this connection linked the film not teenage television series, but to famous coming-of-age comedies for a teenage audience directed by John Hughes (1950-2009) - such as *Sixteen Candles* (1984), *The Breakfast Club* (1984) and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (1986). The comparison, in our opinion, is completely justified, but with one fundamental caveat: the pattern of light comedies about teenagers and their heterosexual attractions has been adjusted for gender and was used in the film *Love, Simon* in homosexual context.

It should be noted that a media literacy organization *Common Sense Media*, was one of the first to publish a supporting pack of materials for parents and teachers about the film with label "Great for families" (Slaton, 2018). The parents' guide highlights the positive message of the film: "the movie's messages are about acceptance, inclusion, remaining true to yourself, and treating others with care and kindness. Several incidents of homophobia are used to teach lessons about atonement and empathy. Strong family bonds play a crucial role. Courage and integrity are themes" and stress the fact, that the protagonist is a positive role model: "Simon is a relatable "everyguy": He's accepted and liked by other students, and his family members (including a younger sister) are kind and supportive. He does well in school, is easy to live with, and doesn't do drugs, and though he makes mistakes, he atones for them and attempts to do better – many parents will likely consider him a positive role model for teens". The most important section of the film's guide called "Families can talk about" suggests several essential questions that parents can discuss with their children after the film, e.g. "How does Simon demonstrate courage and integrity? Why are those important character strengths? How does the movie depict bullying? What should teens do if that happens to them?... Are drinking and drug abuse glamorized?", etc. (Slaton, 2018). However, none of the suggested questions directly addresses the issue of teenage (homo)sexuality.

#### 4. Results

##### *The hermeneutic analysis of the film Love, Simon (USA, 2018)*

Historical, cultural, political, ideological contexts. Features of the historical period of media texts' production, market conditions that contributed to the idea, the process of creating media texts, the degree of influence of political and social events on media texts.

The historical period of the creation of the media text is the second decade of the XXI century, the time when worldwide films on school theme sharply increased the presence of non-traditional orientation characters (usually as a supporting character, a protagonist's friend). In the US, the release of a comedy melodrama *Love, Simon* can be viewed in the context of the victory of political correctness, including sexual sphere. And the fact that one of the major Hollywood studios for the first time made the school student protagonist gay, proves that the notion of sexual political correctness has virtually legally spread to minors.

*The worldview of the characters and the hierarchy of values depicted in the media text*

The worldview of the school students in the film *Love, Simon* (2018) is determined by the desire to find their own way in life, above all, in the sexual sphere. Almost all of the characters-students (and adults too) are optimistic, easy going, they neither have any problems with classes, nor family troubles, and the protagonist, having realized his non-traditional orientation, is ironically lenient about his parents who obviously enjoy conventional family values.

Structure and methods of narration in the media text:

- location and time of action: suburbs of Atlanta, the USA, 2017. The main locations are school classes, corridors, houses, a school yard, an amusement park;

- furnishing, everyday objects: modern school classes, comfortable and cozy house of the protagonist, car.

- (stereotyped) ways of depicting reality: most of the characters fit well into the frame of positive ones, there is technically a single villain - a school blackmailer.

*Typology of characters: character features, appearance, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures, the presence or absence of the stereotypical manner of representation in the media text:*

- age of the characters: about 17 years old. The age of other characters varies from 10 to 60;

- level of education: incomplete secondary education for schoolchildren; higher education for teachers and parents of the protagonist;

- social status: financial situation of the characters, apparently, is quite well-off;

- family representation: the protagonist's parents have been happily married for twenty years;

- appearance, clothing, physique, vocabulary. The characters are dressed according to the fashion of the end of the second decade of the 21st century. Almost all of the schoolchildren (except for the blackmailer) are cute and slim, friendly, are ready to support in a difficult moment; their vocabulary is devoid of crude expressions that could violate the age rating of PG-13. Adult characters (Simon's parents, the teacher), though shown as archaic heterosexuals, are also quite sympathetic. The protagonist, a high school student Simon, is attractive and intelligent, and this, of course, is especially important for the success of the media text, as it would be much more challenging for the film's authors to make the mass audience empathy with a gay teenager of dull or tacky appearance and marginal behavior. By the way, a similar device was used by Pasquale Festa Campanile (1927-1986) in the frivolous comedy *Nobody is perfect / Nessuno è perfetto* (Italy, 1981), where a former military man, having undergone a sex change operation, turned into ... a charming young woman in a sparkling performance by Ornella Muti. This comedy was a great success with the European audience precisely because the main role was played not by a real transsexual, but by the famous Italian movie star, fully armed with femininity. Thus, if the adult film *No one is perfect* has become a kind of an anthem for the transsexuals' charm, then *Love, Simon* offers a minor audience a controversial gay model to follow.

- *a significant change in the characters' lives*

A schoolboy who realizes his minority orientation becomes the object of blackmailing by his classmate who accidentally learned about his online correspondence.

- *the character's problem arises* from the protagonist's doubts (though not too painful) about whether to come out of the closet.

- *solution of the problem*

The protagonist ventures to openly declare her homosexuality and kisses an African-American boyfriend accompanied by enthusiastic applause of his classmates.



## 5. Conclusion

In the course of the hermeneutic analysis of the audiovisual media text, we came to the following conclusions:

- Western media took several decades to legalize non-traditional sexual orientation in general and in school environment, in particular;
- a romantic comedy *Love, Simon* (2018) is the pioneering film released by a major Hollywood studio, featuring a gay teenager as the protagonist;
- homosexuality of the protagonist is presented by the film authors with the maximum degree of attractiveness for the audience (the synthesis of genres of comedy and melodrama, a charismatic performance, storyline following the key recipes of the most popular films on the school theme of the past), which provided impressive box office success;
- the positive feedback of the American media critics on the film illustrates that political correctness of the Western society now extends not only to a tolerant attitude towards homosexuality among adults, but also among schoolchildren: this is eloquently expressed by the low age rating assigned to this the film (PG13);
- the media text's message visibly contains signs of propaganda of non-traditional sexual orientation among minors (vulnerable to social influences, teens who are in the process of searching for their identity), which makes it subject to the Russian law No. 135-FZ (2013) and prevents from being shown in Russian cinemas.

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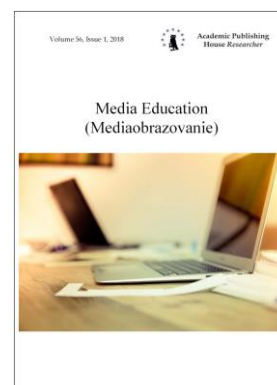
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## Comparative analysis of the development of mass media education in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries

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### Abstract

Analysis of the development of mass media education in the CIS countries showed that the main sections of the contents of the media education program (the existence of a section depends on the age and professional status of the audience) can be presented in the following way: the place and role, media and media education functions in the modern society, types and genres, media languages; basic terms, concepts related to media culture; historical stages of development of media culture in the world; analysis and evaluation of the functioning of media and media texts of different types and genres in the socio-cultural and ideological contexts; technologies of creation and distribution of media texts of various kinds and genres. Areas of application of such programs are: schools, secondary special educational institutions, universities, advanced training courses, additional education institutions and leisure centers; distant media education courses aimed at various population groups; independent (continuous/lifelong) media education, for example, through Internet sites. Modern models of media education in the CIS countries (with all the diversity of age and professional whole groups of the population) contain diagnostic, content-targeted and effective components.

Thereat, the author of the article believes that the CIS countries should not build the development of mass media education of their citizens based on confrontation and ideological propaganda. Thematical units of media education syllabi should evenly give the audience an idea that there is no single supreme democratic state in the world with ideally objective mass media. That is why the basis of media education activity must be sociocultural concepts (including, of course, analytical and practical components) rather than ideological ones that will allow the audience to comprehensively master the ambiguous world of media culture.

**Keywords:** media education, media competence, media literacy, media pedagogy, media, model, CIS, school, university, society.

### 1. Introduction

Analysis of the development of mass media education in the CIS countries (Akhmetova, 2011; 2012; 2014; 2016; Baranov, 2002; Beknazarova, 2011; Bondarenko, 2009; Chelysheva, 2008; Fateeva, 2007; Gabor, 2002; Gendina, 2017; Gudilina, 2007; Gumenyuk, Potapova, 2015; Hilko, 2007; Ismayilova, 2016; Ivanov, Ivanova, 2013; Kirillova, 2012; Korkonosenko, 2004; Korochensky, 2005; Koropatnik, 2015; Kovbasco, 2013; Kulinsky, 2010; Mokroguz, 2013;

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Naydyonova, 2013; Nuraliev, 2010; Onkovich, 2009; Pocheptsov, 2015; Robak, 2002; Sakhnevich, 2010; Sharikov, 2012; Spichkin, 1999; Vartanova, Zasursky, 2003; Venidiktov, 2015; 2017; Vozchikov, 2007; Zaznobina, 1998; Zhizhina, 2009; Zhurin, 2009, etc.) shows that it is advancing unevenly.

Regarding the intensity and levels of development of media education, the CIS countries can be divided into three groups: 1) countries with a relatively high level of development of mass media education (theoretical researches, practical implementation): Russia and Ukraine; 2) countries with medium level of development of mass media education (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia), 3) countries with low level of mass media education development (Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan). Being part of the CIS till August 18, 2009, Georgia also, in our opinion, belonged to the third group.

Our assessment of the current situation can be verified by the findings of researchers from the CIS countries. For example, K. Ismayilova notes that *"in Uzbekistan the state of media education today can be characterized as being in the stage of formation. There is no concept of a national model for the development of media education; there is no single system of media pedagogy. Media education projects are more evident in informal education (trainings of non-state educational institutions, advanced training courses, etc.). There are not enough specialists capable of effectively educating media literacy"* (Ismailova, 2016: 124). In the "Report on the results of the study of the level of media literacy in the Kyrgyz Republic" (a survey of the population over 16 in the Kyrgyz Republic was conducted from September 1 to November 30, 2017, 1200 urban and rural respondents from seven regions were interviewed) (Report..., 2018: 11) states that in Kyrgyzstan "the topic of media literacy is relevant and challenging. The existing activities to increase the level of media literacy as a skill and the development of media literacy as a science are both at a rudimentary stage" (Report..., 2018: 94). A similar situation is currently observed in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan (Tajidinov, Rustamov, Kosimov, Ibodova, 2010) and Turkmenistan...

In terms of practical implementation of mass media education in schools by the end of the second decade of the 21st century, the primacy undoubtedly belongs to Ukraine, where in 2010 the "Concept of introducing media education in Ukraine" was adopted (Concept..., 2010), and in 2011 a large-scale experiment of integrating media education programs in dozens of Ukrainian schools. Nevertheless, since 2014, the process of media education development in Ukraine has acquired a specific character, as it will be discussed in more detail below.

Despite significant advances in research and publications in media education field (Baranov, 2002; Bondarenko, 2009; Chelysheva, 2008; Fateeva, 2007; Gendina, 2017; Gudilina, 2007; Hilko, 2007; Kirillova, 2012; Korkonosenko, 2004; Korochensky, 2005; Sharikov, 2012, Spichkin, 1999; Vartanova, Zasursky, 2003; Vozchikov, 2007; Zaznobina, 1998; Zhizhina, 2009; Zhurin, 2009, etc.), the practical implementation of mass media education in Russia is still of a sporadic nature and in many ways continues to depend on the efforts of enthusiasts.

## 2. Materials and methods

Materials of our research are academic writings on media literacy education, and media competence published in a variety of countries, the CIS countries foremost, as well as Internet sites, and evidence of the practical application of media education in the CIS countries, accumulated from 1992 to the present day. Methodology is based on theoretical framework on the relationship, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and the logical in cognition, the theory of the dialogue of cultures by M. Bakhtin – V. Bibler (taking into account the theoretical concepts developed by such well-known researchers as Y. Lotman, U. Eco and others). The research is based on a content approach (identifying the content of the process being studied, with due regard to the aggregate of its elements, interaction between them, their nature, access to facts, analysis and synthesis of theoretical conclusions, etc.) and a comparative approach.

The following methods are used: data collection (dissertations, extended abstracts of Ph.D. dissertations, monographs, articles, reports) related to the project's theme, analysis of academic literature, theoretical analysis and synthesis; generalization and classification; content analysis.

### 3. Discussion

#### *Countries with a relatively high level of mass media education development*

##### *Russia*

Since there is a special article devoted specifically to the state of media education in Russia (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2018), in this article we only note that, unlike Ukraine, the relatively high Russian level of media and information literacy development is manifested mainly not at the level of practical implementation, but at the theoretical and methodological levels (Baranov, 2002; 2008; Bondarenko, 2009; Chelysheva, 2008; Fateeva, 2007; 2015; Fedorov et al., 2014; Fedorov, 2001; 2003; 2007; 2009; Fedorov, 2003; Fedorov, Chelysheva, 2002; Fedorov, Novikova, 2005; Fortunatov, 2009; Gendina, 2013; 2017; Gudilina, 2007; Hilko, 2007; Kirillova, 2005; 2012; Korkonosenko, 2004; Korochensky, 2003; 2005; Levitskaya et al., 2016; Polat, 2001; Sharikov, 2005; 2012; Silverblatt, Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2016; Soldatova et al., 2013; Spichkin, 1999; Tsymbalenko, Sharikov, Shcheglova, 2006; Vartanova, Zasursky, 2003; Vozchikov, 2007; Zadorin et al., 2017; Zaznobina, 1998; Zhizhina, 2009; Zhurin, 2009, etc.), although in recent years there has been a growing expansion into the practical field in this area.

##### *Ukraine*

For quite a long time (1992-2013), Ukraine was in a situation of the country, strongly influenced by the Russian media education experience, including the academic developments of our research school (Balyk, 2012: 171-177; Bondur, 2008: 33-36; Burim, 2012: 155-162; Chemeris, 2006: 104-108; Cherepovska, 2009: 15-26; Gurinenko, 2009: 181-184; Ivanov, Ivanova, 2013: 25-44; Ivanov, Shkoba, 2012: 41-52; Kazakov, 2007; 2009: 88-94; Kosyuk, 2005; Lozitska, 2009: 60-65; 2010: 60-66; Oleksyuk, Shubenko, 2009: 77-87; Onkovych, 2007: 357-363; 2008: 165-177; 2009: 252-255, 327-333; Sakhnevich, 2010: 239-242; Sheguta, 2013: 10-12; Trohanyak, 2007: 54-57; Voloshina, 2010: 510-517; Zakharchuk, 2010: 145-151 and others). One of the articles published in Kiev was specifically dedicated to the activities of our research school "Media Education and Media Competence" (Kovbasko, 2013: 210-218).

The media education experience of UNESCO, and Western countries, also actively rendered in Ukraine (Barishpolets, 2008: 162-170; Cheremis, 2012: 124-130; 2013: 215-221; Dub, 2012: 4-5; Ivanov, Ivanova, 2013: 25-44; Ivanov, Voloshenyuk, Kulchynska, 2011; Moroz, 2011; Onkovych, 2010: 119-128; Robak, 2002: 70-92; Trohanyak, 2008: 55-62; Vasyanovich, 2007: 11-21, etc.).

Comparative studies were also attempted. For example, levels of media literacy of Polish and Ukrainian students were compared: 54 students from Wroclaw University and 42 students from Lviv National University participated in the experiment (Trohanyak 2009: 41). The findings showed that 71 % of Lviv students do not know anything about media education, identifying it with distant education; they did not take any courses on media education at the university. Polish students, on the contrary, had the opportunity to attend the media education course, so 78 % of the respondents in this group were able to correctly identify the tasks of media education (Trohanyak 2009: 45).

A similar analysis was made upon detecting the levels of media literacy of the youth in Slovakia and Ukraine in 2004-2008. The authors of the study used quantitative methods - questionnaires and written tests with subsequent meaningful analysis. The Slovak sample consisted of 674 respondents, of which 206 were university students, 188 were graduate students and 180 were students of other years of study. In Ukraine (in 2004), the sample was 2003 respondents aged 14 to 35. The related study with a slightly modified toolkit was conducted in 2007. The results of the research attested to the fact that Ukrainian youth lagged behind Slovak peers in terms of media literacy (Afanasyev, 2010: 45-47).

In connection with the experimental introduction of media education in Ukrainian schools, 93 teachers of primary, secondary and high schools were surveyed (the majority of the respondents were female – 78 %) (Mokroguz 2013: 426).

Therewith, the interviewed Ukrainian teachers prioritized media education objectives as follows:

- protection against harmful media influence, for example, from the impact of violent scenes on the screen, from propaganda of "bad taste", from works of low artistic quality, etc. (74.5 %);
- development of critical thinking of the individual in relation to media (62.8 %);
- preparing people to live in a democratic society (61.6 %);

- development of "good" aesthetic taste, evaluation of aesthetic qualities of media texts, appreciation of masterpieces of media culture (58.8 %);
- development of the audience's ability to conduct the moral values, psychological analysis of various aspects of media, media culture (55.8 %);
- teaching the audience practical skills to use media technology (38.1 %);
- development of personal communication skills (37.3 %);
- development of skills of self expression with the help of media, media texts creation (31.7 %);
- development of the audience's ability to perform political, ideological analysis of various aspects of media, media culture (31.3 %);
- development of the audience's ability to analyze media texts in a broad cultural and sociocultural context (28.5 %);
- satisfaction of various audience's needs in the field of media (16.1 %);
- development of the audience's ability to perceive, understand and analyze media language (audiovisual level, composition, stylistics, symbols, etc.), to "decode" media texts (11.9 %);
- teaching the theory of media and media culture (9.8 %);
- teaching the history of the media, the history of media culture (3.8 %) (Mokroguz, 2013: 427-428).

Since this survey was conducted on the basis of the questionnaires developed by our research team (Fedorov, 2007), we can compare the results obtained in Ukraine with the similar results of the questionnaire survey of Russian educators (Fedorov, 2007: 170-180), where teachers from Russia ranged the most crucial objectives of media education as follows:

- development of critical thinking (the main task is: development of critical thinking, autonomy of an individual in relation to media / media texts) – 63.2 %;
- development of aesthetic perception, taste, abilities for competent evaluation of aesthetic quality of media texts, understanding; propaganda of masterpieces of media culture – 57.9 %;
- development of the audience's ability to political, ideological analysis of various aspects of media / media culture – 50.9 %;
- development of the audience's ability to analyze media texts in a broad cultural and sociocultural context – 43.8 %;
- teaching the audience practical skills to use media technology – 43.8 %;
- development of the audience's ability to perceive, understand and analyze media languages - 36.8 %;
- protection of the audience from harmful media influence – 35.1 %;
- equipping people to live in a democratic society with the help of media / media culture- 35.1 %;
- satisfying the needs of the audience – 33.3 % (Fedorov, 2007).

A comparative analysis of the opinions shows that while the Ukrainian teachers prioritize protective tasks (74.5 %), their Russian colleagues appreciate the development of students' critical thinking (63.2 %), and meanwhile only 35 % of them attach more importance to inoculatory approach. However Ukrainian teachers (as, in fact, Western European countries) appreciate the task of preparation people for participation in a democratic society (61.6 %), whereas only one in three Russian educators share this priority.

But with respect to the need to develop a good aesthetic taste, assess the aesthetic qualities of media texts; understand media texts, masterpieces of media culture, the viewpoints of Ukrainian and Russian teachers are very close (58.8 % and 57.8 %).

It was revealed that the interviewed teachers believe that media education of schoolchildren should be compulsory (65 % in Ukraine, 63 % in Russia) as integrated in basic school disciplines (44.9 % in Ukraine, 45.6 % in Russia), as a separate subject (32.3 % in Ukraine, 24.5 % in Russia) or as the synthesis of autonomous and integrated lessons (20.2 % in Ukraine, 50.8 % in Russia). Approximately one third of teachers (28.8 % in Ukraine, 34.8 % in Russia) think that the media education of schoolchildren should be optional or extra-curricular. Only 3.6 % of teachers – in Ukraine and 14 % – in Russia resist the idea of schoolchildren's media education (Mokroguz, 2013: 430; Fedorov, 2007). As one can see, there are very similar trends.

It was found that only 3.2 % of Ukrainian teachers used elements of media education in each lesson. More common were the following answers: at 1-2 lessons on the topic (24.2 %), at 1-2 lessons per quarter (32.3 %), at 1-2 lessons a semester (16.4 %), at 1-2 lessons a year (22.2 %). Only

1.7 % of teachers stated that they have never integrated media education in their lessons (Mokroguz 2013: 434). In Russia, 28.2 % of teachers said that media education is used to a greater or lesser extent in the classroom, but the percentage of teachers not involved in media education was much higher – 25.6 % (Fedorov, 2007).

Among the obstacles to using the elements of media education in the lessons, the teacher mentioned the following: little knowledge on the theory and methodology of media education (65.8 % in Ukraine, 54.3 % in Russia), time consuming lesson planning (42.5 % – in Ukraine), lack of own media skills (33.1 % in Ukraine, 24.5 % in Russia), lack of school officials' support and guidance (28.3 % in Ukraine, 77.2 % in Russia), absence of financial incentives (3,6 % – in Ukraine, – 89,4 % in Russia) (Mokroguz, 2013: 435; Fedorov, 2007). As we can see, with the relative similarity of some points, Russian teachers demonstrated more interest in opportunities of fundraising and more sensitive to authorities' impact.

Of course, during this period it is possible to distinguish some authentic scientific and methodological developments of Ukrainian colleagues: G.G. Pocheptsov and V.F. Ivanov published many works devoted to mass communications, media influences and information wars (Ivanov, 2009-2010; Pocheptsov, 1999; 2000; 2001; 2011, etc.). B. Potiatynik and N. Gabor tried to find their way in media education with an emphasis on media ecology (Potiatynik, 2004; Gabor, 2002), G.V. Onkovych developed the concept of media didactics (Onkovych, 2009; Onkovych, 2013: 79-89; Onkovych et al., 2013). Thus, in Ukraine in recent decades there have developed several directions for interpreting the goals and objectives of media education. The most prominent are Kiev group, which we conventionally refer to as the group of "media didactics" (G. Onkovych, V. Ivanov, etc.), Lviv school of "media ecology" (B. Potiatynik, N. Gabor, etc.) and Mariupol school of "media criticism" (G. Pocheptsov and others). These three centers can be attributed to some degree to the "enlightening effect" of media education. In contrast to them, Kharkiv National University adopted an alternative media education model, in which the emphasis is on the aesthetic component of media and visual communications (Bakirov, Starodubtseva, 2013: 51).

Taking into account the Russian and Western experience, media pedagogues of Ukraine began to develop teaching manuals (especially vigorously upon the beginning of a large-scale experimental introduction of media education in Ukrainian schools) (Basics..., 2014; Cherepovska, 2010; Media culture..., 2009; Practical ..., 2013; Sakhnevich, 2010; Media education ..., 2012; 2014, etc.). More and more scientific-methodical conferences were organized to involve Ukrainian educators in the media education process (Collection of ..., 2013; 2015; 2017; Materials..., 2013; Media culture..., 2008, etc.).

However, since the spring of 2014, especially in connection with the formation of DNR (Donetsk People's Republic) and LNR (Lugansk People's Republic) military operations on their borders, mass media education in Ukraine has increasingly assumed an ideological color. The early signs of these changes were visible in the article by Y. Emets-Dobronosova with the eloquent title "Media Education" according to the Kremlin's recipe" (Emets-Dobronosova, 2014). The author declared substantially unsupported claims that *"a vivid example of the multidimensionality of the Kremlin's technologies" was the "negative influence" of Russia on the development of media education in Ukraine: "Ukrainian scientists' embeddedness in the Russian context of the development of media education is impressive. They regularly and in sufficient scale speak not at international forums on media education, but at Russian conferences. Immediately after the start of the program on the development of media education in Ukraine, seminars and trainings were launched, with only one nuance - under the paternal leadership of Russian specialists. Even the history of media education worldwide most Ukrainian pioneer scientists in this field have studied with the mediation of Russian publications"* (Emets-Dobronosova, 2014).

It is unclear how the studies of Russian acknowledgement of international theory and practice of media education, and Russian experience in media education in itself, can do any harm to Ukrainian researchers in the field.

It should be noted that the above criticism was promptly taken into account by Ukrainian media educators. For example, textbooks on media education, published in Kiev in 2017 (Authors' ..., 2017; Parents..., 2017; Media Literacy..., 2017), are mostly based on Western resources, they have almost no references to the Russian experience.

Moreover, as early as in 2015, in Ukraine, a number of articles were published which message was to change the media education concept in Ukraine, giving now the priority of ideological and



information confrontation. So M. Koropatnik in the article "Peculiarities of media education in the conditions of the "hybrid war" of Russia against Ukraine" expresses indignation that media education in Ukraine *"continues to be based mainly on traditional positivistic educational principles without taking into account the mass media's propaganda pressure on the consciousness of people of different age categories with a sufficiently powerful manipulative potential. But in response to the aggressive information environment, there is a need for a deeper analysis of the characteristics of information, disinformation and propaganda wars in order to consider them in the practice of media education, especially in terms of increasing its effectiveness in the process of socialization of the individual. ... There is the basis for this - the Ukrainian model of media education that integrates the best world experience: Canadian (development of critical thinking), French (civic education), American (priority of creativity vs. authoritarian approach in education), British (combination of protective model of "vaccination" and aesthetic development). The prerequisites for achieving one of the most important tasks of media education in the current conditions is to develop critical thinking, the ability to understand the hidden meaning of messages, and to resist the manipulation of the individual's consciousness by the media-create an ideological theory of media education and the theory of media education as a means of critical thinking development"* (Koropatnik, 2015: 18-21).

Similar ideas were developed by M. Koropatnik and in his article "Problems of forming media competence of the population in Ukraine regarding the events in the Crimea and Donbass in the context of Russia's information and propaganda aggression" (Koropatnik, 2015: 357-372), in which the author for some reason does not provide analysis why Ukraine, having become the victim of the "aggressor" in the opinion of the Kiev regime in 2014, has not only maintained diplomatic relations with Russia for four years, but does not withdraw from the CIS (although there are projects of the cession), does not cut the "hostile" gas pipe passing through its territory; does not require the immediate return home of millions of Ukrainian labor migrants who work in Russia, etc. And if we go back from politics to the topic of media education, one can witness that in 2018, in spite of the position of Kiev's authorities; a lot of Ukrainian media educators continue to submit their articles to Russian academic journals.

Anti-Russian attitude also permeates the article by N. Cherepovska, categorically asserting that *"information aggression aimed at Ukraine from the hostile state is aimed at ceizing the consciousness of the society, exercising control over it and managing the public opinion of Ukrainians according to its imperial goals. The adequacy of the perception of hostile propaganda and the corresponding resistance to media informational influences on the part of our citizens is a serious social and psychological problem. Its essence lies in the disparity of a large-scale, professionally prepared, purposeful hostile indoctrination as an attack on the identity of Ukrainians, on the one hand, and the lack of an effective tool that can provide the opportunity to provide psychological resistance to harmful information to the general public, on the other hand"* (Cherepovska, 2015: 60).

Thus, some Ukrainian media educators and ideologists decided that "war is a high time for media education" (Dorosh, 2014) and began to turn it into an instrument of anti-Russian propaganda.

And thus, media education manual for librarians in the spirit of standard propaganda of the Ukrainian pro-Western regime established in 2014, states that *"dramatic events in our country connected with the revolution of dignity, the death of the heavenly hundred, further armed aggression of Russia and the annexation of part of the territory of Ukraine, firmly riveted millions of people to news reports, forced them to monitor information around the clock - almost live, in order to constantly be aware of, to make relevant conclusions and act. Many of our fellow citizens, perhaps for the first time in their lives, became so dependent on news. Therefore, as never before, the question of journalistic standards, responsible media and, at the same time, competent, literate reflection of everything that we learn about from various media has emerged in Ukrainian society. Often their goal is not to inform, but on the contrary - to misinform, to broadcast false, so to speak, fake information, as, for example, in the notorious reports on the Russian Channel 1"* (Gumenyuk, Potapova, 2015). At the same time, the authors of the manual seem to seriously believe that false and unverified information only comes from Russia, whereas Western and Ukrainian leading media sources allegedly always the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth...

Another Ukrainian publication exhibits the similar approach: "Media literacy of citizens. The teaching manual for coaches" (Training ..., 2015).

Needless to say, Russian media are not perfect, however, at the present time almost every central television channel in Russia broadcasts live political and sociocultural discussions on a daily basis with the participants of American, German, Polish, other European countries and Ukrainian journalists and political scientists who openly express their anti-Russian views, sharply criticize Russian authorities, etc. Thus, there is much more freedom of speech on Russian television than in the Ukrainian one, where Russian journalists and political scientists of non-liberal orientation are not allowed to take part in television debates or political talk shows.

Another textbook for teachers published by the Academy of the Ukrainian Press – "Media literacy in Civics lessons" – has been largely compiled as counter-propaganda: teachers are taught to resist Russian media propaganda (Media Literacy..., 2016: 56-60). In particular, in this manual, in our opinion, it is cynically asserted that *"the theme of World War II is deliberately politicized today and is used with a manipulative goal to split Ukrainian society. This is dangerous, because often people, who use the Soviet concept of historical memory of the WWII, believe that the Ukrainian state is building the different history, where the heroes are those whom they have always considered enemies. The mythology of World War II is now actively used by Russian propaganda, attempting to discredit Ukraine, declaring a pro-European course and attempts to go beyond the Soviet and post-Soviet mentality and ideology"* (Media Literacy..., 2016: 133).

In fact, at the present time the Ukrainian regime is trying to create the different history, claiming heroes those who earlier (in the USSR) were considered enemies. Hence dozens of monuments to the "heroes" of the so-called Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) – nationalists, most of whom served the Hitler regime, especially in 1941-1942. Biography of one of the leaders of Ukrainian nationalists - R.I. Shukhevych (1907-1950) is a striking example: in 1941-1942, he, together with thousands of Ukrainian nationalists, served in the Nazi army (Lisenko, 2008: 27).

Of course, thousands of Russians served in Hitler's armies, and the commander of the so-called Russian Liberation Army (ROA), General A.A. Vlasov (1901-1946) was no better than R.I. Shukhevych and his associates. But in Russia, the Vlasov activities have been officially condemned, they have never been considered, are not considered, and, hopefully, they will never be considered heroes; whereas today in Ukraine 35 streets are named after Shukhevych, 11 monuments are erected (Shukhevych, Wikipedia). Dozens of monuments are installed in Ukraine in honor of many other Ukrainian nationalists who collaborated with the Nazis ... Can this be called the "pro-European course" of the Ukrainian government?

Even further, regarding lies and manipulations, in our view, goes a similar manual for teachers "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking in Social Studies", also developed and published by the Academy of the Ukrainian Press. Some of its units have clearly anti-Russian orientation (Media Literacy..., 2016: 106-109).

To address the issue in more detail, we'll look at the sample paragraph of this manual, where its authors assert that *"working with the images of Stepan Bandera, we saw in practice how the negative image of one of the symbols of the Ukrainian liberation struggle is being formed and the corresponding myths are emerging. They can be decoded only through critical thinking and a comprehensive analysis of the authentic sources. ... Soviet, and then Russian propaganda from the second half of the 1940s has interpreted the personality of Stepan Bandera as a Nazis' (fascist's) accomplice. In accordance with this, since 1946, the supporters of the Ukrainian statehood began to be labeled by Soviet propaganda as fascists-Bandera"* (Media Literacy..., 2016: 13-14).

Following the guidance of the textbook's "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking in Social Science Lessons" authors (2016); using critical thinking, let's turn to the analysis of original primary sources. Supporters of S.A. Bandera (1909-1959) and the so-called *Act of the Proclamation of the Ukrainian State* (1941), usually as the main argument, appeal to the fact that after the signing and promulgation of this act on June 30, 1941, S.A. Bandera was arrested by the Nazis and sent to a concentration camp, he was released only in 1944, and therefore did not take part in military operations (Marchenko, 2018, etc.).

In fact, the Nazi leadership did not like the actions of S.A. Bandera's associates related to the proclamation of the so-called "independence" of Ukraine. But if one carefully reads the original text of the *Act of the Proclamation of the Ukrainian State* (1941), one can easily find that S.A. Bandera

and his supporters did not in the least assume the true Ukrainian "independence", arguing that "...3. *The newly formed Ukrainian state will work closely with the National-Socialist Greater Germany, under the leadership of its leader Adolf Hitler which is forming a new order in Europe and the world and is helping the Ukrainian People to free itself from Moscovite occupation*" (Act ..., 1941: 1) (to be substantive, the full text of The Act of Proclamation of Ukrainian Statehood (1941) is attached in the annex). I wonder if the full text is provided by Ukrainian teachers to their students and whether they are ashamed to acknowledge the Ukrainian nationalists wanted to live according to Nazis laws, and, consequently, to accept and welcome all their actions (for example, Holocaust)?

The prominent Ukrainian theorist of media and information wars G.G. Pocheptsov pertinently identifies the following parameters of the intensity, and hence the artificiality of propaganda campaigns:

- *"a simultaneous sudden beginning and a similarly simultaneous completion of the entire campaign or its individual stages,*
- *the use of all genres, not just news, for example ... talk shows,*
- *a rigid selection of representatives of the single viewpoint of view on screen,*
- *involvement of all sorts of communicative "allies" (in other countries, in different strata of society),*
- *preparation of strategic communication projects in the form of documentary and feature films, as well as a series of books on this subject,*
- *linking schools, which are the tool of the Ministry of Education, which, as is known, in modern societies performs the functions of the Ministry of Propaganda,*
- *the use of the descriptive language, which was previously banned,*
- *a sharp overstatement of the emotional tone of such messages"* (Pocheptsov, 2015).

All the above is accurate, but it should be deplored that some Ukrainian media educators (Gumenyuk, Potapova, 2015; Media Literacy..., 2016, etc.) understand this kind of mechanisms, unfortunately, is a very biased way, applying it solely to Russian propaganda, excluding Ukrainian and Western one.

It should be noted that to his credit, G.G. Pocheptsov precisely sees the omnitude of media propaganda laws, because *"intensive changes in the physical space require the same intensive changes in the information space (for example, the volume of communications on this subject is dramatically increasing both in public and in non-public spheres) and virtual space (for example, "fraternal peoples" from Soviet rhetoric belong to the virtual level, because they describe sacred values). Ukraine in return also uses a virtual reference to the "imperial ambitions of Russia" ... the opposite sides see, as a rule, absolutely different realities, reasonable for each side involved"* (Pocheptsov, 2015).

Moving on to the modern practices of introducing media education in Ukraine, in recent years, it has been implemented in ten Ukrainian regions. In doing so, 84 % of the 90 interviewed teachers, currently teaching media literacy, were trained in formal media education courses, 16 % were self taught. In secondary schools the introduction of media education takes place in various forms, as a result of which various aspects are enhanced and developed - from the psychological (including the development of critical thinking) to the practical (the creation of media products). Ukrainian teachers see the future of media education in including it in school curricula and in the development of integrated learning (Implementation..., 2015: 6-7; Concept ..., 2010; Naydyonova, 2013: 63-79).

With the onset of an active confrontation between Ukraine and Russia, the development of media education in Ukraine generated serious interest among American (and European) politicians. In this regard, it is very significant that when the 6th International Scientific and Methodological Conference on April 20th and 21st in Kyiv, organized by Internews and the Academy of the Ukrainian Press, was held, it was opened by M. Yovanovitch, USA's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Ukraine (Dorosh, 2018). It is clear that in the context of sanctions directed against the Russian Federation, American politicians are very interested in seeing media education in Ukraine develop with a propaganda bias, with a tangible flavor of anti-Russian orientation.

*Countries with an average level of mass media education development**Moldova*

Moldova joined the process of mass media education relatively recently and, without its own financial resources for the development of media education, immediately found itself under strong influence of Western projects in this field (Lang, 2015; English for Media Literacy Project in Moldova, 2017; International recognition for Moldovan librarians as Media Literacy Trainers, 2018, etc.). In April 2014, the Independent Journalism Center (IJC), in partnership with Radio Free Europe launched the project "Media Literacy for Young Moldovan People" (Suryapin, 2016). The project "Promoting media literacy among Moldovan citizens" was implemented by the IJC between March 2013 and April 2014 with the financial support of the United States Embassy in Moldova.

The main thrust of the development of mass media education in Moldova, as many Western politicians want to see it, is best explained by V. Bucataru in the following recommendations: *"Publicly address topics such as critical media consumption, fake news, propaganda and disinformation through examples that relate to daily life and take into account professional, religious, ethnic, and linguistic background; ... Set up institutional partnerships that engage with the strategic communication centers of the EU and NATO, and thus interact in platforms that address information war on a multinational level"* (Bucataru, 2018: 5-6).

One has to admit – it's an unexpected twist in media education recommendations for the development of democracy – to establish a partnership with NATO. Clearly, Moldovan media education is directed towards the ideological platform. Moreover, there is a clear instruction, who/what it is necessary to "media educate", the population against: *"Not a member of EU or NATO but still at their frontier, Moldova remains ever vulnerable to foreign influence. Russia will continue to target the country and attempt to deepen societal divisions by, among other means, undermining institutional trust. For Russia, this approach highlights both frustration over its lost sphere of influence and intentions to be seen as a strong actor in the regional and international arena. ... Russian TV channels in Moldova have become a means of delivery for fake narratives and propaganda, a highly controlled and centralized "golden pipeline."* (Bucataru, 2018).

*Armenia*

A lot of academic publications on media education are being currently published in Armenia (Kazdanyan, Chilingaryan, 2016; Muradyan, Manukyan, 2017, etc.). The main media education resource of Armenia is the Media Education Center ([www.mediaeducation.am](http://www.mediaeducation.am)); its organizers develop various teaching materials and conduct events (including conferences) that promote the development of media competence of the population. Media programs of the Yerevan educational complex "Mkhitar Sebastatsi" are moving in the same direction.

The activity of the Media Initiatives Center ([www.mediainitiatives.am](http://www.mediainitiatives.am)), which develops media literacy in Armenia, should also be noted. The Media Initiative Center develops lesson plans, recommendations and educational games for schools, and works closely with the Ministry of Education to integrate media literacy into the school curriculum (in particular, the Ministry of Education of Armenia approved the Media Literacy Teacher's Manual prepared by this center). The Media Initiative Center also collaborates with libraries and museums, using an integrated approach to implement the UNESCO-promoted concept of media and information literacy (MIG) (Grizzle, 2017). The project of the "Media Initiatives Center", entitled "Educating the public about media literacy," is of interest. Within the framework of this project, about twenty videos about the role and functions of media in modern society were produced (Suryapin, 2016). In 2017, the Armenian Media Initiatives Center together with the Media Support Center (Kyrgyzstan) received the Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Award from the Global Alliance for Partnership on Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL).

However, recently the development of media education in Armenia is sometimes associated with an anti-Russian attitude. For example, G. Vardanyan is convinced that *"the pro-Russian position is the result of intensive and effective Russian propaganda. Russian media in Armenia, in particular TV channels, are broadcast in free access. ... What can be done to counter propaganda in general and Russian propaganda in particular? One of the recipes is media literacy. Starting from school one needs to teach children critical thinking and correct media consumption. This will reduce the chances of the propaganda's impact. Fact checking is part of*



*media literacy. And if you repeatedly imagine how a Russian propaganda machine is lying, it will help people to distinguish between the truth, a half-truth and lies" (Vardanyan, 2017).*

#### *Belarus*

The development of media education in Belarus in the 1990s – the beginning of the XXI century in many ways resembled similar processes in Ukraine. For a long time the media-educational articles of descriptive nature prevailed in Belarus, as a rule, they briefly retell the content of the research of foreign scientists, and Russian researchers on media education (Dubrovskaya, 2013: 91-95; Kovbasa, 2013: 39-40; Kurachenko, 2012: 60-62; Pugach, 2011: 38-39; Sharko, 2012: 137-145; Spirina, 2013: 28; Zhilinskaya, 2008).

However, in the Republic of Belarus *"in recent years there has been a significant increase in interest in media education – both in the academic community and in the pedagogical environment. ... The most active theoretical development of problems of media education is carried out in Belarus State University, Grodno State University, Mogilev Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and some other universities of the country. In the school curricula, as a separate academic subject, media education is not included, its implementation in the system of secondary and higher education in Belarus is carried out through the introduction of media components in the academic disciplines" (Venidiktov, 2015: 192-193).* One can agree that *"in connection with the theoretical and methodological underdevelopment of issues of media education in Belarus, research in this area is relevant" (Kovbasa, 2013: 40).*

In 2016, the first textbook for educators was published in Belarus, *"Media Education in a Modern School: Developing Media Literacy of Students" (Media Education..., 2016)*, which contains units related to the role of media in the modern world, types, genres and language of media, analysis of media texts, media manipulation, the development of critical thinking, the tasks of media education, media competence, media education, integrated into various school disciplines, extra-curricular activities of children and youth, in the work of film clubs, etc.

The authors are convinced that this textbook *"has a number of peculiarities that, without exaggeration, make it a unique publication: it is innovative in form and content, since manuals for teachers on the problem of media education of students in our country have not been published; the texts are structured in such a way that, in addition to highlighting the relevant aspects of the topic of media education, readers are invited to complete the tasks themselves, answer questions and, thus, experience media literacy development or suggest these assignments to their students; the book contains many examples, ready-made scenarios for classes" (Media Education..., 2016: 10).* True, it's a little embarrassing that sometimes the Internet links offered to readers of this manual lead ... to the anti-Russian site StopFake: Struggle against fake information about events in Ukraine (Media Education..., 2016: 240). I would not want to think that Belarus media educators will take up the ideological trend of Ukrainian media pedagogy of recent years, but the trend in itself is rather alarming ...

It should be noted that in the same year in Belarus, a review of this training manual was published, stating that *"all the chapters included in its structure have a single basis: an orientation toward the formation of liberal thinking, the essence of which is the orientation towards a single individual autonomy of a student and anthropocentrism (a person is the measure of everything). It is no coincidence that the goal and product of media education in the peer-reviewed publication is an independent subject capable of resisting the temptations of the media world at the expense of a personal resource and creatively using its potential for cultural, social and personal development. This concept can become the basis for the development of the national concept of media education, which is argued as necessary by one of the authors (article by Alla Lozitskaya)" (Polonnikov, 2016: 46).*

It is to be hoped that the national concept of media education in Belarus will be balanced and comprehensive, since there are good reasons stated in recent articles of Belarus media educators (Dubrovskaya, 2013: 91-95; Gubarevich, 2017: 19-32; Kurachenko, 2012: 60-62; Venidiktov, 2015: 190-196; Zhilinskaya, 2008).

#### *Kazakhstan*

Back in 2010, *"the only school of journalism in Kazakhstan was in Kazakh National University (KazNU) named after al-Farabi, the largest university in the country. It is this faculty that develops state curriculum standards, that is, it actually forms the standards of media*

education. Other universities that train journalists have only departments and chairs" (Jalilov, 2010: 111). It has been repeatedly noted that there is a need in Kazakhstan for organizing media education trainings and seminars for teachers, since most of them "have never worked in the media and prepare their lectures based on textbooks and books published in the Soviet Union" (Kulinsky, 2010: 159).

As in Belarus, the process of mass media education in Kazakhstan began with the adaptation of Russian experience, but then, thanks to the efforts of the research group headed by L.S. Akhmetova, quickly became equipped with an analysis of foreign media education theories (Akhmetova, Verevkin, Lifanova, 2017). In 2014, L.S. Akhmetova noted that "the issues of media education in Kazakhstan today are rather debatable among researchers, bloggers, participants of social networks, and general public advanced in the field of new technologies. Everyone understands that this is necessary. However, not enough attention is paid to such issues yet" (Akhmetova, 2014: 37). Over the past four years, the situation has changed for the better – media education literature is being published more and more often (Akhmetova, 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2016; Akhmetova, Verevkin, Lifanova, 2015; 2017; Akhmetova, Verevkin, Lifanova, Shorokhov, 2013; Akhmetova, Shorokhov, Niyazgulova, 2015).

L.S. Akhmetova's team published collective monographs "Media Education in Kazakhstan" (2013), "Media Education and Media Literacy: Theory, Methodology, Practice" (2015). Having received a grant from the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan on the theme "Development of media and information literacy of the youth in the context of ensuring national security and the implementation of the State Program "Informational Kazakhstan - 2020", they produced another significant work – "Media and Information Literacy: Conceptual and Methodological Foundations" (2017), which took into account the current UNESCO recommendations on the synthesis of information and media competence of the individual.

And although media education has not entered Kazakhstan schools on a massive scale yet, it can be hoped that in the coming years Kazakhstan will be able successfully implement media education programs at different levels.

#### *Countries with a low level of mass media education*

Media education in *Uzbekistan* for a long time was in the phase of protracted formation (Abdurakhmanov, Beknazarova, 2011: 20-24; Beknazarova, 2011; Ismailova, 2016: 121-126). The textbook "Uzbekistan on the path to the development of media education" (Mamatova, Sulaimanova, 2015) serves a vivid example, because, contrary to its title, it contains almost no information about what is actually going on in the field in Uzbekistan. However, the training manual contains a brief adapted rendering of UNESCO's recommendations on the development of media and information literacy, and it is a progressive step.

Moreover, "in 2015-2017 on the initiative of the UNESCO Office in Uzbekistan and the National Library of Uzbekistan named after A. Navoi, the project "Development of information culture and media literacy of specialists of information and library institutions of Uzbekistan in the period of deepening reforms in the information and library sphere" was realized. The goal of the project is to train specialists of information and library institutions of Uzbekistan in the promotion of the ideas of UNESCO and IFLA on media and information literacy through the training course "Fundamentals of the Information Culture of a School Student", as well as to adapt these training materials in order to facilitate their perception by schoolchildren in Uzbekistan" (Gendina, 2017: 37).

As a result, the authors of the project prepared a number of useful recommendations on the development of media and information literacy in Uzbekistan: first, "to compare the UNESCO curriculum with the existing national curricula on information and / or media literacy, to determine the contents of the missing information and / or media components. Then add the missing component (media or information), thereby ensuring a balance between media and information competencies. Further, it is necessary to analyze the definitions borrowed from the UNESCO curriculum in accordance with the terms and concepts accepted in the country and, if necessary, to supplement the composition of the glossary. In addition, the information and media resources recommended in the UNESCO curriculum should be selected and replaced with appropriate national information and media resources, and then a list of literature in the national language (s) should be compiled. After that, it is required to analyze the educational text with the help of ethnomarkers and replace the identified precedent phenomena by analogues

corresponding to the realities of the country (geographical, literary, folklore and historical objects, political associations and organizations, laws, etc.)" (Gendina, 2017: 41).

Active processes that promote the development of mass media education have begun in recent years in *Kyrgyzstan*, where "the existing activities to improve the level of media literacy as a skill and the development of media literacy as a science are in a rudimentary stage" (Report..., 2018: 94). These conclusions were drawn based on the results of a study assessing the levels of media literacy of the population (over 16 years) in the Kyrgyz Republic. It was held in September - November, 2017, 1200 urban and rural respondents from seven regions were interviewed (Report ..., 2018: 11).

The main lever for the development of media education in Kyrgyzstan is the non-profit Foundation "Media Support Center", established in 2002. The first project to develop media and information literacy in Kyrgyzstan was launched by the Foundation in 2012 in partnership with IREX Europe and the Deutsche Welle Academy. Through the efforts of the Media Support Center Foundation in Kyrgyzstan, 25 schools have already piloted the media literacy lessons developed by the Foundation in cooperation with the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education and Science and the Kyrgyz Academy of Education. In Kyrgyzstan such an experiment is being conducted for the first time. The project has already covered about three hundred children in Bishkek and its suburbs. ... The first thing that the teachers teach the course is not to take any information for granted. Regardless of where it publicized – everything needs to be checked by other sources. Those who have taken the course say that they watch daily news reports with a different attitude now" (Begalieva, 2017).

Most recently, in 2018, Kyrgyzstan published the first textbook for teachers on media and information literacy (Imankulov et al., 2018), which, seems to provide significant help in developing the media competence of both the teachers and their students.

Unfortunately, the development of media education in *Azerbaijan*, *Tajikistan* and *Turkmenistan* still lags far behind *Kyrgyzstan* and *Uzbekistan*.

In general, modern development of media literacy in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan is supervised by Western organizations IREX Europe and Albany Associates. In 2018, with the support of the British Embassy in Kazakhstan and the British Embassy in Kyrgyzstan, in the framework of IREX Europe, a series of teaching aids in Russian was published (which remains the language of cross-ethnic communication of the CIS countries). Note that "Media literacy: a practical textbook for higher education institutions on media and information literacy" (Sturkhezky, 2018) and "Media literacy. A practical manual for librarians" (Kozitska, 2018), unlike many of the Ukrainian analogues of recent years, are sustained in a politically neutral manner. The first of them (Sturkhezky, 2018: 97-101; 133-135) cites the research of our scientific school, and contains links to the Internet resource "Information Literacy and Media Education for All" (www.mediagram.ru) also created with participation of Taganrog media education research team (Russia).

Unfortunately, the publication "Propaganda, deepening the abyss in mutual understanding. Monitoring of the media of the Eastern Partnership countries and Russia" lacks the balanced representation of views (Propaganda ..., 2016). Media monitoring of the six countries of the Eastern Partnership and Russia was held from June 6 to July 3, 2016 within the framework of the project "Joint Efforts and Professional Knowledge to Counter the Propaganda", supported by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Secretariat of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and implemented by the Yerevan Press Club in partnership with Internews Ukraine, MEMO 98 (Slovakia), Independent Journalism Center (Moldova), the Charter of Journalistic Ethics of Georgia, the Belarusian Association of Journalists and the Azerbaijani expert group" (Propaganda ..., 2016: 4). Meanwhile, "this study was focused on monitoring and detecting the potential impact of, so to speak, "migrating" propaganda messages (stereotypes, narratives), often falling into the information space, including media of the Eastern Partnership countries, specifically of Russian federal channels or under the influence of their content" (Propaganda ..., 2016: 4).

Thus, the authors of the study seem to have "forgotten" that propaganda is not a one-way street, and if we are to investigate the mechanisms of propaganda, then we should consider examples of propaganda produced by different countries, rather than consider that propaganda exists only in Russia, and in other countries (for example, the United States, Britain, Germany,

France) everything is so democratic that propaganda and “migrating ideological stereotypes” are out of the question.

In this context, it is very significant that in 2018 the US authorities, disturbed by the “excessive influence of Russian media on public opinion” in the countries of Central Asia, “allocated \$ 15 million to support independent journalists and raise the level of media literacy in this region” (US ..., 2018).

#### 4. Results

Comparative analysis and synthesis of goals and objectives, key concepts, the main stages of historical development, structure, content, models of mass media education in the CIS countries allows to develop the following scheme.

##### *Goals and objectives of mass media education in CIS countries*

The general goal of mass media education for all CIS countries is to develop and improve the level of media literacy / media competence of the population (that is, culture of communication with media, creative, communicative abilities, analytical thinking, the ability to create, disseminate, interpret, analyze and evaluate the role and functions of media in society, media texts of different types and genres).

##### *Mass media education objectives:*

- practical-creative (training in the ability to search, create and distribute media texts of various kinds and genres while respecting the humanistic focus and ethical correctness of these messages);
- analytical (training the skills of qualified analysis and evaluation of the role and functions of media in the society, media texts of various types and genres);

##### *Peculiarity of tasks:*

- in some CIS countries (Ukraine, Moldova), these tasks are increasingly associated with the opposition to Russian media influence.

##### *General key theoretical concepts of mass media education in the CIS countries:*

- practical (focused on teaching hands-on skills of work with media technology with the subsequent creation and dissemination of media texts);
- development of critical thinking about the role and functions of media culture in society and media texts of different types and genres;
- protectionist (typical for the synthesis of media education and religion);
- aesthetic (oriented to bring up a high aesthetic taste on the material of the most high-quality works of media culture);
- sociocultural and cultural studies (analysis of the role of media in society and media texts in a broad socio-cultural context).

A number of theoretical concepts (semiotic, ecological, ethical, etc.) have little effect on the development of media education in the CIS countries.

*Peculiarities:* in Ukraine (an associated member of the CIS since 1993), in recent years, the ideological theory of media education has been favoured, in which critical thinking is developed through detecting fake media information, in particular, in the news (Gumenyuk, Potapova, 2015; Media Literacy..., 2016; Training..., 2015). Starting from 2014, the development of media education in Ukraine increasingly goes hand in hand with anti-Russian propaganda (Gumenyuk, Potapova, 2015; Dorosh, 2014; Emets-Dobronosova, 2014; Koropatnik, 2015; Media Literacy..., 2016; Training ..., 2015; Cherepovska, 2015, etc.).

##### *The main stages of the historical development of mass media education in the CIS countries in the 1990s:*

- deprivation of the state support during the years of "perestroika" (typical for all CIS countries);
- gradual departure from the popular in the Soviet period ideological and aesthetic approaches of media education, exploration of the Western approaches (culturological, development of critical thinking, etc.) (typical for Russia, Ukraine and Belarus);
- presence of only weak foci of media education in a number of CIS countries: typical for Azerbaijan, Georgia (until 18.08.2009 Georgia was part of the CIS), Tajikistan, Turkmenistan (Turkmenistan is associated member of the CIS) and Uzbekistan;



- attempts of private business to support the media education movement (typical only for Russia);
- intensive development of academic research in the field of media education (at this stage it is typical mainly for the Russian Federation);

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- recognition of the importance of media education at the state level (typical for Ukraine, where in 2011-2018 a large-scale experimental introduction of media education in dozens of secondary schools began, and to a lesser extent for Russia, where on November 17, 2008 the Government approved the Concept of Long-Term Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the period until 2020, where in the section on information and communication technologies the need for media education is declared; in 2013 the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation supported the idea of film education as an elective in secondary schools);
- intensive use of new Internet technologies for the development of media education (primarily in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan);
- launching new university majors/minors related to media education (Russia, Ukraine);
- convening a series of international and regional conferences (incl. UNESCO sponsored) on media education (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia);
- organizing a series of international and regional schools, training seminars, courses on media education (primarily in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan);
- continuation of the intensive development of research in the field of media education, carried out in many cases with the support of Russian science foundations and foreign funds (for the Russian Federation) or only foreign funds (typical for Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan);
- gradual integration of media education programs in a number of CIS countries (typical for Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia (until 18.08.2009 Georgia was part of the CIS), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan).

*Structure and content of models of mass media education in the CIS countries*

*Conceptual basis:* synthesis of the theory of development of critical thinking, practical, and sociocultural theories of media education.

*Aim:* development of media literacy / competence of the individual.

*Objectives:* development of the following skills: practical, creative, analytical.

*Methods of media competence's development:* verbal, visual, explanatory-illustrative, problem-based research.

*The main units of the contents of the media education program* (the availability of a particular unit depends on the age and professional status of the audience): the place and role, functions of media and media education in modern society, types and genres, media languages; basic terms, concepts related to media culture; historical stages of development of media culture in the world; analysis and evaluation of the functioning of media and media texts of different types and genres in the socio-cultural and ideological contexts; technologies of creation and distribution of media texts of various kinds and genres.

*Areas of application:* schools, secondary special educational institutions, higher education institutions, professional development courses, additional education institutions and leisure centers; distant media education of various categories of the population; independent (continuous) media education, for example, through Internet sources.

Anyway, all modern models of media education in the CIS countries (with all the diversity of age and professional entire population groups) contain diagnostic, content-targeted and effective components (Akhmetova, 2011; 2012; 2014; 2016; Baranov, 2002; Beknazarova, 2011; Bondarenko, 2009; Fateeva, 2007; Fedorov, 2001; 2007; Gendina, 2017; Gumenyuk, Potapova, 2015; Hilko, 2007; Ivanov, Ivanova, 2013; Kirillova, 2012; Korkonosenko, 2004; Korochensky, 2005; Koropatnik, 2015; Naidyonova, 2013; Onkovych, 2009; Sakhnevich, 2010; Sharikov, 2012; Spichkin, 1999; Vartanova, Zasursky, 2003; Venidiktov, 2015; 2017; Zaznobina, 1998; Zhurin, 2009, etc.), which take into account the best Western media education practices (Bazalgette, 1989; Bowker, 1991; Buckingham, 2000; 2003; Debray, 1991; Gonnet, 2001; Hart, 1991; 1997; Masterman, 1985; 1997; Potter, 2016; Scheibe, Rogow, 2012; Silverblatt, 2001; 2014).

## 5. Conclusion

It is necessary to agree that "the question of the possibility of developing cross ethnic media education systems that reflect the needs of integration groups in the global media discourse and which can withstand external information threats is quite debatable. The search for answers will inevitably affect: a) the educational environment in which media literacy courses should be introduced (at various levels of instruction), developed with the account of international information interests; b) the media sphere, which includes the contents of all types of media (both national and allied) and carrying out a spontaneous impact on the audience's citizenship; c) political reality, predetermining the attitude of citizens to the information provided to the media and, on the other hand, experiencing the consequences of the audience's information choice; d) institutions of civil society (local, national and transnational), whose viability largely depends on the sustainability of the information sphere; e) ideological climate in integrable societies" (Venidiktov, 2015: 194). Herewith, we believe that the CIS countries should not build the development of mass media education of the population based on confrontation and ideological propaganda. All thematical blocks of media education programs should evenly give the audience an idea that there are no ideal democratic states in the world with ideally objective mass media. That is why the basis of media education activity must be sociocultural concepts (including, of course, analytical and practical components) rather than ideological ones that will allow the audience to comprehensively master the ambiguous world of media culture.

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### **Appendix**

#### *"The Act of Proclamation of Ukrainian Statehood*

*1. By the will of the Ukrainian people, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists under the direction of Stepan Bandera proclaims the formation of the Ukrainian State for which have laid down their heads whole generations of the finest sons of Ukraine.*

*The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, which under the direction and founder and leader Yevhen Konovalets has undertaken in the past ten years a bloody battle with the Moscovite-Bolshevikenslayers in an energetic battle for freedom, calls all the Ukrainian people not to place down its weapons until all Ukrainian lands are united to form a Sovereign Ukrainian Government.*

*The Sovereign Ukrainian Government will guarantee Ukrainian people order, unilateral development of all its energies and all its needs.*

*2. In the western lands of Ukraine a Ukrainian Government is formed, which is subordinate to the Ukrainian National Government that will be formed in the capital of Ukraine – Kiev.*

*3. The newly formed Ukrainian state will work closely with the National-Socialist Greater Germany, under the leadership of its leader Adolf Hitler which is forming a new order in Europe and the world and is helping the Ukrainian People to free itself from Moscovite occupation.*

*The Ukrainian People's Revolutionary Army which has been formed on the Ukrainian lands, will continue to fight with the Allied German Army against Moscovite occupation for a sovereign and united State and a new order in the whole world.*

*Long live the Ukrainian Sovereign United Ukraine! Long live the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists! Long live the leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian people – Stepan Bandera.*

*Glory to Ukraine!*

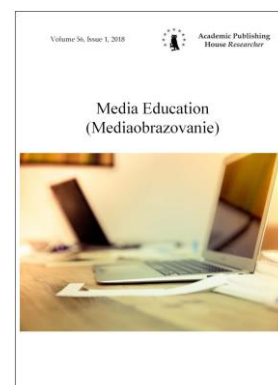
*(Signed) Yaroslav Stezko – Head of the National Assembly"*

Source: the Newspaper "Samostiyna Ukraina" published in Stanislaviv, July 10, 1941, p. 1.

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## Political segment of students' media literacy: an approach to measure it

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### Abstract

In modern science, attempts to measure media literacy / media competence are made from time to time. However, those who try to do it usually employ different theoretical premises, interpret phenomenon under consideration in their own ways, and, as a result, use various criteria for evaluations. Based on the analysis of more than hundred most oft-quoted (both in foreign and Russian scholarship) definitions of media literacy, the author offers his own conception of the term and puts forward the way it can be measured. While doing so, he stresses the importance of a political segment of media literacy, i.e. the ability to critically analyze and check credibility of politics-related media texts.

Through anonymous questionnaire method, ninety-seven 17-26-aged students of Saratov National Research State University named after N.G. Chernyshevsky were surveyed. Among other things, the questionnaire implied the necessity to answer questions on the text respondents were asked to read, as well as to form their attitudes to fifteen statements listed (rather agree with each of them or not). Points got by every student were transformed into percent. The medium media literacy level of all respondents and medium figures for different genders, ages, and majors were calculated. In closing, possible directions of further research on the issue were outlined.

**Keywords:** media literacy, youth, students, measurement, questionnaire survey, media education, media competence, mass media, politics, political culture.

### 1. Introduction

Among a wide variety of issues considered in the realm of media education studies, attempts to measure certain media competences or media literacy in general take pride of place. Compared with many other aspects, research on this topic is few and far between. Following W.J. Potter and Ch. Thai, I believe that there is still a problem of validity of the results got by scholars, regardless of striking potential accumulated so far (Potter, Thai, 2016: 27). In other words, scholars tend to interpret media literacy-related notions (i.e. skills, knowledge, experience, etc.) in their own ways and consequently create their own methods to measure it. As a result, due to variations in approaches, it becomes quite difficult to compare and juxtapose inferences made by different scholars, as well as to estimate tendencies and dynamic of media literacy levels' alterations in the course of time.

Making no pretense to elaborating a kind of universal or integrative approach to measuring (we consider this goal a point of discussions and disputes within scholarly forums and conferences), one of the possible ways to measure students' media literacy is offered in this article.

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While working out the methodological part of this research, I drew on existing theoretical and practical studies of well-known scholars in the field (Arke, Primack, 2009: 53-65; Ashley et al., 2013: 7-21; Fedorov, 2012: 48-51; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2016: 16-37; Levitskaya, 2015: 30-42) and tried to shift focus of measuring to political side of the phenomenon under consideration. In other words, I was primarily interested in detecting those skills and competencies that are politics-related and thus have direct effects on the development of political culture of the youth.

## 2. Materials and methods

Having analyzed more than hundred definitions of media literacy that are the most often quoted in both Russian and foreign studies, I articulated the one that includes components widely used in majority of already existing descriptions of media literacy (for more details, see Kazakov, 2017: 78-97). So, I define media literacy as an ability to find information amidst a deluge of media messages, to critically interpret and analyze it, to check its credibility and – if necessary – to create their own short media texts.

Drawing on this definition, I designed a questionnaire aimed at detecting respondents' media literacy levels (see Annex). The questionnaire itself consists of three parts. In the first of them, one should read a text and answer eight questions. The text is a page-long post in a blog of V. Afanasieva who is a professor of Saratov State University and a well-known (in Saratov) blogger under one roof. In that post, she explained her personal attitude to Russian liberals (Afanasieva, 2017). By answering the questions (both open and closed), respondents tried to identify target audience of the text they read, the author's purpose, points of view and omitted information, ways to check credibility of the facts and arguments used by the author. There was also a task to formulate the main idea of the post in one sentence – by asking respondents to do it, I assessed their productive skills.

The second part of the questionnaire is comprised of fifteen statements – respondents should agree or disagree with them. Each of the statements either is connected with the current state of media industry or deals with certain aspects of media literate person's behavior. At last, the third part of the questionnaire contains questions about respondents' gender, age, and level of education.

In March 2018, ninety-seven students of Law and International Relations Departments, Saratov State University, were surveyed. They all were at the ages from seventeen to twenty-six. There were sixty-five female and thirty-two male students among them. It is worth noting that such a sex ratio is quite typical for liberal arts and social departments of our University. Roughly in equal proportions, respondents' majors were political science, international relations, forensic analysis, and customs procedures. That being said, none of all students has taken courses somehow connected to media literacy.

## 3. Discussion

As already noted, attempts to measure media literacy are quite often made by both Russian and foreign scholars. However, at least in Russia, the term “media competence”, which in fact is one of the indicators of media literacy, is slightly more popular than “media literacy” (see, e.g., Zhizhina, 2016: 47).

I agree that media literacy is broader than media competence. Nevertheless, within this research, I would prefer to use the former. There are at least two reasons that make me choose this option. Firstly, as a rule, media competence implies a kind of dichotomy – one either has it or not (Potter, 2004: 21). In this sense, it would be more accurate to use the term “skill” which means an ability to do something that develops gradually – in the course of time and through purposeful activities: one may be able to do something fairly, well, or masterfully. The problem is that “media skills” are hardly used in scholarly discourse. Secondly, it seems to me that, compared with its equivalents, “media literacy” is a much more popular term within the realm of foreign communication studies. Taking all these into consideration, I will prefer “media literacy” to “media competence”.

Speaking about the ways of measuring media literacy skills, it should be noted that is quite a challenging task (Bergsma, 2008; Hobbs, Frost, 2003; Primack et al., 2006). According to Scharrer, “The results of participation in media literacy curricula are not often explicitly defined and measured, but there is a generalized notion about what these outcomes are” (Scharrer, 2002:

354). Potter and Thai go one step further and write: “While there is a large and growing literature that tests the effectiveness of media literacy interventions, there is reason to be skeptical about the value of the findings in that literature because of problems with the validity of the measures used in those studies” (Potter, Thai, 2016: 27).

Numerous attempts to measure media literacy have been made for the last few decades. In their experiment, Quin and McMahon examined the language, narrative, audience and other areas of analysis (Quin, McMahon, 1995). Similar methods to measure media literacy skills were applied by Hobbs and Frost (Hobbs, Frost, 2003). They tried to assess students’ ability to identify target audience, points of view, the purpose, and construction techniques used in media messages, and the ability to identify omitted information from a news media broadcast in written, audio, or visual formats. Other authors developed and validated a special scale to measure adolescents’ media literacy with regard to pro-smoking media messages (Primack et al., 2006).

In spite of the fact that there are many definitions of media literacy, the research field still has some considerable gaps. These gaps lead to a wide variety of ways to measure it. The result is a vicious cycle, as Potter states it:

*Researchers who want to design a test of media literacy go to the literature for guidance, however that literature shows them an overwhelming choice of definitions with no single definition being regarded as the most useful one. Even more problematic is that none of the many definitions provides enough detail to guide researchers very far through the process of designing measures of media literacy. Until more fully explicated definitions of media literacy are offered to scholars, researchers will be left with little guidance, which will result in the continuation of inadequate conceptual foundations for their empirical studies and therefore a fuzzy and incomplete foundation to use as a standard for judging the validity of their measures (Potter, Thai, 2016: 37).*

In Russian science, there is its own tradition of measuring media literacy and / or media competence. In most cases, scholars use questionnaires, tests (Fedorov, 2012: 48-51), and experiments (Ryzhikh, 2012: 50-63; Fedorov, 2014: 82-88) for this purpose. Far less frequently, a focus group method is employed (Frolova et al., 2017: 37-46).

What criteria are usually used for assessment? Generally speaking, they all can be divided into two groups: primarily technical skills along with intensity of using media (Zircon, 2013) and ability to critically analyze and interpret media messages (Fedorov, 2012: 48-51; Zircon, 2017). Interestingly enough, sometimes these two criteria may not correlate with each other: as A.V. Fedorov puts it, “as a rule, modern students’ media competence is quite high with regard to a range of technical skills of practical usage of media, but not with relation to media texts’ analysis” (Fedorov, 2014: 87-88).

Moreover, I believe that in terms of assessing media literacy the second group – so-called interpretive and evaluative skills – takes priority over the first one. A student may be well-versed on technical features and peculiarities of modern communicative devices, use several of them routinely, and actively interact within different social networks and messengers, but at the same time he or she may not know the first thing about the ways to find specific information (say, about politics), how to check its credibility, and where (at what news resources) an alternative view on exact issue can be found.

In this sense, I agree with A.A. Levitskaya who argues that in order to assess media literacy correctly, one should first and foremost consider the level of analytical evaluation of information, media texts, and a wide range of interactions between people and media sphere (Levitskaya, 2015: 37).

Bearing all this in mind, in my questionnaire, I used questions and statements oriented toward revealing substantive (and, partly, activity-related) segments of media literacy. Besides, I drew on the fact that the main goal of the research was to assess political part of respondents’ media literacy rather than media literacy in general. Such a perspective influenced the content and focus of the questions.

#### 4. Results

The first part of the questionnaire contained eight questions about the text respondents were asked to read. Students were informed of the text (when and where it was published) and its author. Depending on its complexity, each question was evaluated from two to six points.

An example of an easy question (maximum two points for the right answer) is the following: Whose points of view were presented in the text? Since the author – V. Afanasieva – had articulated only her own arguments and not even mentioned opinions of those who thought differently, the answer was quite clear: only an author's view was presented there. However, regardless of outward simplicity of this question, sometimes respondents gave wrong answers or just were at a loss to answer.

An example of the most difficult questions (six points maximum) is the following: What methods did the author use to influence the audience? It should be noted that there was plenty of them in the text: comparisons, metaphors, hyperboles, epithets, stigmas – to name but a few. Six points were given if a respondent had named almost all of them, zero points – if nothing was mentioned. Taken together, one could get thirty-five points for answers within the first part of the questionnaire.

The second part contained fifteen statements – respondents were asked to form their attitude toward each of them (“rather agree” or “rather disagree”). I tried to formulate those assertions as clear as possible – so that chances to interpret them differently were slim to none. Examples of true statements are: “To some extent, all people are under media influence”; “TV-channel *Dozhd*, radio station *Echo of Moscow*, and Internet-edition *Meduza* are in opposition to the Kremlin”. Examples of false statements are: “As a rule, a media literate person does not pay attention to news outlets holding views that are at variance with his or her own”; “Today, majority of mainstream American mass media (e.g., *CNN*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, etc.) cover V. Putin's foreign policy in general and reunification of Russia and Crimea in particular positively and endorse it”. Each right choice (be it true or false answer) was worth one point. Therefore, in total one could get fifteen points for the second part of the questionnaire.

Then I summed points got by each respondent for the first and second parts (maximum was fifty) and – in order to transfer it in percentage terms – multiplied them by two. As a result, I got numerical expression of each respondent's media literacy level.

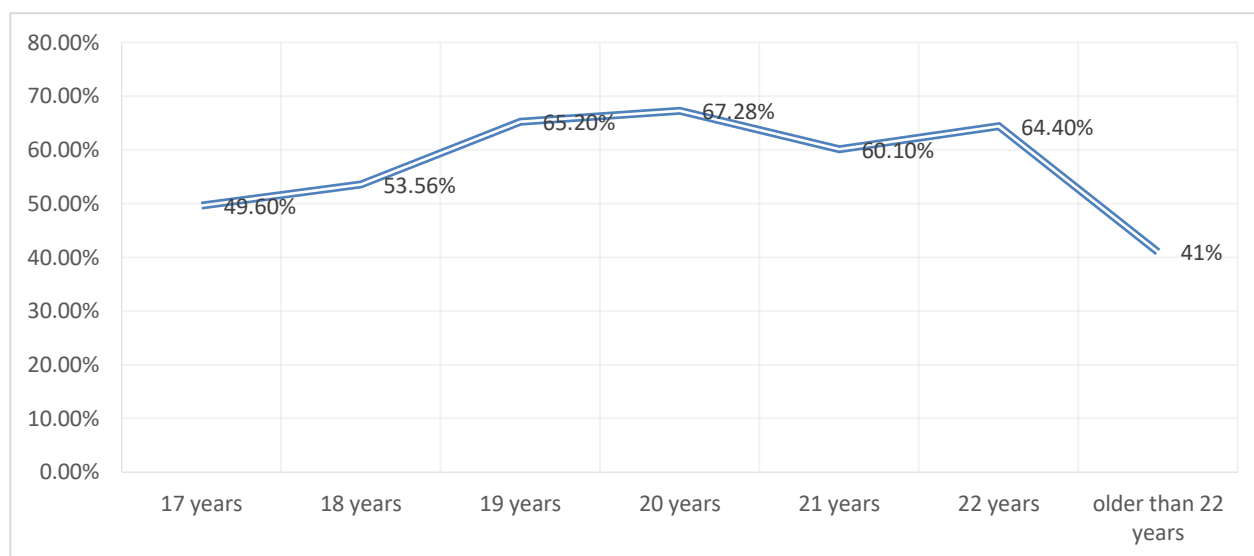
Of course, I am aware of the risk that the final results may well be quite relative, because aggregate percentage to a great extent depends on the list of questions, the way they were phrased, and even on the essence of the text respondents read. Be that as it may, I believe that such survey provides insight into average level of students' media literacy and, which is also very important, finds out those aspects of media texts' analysis that proved to be the most challenging for respondents.

What were the exact results I have got? A scatter of media literacy levels, as expected, turned to be wide – 62 % – ranging from 28 % to 90 %. An average level was 58.07 %. Conspicuous is the fact that the results are contingent upon respondents' gender, age, and major.

An average media literacy level of female students is 60.42 %, while male respondents obtained more modest result – 50.9 %. Why was it so? Arguably, it was due to the fact that young women are usually more attentive and diligent than men. In those cases where male respondents could have overlooked something or just got sloppy to elaborate on something (for instance, to mention methods the author used to influence the audience) female students were less dismissive of the tasks and consequently earned more points. Nonetheless, I would not make a conclusion that females are generally more interested in politics, more often get information about it from mass media and thus are more media literate than males.

Comparison of average media literacy levels according to age seems to be much more indicative. As can be seen at graph, from seventeen to twenty years, an average media literacy percentage constantly grows, then it declines, grows again and – what is most illustrative – plummets after the age of twenty-two. Needless to say, the sample is not big enough to confidently state that there are firm regular correlations. However, I believe that the main trend has the ring of truth. Having become students with social and liberal arts majors, people usually start showing more interest in politics, use mass media on a daily basis and, consequently, become more perceptive and experienced in this sphere.

The reason of the sharp decrease observed after twenty-two years may be explained by the fact that at this age people usually have their own families, combine work with study, and thus normally have fewer time to follow news, let alone pay attention to the way it is covered by journalists.



**Fig. 1.** Media Literacy Levels According to Age (percentage)

The last criterion to differentiate the results is respondent's major (i.e. political science, international relations, forensic analysis, and customs procedures). As none of them has previously taken courses somehow connected with media literacy (and there is no such a course at Saratov State University at all), I could not compare their results with those of control group.

However, I deemed it necessary to calculate an average level of those students whose major is political science. As an associate professor of Political Science Department, I know from my personal experience that occasionally, within different courses, they do discuss peculiarities of media coverage of politics. This means that they have at least faintest idea about methods used by the press to affect their audience. Numerical calculations have supported my hypothesis: an average level of media literacy of students focusing on political science was 67.04 %, while it was only 54.72 % for all the rest respondents (i.e. future specialists in international relations, forensic analysis, and customs procedures).

A few words about questions that appeared to be the most and least difficult for respondents. As far as the first part of the questionnaire is concerned, the most frequently students gave correct answers to the questions about the purpose of the text, gender and age of its potential audience, as well as about points of view presented in the post. Conversely, respondents struggled when asked to list rhetorical tools used by the author and media sources with alternative political agendas. In an attempt to answer the last question, most of the times they wrote that alternative views can be found just "online", "on social media", "on TV", "in blogs", etc. Only a handful of them managed to mention exact pro-liberal media outlets.

The last question of the first part of the questionnaire implied a task to encapsulate the text into one or two sentences. By doing so, I intended to measure students' creativity and their ability to produce short media messages. While evaluating their answers, I took two main factors into consideration, i.e. the content of what was written (to what extent it correlated with the essence of the text) and the way it was stated (in terms of style, spelling, and punctuation). Interestingly enough, maximum that one could get for this task was five points, but an average turned to be only 2.52 points.

Within the second part of the questionnaire, students often made mistakes while defining truthfulness of the statement about opposition-leaning mass media. For many of them (sixty out of ninety-seven respondents), *Dozhd*, *Echo of Moscow*, and *Meduza* appeared to be loyal to the Kremlin. Two more assertions also proved to be rather tricky: "While setting their news agendas, mass media, among other factors, take their audience's preferences into consideration" and "There is a tendency that usually events are presented more dramatically in media texts than in reality". Thirty respondents found these two statements false.

What does it all mean? At first, it may well be a kind of red flag that students have a shaky knowledge of modern media landscape (even in Russia); many of them do not have a clue what



media are loyal to the government and what are in opposition to it. At second, they do not know a “theory” of media industry either. To be honest, I could not even imagine that a third of respondents would brush off suggestion that, among other things, journalists take into account preferences of their audiences.

On the other hand, I find it quite indicative that in most cases students had no problems with statements like “Today, majority of mainstream American mass media (e.g., *CNN*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, etc.) cover V. Putin’s foreign policy in general and reunification of Russia and Crimea in particular positively and endorse it” (only three respondents out of ninety-seven deemed it true) and “Conflicts, wars, scandals, and blood attract the most attention (when it bleeds, it leads)” (only five false answers). In my opinion, the very fact that these assertions are so obvious for students may be considered to be an important feature of substantive content of the messages produced by Russian mass media.

## 5. Conclusion

Those were the main results of the research I have conducted. To reiterate, due to the number of respondents surveyed (ninety-seven students of Saratov State University) they are not fully representative. Besides, the lack of conventional definition of media literacy and commonly agreed criteria of its levels gravely complicates a search for “universal” measuring tools: some scholars emphasize the importance of creative aspects of media literacy, others – productive, still others – interpretive, and so on.

Within this research, I primarily focused on interpretive and productive components of media literacy. Moreover, I tried to stress a political side of this phenomenon. In this sense, the very attempt to come up with the way to measure it seems to be quite important. In today’s world, when media wars (for both home and foreign policies) have nearly become a commonplace, politics-related dimension of media literacy is arguably growing in stature and media literacy itself turns into one of the key factors of individual’s political culture. As a result, this part of media education assumes critical prominence.

A survey I carried out allowed me to suppose that in spite of the fact that young people are rather good at using up-to-date media technologies, most of them do not properly orient themselves in the maelstrom of media messages, have only a passing acquaintance with key subjects of the Russian media landscape and a sketchy notion what the interaction between the press and the audience should be like. In addition, there is a correlation between media literacy levels of students, on the one hand, and their age and major – on the other.

Possible ways of further exploration of this problem are the following. First, it is clear that in order to get more valid and representative results, the size of the sample should be significantly increased. Second, some improvements in research methods are also needed. For instance, wordings of questions asked may be improved and the number of questions may be increased (perhaps, by adding questions about media preferences of the audience and frequency of using mass media). Last but not least, it would be useful to compare political segments of media literacy levels of those who got elements of media education and those who did not.

I have no doubts, that development of media literacy skills will lead to improvement in students’ political culture, which, in its turn, in the long run, will facilitate democratization of political system of the whole state.

## 6. Annex

### Questionnaire

#### Part 1.

1. *What do you think is the main purpose of this media text? Select no more than two options. (three points maximum for a right answer)*

- a) to inform the audience;
- b) the author’s self-expression;
- c) to entertain the audience;
- d) to advertise a commodity / service / project;
- e) to convince the audience;
- f) to educate the audience;

g) your own variant:

2. *What rhetorical tools did the author use in order to attract and keep the audience's attention? Please, list and briefly explain them. (six points maximum for a right answer)*

3. *Whose points of view and opinions were presented in this media text? (two points maximum for a right answer)*

4. *Do you think that some important information (e.g., facts, issues, aspects, points of view) was omitted in the text? If you think so, please, specify; if you do not think so, leave it blank. (five points maximum for a right answer)*

5. *Define the target audience of this text. (three points maximum for a right answer)*

*In terms of gender:*

a) males;

b) females;

c) both females and males.

*In terms of age:*

a) 5 – 15 years;

b) 16 – 25 years;

c) 26 – 40 years;

d) 41 – 60 years;

e) older than 60 years;

*In terms of level of prosperity:*

a) the poor;

b) the working class;

c) the middle class;

d) the rich;

e) all.

6. *In your opinion, is it necessary to check credibility of the facts contained in this media text? If yes, please, specify the exact ways to do it. (five points maximum for a right answer)*

7. *At what news sources can one find media stories on this issue? Can you name exact media outlets where a stance that is alternative to that set forth in the text you have just read is likely to be presented? (six points maximum for a right answer)*

8. *Please, try to encapsulate the main ideas of this text into one or two sentences.*

#### Part 2.

Fifteen statements are listed below. Please, define your personal position on each of them ("rather agree" or "rather disagree"). Circle the numbers of those statements you rather agree with.

1. An owner of media outlet, as a rule, does not exert any effect on editorial policy of his or her TV-channel, newspaper, radio station, etc.

2. Among others, mass media take into account their audiences' preferences while defining their news agendas.

3. Most people prefer to get information from news outlets political stance of which (i.e., liberal, conservative, communist, loyal or opposing to the government) is closer to their own.

4. As a rule, a media literate person does not pay much attention to those media whose positions on key political issues are at variance with his or her own.

5. On a personal level, different people may take the same piece of information differently.

6. To some extent, everyone is under media influence.

7. The way a politician is portrayed by mass media influences the level of his or her popularity with the general public.

8. To focus public attention on the issues they cover is a peripheral goal of most mass media.

9. Technical aspects of live TV-broadcasts (lighting, angle, background sound, etc.) do not affect the audience's attitude toward the exact participant of the program.

10. Conflicts, wars, scandals, and blood do not capture the audience's attention.

11. Events covered by mass media tend to seem more dramatic than they are in reality.

12. As a rule, breaking news contain well-balanced evaluations and the most reliable facts that usually prove to be true later.

13. Most media texts should be taken with a grain of salt.

14. “Dozhd”, “Echo of Moscow”, and “Meduza” are among those media outlets that are in opposition to the current government in Russia.

15. Today, majority of mainstream American mass media (e.g., CNN, “The New York Times”, “The Washington Post”, etc.) cover V. Putin’s foreign policy (and reunification of Russia and Crimea in particular) positively and endorse it”.

Part 3.

1. Your gender:
  - a) female;
  - b) male;
  - c) other.
2. How old are you?
3. What is the highest education level you have?
  - a) basic general (compulsory);
  - b) secondary;
  - c) secondary vocational;
  - d) incomplete higher;
  - e) higher;
  - f) postgraduate degree.

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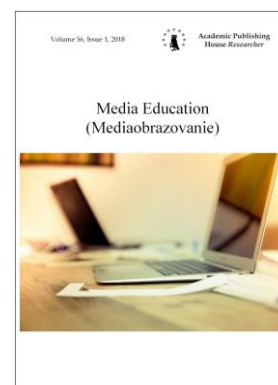
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## Media Studies Within the System of Contemporary Culture Studies Education

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### Abstract

This article describes the experience of teaching media within the humanistic educational framework as one of the pressing questions in high-school pedagogy. The article is based on the long personal experience of the author, who, starting with teaching cinema studies to students, gradually developed media culture and media education school within the culture studies framework. Empirical basis of the research is provided by the prolonged experience of the Chair of Cultural Studies and Leisure Studies of Ural Federal University. After analysing prospective trends in the development of contemporary Russian media education through the combined theory-and-practice approach, the author describes “media studies” as a priority field in humanistic higher education. Teaching media within bachelor's and master's programs in “Culture Studies” and “Socio-Cultural Work” allows us to solve several pedagogical tasks at once: 1) increase student's media competency; 2) foster the development of personal media culture; 3) teach students skill required to create their own media texts; 4) supports professional training of managers in socio-cultural field (including audio-visual field). Our experience of introducing media studies in humanistic curriculum produce results which demonstrate that this educational approach not only fosters the development of an all-rounded personality but also provides competitive advantage for the prospective professionals.

**Keywords:** culture studies, education, media studies, media competence, media culture, media.

### 1. Introduction

The concepts of “media education”, “media studies” and “media literacy” have become an integral part of contemporary education in Russia, both at school and university level. This is despite the fact that as recent as late 1990s the question of media education were the most hotly debated within theoretical and practical framework of Russian pedagogy.

As early as 1980s, UNESCO declared media education a priority goal of pedagogy, and information factor the leading factor in teaching teenagers and young people at all levels, defining media education as the study, teaching and learning of modern methods of communication and expression considered to be part of a specific and autonomous discipline in pedagogical theory and practice. *International Encyclopedia of the Social , Behavioral Sciences* states that “‘Media education’ is teaching *about* media, as distinguished from teaching *with* media. Ordinarily, media education emphasizes the acquisition both of cognitive knowledge about how media are produced

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and distributed and of analytic skills for interpreting and valuing media content. In contrast, ‘media studies’ ordinarily emphasizes hands-on experiences with media production. Both media education and media studies proponents intend to achieve media literacy goals through learning activities with young people.” ([International Encyclopedia, 2001: 94](#)).

All these definitions demonstrate the relevance of media pedagogy as a specialized field within the humanities. Russian media education has developed three main approaches: 1. Media education as training of future professionals in journalism and mass media; 2. Media education as a basis of media literacy (media competency) in schools and pedagogical colleges; 3. Media studies within the system of university-level humanistic education. Each of these approaches is related to the perspectives for the development of media culture of society and education of active “global citizens” ([Fedorov, 2015](#)).

## 2. Materials and methods

This study explores the practice of teaching media within the framework of contemporary culture studies education aimed at training professional managers in sociocultural work. This study is based on the years of experience in relevant curriculum as practiced by the Chair of Cultural Studies and Leisure Studies in Ural Federal University. The main methodological principle of this research is the combined theory-and-practice approach – the principle that has provided foundation for all media education included in the culture studies curriculum of Ural Federal University. Methods of analysis and synthesis help to generalize and categorize data, thus helping to elaborate such concepts as “media education”, “media literacy” and “media culture”. The use of synergetics method helps us to apply system approach to our research, in order to argue that both “media education” and “media studies” are multi-faceted complex processes that require multidisciplinary approach (bringing together history, culture studies, pedagogy, semiotics, psychology etc.) in order to foster the development of individual media culture.

## 3. Discussion

The works of foreign researchers of late XX<sup>th</sup> – early XXI<sup>st</sup> century reflect an experience of introducing media into the educational system, as well as in the practical approach to teaching various classes. One of the first Western researchers whose works attracted attention in post-Soviet Russia was L. Masterman, an English media educator. His attitude was clear and well-defined: “Representation is the central and integrative concept of media education. Media do not reflect the reality – they represent it. The main goal of media education is the “denaturalisation” of media. Media education is the research process first and foremost” ([Masterman, 1993: 22–23](#)). This theory affirms that the goal of media education is fostering student’s critical thinking. Materman’s position was endorsed by many foreign media educators of 1980s–1990s: D. Buckingham, C. Bazalgette, C. Worsnop, J. Gonnet, R. Ferguson, A. Hart and others.

In the XXI<sup>st</sup> century, the priorities dominating media education have changed. For example, R. Berger and J. McDougall posited the main question in professional media education: “how we teach ought to change, as well as what we teach” ([Berger, McDougall, 2013](#)). The authors believe that this – theory vs practice – approach would subsequently allow the students to successfully find their place at the labor market.

J. Potter in his work “Digital Media and Learner Identity: The New Curatorship” proposed the model of teaching digital media based on the “new curatorship” ([Potter, 2012](#)). This idea has become popular among the educators across countries as the most fruitful: it facilitates rethinking how the relations between “expertise, apprenticeship and participation” work within the process of designing new environments conducive to the development of students’ critical thinking and media literacy ([Berger, McDougall, 2013: 9](#)). The authors notes the importance of tracking how a student’s experience is being formed; how an access to necessary resources is provided; and how a student participates in specialized “creative centers” where he or she acquires practical skills. Each stage has inbuilt controls that implements the idea of mentorship.

E. Morrell and J. Duncan-Andrade use the term “critical media pedagogy” which the authors define as the deliberate work of educators and students to develop critical thinking skills that would help the young people to critically assess and interpret media-generated messages, as well as messages from other sources (in their communication with their peers, families etc.). According to

the authors, these are the basics of “academic literacy”. E. Morrell and J. Duncan-Andrade believe that the result of these “critical media pedagogy” would be the ability of students to create their own narratives reflecting their sociocultural experience that can help the students both to become critical citizens and to find their professional vocation: “Through a problem-posing... and culturally affirming pedagogy... students can also learn to deconstruct dominant media narratives and to create their own counter-narratives...” (Morrell, Duncan-Andrade, 2005).

We can agree with the authors that determining the students’ interests within the educational framework may also correct the educators’ work in their efforts to achieve learning outcomes. The development of digital media products through the use of digital media requires teachers to master information and communication skills (ICT), as well as aesthetic representation of reality and its reflection in media images.

Mastering ICT skills is a necessary professional component for specialists in any field. L. Qvortrup proposes to define media pedagogy as: a content of education (media education); an education and socialisation within media environment (media socialisation); and the use of media in teaching and for teaching (educational media) (Qvortrup, 2007). These three approaches help to implement the principles required to foster a media literate individual of the XXI<sup>st</sup> century. They also open perspectives for meaningful pedagogical solutions applied at various levels of education.

H. Shmidt’s article published in influential *The Journal of Media Literacy Education*, argues in favor of the theoretical importance and practical necessity to establish media literacy educational programs in colleges and universities, since “media literacy competencies are necessary for all of today’s college graduates... and media-related skills are increasingly important for a variety of professions as well.” (Shmidt, 2015: 53).

At the same time, the question of *what* should serve as basis for studying communicative culture in colleges and universities remains open to discussion. In their article “Media literacy and transmedia storytelling”, English researchers A. Weedon and J. Knight note that “Media studies have claimed the realms of television, newspapers, cinema, radio and audiovisual texts, their forms, the industries that produce them and the means of distribution and consumption as its object of study. New media researchers have added identity, interactivity, geolocation, engagement, affectivity, sharing, creativity and fan crowd and other forms of online and real life community building through new communications technologies» (Weedon, Knight, 2015: 405).

At the same time, according to S. Ashley, the challenges faced by media educators in Europe and the USA are generally typical, related mostly to the educational setting (limited time, large number of students and their widely differing skill levels). This is why many surveyed educators “aim to foster engagement with media and civic life through a focus on current events and media consumption. Several noted a focus on the role of media in a democracy and the importance of accessing information from a variety of sources. Diverse perspectives such as those generated by differences in race, gender, and politics did not seem to be a problem for those surveyed” (Ashley, 2015: 170).

Another often discussed challenge faced by contemporary media education is how to approach social media within the education process. American researcher S. Talib believes that this is the most important question of media pedagogy, since social media have become an integral part of life for the young generation. This is why this complex and engrossing media environment requires skilled media pedagogy which would prepare the students to understand, interact with and adapt to social media that are becoming an integral part of their life. The research in media literacy shows the need for instruments and methods that would help the students to become “adept digital citizens” (Talib, 2018: 55). Based on this, the author concludes that “one important avenue of further research could be a cross-disciplinary meta-analysis of social media research. This would help codify and increase the number of ID approaches available to people interested in adopting this method in their teaching and research. For teaching, it would be useful to explore how this pedagogy evolves as it is applied in different fields such as sociology and digital humanities among others” (Talib, 2018: 64).

At the same time, contemporary foreign researchers clearly focus on practical aspect in relation to competitive advantage and professional self-fulfillment of prospective specialists.

Russian media education envisage its main goal as the development of media literacy and media culture of the students, as described by A.V. Fedorov in his book (Fedorov, 2001). However, in recent years this author has increasingly tended to define the goal of media education as “media

competency”, which, in his opinion, “better describes the nature of individual-based skills required to use, critically analyze, assess and transmit media texts in their various types, forms and genres, and to analyze complex processes by which media functions in society” (Fedorov, 2007: 82). In his view, media literacy (media competency) should be understood as a “key element in a concept of global citizen” (Fedorov, 2015).

Research shows that the majority of Russian media educators pursue the following goals in their teaching practice: development of their student’s critical thinking ability; teaching theory and history of media culture; teaching media language and media text decoding; fostering students’ ability to perceive media texts aesthetically; facilitating students’ communicative skills; teaching the students creative self-expression through various media (Fedorov et al, 2004: 26–27).

Taking into account that media education is a comprehensive process of socio-psychological interaction (dialogue) between media educator and student, A.V. Sharikov proposed the following definition of its goal: “Media education is the process through which an individual acquires the culture of mediatized social communication” (Sharikov, 2005: 78–79).

In March 2017, International Forum “Media Education in Pedagogy: Existing Methods and New Approaches to Its Management” (International Media Education Forum, 2017) raised the questions relating to the functioning of the Russian system of media education management. The Forum’s main goal was to consolidate efforts of administrative, educational and media communities in order to create an open informational space that would include efficient pedagogical media technologies and innovative media and information resources. The topics discussed at the Forum show that pedagogical community is highly interested in the modalities of interaction between media and education: media education management system; regional models of media education development; media and information literacy as a key competence of modern teacher; media culture and information security; media center as a media educational technology facilitating the development of students’ communicative competencies; the use of media education technologies for patriotic education at schools.

These examples demonstrate that the question of “media and education” is not only highly relevant – it is also being solved in multiple ways in modern pedagogy.

#### 4. Results

##### *Media education concept as a culture studies project*

Analysis of theory and practice of media education, both Russian and foreign, demonstrate that there are no globally approved theoretical concept of this term. The experience accumulated by the Russian Association for film and Media Education headed for years by A.V. Fedorov, which influenced the works of scholars in various humanistic schools and trends (O. Baranov, A. Fedorov, E. Vartanova, Zasursky, A. Korochensky, S. Penzin, S. Urazova, Y. Usov, N. Khilko, I. Chelysheva, A. Sharikov, O. Shlykova and others) provides us with the opportunity to determine main conceptual frameworks of media education that allow us to describe media education as a structure of applied culture studies.

We agree with A. Fedorov (Fedorov, 2001: 20-33), which highlighted the following basic concepts of media education:

##### 1) *Media education as a culture studies framework*

Here, the content of media education is framed through the key concepts of media culture, which are relatively universal: “multimedia culture”, “culture of mass communication”, “media sphere”, “media space”, “media environment”, “media text”, “media technologies”. At the same time, this framework fosters exploration of the main types of media culture: print culture, electronic culture, audio culture, visual culture, audio-visual culture. In terms of media representation, this framework focuses on media text genres (regardless of what type of media is used): analytical article, journalist report, essay, interview, photo portrait, photo collage, social photography, talk shows, socio-psychological drama, comedy, melodrama, historical saga (in cinema and TV), video clip, website etc.

This framework of media education, which is widespread in many countries (UK, Canada, France and Russia) has been seriously influenced by the ideas of Canadian theorist Marshall McLuhan, who became one of the first theorists of media culture proving that all media is based on the transmission of value-laden information (“The media is the message”) (McLuhan, 2003: 7). From here, the main functions of media are derived: media re-create reality; each media text is a



result of deliberate construction; the content and the form of media text are interconnected, although each medium possesses its own language and rules of encoding reality; each medium has its own cultural code and its own cultural meaning;

#### 2) *Media education as a sociocultural framework*

The theoretical basis of this framework is provided by the synthesis of culture studies (fostering individual media culture) and sociological (teaching the importance of the social role of media) approach. The main points of this framework have been described by A.V. Sharikov: 1) the development of media naturally leads to the emergence of specialized education in each field of humanities; 2) since media audience is a mass audience, professionals (the teachers of specialized classes) confront a need to teach media language to a wider social group; 3) this tendency is further supported by the fact that the society itself increasingly becomes aware of the power of media influence over the individual, which, in turn, leads to the rethinking of social impact of media and fosters further development of media education (Sharikov, 1990: 60). At the same time, the main goal is a sociocultural development of students and their adaptation to the conditions of their social environment.

#### 3) *Semiotic framework of media education*

This framework is based on the works of such renown Russian and Western media theorists as M. Bakhtin, R. Barthes, B. Bibler, N. Boltz, Y. Lotman, J. Kristeva, M. Yampolsky and others. The main goal of semiotic framework is to teach the target audience how to “read” media text. As a result, the main content of media education revolves around “codes” and “grammar” of media text, and the main education strategy is media text decoding, description of its content, text-related associations, language nuances etc. Semiotic analyses can be applied to all kinds of media cultural “products”: books, magazines, articles, movies, TV series, videos, TV and radio shows, photographs, multimedia artworks, computer graphics, websites etc. The analysis of semiotic framework of media education shows that it generally ignores ideological function of media, paying main attention to the specifics of media text language, and not to its political connotations.

#### 4) *Aesthetic framework of media education*

This framework still remains popular among Russian media educators. An entire process of film education, both in secondary and higher education, was being developed within this framework in 1920s–1980. Here the theoretical basis largely corresponds with the culture studies framework of media education. However, the main goal of media education is seen as helping students understand the rules governing media text creation – the rules that are directly related to art – as well as develop student’s aesthetic appreciation and taste and their ability to perform expert analysis of art objects. This is why the main content of media education centers on the study of specific characteristics of media culture; the history and theory of its subtypes (photography, cinema, TV, video, multimedia system, Internet etc.); the original vision of the media text’s creator; and the development of individual critical thinking. Aesthetic theory of media education was also popular in the West in 1960s–1970s, the pinnacle age of *auteur cinema*. However, today it is obvious that the artistic dimension of media is not the most important one for the contemporary pedagogy, since media text has to be examined not only aesthetically but also through ethical, psychological, social and other angles.

#### 5) *“Practical” framework of media education, or media studies*

Within this framework, the goal is to expand the study of media culture to include media technologies. It also pays particular attention to the development of practical skills and competencies in various media use, encouraging students to create their own media texts thus fostering their creative self-expression. Each of these frameworks, in its own ways, strives both to develop media literacy of the students and to foster individual media culture that includes “the culture of information production and transmission, as well as the culture of its perception”, which is simultaneously “a marker of sophistication level of an individual able to “read”, analyze and assess media text, express themselves creatively through media, acquire new knowledge through media etc. (Fedorov, 2001: 20-33; Kirillova, 2008: 18).

As we have seen, the main goal of teaching media in contemporary university-level humanistic departments is to prepare the new generation to life that is being shaped by the digital revolution: to teach students how to perceive information of various types, help them assess it, understand how it works, learn to communicate through non-verbal computer-mediated forms and modern information and communication technologies.

Theoretical and practical questions of media studies have long been the priority for teachers and students at the Department of Art History and Cultural Studies of the Ural Federal University.

The area of audio-visual communications and media technologies have been the focus of the Chair of Cultural Studies and Leisure Studies since 2001 (before this, "History and Theory of Cinema" was the leading discipline), when the chair-approved curriculum first introduced courses for the bachelor programs in "Intercultural Communication" and "Cultural Management". Thanks to this, students specializing in cultural research can master contemporary management systems, marketing and business in socio-cultural work, advertising techniques and audio-visual business. In 2005, two new courses, "The Culture of Mass Communications" and "Media Culture and Foundations of Media Management", were introduced into the curriculum.

In 2006, with the support of the President of Russia grant, the Ural Research and Methodological Center for Media Culture and Media Education was established as a regional social project. The same year, the newly-established center joined forces with the Russian Institute for Cultural Research (Moscow) to organize the All-Russian Research Conference "Screen Culture in Contemporary Media Space: Methodology, Technologies, Practices", and in 2007, in collaboration with the Boris Yeltsin Foundation, – Intentional Research Conference "The Future of Russia: Vector of Changes". Here, the "Media Culture of New Russia" became one of the leading sections; the results of its work were published as the collected papers (Kirillova, 2007). Ural Center for Media Studies and Media Education, which is a subdivision of the Department of Art History and Sociocultural Technologies, has become a valuable research base for teachers and students.

In 2010, the Chair of Cultural Studies and Leisure Studies opened master's program in socio-cultural work. The first program offered was "Tolerance Technologies in Sociocultural Work"; however, the second master's program, "Audiovisual Communications and Media Technologies in Sociocultural Work", is aimed to provide professional training for future managers in socio-cultural field of work.

The relevance of this program is supported by the need to train highly qualified professionals in audio-visual cultural management, taking into account the importance of contemporary media technologies as a factor of social modernization which forms the framework for the development of civil society.

The curriculum of this program prepares master's students for the new innovative type of work in research, pedagogy, project design, creative fields and organization (management). The program combines theoretical research training aiming to develop professional research skills in audio-visual culture and communications with the practical learning of new technological skills and computer processes necessary for the prospective workers in socio-cultural management field.

This educational program teaches such subjects as: issues in modern communicative; history and theory of audio-visual culture; computer technologies in socio-cultural work; state media policy and its role in transforming Russian socio-cultural environment; international information law and Russian legislation regarding media technologies; audiovisual documentation used in socio-cultural work; photo, cinema and TV archives; producing; advertising technologies; and audio-visual business.

The program also includes various forms of creative projects and professional work in audiovisual field: students analyse audio-visual artworks, TV and radio programs, write scenarios, shoot short movies and video clips, develop festival and competition programs, design websites etc.

The prospective professional field available for master's students in socio-cultural field after their graduation from the program "Audiovisual Communication and Media Technologies" are: managerial work in sociocultural and audio-visual fields; research and pedagogical work, including media pedagogy; producing of specialised projects in sociocultural and audio-visual fields; festival management; expert and analytical work at the contemporary art market.

Master's program "Audiovisual communication and media technologies in sociocultural field" is an inter-departmental project which attracts not only students majoring in culture studies and art history, but also journalists, historians, linguists and economists.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, we may say that the practical application of media studies within the cultural research education provides good results, which prove that "media education is the road to create a personality in harmony with media and social realities; a set of methods fostering the development

of creative and communicative abilities, critical thinking, and skills required to comprehensively perceive, interpret, analyze and assess media texts” (Fortunatov, 2011: 145–146).

Still, today practice-oriented approach dominates the field education, since it allows to respond to the challenges and needs of contemporary culture, with education being a part of this culture. One of the relevant tasks facing the XXI<sup>st</sup> century pedagogy is the formation and development of students’ academic literacy skills according to their subsequent activity and professional choices. Introduction of contemporary ICT and media resources into the educational process would help teachers to attract and hold their audiences’ attention on the relevant social topics and questions within the context of global and Russian cultural development. Media literacy acquired through education process not only provides a person with a competitive advantage on the labor market, but also guarantees their high demand within their chosen professional field.

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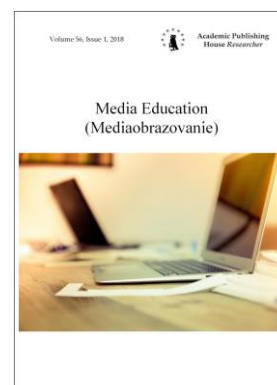


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## Methods of teaching journalism as academic course in higher school

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### Abstract

The article presents the content and methods of conducting a study course on teaching journalism, which is developed for the master's degree level of education. The author uses his experience as a Professor at *Saint Petersburg State University*. He argues with those colleagues who believe that teaching journalism can be limited to teaching practical instrumental skills. The concept of the described course is based on the model of journalism education as a systemic phenomenon, which includes a comprehensive social and humanitarian background at the university level, the formation of advanced professional ideology and labor technique. Structurally, the article is built in the form of in detail characteristics of the factors that have a decisive influence on the organization and methods of training. The author draws attention to the following factors: normative (officially established standards of education), personnel (team and qualification of teachers), professional and practical (industry requests), audience (characteristics of students), and organizational and methodological (organization of the educational process). None of them can be considered dominant while each one dictates some parameters of teaching that need to be taken into account.

**Keywords:** teaching journalism, master's degree, study course, concept, methods, influencing factors.

### 1. Introduction

Experts of the global *Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication* concluded that journalism education “has become one of the fastest growing academic fields in the world” (Goodman, , Steyn, 2017: 254). Russian academic experience gives strong evidence of given statement validity. In this country, there are about 150 organizations that provide higher education in the field of journalism, and regular teaching activity traces its history from at least the *State Institute of Journalism* in early 1920s (Fateeva, 2007: 107). At present, diversity grows, taking into account the three levels of education, including bachelor's, master's and postgraduate studies.

There is no doubt that such a rich experience puts Russia among the world leaders in journalism education (Khubetsova, 2018; Korkonosenko, Berezhaia, Khubetsova, 2018; Vartanova, Lukina, 2017). To be highly developed the university education needs a solid theoretical and methodological basis. Accordingly, there are more and more reasons for forming the branch pedagogy of journalism and appropriate training of the younger generation of teachers.

The aim of this article is to present the content and experience of teaching a discipline designed to students' preliminary preparation for a possible university career. In this discourse, we

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will clarify our understanding of the concept and objectives of journalism education, as well as the most controversial issues that arise in the teaching process.

## 2. Materials and methods

The main object of analysis undertaken is the course for undergraduates *Methods of teaching journalism discipline in higher school*, including its subjects, corresponding problem situations, and ways to overcome them. In certain variations, the discipline exists during about 20 years at *Saint Petersburg State University*. For so long, the author has accumulated a considerable amount of observations and reflections, which make it possible to draw conclusions on optimal organization and effects of the course. As methodological techniques we use the reconstruction of the training course logic and critical consideration on the audience's behavior and their perception of the teaching in its essential components. Description of the course and its teaching is immersed in the context of the discussion concerning the feasibility of developing journalism education at the university level and the range of knowledge and skills taught.

## 3. Discussion

As is well known to experts in different countries, a lot of journalists don't accept the idea of university education and are critical of its prospects. What such "remarks do reflect however is a belief that aptitude for the occupation is a singular 'talent' rather than a set of skills and behaviours that can be learned. They reflect a traditional scepticism in industry about the value of academic study and qualifications in journalism and the view that universities are places of "debate" rather than training and development" (Evans, 2014: 68). Meanwhile, unshakable conviction in the universal value of one's personal experience and skepticism of some professionals do not cancel the existence of university education.

In turn, even some university teachers maintain a strong belief that this area of studying does not need any theoretical basis or special methodological support. Therefore, the leading role should belong to the transmitting experience from hand to hand, with a focus on certain print or broadcast media. Here is a typical example of such a solution of pedagogical issues, "In my years as a journalism teacher and high school newspaper adviser, I found nothing more valuable for teaching the craft than showing students how the professionals do it. From interviewing and reporting to photography and page design to making ethical decisions and exerting First Amendment rights, newspapers like *The New York Times* were our models" (Ojalvo, 2009). Another journalism professor expresses no less categorical opinion on the website, which supposedly covers everything an aspiring journalist needs to know, "In a nutshell, the best and really the only way to truly learn journalism is by doing it" (Brown-Smith). The list of such statements can be continued without long searching for. It is no coincidence that in some countries with a developed press system (Britain, Israel, etc.) traditionally, preference is given to the training of journalists in editorial staffs by the "learning by doing" method, and only in recent decades specialized education has come to universities and colleges.

The British scholar reasonably said concerning the theory and practice combination in teaching, "As journalism practitioners continue their progress in the Academy, it is important to avoid assumptions about the nature of the framework that will evolve. In addition, while there has been an effort to show how theory can be integrated into the teaching of practice, much less has been done to show how practice might influence theory. The process must work in both directions to be truly reflective" (Greenberg, 2007: 289).

In Russia, a profound academic approach to journalism teaching was initially chosen. Much has already been done in this dimension to present moment, in last decades especially. This is significant that the national library of books on journalism education is intensively growing. In traditions of Russian science, few dissertations for the Doctor of Science degree have been defended (Fateeva, 2008; Raspopova, 2007; Shesterkina, 2011; Vladimirova, 2015). Educational books on teaching journalism have become widely known in the pedagogical community (Korkonosenko, 2004; Korkonosenko, 2015; Lazutina, 2011; Zagidullina, Fateeva, 2007 and others). Special issues of professional journals are devoted to theoretical and pedagogical journalism schools in Russia (Information Age. 2017. No. 3). The country regularly hosts conferences of journalism teachers, including forums under the *EJTA* aegis (Journalism education across borders, 2017). Our pedagogical community tries to correlate both mainstream trends in

higher education, one of which leads to global integration while another is aimed at diversity and supporting specifics of national journalism and educational schools. Not all countries come this way. In particular, the teaching strategy of one of the Arab world universities seems controversial. As its leader writes, “In the course of taking journalism at the Doha campus, the students learn about the roots and roles of journalism as they developed in the United States; the social, cultural, corporate, and political currents that exert great influence on the business and content of media and journalism; standards and ethics for journalists as they developed over time; and even the changes happening in the United States that concern many about the condition of the “free press” (Abusharif, 2014: 203).

Against the whole background described, the following generalization can hardly be recognized correct, “Unfortunately, at present there is very little, or rather no methodical literature on the teaching journalism disciplines in higher education. Therefore, methods as the fundamental basics of training in the specialty should be developed from scratch” (Nurgozhina, , Dudinova, 2014: 5). On the contrary, the availability of literature forms an additional prerequisite for the stable training of teachers. The optimal opportunities for the beginning may be found at the master's and postgraduate levels of education, which provide for cycles of disciplines on education and research (concretely, within academic-oriented model of the master's degree). Not every undergraduate or graduate student will associate his own career with the university, but at the same time this contingent is the most likely a source of replenishment of the higher school staffs.

At *Saint Petersburg State University*, to which the author belongs, the course for undergraduates *Methods of teaching journalism discipline in higher school* (2<sup>nd</sup> semester) is aimed directly at solving the problems described above. In other Russian universities, it is either arranged differently or absent from the curriculum, and these peculiarities make the St. Petersburg experience original, if not unique. From the beginning, we assumed this kind of introduction to the teaching occupation to be based on fundamental principles, so as not to become a set of organizational and technological recommendations. Good to meet methodical elaborations on separate training courses similar to those published from time to time by the American *Journalism*, *Mass Communication Educator* journal (Blom, 2017; Bradford, , Mathew, 2018; Weber, 2016 and others). But for those who in the future will connect themselves with the university, it is even more necessary to get integral and comprehensive view of teaching. For them are equally important the normative foundations of educational activity, and the structure of the university as a production organization, and the psychology of relationships with other teachers and students, and the qualification requirements to the teacher, and many other professional algorithms that are unknown to an outside observer (and, of course, a strict critic) of pedagogical labor. It is greatly difficult to accommodate all the necessary knowledge into 24 academic hours; that's why in some thematic sections it appears possible only to identify problems, without commentaries in detail, in the hope of awakening students' cognitive interest and excitement.

#### 4. Results

For the determination of a course the choice of the basic concept should be fundamentally important point. Actually, clearly expressed conceptuality predetermines not only the direction of a particular course, but the whole arrangement of journalistic education and the ways of its evolution (Khubetsova, Korkonosenko, , Blokhin, 2015). For example, if we limit the purpose and content of training to giving and getting labor skills, especially in their informational interpretation, the program would be built by the technological axis. Relatively, the priorities would be reflected in the following formulation, “The authors of this report believe that all journalism schools must broaden their curricula to emphasize data and computational practices as foundational skills. To place data journalism in the core of journalism education will mark a crucial advance in what schools can offer their students” (Berret, Phillips, 2016: 9). Certainly, there may appear supporters of other priorities which lay far from the technological conjuncture, such as mastership in literary speech, erudition in the fields of economics and politics, communication skills, etc.

We start the training course with the justification of the systemic nature of journalism education. This quality is manifested in the unity of enlightenment (knowledge giving), skills acquisition (training) and upbringing. As a result, the graduate must acquire a solid amount of social and humanitarian knowledge, combined with multi sided skills and advanced professional ideology. In fact, in this context we are not talking about concepts and terms as such, but about the

choice of a model of professional practice, which teaching staff considers as a target area. Thus a versatile personality is being formed, ready to perform responsible functions and duties in actual industrial environment. In this regard, the journalist is not inferior to the students of other humanities faculties of the university, where instrumental training does not prevail. A good deal of the master's audience consists of people with diplomas of philologists, economists, political scientists, etc., and they readily perceive the proposed concept. Accordingly, the system is manifested in the close interrelationship of dozens of academic disciplines. Outwardly, they may look like disparate fragments, but they enter in the student's consciousness as an integral complex, and this overall unity encourages teachers to accurate coordinating the elements of a common curriculum.

At last, consistency finds itself in the interaction of several factors affecting the program construction and training methods. For students, we indicate such factors as normative (officially established standards of education), personnel (team and qualification of teachers), professional and practical (industry requests), audience (characteristics of students) and organizational and methodological (organization of the educational process). None of them can be considered dominant; each one sets some parameters of teaching that need to be taken into account. Such dialectical understanding of this composition helps to avoid unilateralism and to balance the requests while working with the audience.

For example, a certain audience for some reasons is poorly prepared for acquiring academic and professional competencies, but the requirements of educational standards are not subject to revision, and the level of teaching cannot be lowered on subjective grounds. In turn, employers' requests and recommendations should be reflected in training, but they are often dictated by momentary changes in the media industry, while education products are designed for long-term use, and therefore the school needs stability in the basic components. From time to time, the university scholars make attempts to find out the attitude of media practitioners to the system of journalism education and their recommendations for improving the quality of journalists' training system. One of the surveys showed the following suggestions on the most efficient measures for improving: invitation of authoritative practicing journalists for delivering lectures and practical training; creation of conditions for journalistic practice in all types of media (print, TV, radio, Internet); increasing the period of students' practical training, etc. (Shesterkina, Marfityna, 2017: 32-33). It is easy to see that, firstly, the proposals are directed exclusively towards interaction with practitioners (that is, the survey participants themselves) and do not relate to the comprehensive nature of the university program; secondly, they do not contain radical and innovative ideas; and thirdly, cooperation with the real industry and its representatives is already incorporated in journalistic education as one of the mandatory components.

Further the course will be built as a stepwise review how each of the above mentioned factors acts.

Normative factor. The basis of regulatory requirements is included in the Federal Law *"On education in the Russian Federation"*. Working with this document provides an opportunity to abandon the approximate wordings in favor of strict categories and concepts. At the same time, the central ideas on which the Law is based also become the subject of serious reflection. For the development of journalists' professional consciousness and their self-determination in the university environment, it is crucial thing to draw students' attention to the definition of the goals of education: it is a socially significant good and is carried out in the interests of the individual, family, society and the state, for human development, to meet his educational needs and interests. Bringing the personality to the fore (not the state, schools, industrial organizations) stimulates students to understanding the humanitarian orientation of the education they get and helps them from this position to realize their own role as active subjects of educational activities. It is in this way that the discussions of the Law develop in the classroom, including in relation to the real conditions of educational processes at the university.

Similar approaches are used in the analysis of *Federal State Educational Standards (FSES)*. Once again, such acts have their own hard data, which undergraduates should be able to operate with, in instance, the methodology of credits calculation. At the same time, equal requirements for the organization of educational activities in all universities as well as equal criteria for its evaluation deserve close attention. Otherwise, it would not be possible to guarantee a sufficiently high qualification of graduates, regardless of the place of study. Unlike many other countries, in



Russia, journalism diplomas are mainly issued by state Universities that makes the issue of standards and guarantees extremely relevant. Not all regions of the country have enough resources (primarily staff resources) to meet high standards, in particular with regard to the magistracy. The flow of talented and ambitious bachelors to the largest universities in capitals becomes direct consequence of this order of things. This argumentation meets an understanding audience's reaction, as it is usually more than half consists of such migrants from the province.

In strong connection with the normativity contained in official acts there exist standards and norms that were developed in science. Knowledge of them brings obvious utilitarian effects, as undergraduates are deeply engaged in writing their dissertations. In the long term, without knowledge of the classification of scientific disciplines and schools it will be impossible to conduct pedagogical activities. Meanwhile, the bachelor's level of education provides very little teaching space for obtaining proper research qualification. In fact, the lessons of science in the magistracy begin with a zero cycle. They are even more valuable for the part of the audience that has a different educational background, not in journalism. In the most difficult situation are foreign students, such as Chinese, who are forced to plunge into a completely unfamiliar sphere of academic activity. If a young man enters on the path of a researcher without a deep exploration of the predecessors' experience, theoretical roots and traditions, in the future, he will always be a dilettante and a loser in his scientific work.

Although the primary parameters of the classification in sciences are the same for all branches of social and humanitarian knowledge, in relation to journalism they acquire specific characteristics from the theoretical, methodological and methodical point of view. In journalism studies one can clearly see the division into the main scientific approaches to the objects of analysis, namely history, theory and criticism. Starting discussions of this division, the audience comes to the natural conclusion that their research experiments mostly relate to scientific criticism with elements of theoretical generalizations. Such self-determination occurs once again when considering the classification of science by the level of abstraction, from general theories and universal categories towards theories and categories of the middle level and further to specific empirical studies, observations, measurements, etc. Students correlate discussion of the topic with their research projects and find out the importance of a harmonious combination of theoretical postulates with the competent constructing of empirical segments. It is also extremely useful to remind them of the subject and branch differentiation of scientific cognition. Closed in narrow profiles of thematic specialization, undergraduates usually have little interest in the state of affairs in related branches. So, specialization in speech communication does not entail penetration into the territory of the history of journalism or sociology of journalism, and vice versa. However, in reality, the teacher and the researcher have to work in a team, where interdisciplinary cooperation is the norm and the key to the productivity of intellectual working.

Teaching personnel factor. Undoubtedly, the qualification requirements for the teacher and the criteria for assessing his achievements will always cause increased interest among students at all levels. Undergraduates have a rich personal experience of interaction with numerous representatives of the pedagogical community; they have got a lot of material for comparison and have created their stable preferences. For those of them who will work at the university, the issues of teacher qualification are also of obvious career importance. However the observations of teachers from the classroom often draw a subjective picture and do not provide reliable knowledge on the essence and regulations of teaching.

It would seem that everyday communication with teachers helps to understand the official statuses of the university employees, their positions and roles in the structure of the organization. Actually, students are very poorly versed in the university hierarchy. Many of them have a vague representation on the differences between Assistant, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor in terms of duties and responsibility. Even less they know about the academic titles of Docent and Professor, while variative combinations of positions and titles with academic degrees cause a slight cognitive dissonance. However, the procedure for obtaining academic degrees deserves a description with as many details as possible. Magistracy gives the right to apply for admission to graduate school, which in the optimal cases ends with the defense of the thesis of the Candidate of Sciences. Students know, more or less, the traditional procedure for defending and awarding a degree by a decision of the Federal Ministry. However, in recent years, *St. Petersburg State University* and *Lomonosov Moscow State University* have begun to award their own PhD,

Candidate and Doctor of Science degrees under very unusual rules for Russia, and it is likely that other educational institutions will follow the two leading universities.

To the characteristic of positions and titles the description of official duties of the teacher which, according to the legislation and educational standards, include regular research and scientific and methodical working should be added. In the aggregate, students shape a representation on how broad is the functional profile of the person whom they are used to associate mainly with the classroom, and how high the requirements for his professional competence are. In this context, it is appropriate to emphasize the difference between the Russian tradition and personnel policy at many foreign universities, where each teacher normally is called a Professor and where scientific activity is not necessarily included in the scope of responsibilities. On the website offering a short-term training for certified journalism teachers (U.S.) one of the sections is entitled "What do journalism teachers have to know?" The answer proves very different from the complex set of qualities that are typical for Russian higher education, "Prospective teachers must be able to engage students in activities in and out of the classroom that challenges their abilities to gather and process information to produce journalistic pieces such as articles, photojournals, and broadcast reports" ([Journalism teacher certification](#)).

In fact, we come back to the question on the place of instrumental training in education which was raised at the beginning of the article, but now from the formation of the teaching staff viewpoint. Considerable professional experience gives us the right to argue that at all times the ratio of so-called theorists and practitioners was one of the most debatable topics for students. For journalism, this is a particularly sensitive issue, because education is aimed primarily at work in the media industry. The younger generation is characterized by desiring to start an independent professional life as early as possible, being fascinated by the lessons of practicing masters and underestimating the importance of the knowledge possessed by "theorists". Meantime, extensive professional experience shows that in the long term, intellectual and cultural capital acquired during the university years have real high value, while instrumental skills are quickly gained and updated in the routine industrial daily life.

It is also useful to draw students' attention to the personnel composition of the teachers team whom they actually deal with. Not every aspect of training necessarily requires teachers to have a close personal connection with the current industrial environment. Within this discourse, it will be enough to refer to examples of experts in media linguistics, history of journalism, media law, etc. On the other hand, well-chosen teaching staff necessarily includes acting practitioners, who are assigned to the applied profile training. This is the task of the administration in a particular institution.

Audience factor. It is quite clear that within analysis of the audience factor it is necessary to talk about differentiated approaches to various training contingents, depending on the learning objectives, personal characteristics of students, the level of their preliminary training, etc. At the same time, in this section there are topics which have controversial nature and may be treated differently according to individual's points of view. Such set of topics includes the relationship between teachers and students. There should be reliable guidelines and criteria that are known and understandable to all sides of communication. As analysis of the status and ethical documents of educational institutions shows that a business style of relationship serve as a basis for considering and estimation. In other words, both university staff and students have a set of rights and responsibilities due to their role in the educational process. Precisely matching to rights and obligations will be the criterion for determining whether one's behavior is right or wrong, acceptable or not in the university environment.

If following this rule, it solves the problem of the so-called kind teacher, who arbitrarily lowers the level of demands to the student below the state educational standard and thus evades the performance of his duties. Another area of concern relates to attitude to the working student. It often happens that a young person is not only just forced to make money for living, but also achieves some success in the professional field. However, resources are no longer sufficient for academic success. It is unlikely that he has the right for these or those indulgences, because he forms the budget of time independently and should be responsible to the educational institution – as full as to his employer.

For the audience, such typical situations become a kind of cases, for which the criterion of business relations appears a key to understanding and decision making. As a rule, this approach

coincides with the expectations of students. We can refer to the study among the American public relations students targeted at testing whether an instructor's gender or professional background influenced the students' perceptions. The findings from the study suggest that students evaluate professors on professional criteria and the professors' ability to connect classroom experience and theory to actual practice (Tindall, Waters, 2017: 52). It is important that business relations criterion not only helps to solve discrete tasks, but also identifies the contours of the university ethics as a broad phenomenon that regulates numerous and diverse contacts and interactions. The second reference point is respect to the individual, his or her interests, needs and merits. This is a good reason to switch the conversation to the university etiquette, including the forms of personal communication between students and teachers, style of clothes, manners of behavior in the business environment adopted in higher school.

Organizational and methodical factor. In connection with this factor, students get acquainted with the management system of the educational process, planning, preparation of educational and methodical documentation. Their attention is drawn to the comparison of types of educational work in terms of tasks and specificity of methodical providing for lessons; the content of educational and methodical complexes also should be revealed and the genres of educational literature characterized, such as textbooks, manuals, guidelines, and workshops. Special consideration should be given to the intricate question of the industrial practicing purposes and role in academic life. Finally, here there is also place to touch on the distribution of teaching assignments depending on the employee's official position and qualification.

## 5. Conclusion

Of course, we should not exaggerate the importance of master's degree as a pass to the professional pedagogical future. Certainly, the relationship between education and teaching is not direct and not natural; most masters go into practical journalism or related areas of business activities. But at a minimum level, the educational effect proves already evident in the students' understanding better the environment in which they stay for many years, and in general, they discover pedagogical work as a very peculiar and exciting activity. For a journalist, this is another possible area of thematic specialization in the coverage of social life.

Directly on the educational level, it is obviously seen the increasing competence of students in the evaluation of events and phenomena in the frame of academic practices. So, during the seminars, they reasonably review the curriculum and key methodological documents and offer their projects of lectures or laboratory lessons and analytical presentations on the materials of textbooks. All this is not scholastic exercises, but the approach to implementing tasks of the pedagogical practice, which is provided by the master's program and takes place in real university classrooms. It should be added that the course we describe is closely related to the course *University Psychology and Pedagogy* from the cycle of compulsory master's disciplines.

At the maximum level, the course gives useful toolkit for those who have made his life choice in favor of teaching. We mean not only a university career, because pedagogical self-realization is possible (and often happens in reality) in mass media education. Clubs and courses of journalism for teenagers, secondary school lessons on media literacy need experts who not only discovered the secrets of journalism mastership, but also have had initial pedagogical training, and the shortage of such professionals for many years exists as an urgent problem.

Returning to the starting thesis of the article, we would like to confirm that the named and other useful effects of the *Methods of Teaching Journalism in Higher School* course may be produced under some obligatory conditions. Maybe main thing among them is that the course should comprehensively cover the pedagogy of journalism, in the interrelationship of its different sides and components, including complex psychological and ethical issues. The course is taught in a dialogue and discussion mode, the students discover the unfamiliar in the familiar routine of everyday studying life, and for many of them it becomes an attractive occupation.

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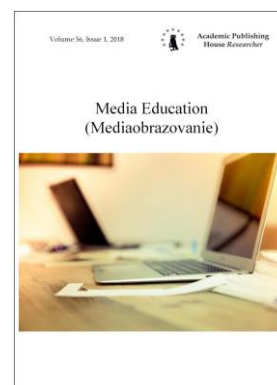
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## Modern media: influence on communicative behavior and pedagogical projection of the legal problem in the light of ethical and speech standard

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### Abstract

Democratization in speech have not only broadened the ways of language expression, manifestations of linguistic individuality, but have led to many negative phenomena. This is typical not only for marginal communication, but also for political discourse, especially – for the media, which has a huge impact on the speech behavior of society. Nowadays, the concept of ethical and linguistic standard have been actualized, it is developed not only in the framework of ecological linguistics, but also in legal linguistics. In the context of ethical and speech norms, it is important to note the words usage is inseparable from the categories of ethics. These new phenomena are due to the combination of all the circumstances of socio-political and cultural life. It is impossible to give any recommendations in the field of regulation in general and ethical and linguistic norms in particular without taking them into account. The methodology of the work is based on a combination of panchronic and diachronic approaches to the language. The leading method is extrapolation of language theories, which arose in the same historical conditions, to the conditions of different historical reality, synthesis of interpretative and comparative approaches to the material, component-semantic and contextual analysis, composite analysis.

**Keywords:** media communication, legal linguistics, media linguistics, ethic-linguistic standard, deviation.

### 1. Introduction

Democratization and freedom in speech behavior not only widespread the possibilities of language expression, manifestations of linguistic individuality, but also resulted in many negative phenomena, the main of which is the disregard for the norms of the literary language.

And this is typical not only for marginal communication or for the specific speech of teenagers, but also partly for political discourse, and especially for the media, which has a huge impact on the speech behavior of society as a whole.

The current language situation is often regarded as a crisis, and this crisis is connected with dangerous changes in the Russian language picture of the world. It is true that modern processes are manifested in the deformation of the stylistic system of the literary language, in the reduction of the aesthetic possibilities of the language of literary texts.

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It is well-known fact that standard speech is a system object with a complex organization, which means that the criterion of correctness is not only the ideal "example". Violation of norms is often estimated as a factor of speech creativity. It is important that "common parlance becomes prestigious" (Gnusina, 2006: 4), and more than half of the glossary of the first and only of its kind, "the Dictionary of Fashionable Words" (Novikov, 2005) is made of the words that cannot be attributed to the strict literary norm.

The Russian speech is rapidly losing synonymous wealth; for example the almost widespread designation of the different emotional states through the expression *to be in shock*. Intentional violation of spelling which recently seemed to be something immutable is typical now. In recent decades, the concept of ethical and linguistic norm actively developed not only in ecological linguistics, but also in such new syncretic area as legal linguistics has been actualized. It is the concept of ethical and speech (or ethicolinguistic) norm that underlies linguistic and legal expertise and linguistic conflictology. The multi-ethnic nature of the Russian state, manifestations of interethnic and inter-confessional antagonism, violation of human rights, manifestation of xenophobia – all these problems require to cultivate tolerance, communicative correctness and language tactfulness in the Russian society. In this connection it is an interesting linguistic commentary to the word *norm* by V. Novikov ("Romantic relationship with Language"), which drew attention to the fact that the Latin root is the category of "false interpreter's friends": in the West, *norm* means something ordinary, standard, average (no wonder Western Europeans learning our language make a mistake: I normally don't go to Church, I normally don't drink strong drinks, that is they use *normally* instead *usually*).

We have the same rule – it is either a knowingly unattainable (and, moreover, often meaningless) purpose like *Norm is soberness of life*, or an enviable rarity, good luck. Not by chance in the youth slang in the sixties word *normal* meant 'great, excellent'. If the norm in the Western mentality is the living horizontal, the middle line, against this background vertically elevated people and destinies (the rich people, governors, celebrities) and vertically omitted (unemployed, criminals, immigrants) slightly stand out. In our West-East (Eurasian etc.) form the *norm* is the upper part of the vertical. G.G. Khazagerov about "near pragmatics", that is, the momentary communicative interests of the speech sender, the author of a definite statement, and "distant pragmatics", which means the cultivation of the communicative space as a whole (Khazagerov, 2000: 32-36).

The difference between "near pragmatics" and "distant pragmatics" is clearly manifested in advertising discourse. Some advertising ideas based on slang, including criminal one, can be perceived by a some audience as good ("cool"), can successfully fulfill the main function of commercial advertising – to increase sales, but they can hardly increase the cultural and rhetorical level of society: *It's time to take cash* (in Russian this statement means *plunder cash registers* advertising cash registers) (example from: Garan, 2009). Since social groups within a language group are in the process of constant interaction and mutual influence, the normative changes that have arisen in one of them may affect the entire language group, if the social boundaries of the linguistic phenomenon functioning are expanded. Thus, norm is in constant development and it is varied in the specific conditions of communication. A special type of norm, connected with ethics of communication, is more and more actual now. It is ethical and speech norms. The purpose of ethics is to organize harmonious, fruitful cooperation, this explains the importance of ethical prescriptions in people's lives. Ethical norms include concepts such as benevolence, charity, honesty, unselfishness, care for others, respect for people, etc. In communication, these properties are manifested as courtesy, tolerance, tactfulness, sensitivity, correctness, delicacy, courtesy, modesty, sincerity. They exclude rude, aggressive behavior that makes the communication process ineffective, leads to interpersonal conflicts and has a negative impact on the emotional and psychological state of the communicants.

## 2. Materials and methods

The methodology of the work is based on a combination of panchronic (involving the use of speculative, logistic, scholastic methods) and diachronic (involving reference to empirical data with the widest possible involvement of non-linguistic reality) approaches to the language. As a result, the leading method is extrapolation of language theories, which arose in the same historical conditions, to the conditions of different historical reality.

Synthesis of interpretative and comparative approaches to the material allows to apply a complex of techniques, among which the leading ones are component-semantic and contextual analysis, composite analysis

### 3. Discussion

Since different actors and social groups can perceive different algorithms as norms, so far there are many equal and coexisting (or fighting) with each other options. There are many factors that influence the subconscious or conscious choice of a social option by speaker. D. Hymes (Hymes, 1974) identifies a series of such factors, symbolically denoting them as an abbreviation of SPEAKING, where S – setting (environment), P – participants (participants of the communicative process), E – ends (goals and objectives), A – act sequence (sequence of actions), K – key (tone, manner of conversation), I – instrumentalities (means of speech transmission), N – norms of interaction (norms of behavior) and G – genres. All these factors influence the choice of language forms by any speaker, and the vast majority of competent native speakers have a certain degree of control over their speech. The set of both lexical and grammatical means of any language is limited (Sperber, Wilson, 2015; Wierzbicka, 2018), but these means have a huge functional potential, systematically determined, implemented and developing in the text. In modern communication based on ideas of tolerance, both normative and deviative forms are effectively used as normative ones, which do not contradict the idea of harmonious communication (Goddard, 2014). The contradiction with ethical and speech norm can be evident, direct, even rough, and not evident, when irrelevance (unethical nature) of language unit is felt not by all communicants.

Thus, N.O. Svetlichnaya (Svetlichnaya, 2009) writes about the inadequacy of some abbreviations, which is associated with ethical ideas. Abbreviation of the Great Patriotic War (GPW) or Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) are unethical, after all, we do not use abbreviated notation for the names of historical events such Great French Revolution (GFR), Kulikov Battle (KB), while the abbreviated names of institutions, organizations are quite relevant to all types of literary standards. Serious doubts, until recently, caused an abbreviation of the Russian Orthodox Church. About three decades ago, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexiy II wrote about the appearing abbreviation ROC – The Russian Orthodox Church: "Neither the spirit of the Russian people nor the rules of piety allow such substitution. This familiarity with the Church results in a serious spiritual loss. The name of the ROC turns into an empty sign that does not affect the spiritual strings of a person. I hope that the strained abbreviation like ROC, or abbreviation existed before "P.Great" and even "I. Christ" will not be met in the Church speech" (Literature Newspaper, 5 June 1991). Abbreviations such as Great Patriotic War (GPW) or Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) are named as "barbarian" in the investigations of N.O. Svetlichnaya. However, according to our observation, the abbreviation ROC is becoming more usual, and even in the speech of the Church leaders themselves.

Interview with V. Kipshidze – Deputy Chairman of the Synodal Department for Church mediarelations:

– Correspondent of newspaper "Culture" (2017, No 1): *What trends in relations between the ROC and the state can you note? What cultural projects are supported by ROC?*

– V. Kipshidze: *On the whole space of the canonical responsibility of the Russian Orthodox Church believers with enthusiasm and love are expecting the arrival of the Primate to share with him the joy of common prayer.*

As we can see, both the correspondent of the "Culture" and the Church representative easily use this abbreviation. In two meanings 'Russian Orthodox Church' and 'Russia's Orthodox Church' this abbreviation is included into the latest «Dictionary of Abbreviations of the Russian Language» by G.N. Sklarevskaya (Sklarevskaya, 2006), coordinates in the feminine gender "ROC congratulated orthodoxies of the whole world with Merry Christmas" and this abbreviation does not have any stylistic marks. Obviously, for almost 30 years this abbreviation became usual and ceased to look unethical or offensive for believers. For example: *The ROC turned a blind eye to political lies* (Interlocutor, 2017, No 10)

*Priests will be banned from singing and healing. In the Russian Orthodox Church there was made a list of professions that were incompatible with divine service* (Version, January 23-29, 2017).



As for abbreviations in general, their irrelevance is often associated with difficulties in deciphering. This was written by L.V. Shcherba: "In those cases where the interpretation is difficult, and the word is uncommon, the compound words are decisively harmful, since it is not clear", and "one of the highest measures of the language dignity is its common understandability" (Shcherba, 1957: 137). Sometimes intentions of the speech sender meet obstacles in the form of lexical or grammatical lacunas. For example, the notes that there is no female variants to the words of the *ass*, *authoritative (person)*, *virtuoso*, *genius*, *universal*, *laureate*, *diplomat*, *grandmaster*, *master of sports*, *hero*, *animalist*, *documentalist*, *director*, *leader*, *politician* in the Russian language. G.V. Bortnik (Bortnik, 2001: 52) writes that the title of the ensemble "*VirtuosKI of Moscow*" even with the most star cast rather would laugh, scare than attract. Now there are some cases in the jurisprudence when the women-deputies appealed to the courts with claims, when they were called *deputatka* or people's *izbrunnitsa* in newspaper articles (Bortnik, 2001: 52-53). Ethicolinguistic norms are often violated in comparisons (for example a fragment of the electoral roll: the Government should be changed regularly like socks, as required by the Constitution (NTV, Saltykov-Shchedrin Show, September, 11, 2016).

A poor comparison may be due to the fact that equalization may discredit one of the objects: The young defender represented in court the case of a farmer who sued the railway company for the fact that the train belonging to it crushed 24 pigs. Trying to impress the jury with the size of the caused damage, the young lawyer said: *24 pigs, gentlemen, 24! Twice more than you!* When in 1989 A. Kashpirovskiy in one of TV programs said: "I am strong as the devil, "he was condemned by the Church for this expression. He was deprived the opportunity to hold his sessions on TV. He could not prove that it was only an artistic technique to enhance the impression (Kulikova, Brusenskaya, 2017). Ethical limitations are imposed on the use of irony. The ironic sense is a situational implicature (Akimoto et al., 2014) – the conclusion that the recipient comes to during a pragmatic interpretation of a pragmatic statement in communication. When interpreting irony, it is inevitable to rely on the data of a number of Humanities – Aesthetics, Psychology, Philosophy, Logic, according to which this phenomenon has not linguistic, but philosophical, ideological character (Sperber, Wilson, 2015). In this sense, irony does not necessarily relate to the field of comic meaning: irony, with its acquisition of existential quality, can be included "into the field of tragic", can become a position of the person, fundamentally distancing from any object. Irony, even in the most trivial cases, is not obvious (and its traditional definition points to it: irony is "hidden ridicule"). That is why irony is unacceptable in ritualized situations, the gross violation of ethical standards is irony about the physical shortcomings of a person. Thus irony must be entirely imbued with ethics and morality. It is noticed that in the trial speeches the irony is almost never used where we are talking about the murder, but very often used when we are discussing such crimes as perjury, forgery, counterfeiting. Baisheva investigates it in speeches A.F. Kony (Baisheva, 2014).

Violation of the ethic-linguistic norm is often associated with the fact that the communicants do not consider pragmatic co-meaning of the word (Sánchez-Moya, Cruz-Moya, 2015). Pragmatics is primarily interested in the cultural component of lexical semantics. The view that semantic (cognitive) and pragmatic meaning can be separated in general meaning of the word is well-known, and even in textbooks and dictionaries addressed to students there are definitions of pragmatic meaning. Pragmatics is primarily associated with the connotative component of lexical semantics, these nonverbal (not clearly expressed) meanings (connotations) makes the word "extensible for new revelations of thought". Many pragmatic functions are sustainable and subordinate to themselves a significant number of lexical units.

The study of the history of such functions, which changed in centuries or decades, gives information about the worldview of the era. Today many pragmemas are described in detail (words with clearly expressed pragmatic meaning) of the Soviet era, which until recently were in the field of social attention, in any case – of the official one (their deideologization, going to the periphery, the development of their new connotations, etc.). The "connotative revolution" touched on many words: pragmatic sound of the word such as *business*, *career*, *profit*, *barysh* was changed twice in memory of one or two generations. Pragmatic co-meanings are more dynamic than the actual semantics. Thus, in accordance with the mentality of the Soviet person, the nomination *careerist* is an insult, while the modern young man will perceive this word rather as a praise. The word *ment* in the modern spoken Russian language has lost its offensive connotation and has become

synonymous with American jargon *COP*– policemen. For example: *We are real ments* (A. Konstantinov *Gangster Petersburg*).

The dynamics of the pragmatic meaning of the word and violations of ethical and speech norms associated with it are clearly manifested by the example of the usage of the words *success*, *successful*. Our time is characterized by the cultivation of personal *success* (for example, the positioning of the TV channel RBC: RBC is the channel of *successful people*). New shades of words *success*, *successful* is imported phenomenon in the Russian language. For example: "Even the native Russian word *successful* sounded with an English accent. At first it was combined only with the names of cases, events: a *successful* action, a *successful* match. By analogy with the English "*successful*" now we have *successful people*, especially *businessmen* and *showmen*" (V. Novikov "Romantic relationship with Language"). See, for example, Dictionary of Linguistic Terms (Brusenskaya et al., 2005).

E.I. Khan-Pira considers that innovations associated with the extension of syntagmatics of the words *successful* are result of semantic copying (Khan-Pira, 2001: 345). In English, it is quite usual to say, for example, *successful writer*, and usage of the word *success* is different from the usage of the Russian equivalent: for example, in English literally *He is success* – 'he is a success', that is, *he achieved success*.

In the book by S.I. Hosiyeva "Russian Writers and Poets" (from the series "Brief Biographical Dictionaries") in the article dedicated to Nikolai Ostrovsky, we read: *Blind, immobile, feeling terrible pain, he creates the book "How the Steel Was Tempered" (1932-1934), which had great success* (Hosiyeva, 1999).

This dictionary was created under the influence of the ideas of "perestroika", that is reflected in the selection of personalities ("literary generals" of the Soviet era – V. Kozhevnikov, A. Ivanov, A. Sofronov, A. Surkov, G. Markov are not included into it, but the immigrants of the last wave – V. Aksenov, Y. Aleshkovsky, V. Voinovich, A. Galich, V. Maximov are widely represented) and authors such as Y. Semenov, A. Rybakov, E. Radzinsky. A. Rybakov's talent is hardly higher than the talent of those "generals", and it was political conjuncture influenced the choice. The style of this dictionary generally is not perfect, and the shift, which can be described as a violation of ethical and linguistic norms, is not accidental. Only absolutely indifferent to Ostrovsky's feat person could use the word *success* to the destiny of his book. In the article devoted to G. Gazdanov we read: After the war, the book "the Return of Buddha" *was published, which was a great success, which brought fame and money*". Convergence of success, fame and money is typical. Actually, in such proximity the concept of "*success*" exists in Russian linguoculture.

And only highly callous to the verbal expression of thought person could characterize the role, influence of the novel "How steel was hardened" on the Soviet people in the 30-s to with this word. "It (the concept "success") is very important in the life of Russian society on the modern stage of development *as feature of modern life* (emphasized by us) (Andreenko, 2010: 3).

And further, "The Concept of SUCCESS is a complex and historically determined mental unit, which has axiological and philosophical nature and involves several interdependent structural components with universal and national-specific features" (Andreenko, 2010: 3-4).

In the cited paper the author compares the content of the concept "SUCCESS" in Russian and American linguistic cultures, and notes that "the value component of the concept ... historically bears the opposite attitude to success as value in Russian and American linguistic cultures", despite the fact that "in the modern Russian discourse positive evaluative component dominates" (Andreenko, 2010: 6). Many authors investigated the phenomenon of American culture, note the fact that the desire for success in this culture acquires the status of national philosophy, and these ideas about success become dominating at the present stage of the development of the global community. While in American culture success has always been understood as a life motive, even moral duty, in Russian linguoculture historically there was rather negative attitude to success: success can be valuable in the national rather than in personal sense. There is a very significant moment in the documentary film *Tatiana Lioznova. To Live up to a Streak of Light in Life* characterized by the producer's monologue about her teacher – S.A. Gerasimov. T. Lioznova worked as a producer assistant of *Young Guard* and she described the animation reigned there (the war had been just ended, the story about young fighters of Krasnodon had shocked everyone) and, in particular, she pronounced a phrase:

In mass scenes Gerasimov had been remarkably successful, no, that's not a word, it was a inspiration...that she qualified in such a way the word *success is not the word*, is extremely revealing. A pragmatic assessment can be contained not only in the nominative part of speech – in the noun, but even in verbs. Even using a particle can make a phrase offensive (Yus, 2017). For example, a fragment from an interview with E. Ryazanov on the eve of his 80-th anniversary:

E. Ryazanov: *I, like the majority of the population of our country, do not understand why the producer, whose films beat attendance records, should go to the bankers and bow to them in the belt? I am not asking money for myself, but to make the next picture!*

Corr.: *So you still have the plans?*

E. Ryazanov: *the Question is very offensive. Do you still have ideas in life? I still have. I have a good appetite. I can have a drink. And I can love a girl. But you said: " It's time for you to die, dear" (Arguments and Facts, 2007, No. 46).*

Thus, ethical and speech mistakes are made when the addressee ignores the ethical and aesthetic component of speech culture, which in the Russian speech tradition implies a special role of categories of sensitivity, delicacy, peacefulness, mercy. Pragmatic postulates of speech communication (e.g. known as maxims by P. Grice, G. Leach) also have an ethical nature.

These are the maxima of tactfulness (Arévalo, 2018; Marlangeon, 2018). (Keep the interests of another! Don't break the boundaries of his/her personal space!); the Maxim of nobility (do not cause problems to others!); Maxima of endorsement (do not scold others!); maxima of modesty (remove praise from themselves!); maxima consent (Avoid objections!); the maxim of sympathy (express benevolence!) Noncompliance of these maxims also leads to violation of ethical and speech norms. It is a mistake that negative evaluation in public communication not always results in violation of ethical and speech norms.

The nomination "Babas' battalion "about the "associates" of the former defense Minister A. Serdyukov was quite exact. But the estimates, which hurt the moral feelings of the people, is completely unacceptable. "It is very ugly when a young journalist, speaking about the famous "old men", calls them "mastodons" (Alexandrova, Slavkin, 2016: 23-24). Or, for example, offensive nomination, offending many readers simultaneously:

*Most of Russians – and authoritative experts (political scientists, economists), and the creative elite, and ordinary workers today agree: finally Russia entered an era of stability (Arguments and Facts, 2008, No 5: 3)*

Often violations of ethical and linguistic norms arise in translated texts (due to insufficient attention to pragmatic components of language units). For example, Cindy Crawford's appeal (actresses and model, famous for widely replicated complexes of physical exercises called "How to achieve perfection") to the audience includes (by the will of the interpreter!) such a phrase:

*After the first program, many people wrote to me how they felt better working on my program, how they gained self-confidence...*

Two similar expressions – *confidence in herself* and *self-confidence* – have a completely different pragmatics in the Russian language: positive pragmatics in the first case and pejorative in the second one (Belyaeva, 2010: 34), so the praise to the complex, thanks to which users became self-confident, sounds at least strange.

Investigators in the field of ecological linguistics note that communicative discomfort occurs when using foreign language material, especially in cases when borrowing can be replaced by native units not damaging semantics and pragmatics in the statement. However, the question about the equivalence of such a replacement is far from unambiguous. In our opinion, it is connected with the ways of introducing borrowing, which can either confirm the necessity of "introduced" language material, or, on the contrary, demonstrate its inadequacy. A good way to introduce anglicism (which in isolated usage is likely to cause rejection) is found in the article by A. Okolelova (*Evening Rostov*, March 14, 2017). Title – *Who do Rostov birdwatchers take care?* Lead: *Menacing-sounding foreign term means only enthusiast to watch after the birds – and there are a lot of them in the Southern capital!*

The article gives a few comments to a foreign language word:

The author used an explanation why just Anglicism is entrenched:

*The first observers organized Union of Bird Protection of Russia. But the foreign term has remained in usage – people have tried to create a Russified version of the nomination, but it was ridiculous ...*

The reader is not made to use unfamiliar borrowing, but there is an explanation to prefer anglicisms: its international status (in our city the movement is not as widespread as abroad; in Belarus, the cost for studying at school of birdwatching reaches four thousand rubles in our rate, etc.), "handicap" of options – indeed, will hardly survive.

A.B. Bushev (Bushev, 2007: 73-75; 2004: 354-355) noted a special function of the latest borrowings, mainly of Anglo-American origin – euphemistic: *fayeed-reising* instead of *going around the world*, *security* instead of *service*, *racket* instead of *extortion*, *sequestration* instead of *reduction*. Replacement of the original words, the *extortion*, *embezzlement*, *bribery* by foreign words *corruption* or expression *stealing children for ransom or sale into slavery* by the anglicism *kidnapping* is a euphemisms.

Compliance or, on the contrary, noncompliance of the ethic-linguistic norm emerges at the level of the whole text or important fragment of the text that the same unit of language (doubtful, from the point of view of compliance to the ethic-linguistic norm, such as borrowings or substandard) can have quite different connotations under the influence of the general speech strategies.

#### 4. Results

In the context of ethical and speech norms, only linguistic understanding is important itself, since the usage of the words is inseparable from the categories of ethics. A.P. Skovorodnikov (Skovorodnikov, 2013) mentions even the discipline of linguoethics. Of course, many ethical and linguistic norms are observed by people intuitively, without special study of these norms. It is impossible to greet with the words *Good morning* the person who had a misfortune that day.

A.P. Romanenko expresses the idea that the media "constantly cultivate festive, elated mood", the most popular words are "having entertaining and silly semantics" (Romanenko, 2007: 515). The traditional teaching of the Russian language at all levels for many years has led to the fact that Russian speakers have completely lost the idea of what should be the Russian language ideal. Ethico-linguistic norm is also mobile and dynamic.

It was traditionally believed that normative usage was more status. In modern communicative conditions, it is appropriate to clarify: the more status usage is the more normative usage. People will forgive to the person with high social status the language liberty, unforgivable for others and will find it quite acceptable, even good and expressive. O.M. Holomeyenko (Holomeyenko, 2014) gave examples about famous Soviet writers. The threshold of permissibility in the usage of invective had been decreased in the post-perestroika period. Some famous writers in recent times in lyrics easily include unprintable before words, without using any hone or other means of euphemization.

Today, more than ever before, the problem of a special kind of human rights – linguistic right – is relevant. This type of human right *can* form and *should* form international human rights standards and evidence. This right includes several components, which also include the right to a linguistic ecology: according to this right, a person should not live in a language environment alien to him or her and suffer communicative damage. The violation of linguistic rights may be the humiliation and stress that people usually suffers from obscene language, thus, society and law are obliged to protect his or her "linguistic ecologic right". The right to a linguistic ecology is closely linked to the human right to defend person's honour and dignity. The insult of honour and dignity, and their frequency determine the strong professional cooperation between philologists and lawyers.

The difficulties associated with the legal regulation of invective language (Alba-Juez, Larina, 2018), because many native speakers think the invective function as natural function, even a useful one (the invective not only demonstrates the aggressiveness of the society, but may also reduce aggression from business into the sphere of the word).

Pragmatic co-meaning of the word is more dynamic than semantics itself (Mackenzie, 2018). The problem with the offensive sound of the word, at the present time is becoming increasingly important in the legal continuum (Galvis, 2004: 9).

In the context of linguistic ecology and ethical and speech norms, the pedagogical projection of this problem is extremely important. In this respect, the work of I.A. Sternin (Sternin, 2011) is indicative, where "recipes for salvation" are offered in the full sense. The author considers:

1. it is necessary to develop speech of children;



2. it is necessary to explain that profanity is unacceptable not at all, but only in a public place;
3. it is necessary to make up own swearing;
4. it is necessary not to prohibit, but to allow and limit.

Pedagogical struggle with foul language was always "undermined" with examples of the usage of obscenism in texts by authoritative authors.

The effective nature (and even the aesthetic role) of such words is not questioned, but it is necessary to observe the formal (absolutely legitimate!) prohibitions. I.A. Sternin draws an analogy with the ancient theater. Death, murder were often the subject of tragedies, but there was a ban: killing was not supposed to be on stage.

## 5. Conclusion

There are a lot of "pain" points in modern communication: incorrect advertising, unmotivated borrowings, unmotivated borrowings in ergonyms and urbannonyms, manipulative strategies and tactics in political discourse, the extremely high level of aggressiveness in the speech behavior of people (starting with everyday conversations and ending with parliamentary debates). It is clear that verbal aggression reflects a deeper aggressiveness caused by prolonged suppression with its external forces, as well as fear of the outside world and sharp change in the circumstances of life. The normative space of the modern Russian language is being transformed under the influence of new information technologies and means of communication. Computer communication is developed in accordance with the laws of mass culture and globalization processes, it is a catalyst for the manifestation of expressive potencies in the language, leads to the formation of new genres, including invective (such as trolling and flaming), grossly violating ethical and linguistic norms and ecological law on "communicative comfort".

G.G. Khazagerov was absolutely right, when he wrote that "the question of the norm requires much deeper development than we see today. Those who study language professionally, must agree with special scientific honesty that the problem is connected not with the influx of jargon, borrowings, etc., for which we have recipes and assurances in the ordinariness of occurring, but with entirely new phenomena..." (Khazagerov, 2003: 64). These new phenomena are determined with the totality of all the circumstances of sociopolitical and cultural life, it is impossible to give any recommendations in the field of regulation in general and ethical and linguistic norms in particular without taking them into account.

Today, it is urgently necessary to make active dictionaries aimed specifically at ethical and speech norms of modern communication, seriously contribute to the strengthening and approval of the normativity. V.G. Gak wrote that "the dictionary of the active type should talk" to the reader; the lexicographer should make detailed explanations" (Gak, 1995: 56).

In modern conditions, explanations relating to compliance of the ethic-linguistic norm is very important.

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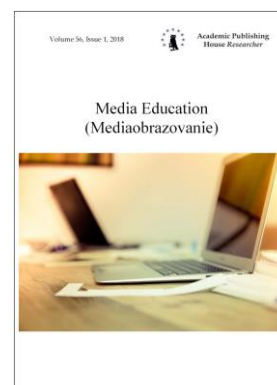
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## The influence of film criticism on the interpretation of the film by the audience

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### Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the specificity of the influence of the film criticism on the perception, understanding and evaluation of the film by the audience. The authors consider film criticism in the context of the phenomena of media competence, media education and media enlightenment and designate media-enlightenment potential of the film criticism. This potential lies in the fact that film criticism can form post-receptive activity of the audience and the development of the visual culture. In this context, the article discusses the specificity of using the notions of media education and media enlightenment in the discourse of modern media analysts, as well as the problems of the functioning of contemporary Russian film criticism in the future, in the perspective of opportunities for implementing media-education enlightenment tasks.

In order to identify the specificity of impact of film criticism on the interpretation of the film by the viewers, the authors conduct an experiment. Its conditions imply the division of the participants into two groups, one of which before the film is offered the text of the film review of the authoritative film critic. After viewing, participants in both groups take test tasks. On the basis of a comparative content analysis of the results of test tasks, the authors come to the conclusion that a preliminary acquaintance with the text of the film review predetermines the focus of attention and evaluative judgments of the recipients, forms their metadiscourse thesaurus. The presence of these characteristics can be regarded as the actualization of the media-enlightenment potential of the film criticism and as the indicator of the formation of media competence of the audience.

**Keywords:** media education, media enlightenment, media competence, film criticism, cinema, film review, audience, film interpretation, experiment, content analysis.

### 1. Introduction

Modern information flows put the audience in front of the need to develop individual mechanisms for interpreting information, its evaluation and systematizing, so the strategies of information consumption, dissemination and filtering become currently important. It is no coincidence that today such notion as "information diet" and "information hygiene" are used in the practice of everyday life.

The effectiveness of the audience's interaction with the mass media greatly depends on its media competence, which is defined as the complex of the motives, knowledge, skills that facilitate the selection, use, critical analysis, evaluation, creation and transmission of media texts of various

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kinds, forms and genres, it also facilitates the analysis of complex processes of media functioning in society (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2017: 18).

In the conditions of permanent transformation of the media environment, the notion of media enlightenment as a non-institutionalized, spontaneous, natural, non-mediated form of development of media competence is updated. Media enlightenment, which is a part of nonformal education and informal, incidental and random learning, combines both general educational tasks and tasks of media education and media criticism (Tyazhlov, 2015).

The film criticism is able to provide effective interaction between the audience and the film industry and we think, that it can be regarded as a representative sphere for studying the media-enlightenment potential of modern mass media. Currently, film criticism takes functions of media criticism in the field of audiovisual content, which determine the expansion of the content of this notion. The closeness of the notions of media criticism and film criticism "up to interpenetration" is noted by leading researchers in this field (Korochensky, 2003; Fedorov, 2010, p. 19).

## 2. Materials and methods

The task of revealing the possibilities of the film criticism in the developing of media competence of the audience required the experimental data. An experiment had been conducted, which made it possible to identify the possibilities for the formation of a viewer's evaluation under the influence of information about the film. In the experiment 87 first-year students of Journalism department who did not begin their studies in the specialty were tested.

The experiment had two stages.

During the first part of the experiment, first-year students of Journalism department, who had not started their studies yet, were divided into 2 groups. Both groups were offered the film *Diva* (director Jean-Jacques Beineix, 1981). The length of the film is 117 minutes. The film was shown with a break of 10 minutes. Students were not previously acquainted with this film and did not have any information about it. It is considered that the film *Diva* opened the direction "Cinema du look" in the French cinema of 1980-1990. This film is regarded as the first film of the "new wave" of French cinema, the first postmodern film, as well as the first film of neo-baroque stylistics.

It was assumed that the film may cause difficulties in perceiving and contradictory reaction of unprepared viewer. Its visual stylistics, the mechanisms of plot construction, genre uncertainty, grotesque images of characters, conditioned by the epic intramural attributes (scenery, cult of analog recording means and carriers), the pace (long plans, unhurried editing) do not correspond to the standard code of modern mass cinematography.

It was expected that for many of participants of the experiment the film might seem "slow", too long, and the plot might be not enough action-packed, complicated.

Before the experiment the first group of participants was offered a review of the film written by the famous film critic S. Kudryavtsev (Kudryavtsev, 2008). We allowed a thought that the audience may be unfamiliar with other reviews by S. Kudryavtsev, but the name of this film critic is widely met on the popular site "KinoPoisk" and could serve as an additional marker for verification. The second group watched the film without any preliminary preparation.

S. Kudryavtsev's review plan:

A. Brief narration of the plot.

B. Characteristics of the plot, visual stylistics, musical and sound accompaniment, camera movement, intraframe attributes, succession and influences.

C. A brief comparative description of other films of this director.

During the experiment, students were not allowed to contact each other, discuss the film, or comment while watching. After viewing the tape, the test-takers were offered test tasks.

The second part of the experiment was carried out in accordance with the methodology and algorithm of the first part. During the second part of the experiment, first year students of the Journalism Department, who had not started their studies yet, were divided into 2 groups. Both groups were offered the film *Permanent Vacation* (director J. Jarmusch, 1980). A short running time of the film (75 minutes) allowed to show it without interruption. Students previously were not familiar with the film and did not have any information about it. The four participants in the experiment were familiar with the name of the famous American director Jim Jarmusch, but did not have any significant information about his works.

*Permanent Vocation* is his first full-length tape, while almost all his films attract the careful attention of film critics.

The film for the second stage of the experiment, which was supposed to verify the data obtained in the first stage, was chosen not accidentally. We considered it necessary to carry out the second part of the experiment on the material different from the first part, since it was suggested that some nonobjective characteristics of the film and the formal-substantive qualities of the review can help to correct the data obtained during the experiment to a certain extent.

That is why we carefully selected a different film, which meets the requirements of the experiment. As in the case of the film *Diva*, it was assumed that the picture *Permanent Vocation* could cause difficulties in perception and contradictory reaction if the viewers are unprepared.

Both *Diva* and *Permanent Vocations* are characterized by a non-traditional code for modern mass cinematography: non-normative visual style (including a pronounced "film" texture – a noticeable grain that can be identified by modern viewers as noise); mechanisms of plot construction (absence of a pronounced conflict); grotesque images of characters; scenery (marginal Manhattan districts of the 1980s); the pace, characterizing the creative manner of the director (long plans, shot by a static camera, minimal editing).

These characteristics allowed us to predict that the film may seem "slow", too long, and the plot – not enough action-packed for many participants of the experiment.

Before the experiment the first group was offered a review of the film written by the editor of the Internet magazine "Cineticle" Sergei Deshin (Deshin, 2010). The second group watched the film without any preliminary preparation. The proposed review was reduced to 3 thousand symbols (mainly due to a detailed analysis of the plot), which made it comparable to the size of S. Kudryavtsev's review of the film *Diva*.

S. Deshin's review plan:

A) Characteristics of the plot and the director's style.

B) Characteristics of the sound accompaniment, visual style, camera movement, tempo rhythm.

B) Comparison of the narrative composition of the film with the plot of the novel by Jerome David Salinger *The Catcher in the Rye*.

It must be emphasized that S. Deshin's review in contrast to S. Kudryavtsev's review, does not contain a consistent retelling of the plot. This factor to a certain extent limited the possibility of content analysis, the results of which turned out to be not so bright, rather than as a result of the first part of the experiment.

During the experiment, the participants were not allowed to contact each other, discuss the film, or comment on the film while watching.

After viewing they were offered test tasks.

### 3. Discussion

Film criticism is an important tool for the formation of "visual literacy" (Debes, 1969; Messaris, 1994; Moore, Dwyer, 1994; Considine, Haley, 1999), which is understood today as a set of vision-competencies that can be developed by a human (a human being can develop). J. Debes, who introduced the term "visual literacy" into research practice, states: "Through the creative use of these competencies, he is able to communicate with others. Through the appreciative use of these competencies, he is able to comprehend and enjoy the masterworks of visual communication (Debes, 1969: 26).

A. Dorr in the article "Media Literacy" in the Oxford Encyclopedia speaks about visual literacy as an important component of media literacy in general: "Particularly when images are realistic, as in much photography, film, and television, the naive user may not realize how much these images too are constructed and must be interpreted" (Dorr, 2001: 9496).

The development of media literacy and media competence of the audience is traditionally associated with media education practices in the context of formal education.

The notion of media education began to appear in the scientific literature from the 1950s and appears, first of all, as a systematic teaching students and schoolchildren how to interact with the media: "it is education that aims to increase students' understanding and enjoyment of how media work, how they produce meaning, how they are organized, and how they construct reality" (Tyner,

1998: 119). In this media education is usually presented in the context of "classroom practice" (Masterman, 2004).

D. Buckingham, writes that the key goal of media education is often defined as "developing students critical abilities". At the same time, the researcher is convinced that "media education should not be exclusively confined to schools" (Buckingham, 2003: 107, 191).

H. Jenkins in the book "Convergence Culture. Where Old and New Media Collide" writes: "Many media literacy activists still act as if the role of mass media had remained unchanged by the introduction of new media technologies. Media are read primarily as threats rather than as re-sources" (Jenkins, 2006: 259).

Analyzing various approaches to the development of media literacy, R. Hobbs pays attention to positive examples of initiatives of representatives of the US media industry. R. Hobbs emphasizes that among the participants of the discussion about the strategies of the development of the audience media literacy there is an opinion that such initiatives should be encouraged: "According to this view, media organizations have a social responsibility to help people develop consumer skill» (Hobbs, 1998).

Traditional strategies for classroom teaching seem particularly ineffective in the situation described by the media teacher M. Prensky, when the generation of digital natives (born digital, digital generation) teaches digital immigrants that have adapted to new realities. "I've coined the term digital native to refer to today's students. They are native speakers of technology, fluent in the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet. I was referring to those of us who were not born in the digital world as digital immigrants. We have adopted many aspects of the technology, but just like those who learn another language later in life, we retain an "accent" because we still have one foot in the past. We will read a manual, for example, to understand a program. Our accent from the predigital world often makes it difficult for us to effectively communicate with our students" (Prensky, 2006).

In this context, the specialist in the field of transmedia storytelling R.R. Gambarato, speaking about media literacy development strategies in the era of new media, pays attention to the fact that "in addition to the academic learning experiences, the current new media eco-system demands more informal learning spheres, such as the ones found on YouTube, online forums, blogs, vlogs, etc." (Gambarato, 2018).

The idea of non-institutionalized training of the audience for critical perception of media is consistently promoted by one of the most significant Russian researchers in the field of media criticism A.P. Korochensky, who says that "not only the institutions of "academic" education and enlightenment, but also the structures of civil society, media and journalism that have a great potential for dissemination of knowledge and development of citizens' communication experience of can and have to take part in the formation of a modern communication culture" (Korochensky, 2004: 41).

One of the premier researchers in the field of media education in Russia A.V. Fedorov supposes that media criticism is an ally for media education. A.V. Fedorov identifies six educational directions in Russia, including not only training of future professionals in the field of media, teachers, students and schoolchildren within the formal educational programs, but also remote media education through media (Fedorov, 2008: 59).

The permanent transformation of the media environment actualizes the notion of media coverage as a non-institutionalized, spontaneous, natural, non-mediated form of development of media competence and media literacy.

At the same time, in Russian academic community a conventional practice of using the terms "media education" and "media enlightenment" has not been developed. In scientific publications, these terms often appear as contextual synonyms, and their meanings are not clearly separated (Bakanov, 2007; Lebedev, 2017; Mokroguz, 2016; Fateeva, 2012).

However, there are attempts to separate these two notions. Thus, in the article "Media Education and Media Enlightenment as Attributes of the Information Society", the authors L.B. Beloglazova and A.A. Butenko separate these notions in the context of the publication without distinguishing distinctive features.

The authors present media education as "the result of computerization", the "form of distance learning", and media enlightenment as "enlightenment through the screen", "educational shows" (Beloglazova, Butenko, 2014: 95-99). In the work "Media Education, Media Enlightenment,

Media Criticism, and Film Criticism as Factors of Forming Media Competence," we are trying to give a clear definition of these two relevant notions (Tyazhlov, 2015).

Media enlightenment content has a heterogeneous character. It consists of different texts which have different functional orientation. One of the most significant content-forming areas is a film criticism, which received a new impetus for its development due to democratization of media processes.

However, today many experts state the crisis of Russian film criticism (Ratgauz, 2012; Yampolsky, 2012), which may discredit its ability to provide effective interaction between the audience and the film industry.

Experts state the weakness of the traditional Russian methodology of film studies (Dondurei, 2011; Prokhorov, 2011; Salis, 2011, Johnson, 2011); snobbery and selectivity of Russian cinematology (Stishova, 2011); the uncertainty of the social role of film criticism (Director v. Critic, 2002) and the destruction of ties inside the professional community (Stishova, 2011); the functioning of professional film critics outside the global public sphere (Prokhorov, 2011), integration into which today is identified with the release of expert film critics on the Internet.

At the same time, the film criticism tries to comprehend its own positions and delineate the limits of its influence (Chernenko, 2016; Ratgauz, 2012; Yampolsky, 2012; Filippov, 2006; Stishova, 2011; Mantsov, 2013, Korneev, 2012).

#### 4. Results

According to the results of the first stage of the experiment, in the group of respondents who had read the review before watching the film, there were more positive responses – 50 %, while in the group of respondents who had not got the review, there were 50 % of the mixed responses. The number of those who absolutely did not like the film, in both groups was 20 %.

Argumentation of the attitude towards the film of respondents who didn't read the review, in the majority of answers was based on the plot, which was given various subjective appraisal characteristics ("good", "confused", "complicated", "incomprehensible", "tedious", "lack of clarity", "understatement"), on the acting ("picked up perfectly", "did not like acting of some supporting actors") (30 %), on the personal preferences ("French cinema is tiresome").

In some questionnaires, the following characteristics were noted: "musical accompaniment" (1), "atmosphere of the 90's" (1), "humor" (1), archaic ("perhaps if it was shot nowadays, it could be more interesting" (1), "dubbing" (1), the camera man's work ("beautiful shots") (1), elitism ("critics, to whom film was made, will decide if it is good or not"), "the title of the film does not correspond to the events occurring in it" (1), love line (2) ("it was fascinating to observe the development of the love story", "It was interesting to see how love for art grows into something more - a fantastic dependence on the person who creates this art"). Twenty percent of the responses in this group did not contain any arguments.

In 70 % of the answers of students who had read the review written by S. Kudryavtsev (Kudryavtsev, 2008), there were noted different structural characteristics of the film: "change of venue"; "There are scenes that are difficult to understand for average person"; "An interesting ending"; "a lot of water"; "The director managed to ... build a plot on the contrasts of beautiful love for music and the criminal world", "holding a parallel of two worlds".

At the same time, the emphasizing of additional structural elements in most cases does not exclude the general evaluation characteristics of the plot ("interesting", "uninteresting", "confused", "difficult to perceive", "generally curious," "too long").

In 40 % of responses the musical and sound accompaniment is commented: "Undoubtedly, the music harmoniously accompanies the action on the screen"; "Beautiful music"; "I liked the sound engineer's work"; "A chic selection of musical accompaniment".

It is important to emphasize that S. Kudryavtsev in his review also pays great attention to musical and sound accompaniment: "... with a tremendous musical and sound accompaniment and a marvelous movement of the camera. It is not strange that it was the operator Philippe Rousseau, composer Vladimir Cosma and sound engineer Jean-Pierre Rue who received the César Award.

In 30 % of the responses, as in the critic's review, the decorations were assessed: "non-conventional scenery"; "such combination of luxury goods and everyday objects"; "I wanted to look narrowly into the details, every detail becomes an art object".



In 40 % of the responses, as in the proposed review, there is an evaluation of the director's work: "I liked the director's vision", "If I were a director, I would have laid the plot in 20 minutes", "An interesting director's approach", "The director managed to make something really very beautiful from ordinary things".

Acting was described in 30 % of the responses, which in general is an integral part of the majority of non-professional reviews: "presentation of characters' temper"; "A good acting"; "I liked acting".

In some questionnaires there were expressed next evaluative judgments: "work of camera man"; "an analogy with the *Garnet bracelet* by A.I. Kuprin"; "fantastic nature and unreality of certain events"; "For one-time viewing"; "will help to free of insomnia".

A comparative content analysis showed that in 40 % of the cases the respondents' argumentation (up to the wording) was clearly determined by the text of the review (Table 1).

**Table 1.** An example of a comparative content analysis of respondents' answers and a review proposed them during the experimental phase of the study

<b>Respondent's review</b>	<b>S. Kudryavtsev's review</b>
// Young postal clerk // (1) // passionately // (2) adores the opera diva. // Entirely by accident, he turns out to be involved in the game between the police and illegal distributors of records (piracy) // (3).	Jules, // young post employee // (1), // obsessed with passion // (2) to the opera. He gets a tape with the voice of his adorable mulatto opera diva, which has never been recorded before. Unexpectedly for himself // the young man is involved in a dangerous game between representatives of competing record companies and the police // (3).
// He gets a record of the performance of the opera diva he adores, who is against pirate records // (1). Because of the appearance of a tape with the voice of the singer Jules // is involved in the struggle of competing record companies // (2).	Jules, young post employee, obsessed with passion to the opera. // He gets a tape with the voice of his adorable mulatto opera diva, which has never been recorded before // (1). Unexpectedly for him // the young man is involved in a dangerous game between representatives of competing record companies and the police // (2).
a) ...he gets a tape with the voice of mulatto opera diva... b) // The plot is banal, like in any other film about love for music // (1). c) ...combination of luxury goods and everyday objects... d) ...paralleling two worlds...	a) ...he gets a tape with the voice of his adorable mulatto opera diva... b) Very // simple plot ( which is, by the way, often used in musical films) // (1) due to a rare talent was turned into... c) ... in the postmodern style it combines elite and mass. d) Beineix puts the story of a sublime, ideal, almost divine love for music in the real context of a suspicious, frightening, risky, night, underground, sometimes literally underground (...) almost hellish existence.
// Every detail becomes an art object // (1). // The director managed to make something really very beautiful (scenery) from ordinary things // (2), to build a plot on the contrasts of beautiful love for music and the criminal world // (3).	A unique sense of style, which becomes for the director of the Diva a kind of expression of the philosophy of life, // allows to transform on the screen the usual, familiar, banal // (2), // make every detail an act of art // (1). // Beineix puts the story of a sublime, ideal, almost divine love for music in the real context of a suspicious, frightening, risky, night, underground, sometimes literally underground (...) almost hellish existence // (3).

Some respondents used the offered text of review in their reflections:

a) P.S. The review did not help!

b) It is not for broad masses, but for true connoisseurs of art film, who are looking for philosophical overtones in a tedious scenario. For broad mass of people – look at the night, so it is nice to fall asleep with the thoughts that you are a connoisseur of art and art direction!

According to the results of the second stage of the experiment, in the group of respondents who got acquainted with the review before reviewing the film, there were more positive responses about the film – 57 %, while in the group of respondents who did not read a review, only 21 % of the responses were unanimously positive. In the second group, responses were unambiguously negative – 50 %, while in the first group there were 22 % of negative responses. It should be noted

that a significant part of the respondents of the first group (previously acquainted with the review) divided their personal impressions and contextual evaluation of the film in their both negative and positive responses – 64 %. In the second group, this trend was not observed, which can be explained by the restrained tone of the Deshin's review, who does not abuse direct estimates of the film and director's work.

The argumentation of respondents who were not acquainted with the review in the majority of written answers is based on the plot, which is given various subjective evaluation characteristics ("*incomprehensible*," "*tedious*," "*not enough action*," "*the plot of the film is not for me*," "*strange*," "*instructive*" , "*understatement*," "*there is no original plot and special effects*"); on acting ("*The actor who played the lead character, incredibly accurately conveyed emotions*," "*the only advantage, perhaps, is acting, it seems to me that actors managed to do what the director wanted from them*," "*I liked the actors, but not their roles*"); on discomfort during the film ("*fierce psychedel*", "*heavy art house*", "*after watching the movie, there is the feeling that all emotions have been sucked out of you*," "*frightens*", "*presses on the public*").

At the same time, in most reviews (both positive and negative), there is a category of "incomprehensibility" (57 %): "*Maybe I do not understand something?*"; "*I did not understand the reason for his vacation, and in general, where did it come from?*"; "*The meaning of the film wasn't clear, it's idea id too strange and uncomprehensible*"; "*I did not like that film is a little incomprehensible*"; "*There are a lot of moments in the film, where I didn't see any meaning, I think they might be cut out, without any consequence for viewers' understanding*"; "*May be there is some understatement and moment, difficult to understand, but there is no lies*", "*The moment with the war China/USA – uncomprehensible, psychopathic*"; "*The plot is difficult to understand*", "*I was furiously trying to understand it*".

In the responses of the first group, "incomprehensibility" occurs only once: "There is some meaning, of course, but I have not understood it".

Students who were not acquainted with the review in their in their responses often tried to complete the destabilized code of the film in accordance with the usual narrative of mass cinema. In the responses of trained students (who had read the review), this trend was not observed. We can assume that their perception was determined by the model proposed in the review by S. Deshin:

*Although "Permanent Vocation" is a debut, it is the most concise and abstract work.*

*It most accurately and characteristically expresses all the Jarmusch's work ... The film is mostly static, the plot goes slowly, smoothly, in a state of half-sleep. Especially noticeable in the debut is the so called Jarmush style, which he calls himself "not to explain anything" (Deshin, 2010).*

In some questionnaires of untrained students from the second group, it was noted: "*complicated music*"; "*translation*"; "*the idea of freedom*"; "*pleasure from the picture*"; "*I prefer films of other genres*".

In 40 % of the responses of students, who got acquainted with the review, the music-and-sound accompaniment was commented the next way: "*I liked the musical accompaniment, because it suits the subject of the film*"; "*music in the background helps to feel the mood of the hero better, even without words*"; "*Psychedelic music on the background*"; "*Unusual music accompaniment*"; "*complicated*", and sometimes even *fake sounds made me fall into the atmosphere of the whole film*".

It is important to emphasize that attention in the S. Deshin's review is accented precisely on musical and sound accompaniment: "Sound accompaniment, perhaps, is one of the most original and main components of the mood and atmosphere of the film. Together with the saxophonist John Lury, Jarmusch managed to create an emotional background, the inner world of the film, which conveys the state of the hero" (Deshin, 2010).

In two responses, students compare the proposed picture with the films of other directors: "*the film resembles the works of A. Tarkovsky (Stalker, Solaris)*"; "*Like Tarantino's films, the accent is made on small details, on meaningless, at first glance, dialogues*".

S. Deshin also uses comparison in his review, comparing the plot of the film with the plot and the mood of the novel by J. D. Salinger *The Catcher in the Rye*.

In the responses of trained students, there is a greater variety of characteristics of the film and their metalinguistic diversity. Comparative content analysis showed that in a number of cases

the respondents' argumentation (up to the wording) is determined by the text of the proposed review: "keynote is loneliness", "auteur film", "unusual manner of shooting", "artistic component (visual)", "stylish scenery and costumes", "deep philosophical meaning", "acting", "angles create a sense of freedom in the frame", "Long pauses between actions create a sense of awkwardness", "actions are not interrelated," "there is no storyline," "film atmosphere," "gloomy colors," "unusual composition".

## 5. Conclusion

The experiment showed that acquaintance with media texts about cinema largely determines the film's evaluation the recipient, expands the argumentation, enriches the audience's metadiscursive thesaurus.

In turn, the level of argumentation and possession of the metadiscourse thesaurus can be regarded as indicators of the media competence development, the formation of which is the common goal of media education, media enlightenment and media criticism. This allows us to speak about the implementation of the possibilities of film criticism, which contribute to the development of the media competence of the audience, which corresponds to its most pressing media outreach tasks, reflecting its media-education potential.

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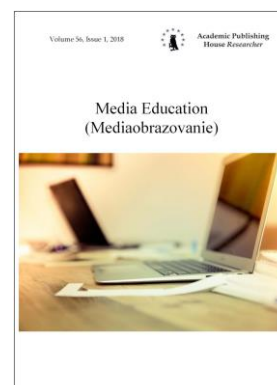
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## **Content analysis of media texts covering crises on practical seminars on political psychology as a necessary condition of the upgrade of the students' communicative culture (on the example of chemical attack in Ghouta in 2013)**

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### **Abstract**

Content analysis is one of the most frequently used methods that shows significant results when applied during studies on political psychology for students enrolled in the departments of political sciences, psychology, international relations, journalism and applied communications in St. Petersburg State University as all these departments widely use media materials for study purposes. Content analysis is used for studying sources that are invariant in their structure or contents, but as a text form are organized chaotically. The article explains the method of content analysis of Russian and foreign media texts covering the events in Syria after the chemical attack on the citizens of Ghouta (2013). Suggested method may be used for studying political events that are conflictogenic by their nature. Authors come to the conclusion that content analysis of media texts is a crucial component of developing critical thinking and media expertise in students. An important part of the training is mastering the key concepts, allowing to understand the significant subjects in the media producing, broadcasting or consuming one or another content.

**Keywords:** media education, media, content analysis of media texts, media representations, media competence confrontation between information and psychology, Syria, conflict.

### **1. Introduction**

Content analysis is an informative method of analysis of political discourse that helps to reveal the psychological contents of the text, factors of creating image of the person who produces the text. Content analysis is a quantitative analysis of texts grouped into text masses, its purpose lies in subsequent interpretation of discovered numerical regularity's contents.

Students use this method in their individual work and during practical seminars for discovering and measuring socio-political facts and tendencies reflected in media. This method is used to indicate periodical's orientation. The object of the study is posts in printed media, Internet media, radio and TV messages. Media text is used to indicate the object of the study and the form that the material takes (its language, structure, genre, rhythm and tone of voice). As a rule, a single unit of text is used as an element of contents. Numerical unit of interconnection between text and out-of-text phenomena, frequency of its appearance (intensity) is used as a countable unit. Regular sample contains from 100 to 600 texts. The main tool is a table of content analysis with outlined indicators (features) that quantify the meaning. It is important for the units of analysis to represent

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coordinated categories ([Content analysis...](#)). Scientific sources that cover the event chosen for content analysis work as a research basis. Articles written by political science specialists that characterized the military conflict in Syria were used in this capacity ([Alieva, 2015](#); [Borujerdi, 2015](#); [Riad Haddad, 2013](#); [Lobanov, Moiseev, 2015](#), [Makhnev, 2014](#); [Noskova, 2014](#); [Podrabinek, 2013](#); [Stepanova, 2012](#); [Farwell, Arakelian, 2013](#); etc.)

## 2. Materials and methods

Experts in linguistics call the method of content analysis “a research method that is directed to systematic, objective and based on countable data study of the contents of communication” ([Kuzmina: 37](#)), and the purpose of this method is “to identify and count events when the chosen units of text were used, and to study messages, images and representations contained in media texts in the broader social context based on this” ([Dobrosklonskaya, 2008](#)). The method of content analysis is based on statistical count of the specially chosen text units (not only verbal) and gives a researcher of mass communication a really broad spectrum of possibilities. “High methodological potential of content analysis is conditioned by the fact that practically any component of media text may serve as a countable unit, both verbal (word, phrase, names of politicians, etc.) and visual (repeated images, audio and video clips)” ([Dobrosklonskaya, 2008](#)). The purpose of the research may lie in defining whether the contents of media, its inner structure and characteristics of formal style coordinate with conceptual model and orientation of the particular media. It may also involve determining the dominant idea reflected in a collection of publications ([Fedorov, 2008](#)).

The choice of the topic was based on a growing interest in the society in the events in Syria, especially among students ([Mironets, Yakovleva, 2015](#); [Egorov, 2016](#); [Stepanenko, Lysenko, 2016](#)). The choice of research period was based on the fact that at that moment the conflict in Syria transitioned into an acute military phase. Students of St. Petersburg State University studied representation of political events during the conflict in Syria on the example of media response to the event connected with gas attack in Ghouta, the suburb of Damascus, that happened on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August, 2013. The purpose of the study was to compare psychological contents of representation of the political event in the English-spoken and Russian sources.

It is very urgent to comprehend the experience of Syrian conflict due to a number of reasons. After a series of mishaps in the international media field Russia for the first time in the recent years has taken an active position in the foreign policy activity. The role that Russian and US media’s position has played in the event should also be interpreted. It is crucial to note that the example of Syria confirms the tendencies in mediatization of political conflicts on the international scene, and this aspect is still understudied.

The subject of the study was media image of the political event. The object of the study was federal media (for Russian sources) and national media (for foreign sources). The following Russian publications were chosen for the purpose of study: newspapers *Rossiyskaya gazeta*, *Vedomosti*, *Kommersant* and magazines *Kommersant. Vlast'*, *Russkiy reporter*, *Expert*.

The choice of western publications was limited to the ones represented in the *Medialogia* system (Russian automatic system of media monitoring and analysis); two leading newspapers from the USA and the UK and such sources from the USA as the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times* and from the UK – *The Telegraph* and *The Guardian* were thoroughly analyzed.

In the process of research, a system of quantitative units was developed. It consisted of 8 variables divided into 3 modules: a module of quantitative calculation of reference (countries, names, participants, organizations), a module of lexical structural-semantic and conceptual-thematic units (names of the events, processes) and evaluation module (participants’ actions, evaluations). Specific text is used as a unit of analysis. Not less than 100 texts in total are required for the analysis.

Participants in Module 1 included all the main characters of the publication (“government forces”, “rebels”, “international players”) and organizations (“government forces”, “United Nations Security Council”, “OPCW”, “ministries of foreign affairs”). Every event had nomination (“conflict”, “terrorism”, “crisis”), processes (“attack ad”, “negotiations”) and actions (“advance of troops”, “territory cleaning”).

Evaluation module contained units and evaluations of actions of the participants or specific statements, situations, future (“Syrian rebels arranged photo shoots”, assessment of actions – “they clearly overdid it”) and also evaluations of the topic.

Thoroughly calculated units allowed to discover multiple interconnections between the events and patterns in the delivery of information.

A study conducted by students of St. Petersburg University (from the department of political psychology) who reviewed events in Syria represented in foreign and Russian media will be taken as an example. The sample consisted of 208 articles that were put into categories according to their semantic content and divided into 4 groups of semantic units: Fact – a headline provides only facts and inform audience about the events. Evaluation – there is an evaluative judgment. Suggested action – a headline consists of a suggested action in the future that mentions its characters. Specified decision – a headline includes information that predetermines evaluation of the text.

Analysis of the articles' names allows to determine differences in semantic contents of texts' headlines. It was determined that among Russian publications the biggest number (32 %) was represented by articles with headlines that register the facts (e.g.: "Syrian balance", "Reaction to chemicals", "Heads of foreign affairs ministries did not come to an agreement about Syria", "Time 's"); headlines with evaluations also had a big representation – 30 % (e.g.: "America is a mother of turmoil", "Ban Ki-moon does not want to be a "statist"", "Obama burned the "peace pipe""). Slightly less number of headlines (22 %) contained a suggested action (e.g.: "They continue to cheat", "Russia waits for physical "evidence", "Return to war") and 16 % of publications had a predetermined evaluation of text (examples: "Will G20 end the war?", "Humanism: will "Tomahawks' be delivered to Syria?", "Are you ready for the overthrow?", "Will Syria be bombed in the name of peace?").

Western publications have similar distribution but with distinctive difference. The number of headlines that contain only facts is significantly bigger – 38 % (e.g.: "Spectators report", "Deadline for disarmament plan is approaching", "Experts in chemical weapons begin negotiations with Syria"), while the ones that contain evaluation is less – 28 % (e.g.: "Merkel is basking in glory, Hollande is dragging through rain", "An offer we cannot refuse", "Obama's uncertain path amid Syria bloodshed"). Headlines that contain information about actions comprise only 21 % (e.g.: "Make al-Assad pay", "The UN investigates new alleged chemical attacks in Syria", "Syrian government gathers strength, but the siege continues"). 15 % of headlines contain information that predispositions text's evaluation (e.g.: "Missing Obama makes China the main force in OPEC", "Experts in Syria engage to eliminate the truth", "Right questions about Syria").

### 3. Discussion

According to media educators, "media has become an inseparable part of our lives whether we are children, young people, or adults; we all have our share of media-related exposure on a daily basis" (Bakuleva, Anisimova, 2014; Worsnop, 2013).

Throughout the centuries mass media "have been mutually interacting with politics. Regardless of their nature or role, the media have been key players in the most important" (Eid, 2014: 844) crisis situations (Hassan, 2014; Eid, 2013). In spite of the fact that their mission is just to provide unbiased information about different political or crisis situations actually they serve as an important tool of the creation of the public opinion which is convenient for the political elites of Western countries (Brinson, Stohl, 2012). One can explain this situation by the fact that when the threat of terrorism or some other crisis situation "is present, the public is in great need of extensive information in order to reduce uncertainty about the danger. The information from the media has tremendous impact on how the public understands an ongoing crisis" (Zeng, Tahat, 2012: 433; Sharp, Blanchard, 2012). And taking to the account the fact that the most well-known mass media have headquarters in the USA, Great Britain, Germany and some other Western countries it is well understood why there is dominating a Western point of view of any crisis situation happened all over the world in the global information and communication space. That's why sometimes it seems very difficult for ordinary people to understand this or that crisis situation and to form his or her point of view which won't be thrust by the Western mass media (Rich, 2013; Klausen, 2015; Bar-Tal, Nets-Zehngut, Shavrit, 2017).

The authors of the textbook "Media literacy. Keys to interpretation of media messages" consider: "To be successful, media professionals must demonstrate an understanding of the process of mass communication, the mastery of production methods and strategies. But in order to really improve the media industry, media communicators also need to know the problems and

responsibilities of professionals involved in the production of thoughtful (media) programming in the interest of the audience" (Silverblatt, Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2016).

That's why it seems extremely important to think about how to increase the level of communicative culture of ordinary people. The key moment in the development of the competencies of future professional communicators is media education technologies aimed at increasing the level of media and information literacy (Buckingham, 2009). Thus it is important to start implementing of corresponding practical master classes in the high school.

During the study of different crisis situations (the Syrian case, for example) students get new skills of analyzing conflictogenic/conflict texts, gain understanding that information confrontation happening in cyberspace makes different newsworthy product. Internet media manipulates not only minds of people in their own country, but also in other countries. Besides that, student may gain understanding that having information means fortifying your own power and reducing power of the enemy or developing a skill to resist information from the outside.

In order to regulate informational attacks several countries created laws that regulate the activities in the informational field. There is a number of documents that protect information and informational systems from the attacks both in Russia and the USA.

#### 4. Results

The results of the study may be interpreted in the following manner: on the whole, analytic data for Russian and foreign publications are similar; the main difference is found in percentage of representation of fact-based headlines – 32 % in Russian publications and 38 % in foreign publications, which may be interpreted as similarity of content.

##### *Analysis of the variable -concept of "COUNTRY"*

In the process of text analysis, it was discovered that the following countries were mentioned (total of 13): the USA, the UK, Russia, Syria, China, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Albania, Norway, Bosnia, Jordan, Libya, and two country unions – the EU and the West (as quasi-referential unit). In both foreign and Russian publications, the most mentioned countries are Syria, the USA and Russia (more than 75 %).

Students' analysis considered the countries with the highest results as their comparison allowed to see key differences in the texts' meaning and to detect the whole field of participants. Countries with results higher than 5 % were divided into 3 groups: 1) primary – the main direction of attention, the most active players (more than 25 % of all mentions); 2) secondary – important players (10-25 % of all mentions); 3) tertiary – allies or not active important supporters (5-10 % of all mentions).

In the western publications the following countries were marked as primary: Syria (29,4 %) and the USA; secondary was Russia (20 %); tertiary – the UK (8,2 %).

In Russian publications: primary country was Syria (39,7 %); secondary – Russia (19,8 %) and the USA (17,2 %); tertiary – China (6,9 %) and Iraq (6,9 %).

In both cases the difference between primary and secondary countries was significant (10 %) which may point to a certain purposeful direction. Russian publications put emphasis on Syria, which may be interpreted as this country being the center of events and the main informational source. It also points to the detalization of processes in Syria. Study of materials has shown that Russia and the USA represent two contrast poles that draw other countries' attention to comprehend the conflict according to the unity in views, therefore, these countries are perceived as the main force that is reinforced by a lot of allies which makes them political. Mentions of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya are also not coincidental (10,6% totally). These countries have suffered from military operations of the USA and their allies. The sole fact that these countries are put in the same list shows that the USA is represented in the negative light. The country is represented as an aggressive military power. It should also be pointed out that all the listed allies of the USA are also their military partners in NATO.

In publications from 2013 Russia is presented only in its political role. Western media views the situation differently, however, indicators of mentions are similar. This fact tells us that current events in the USA are as important as the events in Syria. During the conflict in Syria actions of the USA were based on intimidating Syrian government by the possibility of military operation without actually using the force which can lead to the assumption that actions of the USA were more political than military. At the same time Afghanistan, Iraq and Bosnia were mentioned, and these



are the countries that experienced military involvement from the USA. Nevertheless, the USA is much less represented as military state in the media texts (6 % total). In the publications Russia is also represented only in conjunction with political allies.

The study has shown that Russia media notes representation of Syria and the USA as military-political subjects. Western media dwells on representing participants of the military conflict in the political light.

*Analysis of the variable "NAMES"*

In order to conduct content analysis of the text according to the parameter of "NAMES" students calculated total quantity of all personal names mentioned in the text; afterwards the data was analyzed and systemized.

*The first step* was to indicate media's orientation. In order to do that, personal names of politicians and other participants were divided according to their countries of representation.

Dominant variables were indicated which allowed to sort variables according to the degree of importance.

Russian publications showed the following results: primary group (group of personal names) consisted of the USA (32 %), secondary – of Syria (21 %) and Russia (19 %), tertiary – of France (8 %) and the UK (18 %).

Western publications painted a different picture. Primary group included the USA (46 %), secondary – Syria (18 %) and the UK (18 %), tertiary – Russia (10 %).

Primary group of personal names both in Russian and western media consists of the USA which pays a lot of attention to actions of the USA from both sides. Systematization of names according to the used method allows identifying real players participating in the events, which is different from the analysis of the variable "COUNTRY". These players openly declare their position instead of passively supporting it.

Thus, we can conclude that the real participants are Syria and NATO countries (the USA, the UK and France). This tendency may be traced in all publications that describe the crisis in Syria independent from their topic and country of origin.

*The second step* is defining categories of mentioned politicians and other participants. In order to do that the following 3-level classification is applied: the first level consists of presidents, heads of state; the second level is government officials, diplomats, statesmen, etc.; the third level consists of people outside of power – experts, correspondents, etc.

Political significance of the conflict according to specific media may be defined by how often politicians and participants of the process of different level are mentioned. The more important the person who pays attention to the process is, the more significant is the event.

Top officials are mentioned both in Russian and foreign articles with the same frequency (40 % of all mentions). Bureaucratic apparatus appears more often in the western articles (56 %) than in the Russian articles (50 %). Besides, Russian publications mention personal names from the "OTHERS" category significantly more frequently – 9,3 % on the contrast with 5,6 % in the foreign texts.

More than half of the names mentioned in the text are the names of government officials, however, quite a big percentage comprises of the top state's officials (about 40 %) which makes this event global. Similar number of mentions both in Russian and western publications shows that magnitude and media image of the Syrian conflict is represented in similar manner. It should be specifically mentioned that overthrown dictators from the past appear in the texts: Saddam Hussein and Adolf Hitler (in the western texts) and Muammar Kaddafi and Saddam Hussein (in Russian texts).

*The third step* is the analysis of names and their sorting according to their spheres of activity. In the western texts 17 participants of 23 are either politicians or statesmen, 6 names represent fields that are not directly connected to power (reporters, scientists, civilians) and comprise 7,25 % of all mentions of the names. Military men are not represented.

Russian publications represent 34 names, 22 of them are of statesmen and politicians from different countries, 5 are of military men (4 of them – American) and 7 are representatives of professions that are not directly connected with politics and war. Military men and civilians comprise 8 % of all mentions each.

*Analysis of the variable "PARTICIPANTS"*

In order to reflect the meaning whilst analyzing characters of the publication or the participants, students who conducted investigation tried to reflect how different publications called them specifically. The names were divided according to the objects; 5 main name groups were defined. In the present analysis those groups were processed in the order of appearance. Units of reference that comprised every group, were put systematically, their percentage in the group was calculated and classified according to the meaning. The following 3 group topics were identified: 1) political – includes units connected with bureaucratic apparatus of the state, its political parties, unions, etc.; 2) military – includes unions that mainly serve military or reactionary purpose (e.g.: "rebels", "rioters", "terrorists"); 3) national/civic – "non-governmental unions that are not connected with military or political activity directly" (e.g.: "Americans", experts, inspection, opposition). This analysis has shown that in the western sources referential units with political topic comprise 61 % of all units (38 % – opposition, 4 % – terrorists, 4 % – military islamists). In the Russian publications the division is the following: 62 % – political (opposition – 42 %, opponents of the regimen – 18 %, revolutionaries – 2 %), military – 38 % (unlawful combatants – 12 %, rebels – 14 %, terrorists – 6 %, rioters – 2 %). Russian and western publications are similar in their representation of opposition. Ratio of military to political topics is the following: West – 61 % to 39 %; Russia – 62 % to 38 %.

A lot more vivid emotional expressions were discovered in Russian texts (e.g., "revolutionaries", "rioters", "terrorists") in comparison with western texts which indicates that the events were perceived as real.

The concept of "*Syrian government*" was studied separately taking in consideration variable's contents and meaning of texts.

The following conclusion was made based on referential units in groups. In the western sources 69 % of units are political (power – 31 %, government – 18 %, official Damascus – 6 %, regimen – 10 %, president of Syria – 4 %) and 21 % are military (troops – 20 %, army – 4 %, soldiers – 2 %, government forces – 2 %, military men – 2 %), correspondingly.

In Russian publications 71 % of all units can be classified as political (regimen – 30 %, government – 26 %, Syrians – 11 %, official Damascus – 4 %). 29 % of units are military (troops – 19 %, army – 7 %, soldiers – 4 %).

Comparison of percentage ratio between governmental and military referential units shows that conflict's representation does not have significant discrepancy in Russian and foreign texts by the parameter of mentioning Syrian government as a participant in the events: 69 % to 21 % in foreign texts and 71 % to 29 % in Russian texts.

An extra category appears in the description of *the USA* as a country – a category of *nation*.

Units with political content prevail both in Russian (56 %) and in western texts (78 %). Contents of units connected with military subjects in Russian sources are higher than in foreign (22 %). Russian sources use such unit as "Americans" (17 %) which represents people of the USA. This unit is special as it shows individualized attitude to every nation thus giving it certain emotional weight. It shows the level of engagement of non-political subjects and increases their connection with the real world.

*Concept of "Russia"*

Russia with its subjects is rarely mentioned in western media, however, there are still some regularities: western media does not pay attention to details and consider only generalized image of Russia, while Russian media pays a lot of attention to diplomats ("Lavrov" and "diplomats" comprise 50 %).

Due to a small number of unique units of representation of Russia both in western and Russian media, in their study students noted detailed reflection of US participants from different publications' point of view.

American participants are represented equally in both sources – in 6 units. Foreign texts are practically uniform – 5 out of 6 units are political. In comparison Russian texts are very diverse: 3 units are political, 2 – military and 1 is national.

We may conclude that representation's detalization as well as frequency of mentions of every participant points to participant's importance in these events.

In the category of "*International relations*" all units of analysis are political.

Variable “the UN” in western materials is mostly comprised of civilian units (55 %), while 45 % are political. In Russian texts 11 % are political, 11 % are military, while civilian units also prevail here (78 %).

Concluding the review of such a big variable as “PARTICIPANTS”, average value was calculated for all parts of the variable.

High detalization of the variable or the category in comparison with others shows bigger importance of this parameter. It should be noted that given quite similar results, Russian media uses more diverse references to describe the category of “national/civilian” while western media uses the category of “political”.

Western resources better detailize the concept of “Syrian government”, therefore, they pay a lot of attention to it. Secondary concepts are the USA, opposition and the UN. Russia and international unions are put in the third place. These results may be interpreted in the following manner: Syrian government is the hero of the day, it is the most active, the most dominant force in the conflict, while the USA, the UN and opposition have some kind of interconnection between them.

In Russian media variables are divided in the following manner (according to their degree of representation): “opposition - Syrian government” are primary; “the USA - the UN” are secondary; “Russia - international unions” are tertiary.

This distribution is smooth without any spikes. The first two variables are close in their meaning which may point to equal level of engagement in the global process. In comparison to western texts powers of participants here are in balance which may point to their representation as equals in political and military sense.

#### *Analysis of the variable “ORGANIZATIONS”*

Ranking in the most mentioned organizations in Russian and foreign media is the same. The key organizations in texts of foreign and Russian publications are the USA and the UN. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze them carefully. Russian and foreign media focuses on different points while talking about the USA and the UN.

In the western sources: 1) the USA as organization in western media is comprised by bureaucratic apparatus (president’s administration, Congress, the White House) and military departments (Pentagon, CIA, Navy). Therefore, the number of mentions is 15 and 5. 2) the UN is divided according to functions of its agencies: generalized bureaucratic apparatus (the UN) and agency responsible for sustaining world peace and safety (Security Council). Number of mentions is 37 and 9, correspondingly. Mentions of bureaucratic/solely diplomatic side prevail (3 times for the USA, 4 times for the UN).

In Russian sources: Division in both points is similar. Thus, when talking about the USA organizations, more attention is paid to the military side: bureaucratic apparatus is mentioned 7 times, military departments – 12 times. When talking about the UN attention is divided in the following manner: bureaucratic apparatus - 12 mentions, military (Safety Council) – 14 times. One side is much heavier than the other, military apparatus of the USA is mentioned twice as often, while between Safety Council and the UN Safety Council prevails.

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) being military-political block that unites most European countries was not mentioned at all.

During the review of international non-government organizations two organizations were mentioned: in the western media “Human Rights Watch” (an international non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on human rights) is mentioned 3 times. Russian publications mention “Doctors without Borders” twice (an international non-governmental organization that provides medical help to people who were affected by military conflicts and natural disasters).

These organizations have different purposes - the first one helps to fight for rights, the second is humanitarian. Clear division between the countries also shows meaningful approach in coverage of the conflict. Western publications highlight defending human rights, fighting for justice, while for Russian publications the main topic is helping survivors of the conflict. Two levels of reflection can be easily distinguished - international and local which confirms the idea that the conflict is represented as real political and military confrontation.

Taking these two positions as an example, it should be noted that the focus in meaning is shifted differently in foreign and Russian publications. Syrian sources dwell on the official side and

organization's position, while Russian ones' dwell on the military side which may be interpreted as different understanding of the conflict. Western sources mention it 13 times. All mentions of organizations are connected with Russian international politics (Ministry of foreign affairs, Russian Federation, State Duma's Council of foreign affairs).

UK government is distinguished in the western sources as a separate field of organizations (Parliament, House of Lords, Government), it is mentioned 3 times, while in Russian sources the UK is mentioned only once as the ministry of foreign affairs in conjunction with other international participants (ministry of foreign affairs of France, Germany, etc.).

Number of organizations represented in the texts indicates that scientific organizations are represented by expert evaluations in order to reinforce chosen opinion and to increase text's *validity*.

Russian sources mention much more research organizations (Center of transformation of political systems (Moscow State University), Center of socio-political investigations, Cranfield Forensic Institute (in Great Britain), etc.) than western sources (International Institute for Strategic Studies); 5 and 1 mentions, correspondingly.

#### *Analysis of the variable "NAMES OF THE EVENTS"*

Names of the events that are described in specific texts were picked according to author's naming. 79 units were then divided into the following topics: 1) Conflict in Syria by itself - contradiction between the parties, inner processes in Syria; 2) Military operation in Syria - plans and discussions of international players that participate in military invasion to the Syrian conflict; 3) gas attack in the suburb of Damascus (Ghouta) which took place on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August, 2013.

Mentions of conflict's name prevail in texts from both sides. However, ratios are significantly different: western publications name it more often (by 21 %) than Russian media sources which show that western sources pay more attention to the topic of inner affairs in Syria).

In the group of units "conflict" Russian media tends to use names that characterize inner political position of Syria: "conflict" and "crisis" (59 %); cluster of units (34 %) with such key words as "war", "civil war" and "information war" is indicated separately.

Western sources also indicate a cluster with the word "war" and put it on the first position (64 %), while the inner political cluster of units is in the second position (28 %).

Military operation group is divided into units with militarist meaning (invasion, intervention, intrusion, operation) and the ones that are neutral, impersonal, lacking any connotations (scenario, act). The majority of names in Russian and western publications describe operation in militarist terms (58 % – Russian, 100 % – Western).

On the one hand, when reviewing the names given to gas attack in Ghouta, western publications are prone to emotional expressions: "mass murder", "carnage of innocent", "mad attack". On the other hand, Russian publications tend to use accusatory representations: media calls the attack "the act of crime", "terrorism", "criminal actions".

#### *Analysis of the variable "PROCESSES"*

89 units naming the processes are detected in texts.

Western media represents processes in the following manner: 1. Destruction of chemical weapons (e.g.: "destruction of known chemical weapons and plants", "destruction of Syrian weapons", "weapons withdrawal abroad"); 2. Political processes in Syria (e.g.: "opposition splitting", "increasing growth in the number of islamists", "rising of the political wave of extremism").

Russian media presents processes differently in the following ways:

1) by showing processes that are initiated by the foreign forces (e.g.: "intervention in the conflict", "US combat ships started relocation", "combat ships are drawn to the Syrian shores");

2) by highlighting the UN's activity in the conflict, mostly in connection with investigations of the reasons behind the gas attack (e.g.: "investigating the incident", "the UN commission's investigation", "studying messages about the chemical attacks", "arrival of the observers"; general military actions in Syria;

3) by talking about negotiations – this group includes units connected with the process of peaceful negotiations: discussions themselves (e.g.: "phone consultations", "negotiations", "urgent meetings", "American-Russian meeting", etc.), indicating the purpose of negotiations ("preventing action of force", "political transformation into legitimate government").



Specification of described processes in western and Russian media differs. Western media uses specific expressions that describe military actions (e.g.: “strikes”, “using military power”, “attacks”, “air bombings”).

Russian publications pay special attention to the civil war dynamics (“military actions”, “confrontations”, “mass carnage of the Kurds”, “active actions against unlawful combatants” – In Russian ‘unlawful combatant’ is used as one word? ‘boevik’), including such aspect as informational war (“growing tension”, “attack ads”, “informational attack”). Actions of the opposition that support combat readiness were highlighted separately (“getting weapons promised by Europeans and Americans”, “getting help from Lebanon”, “getting back home after training”).

#### *Analysis of the variable “ACTIONS”*

Participants’ actions were systemized in order to discover differences in representation of political military units (“actions”) in the text. Units of analysis were grouped according to political views of the participants.

As a result, a difference has been discovered between foreign and Russian publications. The former mostly contain political actions, while the latter are mostly military (difference is 9 %).

Foreign texts have shown that the USA may follow American’s representations as a mighty power with practically undeniable military potential that surpasses potential of other participants. Indicators of governmental actions of Syria (25 %) and opposition (13 %) may be interpreted as Syrian troops domination in the war, therefore, as a weakness of discriminated position.

Political activity is evenly distributed between all participants of the event excluding opposition (3 %). Low potential indicates opposition’s incapability or unwillingness to lead a political dialogue and may show lack of diplomatic skills. However, it may also be the evidence of lively diplomatic polylogue with the USA being the leader.

Russian texts show situation from the different angle: the UN dominates in politics which means that this organization is represented as a main authority in solving the conflict. Later on diplomats from Russia and foreign countries take action and carry out negotiations or try to do it acknowledging that the UN is a leader. The USA is dominating the military aspect which may be explained by their plans of invading Syria. Opposition is on the same level of activity as is the Syrian government which indicates that both parties are perceived as equals (if they lead equal military actions, they are equal in power).

#### *Analysis of variable “EVALUATIONS”*

In this module evaluative judgments were collected due to their “evaluation” nature. Evaluations were divided by objects of expression and tone (positive, neutral, negative). Based on analysis results, study group came to the conclusion that general tendencies in evaluation of events and participants of conflict do not have significant differences. It means that evaluation image of conflict is the same both in Russia and in the West.

## **5. Conclusion**

Gas attack in Ghouta is evaluated as neutral-negative in western publications (solely negative in Russian publications) which was interpreted as distancing from the conflict. At the same time discrepancy in the views of the allies may be noticed. Starkly negative evaluations of the concepts of “gas attacks” and “western allies” were detected in the Russian publications. Concept of “Russia” is evaluated either neutrally or positively. Variables “opposition” and “the USA” are described in neutral to negative tone. Positive evaluations prevail in describing “Syria”. No distinguished peaks are discovered in the number of evaluations of every parameter.

Application of the method is advisable in studying media materials that reflect the current stage of solving the conflict in Syria. Content analysis of the materials according to the suggested algorithm that contain identification of mentioned concepts, units of analysis and quantitative units will allow to see the dynamics in conflict development, to identify dominant events, to compare western and Russian attitude to its representation.

Learning the skill of conducting content analysis of the media texts will help to significantly increase critical thinking and media competence of students, to understand mechanisms of ideological influence and value-based contents of specific media texts and also to increase communicative culture of students.

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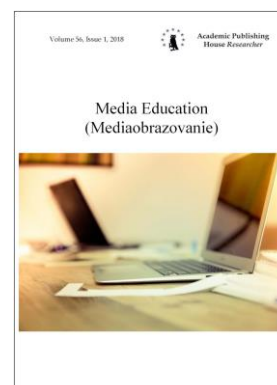
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## Hermeneutic Analysis of Internet Sites of English-speaking Countries about School and University

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### Abstract

The article presents the results of the hermeneutic analysis of present-day British and American Internet sites about school and university. The research objective was to analyze and characterize the cultural and historical contexts, to define the role and value of the school and university topic in the mirror of Internet sites of the English-speaking countries in terms of social studies, culture studies, anthropology and media education. The author of the article concludes that the analyzed British and American Internet media texts about school and university: 1) tell about a crisis and a controversial policy of reforming the national education system in the English-speaking countries; 2) are the expression of the media texts authors' civic views, seeking to raise public awareness of problem zones of the contemporary national education system; 3) present a wide range of urgent topics and plots about school and university education, closely related to the themes and plots of English-language television programmes, documentary and feature films; 4) use a variety of genre modifications to represent reality (official sites of the state, sites of educational institutions, informational and thematic sites, forums, blogs, personal teachers' and principals' sites, sites of educators, journals and newspapers, etc.); 5) realistically reflect both positive (equal educational opportunities for every citizen, struggle against racism and intolerance, tolerance promotion, creating a safe school environment, education reforms, inclusive education, international cooperation in education, use of new information technologies in the learning process, monitoring and improving the quality of educational services, etc.) and negative (budget cuts in education, bullying and cyberbullying, school shootings, teacher strikes, lack of teachers and professional burnout of teachers) aspects of social, political, cultural and educational life spheres in the English-speaking countries; 6) emphasize the dominant idea of national identity and community cohesion and integration, cultivating national values across the curriculum as a core strategy for the modern system of education in the English-speaking countries.

**Keywords:** hermetic analysis, media text, Internet site, media education, school, university, students, teachers, Great Britain, USA.

### 1. Introduction

This research is devoted to the study of Internet sites of English-speaking countries, mainly of the United States and Great Britain, on the topic of school and university. The focus of this research is the sites created by school and university teachers, educators and education experts, where they keep diaries, share experiences in their pedagogical activity, discuss current problems

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of modern education, exchange educational materials and useful links to articles and publications on education.

Typology of English-language Internet sites for teachers is very diverse, as well as the functions of these websites: information retrieval and archival websites for teachers and school children, news sites, analytical and statistical Internet resources about schools and universities.

School and university teachers, heads of educational institutions of English-speaking countries actively join professional virtual communities, maintain their own blogs, and create professional personal pages on websites for teachers, parents and schoolchildren.

The topics of websites about the school and university include a wide range of problems relevant to modern education in English-speaking countries: crisis and education reforms, fighting bullying and discrimination, tolerance promotion, teaching schoolchildren with disabilities and special educational needs, international cooperation in education, teacher training, home learning and distance training, equal educational conditions for all categories of citizens, a model of bilingual school education, creation of a safe educational environment, effective financing of educational institutions, modernization of the material and technical base of schools and use of modern information technologies in the educational process, monitoring and improving the quality of educational services, shortage and professional burnout of teachers, etc.

The study of foreign presentation of the school and university theme in Internet media texts of English-speaking countries seems to us very relevant for analyzing the current state of this problem in the sociocultural, historical, cultural, and media education aspects.

## 2. Materials and methods

The material of our research is websites (state and educational websites, educational websites, business and thematic sites, forums, blogs, personal websites of teachers and school principals, websites of pedagogical associations, pedagogical journals and newspapers), containing media texts about school and university and created in the UK and the USA.

The main research methods include hermeneutic analysis of audiovisual media texts, ideological analysis, stereotype analysis, identification analysis, iconographic analysis, plot analysis, character analysis, anthropological, retrospective and gender analysis.

By the “hermeneutic analysis” of the cultural context of a media text we understand “a study of the media text interpretation process, cultural and historical factors, affecting the point of view of media texts agency / author and the audience view. The hermeneutic analysis suggests comprehension of a media text by comparison with the cultural tradition and reality; penetration into the logic of a media text; media text analysis based on artistic images comparison in the historical and cultural contexts” (Fedorov, 2017: 11). At the same time, by an “Internet site” we understand “a set of pages united by a common theme, design, having an interconnected system of links located on the Internet” (Knyazev, 2002: 247).

The purpose of our research is to identify contemporary cultural and historical, socio-economic tendencies in the evolution of public opinion and attitudes towards the organization and functioning of the system of secondary and higher education in English-speaking countries – the United States and Great Britain; to reveal socio-political, socio-economic, cultural and historical, and moral contexts of media texts of this period; determine the role and value of the topic of national education in the cultural, anthropological, gender and media education aspects.

## 3. Discussion

Quite a number of Russian and foreign books and research publications have been devoted to the analysis of Internet content and modern ICT in educational, media education and cultural contexts (Zapevalova, 2008; Drankevitch et al., 2008; Catts, Lau, 2008; Soldatova et al., 2013; Gorski, 2013; Fedorov, 2014, 2015; Ribble, 2015; Mikhaleva, 2014; 2016; Heitner, 2016; Sheperis, Davis, 2016; Kimberly, Cristiano, 2017; Sales, 2017; Kotch, Cosentino, 2018; Magette, 2018; et al.). In particular, the scholars and experts focused their attention on such aspects as Internet in the context of education and media education; Internet as a socialization factor of schoolchildren; opportunities for education, development and enlightenment provided by Internet resources; online risks and cyber-threats, Internet safety of schoolchildren; development of media culture, media competence and digital literacy among the younger generation and the competencies required for the so-called “digital citizens”; schoolchildren and social media; secret virtual life of

teenagers; Internet addiction among schoolchildren, risk factors and ways to protect children and youth against unwanted media content.

However, the analysis of media images of school and university created on Internet sites both in Russia and abroad (including English-speaking countries) has not been sufficiently presented in research literature so far. We managed to find only some rare examples of the hermeneutic analysis of media production about school and university in Russian publications (Fedorov et al., 2017, 2018; Muryukina, 2017; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2018; Mikhaleva, 2017, 2018). Obviously, this theme requires further research and scientific analysis.

#### 4. Results

##### *Historical and sociocultural contexts*

Despite many years of experience and rich traditions in public education, the current situation in the national education system of English-speaking countries is experiencing a serious crisis caused by a variety of socio-economic and cultural-historical reasons.

In our opinion, the main contradiction lies in the obvious paradoxical policy of contemporary reformers of the education system: the forced total modernization of school education, often characterized by very stringent measures against educational institutions that fail to meet the requirements of new educational standards, is performed in the context of chronic underfunding and constant budget cuts in school education, closing of schools with low education quality indicators.

Also, the situation is complicated by a long-standing contradiction between the private and public sectors of the national education. In the UK, this problem is being addressed through partial democratization of elite private educational institutions, universities involvement in solving the problem of quality mass education, financial support of advanced “beacon schools” and fining of “failing” schools, which is called a fair redistribution of public funds.

In the USA, this confrontation concerns the so-called “charter schools” and traditional high schools. Charter schools are new prestigious experimental schools that receive government financing, but are run independently and are not required to meet the general school regulations. On the other hand, they are supposed to guarantee high-quality education. That is why they are given much freedom from the government and can use different innovations (Bokova, 2016).

In fact, initially it so happened that charter schools have always been in a better position than state high schools since unlike ordinary public schools, they have the right to expel low-achieving students and not to accept students with disabilities whose low achievement results could spoil the ratings of these schools. In addition, as stated on the analytical website *Odyssey*: “There is no requirement for where taxpayer dollars are spent in charter schools. This means tax money is going to a school who can do God-knows-what with it, while traditional public schools are suffering from the lack of funding” (<https://www.theodysseyonline.com/problems-charter-schools>).

According to a teacher from a New York School, the modern school is experiencing a number of related social and economic problems that worsen the situation in American education in general: “high attrition rates of students and teachers, dangerous working conditions, widespread suspensions, harassment of teachers, bullying and violations against students with disabilities, nepotism, and fraud” (Rodov, 2018).

##### *Political, ideological and world outlook contexts*

We believe that the content analysis of media texts about school and university education deserves special attention in terms of the dominant philosophy of education, social order in education in English-speaking countries and modern strategies for reforming the system.

The content analysis of English-language websites created in the UK and the USA has shown that the theme of school and post-secondary education is in the focus of state and public organizations, especially in the context of current reforms and modernization of the national education system. At the same time, both long-standing traditions in education and the implemented reforms receive a deep critical understanding on Internet sites of English-speaking countries.

For example, at the height of the education reform in the 2000s the acute situation in the American school system did not go unnoticed by teachers who in 2010 applied a collective petition to President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on the website *Care2* (<https://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/supportededucation>) – a project named *Teachers’ Letters to*

*Obama*. They expressed their negative attitude to the state educational reform – *Race to the Top* (DOE, 2009) in this open letter as opposed to numerous positive reports and publications officially published by the education authorities, thus exposing some vexed problems of the new policy of American education. They clarified their position as follows:

- *meaningful education reform must embrace a range of assessments* since effective reform of education should include a comprehensive system for assessing students that does not reduce the entire learning process to “test prep” focused on students’ passing multiple-choice tests; they also opposed the use of the so-called “merit pay” based on standardized test scores;

- *school teachers must be held accountable through rigorous in-classroom evaluations by trained evaluators;*

- *teachers must work collaboratively to improve pedagogy and create thoughtful curriculum;*

- *teachers become invested in their work when they are given the opportunity to participate in school-wide decision-making and to be creative and thoughtful in their classrooms;*

- *public schools must be fully funded.* Charter schools must be held accountable to the same regulatory supervision and should not be funded at the expense of most challenged public schools;

- *any vision of effective education reform must assume that skills be taught in a way that induces critical thinking, encourages curiosity, inspires the imagination, and emphasizes discussion.* Music, art and technology are an essential part of this vision. Students should love learning, feel empowered by their educations, and should not experience schooling as something punitive;

- *improvement or turn-around programs for struggling schools must be flexible and participatory.* Teachers, students, and community members need to be involved in discussions and problem-solving (<https://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/supportededucation>).

According to ordinary high school teachers working in America, they suffer from tremendous pressure from the state controlling bodies, and this policy of total control resembles a “witch-hunt”: the current system of monitoring and rating of teachers primarily based on student standardized test scores has already allowed to lay off hundreds of the so-called “ineffective” teachers. In 2010, a young popular high school teacher from Los Angeles committed suicide after the *Los Angeles Times* had published an evaluation of his work and labeled him as “less effective” and “average” in regards to his ability to raise his students’ test scores. This caused a wave of outrage and protest in the pedagogical circles. The *LA Times* used a methodology called *value-added analysis* to evaluate Los Angeles school teachers and then printed the scores. Teachers and education experts call this method “highly unscientific and inaccurate” as it fails to measure a lot of other factors that can also affect students’ academic progress such as “students coming to school hungry or going through traumatic family experiences such as divorce or the death of a loved one” (Feldman, 2010).

The policy of privatizing school education and making schools fiercely compete with each other for state funding did not find support among the broad pedagogical community in the following years and caused mass strikes of teachers across America. News about teacher walkouts dominated the headlines of the CNN website about the current events in education which sounded like military reports: *West Virginia teachers still on strike; lawmakers try to reach pay deal* (Jorgensen , Sterling, 2018); *Teacher walkouts: Battles in Oklahoma, Kentucky and Arizona* (Andone, 2018); *Where dissatisfied teachers are taking action next* (Hanna, 2018); *Teachers in Arizona and Colorado are rallying for school funding* (Andone , Hanna, 2018); *Arizona teachers walk out in latest red-state revolt* (Weir, 2018); *Here's what teachers accomplished with their protests this year* (Yan, 2018), etc.



**Fig. 1.** CNN Website photo of teachers walkouts in Oklahoma and Kentucky (<https://edition.cnn.com/us/live-news/teachers-walkout-oklahoma-kentucky>)

The teachers' protests concerned not only unpopular educational and financial policies of the government, but also mass and violent shootings and killings in USA high schools; the last occurred in Texas and Florida. In this connection, mass walkouts of teachers against the use of armed violence in schools of Arizona, West Virginia and other states resumed. In February 2018, after the sad events in Florida, an organization of public activists, mainly students, teachers and parents named *Never Again* was established. Their mission is "to serve people in danger, connecting at-risk individuals and communities with industrial-grade tech solutions to face some of the boldface problems of our shared world" and "strengthen public safety and respond to violence and harm in real time" (<http://neveragain.org>).

In the context of the current education reforms the creators of the website *Edutopia* (<https://www.edutopia.org>) distinguish 6 core strategies for innovation and reform in learning:

- 1) *comprehensive assessment of student ability* – social, emotional, and academic achievement through various measures, including portfolios, presentations, and tests, multiple learning styles;
- 2) *integrated studies* – academic subjects are presented in an interdisciplinary fashion that reflects modern knowledge and society.
- 3) *student centered project-based learning* involving meaningful activities that examine complex, real-world issues;
- 4) *social and emotional learning* based on cooperative learning;
- 5) *teacher development*;
- 6) *technology integration* combined with new approaches to education and a more personalized style of learning (<https://www.edutopia.org/about/core-strategies>).

Practicing teachers and school officials share real stories about schools on the website *The Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession* (<https://cstp-wa.org>). They write about shootings in American schools and an urgent need to create a safe school environment for schoolchildren (Olmos, 2018; Kragen, 2018); some of them boast of their students' academic achievements (Towbin, 2017; Cruden, 2018); some stories are about teacher leaders – active teachers who are genuinely interested in the improvement of their schools and the system of education as a whole (Olmos, 2018); some complain about old school buildings and poor infrastructure investment (Jordan, 2018); others explain the opportunities of using new educational technologies, project work, ICT in schools (Towbin, 2017; Voigt, 2017; Olmos, 2018); some teachers dwell upon the growing stress and pressure experienced by school administration, teachers and students in present-day schools (Olmsted, 2016); others insist on involving parents in educating and upbringing their children (Kragen, 2017; Gardner, 2017). Robert Mann's blog *Something Like the Truth* (<https://bobmannblog.com>), for example, gives a platform for teachers from Louisiana to share their stories about the long-term destructive policy of discrimination of the poor, immigrants and representatives of various minorities (<https://bobmannblog.com/2013/08/02/poverty-and-class-stories-about-students-by-their-teachers>).



On the other hand, the dominant idea of national identity and the cultivation of national values in educating the younger generation in English-speaking countries is the strategic goal of the contemporary education system both in the United States and Great Britain. The realization of this goal contradicts a complex social and cultural situation in these multinational countries, which make great efforts for the ethnic and social integration of immigrants. The assimilation and social adaptation of immigrant families, including their children, begin with their education and familiarization with the culture and values of the country and society they wish to belong to.

Putting great responsibility on schools in the development of students' tolerance and civic community, UK government, for example, applies every effort to tackle the causes of a lack of social integration. In 2014, the British Department for Education declared schools responsible for promoting community cohesion based on a sense of belonging, valuing diversity and ensuring equal opportunities. Since then the duty of all schools in England, both state and independent, has been to actively promote the 4 British values of: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These basic British values promoted by teachers across the curriculum were supposed to become part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The effectiveness of the implementation of this strategy has always been controlled by the *Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills* (Ofsted) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>).

*Dominating stereotype of success in the analyzed media texts* is hard work and quality education that will guarantee citizens getting a prestigious job in the future.

*Structure and narrative techniques used in the media texts*

The structure, plot, representativity, ethics, genre modification peculiarities, iconography, characters can be summarized as follows:

*Time and place of action in the media texts:* British and American educational institutions (private and state), the time of action is past and present;

*Household items and furnishing in the media texts:* private educational institutions possess superb teaching and sport facilities, are well-equipped and offer high-quality educational services. State (especially rural) schools are in urgent need of additional funding to improve the quality of education of schoolchildren.

*Genre modifications of English-language websites about schools and universities:* official sites of the state, sites of educational institutions, informational and thematic sites, forums, blogs, personal teachers' and principals' sites, sites of educators, journals and newspapers.

*Techniques of representing reality:* the characters are presented realistically; very often they are real teachers, students, their parents, school or university administration, educational experts, journalists, public observers, and other categories of citizens interested in education issues.

*Types of characters:*

– *age of characters:* the age-range is unlimited – from early childhood, school and university age-groups to retiring age;

– *level of education:* school and university students have unfinished secondary or higher education; teachers have higher education;

– *social status, profession:* students and their parents come from middle-income communities, low-income families or families of immigrants; students and teachers are from different cities (rural or urban) and schools (state or private);

– *marital status of characters:* usually is not mentioned, but some teachers come from disadvantaged or immigrant families;

– *appearance, clothes, constitution, traits of character:* school and university teachers follow the dress code of the educational institution where they work. School and university students are dressed in accordance with their social status, age and sometimes religion. Students attending private schools often wear a school uniform.

*The most typical plot transformations of media texts about school and university education:*

– *plot variant 1:* school teachers are struggling with the shortcomings of the current system of school education (budget cuts in education, inequality of schools, mass shootings in schools, illegal dismissals of teachers, etc.); they actively express their social protest together with parents and students by going on strikes, joining organizations, collecting petitions with protests for officials of the highest levels. As a result, they either seek some concessions from the education or government authorities, or get defeated in the fight against the state bureaucratic machine.



**Fig. 2.** Photo of the teacher and her pupil on the schoolteacher's website *Ms. Cassidy's Classroom Blog* (<https://mscassidysclass.edublogs.org>)

– *plot variant 2*: teachers, after frequent shootings (committed, usually by students themselves) in American schools and universities, together with their parents, are trying to create a safe environment for schoolchildren / students; they are developing ways of self-protection, for example, by teaching their students the rules of safe behavior and self-defense techniques in emergency situations of local character such as an attack on the school; teachers and students participate in simulations of emergencies to train their survival skills. As a result, proponents of the self-defense strategy help students and parents feel more protected in the educational institution.

– *plot variant 3*: students from a poor American school, representatives of national minorities, file a lawsuit against the local education officials about violating their constitutional right to receive a quality education. According to the claim, the school needs major repairs, does not meet sanitary standards, the classes are overcrowded, and students suffer from a lack of teachers and textbooks. As a result, the claim is rejected in the court since “access to literacy”, according to the judge's verdict, is not a constitutional right of American citizens.

– *plot variant 4*: UK school teachers are faced with the problem of linguistic, social, cultural and academic integration of refugee children who suffer from peer bullying, psychological trauma carried in the past, or have mental disabilities or learning difficulties due to the language barrier. Teachers together in collaboration with parents, psychologists and other specialists help this category of students adapt to a new life situation.

– *plot variant 5*: indifferent parents of students with disabilities enroll them into a regular state school instead of a specialized one where they suffer from peer bullying and teachers' incompetence; students perform poorly in school until they finally meet an understanding professional teacher who inspires and assists them to find their place in life. Later on, some of them go in for teaching and help students with similar difficulties.

– *plot variant 6*: enthusiastic teachers working in poor provincial schools do not stick only to teaching – they help and support their students from broken homes (low-income families, incomplete families, with parents deprived of parental rights or parents who are drug addicts, etc.) in every possible way. Subsequently, students either successfully finish school and enter universities, or follow in the footsteps of their disadvantaged parents.

– *plot variant 7*: students with special educational needs cannot study effectively in a private or state school due to various reasons (academic failure due to illness, language barrier, low motivation for learning, victims of cyberbullying or bullying, teachers' lack of compassion and incompetence, financial problems of their family, etc.), so parents opt to home school their children. As a result, students manage to overcome all the difficulties with the help of home schooling or distance learning specialists; many enter or are planning to go to universities.

– *plot variant 8*: American teachers become victims of the imperfect education system due to various reasons (work and paper overload, burnout, dangerous working conditions, harassment, pressure from the school administration, controlling authorities or public ratings, etc.). As a result, they either retire from school, or give up teaching, some even commit suicide...

## 5. Conclusion

The hermeneutic analysis of British and American Internet sites about school and university education has enabled us to draw the conclusions that the analyzed media texts:

- tell about an acute crisis and a controversial policy of reforming the national education system in the English-speaking countries;
- are the expression of the media texts authors' – teachers, parents, students – political and civic views, seeking to raise public awareness of problem zones of the contemporary system of national education and its reforming;
- present a wide range of urgent topics and plots about school and university education, by the way, closely related to the themes and plots of English-language television programmes, documentary and feature films;
- use a variety of genre modifications to represent reality (official sites of the state, sites of educational institutions, informational and thematic sites, forums, blogs, personal teachers' and principals' sites, sites of educators, journals and newspapers, etc.);
- realistically reflect both positive (equal educational opportunities for every citizen, struggle against racism and intolerance, tolerance promotion, creating a safe school environment, education reforms and improving the quality of education, inclusive education, international cooperation in education, use of new information technologies in the learning process, monitoring and improving the quality of educational services, etc.) and negative (budget cuts in education, bullying and cyberbullying, school shootings, teacher strikes, lack of teachers and professional burnout of teachers, etc.) aspects of social, political, cultural and educational life spheres in the English-speaking countries;
- emphasize the dominant idea of national identity and civil community cohesion and integration, cultivating national values in the process of upbringing the younger generation and promoting them across the curriculum as a core strategy for the modern system of education in the English-speaking countries.

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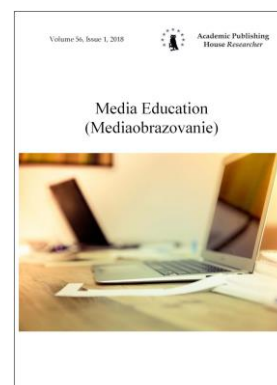


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## **The use of media educational environment for teaching master students effective cross-cultural communication in professional sphere (case study of the english language)**

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### **Abstract**

Nowadays there is a growing necessity of highly qualified and flexible professionals. They have to possess a good knowledge of foreign languages to be able to communicate with colleagues from different countries. Thus, teachers of foreign language are in constant search for the most effective ways of training. In this paper, the authors analyze the process of teaching foreign (English) language to Master students and identify the most effective ways of teaching communication in professional sphere. The study use a critical analysis of the literature on the problem, monitoring of the process of teaching foreign language, generalization of the authors' own experience of teaching. The authors define an important role of modern media in the foreign language teaching and develop a programme of teaching the English language to Master students using media educational environment.

**Keywords:** foreign language, Master students, Master's programme, media educational environment, media competence, professional communication.

### **1. Introduction**

Our society is experiencing an increasing need for skilled professionals who can quickly adapt to the changing conditions of the modern world. The objective of universities is to train and educate graduates who can easily perform their professional duties in any country and in any international team. Such specialists can successfully work on joint projects with representatives of other cultures due to their knowledge of foreign languages and traditions and customs of different countries.

The main aim of the discipline "Foreign Language in Professional Sphere" is to increase the existing level of foreign language proficiency of graduates achieved at the previous stages of education and the formation of foreign-language communicative competence, allowing them to use foreign language in the process of oral and written cross-cultural communication for solving professional problems.

At Northern (Arctic) Federal University (NArFU) the workload of this discipline is 216 academic hours or 6 credits. Laboratory works consist of 64 hours and all the rest belongs to individual work. At the same time, the University has Master programmes consisting of 108 academic hours with only 32 hours of laboratory works.

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Thus, the process of teaching Master students becomes complicated by conditions and factors quite obvious to participants of educational process: insufficient level of school training, insufficient number of hours, allocated to the study of this discipline at the University, the traditional teaching methods, necessity to cover all the components of professional and language training such as vocabulary, grammar, listening, professional communication at the same time.

The teacher, therefore, has to organize the training of Master students in such a way that they have the opportunity to practise recently taught material and revise the acquired knowledge and skills independently.

The rapid development of technology has resulted in a large number of multimedia resources available to foreign language teachers to facilitate learning. For example, websites Ozdic.com (<http://www.ozdic.com/collocation-dictionary>), OneLook.com (<https://onelook.com>) are widely used to learn about vocabulary and to update lexical skills. British Council website (<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/grammar-and-vocabulary>) helps to form grammar skills, website UEfAP (<http://www.uefap.com/index.htm>) masters academic skills.

However, these websites train separate skills and do not develop foreign-language communicative competence of Master students. In our opinion one should not deprive them of communication with the teacher completely, therefore the most effective model of teaching is blended.

## **2. Materials and methods**

The object of the research was the process of training Master students of non-linguistic specialties of NArFU for effective professional communication in a foreign language using media-educational environment.

The aim of the research is theoretical substantiation and practical development of a mixed model of foreign language teaching for Master students with the use of media educational environment.

In connection with the proposed aim we put the following objectives:

- to study and analyze the process of teaching foreign (English) language to Master students of non-linguistic specialties;
- to identify the most effective ways of teaching foreign language communication in professional sphere;
- to develop a programme of foreign (English) language training for Master students on the basis of media educational environment.

In solving the above objectives, we used a critical analysis of the literature on the problem, monitored the process of teaching a foreign language and generalized our own teaching experience.

## **3. Discussion**

The process of teaching is constantly changing and improving due to the altering requirements of society and employers.

The developers of the last Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education (FSSES-HE 3++) identify three universal competences (UC) which have to be formed upon successful completion of any Master's programme. They are: communication (UC-4), cross-cultural interaction (UC-5) and self-organization and self-development (UC-6).

As a result of the formation of UC-4 (communication) Master students should be able to use modern communicative technologies, in a foreign language as well, for academic and professional interaction. This includes:

- knowledge of the system, norms of word usage, grammar, spelling rules of native and foreign languages;
- ability to create oral and written texts of different genres, taking into account the goals, objectives and conditions of communication;
- ability to easily communicate and read original literature on professional topics in a foreign language;
- ability to conduct business correspondence taking into consideration the peculiarities of the style of formal and informal letters, socio-cultural differences in the native and foreign languages;
- ability to present the results of academic and professional activities at various scientific events, including international ones;

- skills necessary for effective participation in academic and professional discussions;
- proficiency in the use of information and communication technologies in the search for the necessary information in the process of solving communication problems in native and foreign languages.

Some researchers speak about science literacy, term introduced by P.d.H. Hurd (Airey et al., 2008: 151). There is no common understanding of this term. In order to make it more precise D. Roberts added two visions of scientific literacy: Vision I – coming to understand the content of science itself, and Vision II – coming to understand the implications and applications of science, particularly in relation to everyday situations (Airey et al., 2008: 151).

The acquired competence UC-5 (cross-cultural interaction) allows Master students to analyze and consider the diversity of cultures in the process of cross-cultural communication. This competence implies:

- knowledge of cultural peculiarities and traditions of different social groups and nationalities;
- knowledge of principles and norms of tolerant attitude to bearers of other religious and political views;
- ability to interact effectively with people taking into account their socio-cultural characteristics in order to successfully perform professional tasks;
- ability to work in a team, interact with experts in subject areas.

As a result of formation of UC-6 (self-organization and self-development) a Master student should be capable to determine and implement the priorities of his own activity and ways to improve them on the basis of self-assessment. For this purpose he or she:

- knows various ways of professional self-improvement;
- is able to find and analyze information sources (websites, forums, periodicals);
- processes the skills of self-education, technologies of acquisition, use and updating of his/her professional knowledge.

Thus, we see that the role of education has shifted, no longer focusing on decontextualized subject content, but rather on defining and inviting situations in which students can train and develop their competences or fundamental human qualities, that is, building, modifying and reformulating their knowledge, attitudes, feelings, beliefs and skills through a critical and creative approach (Cruz-Diaz, 2015: 33). Many researchers are sure that in spite of the fact that students benefit from enormous access to all kinds of media sources they still lack the ability to critically analyse information they find and gather (Storksdieck, 2016: 170).

The reason why is that media nature has changed. We were used to conceptualize them as tools, or as environments: nowadays media area disappearing as tools, they are embedded in our lives and migrating into the things around us. This means they are no more something we can take care of or not, but a natural dimension of our knowledge, jobs and relationships (Rivoltella, 2015).

Speaking about media education, Ukrainian researchers distinguish professionally-oriented media education of future specialists in various fields of training as it is necessary «to use professionally-oriented media texts in the training of future specialists most effectively, so that in the future they can successfully apply the skills of working with mass media to improve the professional level and self-education throughout life» (Onkovich, 2015: 19).

What is new in the media age is the awareness of being dependent on the media, of the mediation of our world to us and among us by semiotic systems that invariably have to be coded and decoded. Everything that determines our action is produced by the media and symbolically conveyed – «the mediatization of everything», seen as the epochal awareness and the media practices of today, moves media literacy from the periphery of specialized education into the center of education in general (Rath, 2017: 8569).

According to S. Tarkhov «the main aim of media education is training of a media competent individual able to cope with practical tasks in the information society, proficient in the use of information of all kinds, having a command of communication via various information and communication technologies» (Tarkhov, 2016: 67).

M. Storksdieck speaks about critical information literacy as a part of science learning and suggests implementing it into the existing reform of science education in the US. He mentions the U.S. Next Generation Science Standards in the form of performance expectations defining the students' abilities during their study. These expectations are based on the eight science and



engineering practices and comprise asking questions and defining problems, developing and using models, planning and carrying out investigations, analyzing and interpreting data, using mathematics and computational thinking, constructing explanations and designing solutions, engaging in argument from evidence, obtaining, evaluating and communicating information (Storksdieck, 2016: 172).

Domestic researchers V.A. Adolf, V.V. Vonog and T.V. Zhavner believe that for a modern specialist an ability «to search and analyze authentic information in the sphere of professional communication» is of fundamental importance for professional and personal growth (Zhavner et al., 2016: 245).

It can be developed in the process of education, when the student is given the opportunity to grasp different obvious and latent potentialities of the new media. In the most general form, teaching interaction with the new media is based on the following elements: educational (acquisition of knowledge about the structure of the media language and development of skills of analytical decoding of the content), edifying (formation of the ability to understand moral and ethical issues in media texts), antiglamorous (elimination of consumerist threat for the student), and practical (development of practical skills for working with the media, which allow students to produce their own media texts) (Nikolaeva et al., 2017: 134).

Russian researcher S. Mindeeva considers media competence of a future engineer as an integral professionally significant quality which defines his/her ability and readiness to interact in the system «engineer – media – society» and facilitates to realize engineering activity effectively (Mindeeva, 2017: 50). This competence incorporates: 1) ability and readiness to use different media educational technologies in professional area; 2) specific knowledge, skills and attitudes in the sphere of media; 3) interrelation with professional activity having its applied character and specificity (Mindeeva, 2017: 50).

In the sphere of media education researchers deal with a great number of terms, concepts and notions. For example, J. Gómez Galán, considers that the terms «media education», «media pedagogy» and «media literacy» are generally the same. «Media education» appeared together with the mass communication media and is the most widely used term. «Media literacy» is used in the U.S and intended mostly for «education of citizens for the adequate use and consumption of techno-media products and also so that they can reach the capacities to analyze, use, and even express, in different ways, the message produced by them» (Gómez Galán, 2015: 34). Today with the appearance of new multimedia and hypermedia languages and tools for using them the researcher suggests the term «digital literacy». Moreover, he supposes that digital revolution has started a process of convergence that he calls techno-media, in which media «stop existing as separate entities in order to form part of a unique digital media that covers the whole of human communication» (Gómez Galán, 2015: 33).

E-learning and distance educational technologies are increasingly being used in Master's programmes. According to the Law of the Russian Federation on Education (№ 273-FL, dd. 29.12.2012) (ed. from 29.07.2017) (<http://sudact.ru/law/federalnyi-zakon-ot-29122012-n-273-fz-ob/glava-2/statia-16>), E-learning – is an organization of educational activities with the use of information contained in databases and used in the implementation of educational programmes and providing its processing of information technologies, technical means, as well as information and telecommunication networks that provide transmission of this information over communication lines, interaction of students and teaching staff. The same law treats distance educational technologies as educational technologies implemented mainly with the use of information and telecommunication networks in the indirect (at a distance) interaction of students and teachers.

In accordance with the requirements of Federal State Educational Standard for Higher Education (FSES-HE 3++) each student has to be provided with unlimited individual access to the electronic information and educational environment of the organization. The electronic educational environment of the organization has to provide:

- access to curricula, working programmes of disciplines (modules), practices, electronic educational publications and resources specified in working programmes of disciplines and practices;
- formation of electronic portfolios of students, which include their test papers;

- monitoring of the course of educational process, results of the intermediate certification and results of the Master's programme;
- conducting training sessions, procedures for assessing the results of training, implementation of which is provided using e-learning and distant educational technologies;
- interaction between participants of educational process, including the synchronous and (or) asynchronous interaction via Internet.

In addition, students should be provided with access to modern professional databases and information reference systems, which are determined in the programme handbooks and are subject to updating.

The use of information and communication technologies is an integral part of the learning process. According to a number of researchers (Zhavner et al., 2016: 247), we use various resources while teaching a foreign language to students of engineering specialties. They are: 1) Internet resources that are not intended for teaching directly such as social networks, Skype, e-mail, etc.; 2) various professionally-oriented websites, where texts and videos demonstrate the principles of operation of some mechanisms and devices, and contain information about particular phenomena in various scientific fields; 3) e-learning courses (resources, containing a complex of educational materials realized in the information training system).

According to T.V. Zhavner, V.V. Vonog, V.A. Adolf, the use of e-learning courses has a number of undoubted advantages: it makes it possible to carry out effective distance and correspondence learning, as well as to increase the motivation of full-time students through unusual and creative work; the learning process can be performed at any time convenient for the teacher and student; with the help of various e-learning tools it is possible to develop almost any skills of foreign language communication (knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, reading, writing, listening), with the exception of speaking skills, which can not be fully developed (Zhavner et al., 2016: 248).

J.L. Jensen et al. consider flipped learning as one of the most popular modern learning technology. It has many advantages such as independence and self-organisation of students, more free time for face-to-face study in comparison to traditional lecture learning (Jensen et al., 2018). Moreover, the use of learning management system (LMS) in the academic process was studied by many researchers and the following advantages were highlighted: – storage of a huge amount of authentic information; – redistribution of class and out-of-class hours; – creation of modular learning when every module is a complete unit; - use of various forms of control; – increase of students' interest and motivation to foreign language acquisition with the help of diverse unconventional learning materials; - individual set of training materials); – possibility of interactive cooperation between a teacher and a student» (Vonog et al., 2015: 27). S. Tarkhov adds one more advantage of LMS, which is personalized interactive learning on the basis on educational resources integrated into the global media space (Tarkhov, 2016: 70).

According to A. Nemirich, media educational environment is «a specially organized environment aimed at the acquisition of certain knowledge and skills in which the goals, content, methods and organizational forms of education become mobile and available for change within a particular educational institution» (Nemirich, 2011: 25-31).

I.A. Fateeva believes that media educational environment is «objectively existing set of socio-political, technical, pedagogical and other conditions in which media educational activity of people take place» (Fateeva, 2007: 3).

V.V. Gura defines media educational environment as a cultural and educational environment where the main carrier of information for an individual is an electronic educational resource in the form of text, image, sound or video. Media educational environment, in turn, is divided into «natural» and designed environments. «Natural» environment is considered to be an information aspect of the modern cultural environment and is represented by electronic media, periodicals, computer information networks, etc. From the author's point of view, the designed media educational environment is «a modern pedagogical system aimed at organizing conditions for humane purposeful interaction of individuals with electronic information and educational resources and media for the benefit of their personal and cultural development and professional socialization». Further, the author introduces the concept of Personality-centered media educational environment, which he defines as a pedagogical system that implements the content information support of the educational process and takes into account the personal characteristics

of the interaction of subjects of educational process with electronic educational resources (Gura, 2007: 199).

L.A. Ivanova suggests considering media and educational spaces as complementary, creating in turn media educational space on the basis of integration of education and information map of the world (Ivanova, 2010: 67).

The purpose of educational media environment functioning is to provide remote interactive access to information and educational resources of higher education institution and information openness in accordance with the requirements of the current legislation of the Russian Federation in the field of education (Albekov et al., 2017: 88).

In this work we support the view held by A.V. Fedorov and accept the following definition of media educational environment: «Media educational environment is multifaceted holistic, psychosocial media reality, providing a set of necessary pedagogical conditions of modern learning technologies and software and methodological tools of learning that are based on modern information and media technologies, providing support and cognitive activity access to information and media resources» (Fedorov, 2017: 18).

By psycho-pedagogical learning conditions we understand:

- ability to choose your learning path;
- relaxed, friendly atmosphere;
- training in cooperation;
- acceptance of responsibility for the learning outcomes by undergraduates;
- availability of constant feedback with the teacher.

Modern learning technologies include:

- modular learning technology;
- developing learning technology;
- technology of development of critical thinking and problem learning;
- «inverted» learning technology (flipped learning);
- technology of «mixed» learning (blended learning).

Programme and methodical means of training include:

- a system of remote education (Sakai) ;
- Internet.

Thus, we see that requirements to modern process of learning in general and to learning a foreign language in particular contain the need to combine modern training techniques and e-learning (distance learning technologies). This allows us to assume that for teaching Master students effective cross-cultural communication in the professional sphere it is necessary to use the media educational environment in all its diversity. But here we should consider one more aspect – the use of copyrighted material as this issue is very delicate. One of the solutions is the adherence to the «Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Media Literacy Education» (2007), reviewed by a team of experts, adopted by several organizations, such as the National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE), the Action Coalition for Media Education (ACME), the Media Education Foundation, etc., and discussed by R. Hobbs in one of her articles (Hobbs, 2016). As the Code states, «educators can, under some circumstances: (1) make copies of newspaper articles, TV shows, and other copyrighted works, and use them and keep them for educational use; (2) create curriculum materials and scholarship with copyrighted materials embedded; and (3) share, sell, and distribute curriculum materials with copyrighted materials embedded. Learners can, under some circumstances (4) use copyrighted works in creating new material; and (5) distribute their works digitally if they meet the transformativeness» (Hobbs, 2016: 52).

#### 4. Results

In NARFU two systems of distance learning are implemented now: Moodle and Sakai. After analyzing these virtual environments for learning and collaboration in the University environment, we have chosen the Sakai platform that is used by many educational institutions around the world. This platform allows:

- organize information support of the educational process with the use of distance educational technologies;
- manage users of all categories;
- store, update and systematize educational and methodical resources;

- interact with all the participants of the distance learning process;
- monitor the distance learning process.

The Sakai platform has the following tools: Homepage, Syllabus, Lectures, Assignments, Tests, Quizzes, Gradebook, Discussion Forums, Webinars, Glossary, Management of the website, Resources, Site Statistics and Help. The Main page contains information about the course, its abstract, keywords, a link to the presentation and information about the teacher who is conducting the course. Here you can set up a calendar, notifications about messages in the forum, mail and read announcements. Master students do not need to learn the schedule and remember the deadlines of individual tasks. All the necessary information related to the course is situated here.

Homepage contains common functionality such as recent announcements, chat messages, discussion forums, shared collaboration spaces and a course site information page.

Syllabus is the working programme of the discipline, it contains guidelines for teachers and students, educational, methodical and information support as well as a set of assessment tasks. Master students can get acquainted with the programme of the studied discipline, basic and additional literature, Internet sources independently. Here they can also get instructions for the performing certain types of tasks.

In the Lectures tool there are materials for obligatory theoretical studying. These materials include authentic texts, the presentations of lectures, scientific articles, audio and video Internet sources.

With the Assignments tool the teacher can create and grade online or offline assignments. The result of these tasks is a text, file or set of files with the previously specified deadlines and the possibility to retake the test.

The Tests, Quizzes tool is used for self-examination before lessons or examinations, for tests and also for surveys and feedback. Teachers can create and manage such tests using closed and open ended questions, matching, question pools, set point value, auto-grading, statistics, timed assessments, high security, audio recording.

The Forums tool is used to support teaching discipline and provide advice. It allows creating, moderating and managing discussion topics and groups within a course and sending private messages to participants. Chat tool engages students in real-time conversations with course or project participants.

The Webinars tool is intended for creation of interactive online conferences in the BigBlueButton web application.

The total workload of «Foreign Language in Professional Sphere» discipline of 216 academic hours was divided into 64 contact and 152 self-study hours. 16 and 52 of them respectively are distant hours when students have to perform tasks on Sakai platform using media environment.

It's worth mentioning that the whole course is divided into four modules: 1) Self-presentation; 2) Professionally oriented media texts; 3) Participating in scientific events, and 4) Academic presentations. Every module comprises assignments for distant work. So, the following tasks can be included in the first module «Self-presentation»:

- To develop critical thinking and evaluation skills students are assigned to watch the video «How to Apply to a Master's Programme at Lund University, Sweden» ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7L7CBBb\\_cFo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7L7CBBb_cFo)) and write an essay (about 300 words) comparing the procedure of applying to a Master's programme at Lund University (Sweden) with the similar procedure at NARFU. Students are asked to highlight merits and drawbacks of the video taking into account different criteria such as the structure of the video, colours, music, etc.

- As students are supposed to take part in conferences, seminars and symposiums they should be capable to introduce themselves effectively. To master this skill they watch a video from TED's Talk (for example, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1xt7zgnuKO>), write a text which should include: 1) some ideas or facts from the video; 2) ways which students believe to be reasonable to introduce themselves in this or that situation, and 3) ways students like to introduce themselves considering the target audience, the aim of the report or a speech, and expected outcomes of the presentation.

- Not only videos but websites as well can help gain this objective. In this case students are assigned to study three media texts «Self Introduction Speech» retrieved from different websites (<https://www.best-speech-topics.com/self-introduction-speech.html>, <https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Speech-Introducing-Yourself>, and <https://www.free-power-point-templates.com/articles/>



examples-of-self-introduction-speeches), to evaluate them and to write their own self introduction speech either for academic, or business activity.

The second module «Professionally oriented media texts» includes such tasks as:

- Not everything you can find on the Internet is true and you cannot trust all the sources.

At the first lesson students learn how to evaluate online information. It is usually done by organizing a discussion where students share their previous experience and debate how they find information online, whether everything they read online is true, how they know about it, what consequences of spreading false or inaccurate information are, etc. After that they are given some problems to solve like:

- Suppose you are not sure that some information is correct. How will you double-check it?
- Two sources you trust give different information about the problem. What should you do?
- At home students have to answer a specific question or find some facts with the help of the Internet and justify their source. Such tasks help Master students to develop critical thinking skills.

• Films are more attractive learning media than traditional textbooks. They offer a lot of clues like facial expressions, gestures, authentic accents to understand the content. Using film in language teaching can also offer a wide range of activities suitable for students, stimulating the most able students and supporting the ones with problems to learning. Films place language in context in a unique way. They present aspects of culture in authentic settings, and they provide an accurate presentation of language in use. That is why this media is widely used in Master students' education for developing communicative and cross-cultural communicative competences. For our course we have chosen short films or videos with the time of duration not more than 5 minutes. After watching the film students analyze it answering the following questions:

- What caught your attention?
- Where did the story happen? Did the setting matter, or could it have been set anywhere?
- Was there anything you liked?
- Was there anything you disliked?
- Was there anything that surprised you?
- Would you like to know more about how the film was made? What would you like to know?
- What would you tell other people about this film?

• At language lessons students get knowledge not only in English but in their profession. They watch two or three videos on the topic and say: What is it about? Is it fact or fiction? Who is it for? Who made it? After discussing these issues they choose the most educative and appropriate video for better understanding of the research problem.

• To practise language skills students are shown a short film without sound and are asked to create subtitles to accompany short sequences of spoken dialogues. Then they watch it with the sound and check whether they guessed the content and used correct language.

• Nowadays all kinds of professionally oriented videos can be retrieved on video hosting «YouTube». For example, for Master students in the programme «Chemical Technology of Wood» we can offer to watch the video «Making of Pulp» (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Uh3XIadm1A,t=39s>) and do the following assignments: 1) make the glossary of the media text; 2) make a plan of the video; 3) write a summary of the video; 4) comment on the content of the video (what is new for you, what is done differently in our country, what can be improved, what can be added, etc.).

• Students in the programme «Industrial Ecology» watch the video «Sustainability easily explained» ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_5r4loXPyx8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5r4loXPyx8)) and complete the following assignments: 1) make a glossary for the video; 2) make a plan of the video; 3) write 3-4 key words for every bullet point; 4) choose one bullet point and write an essay discussing it; 5) evaluate the video you've seen.

• Master students have to read scientific articles on their research problems. They cannot avoid using modern media while looking for literature. To find a proper paper for reading they need to evaluate sources and learn the information about the author, his or her qualifications and credibility, date of publication, etc. So, students are to read the excerpt from the article «Industrial ecology: goals and definitions» by Reid Lifset and Thomas E. Graedel (<http://booksee.org/book/618603>), write the main ideas from the excerpt in their own words, search for some other definitions of industrial ecology (at least two or three definitions), and finally

write an essay analysing the definitions they find and expressing and exemplifying their own understanding of industrial ecology.

- Students of any Master programme are asked to study some online journal (for students in «Chemical Technology of Wood» let it be «Journal of Wood Chemistry and Technology» (<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/lwct20/current>) and choose any article they like. After reading the article, they are assigned to make a list of new words corresponding to their specialty, translate an excerpt from this article, and describe the structure of this article emphasizing the main ideas and auxiliary ones.

- Students can search for appropriate articles themselves. In this case they have to retrieve in the Internet two articles in English related to their dissertation, cite the links of the articles or download the articles, and give the overview of these articles synthesizing them in one text, comparing their structures and evaluating the content.

The third module «Participating in scientific events» is represented by the following tasks:

- Master students rather often participate in various mobility or exchange programmes. Here we can work with a great number of websites. So, if you want to study at a foreign university, firstly, you should find a programme suitable for you. To achieve this goal: 1) study the information about different funds and programmes following the link - <http://narfu.ru/international/projects/grants> or you may refer to other resources as well; 2) choose two or three grants or mobility programmes appropriate to your scientific research and give a short critical overview of the chosen programmes (who can apply, how and when, what s/he will get, what are expected outcomes, etc.); 3) choose a university which is a good fit for you regarding your scientific interests and explain your choice.

- To achieve the aim of studying at a foreign university, to take part in some joint research programme, or to apply for a grant, students should be able to draft a persuasive curriculum vitae. That's why they have the task to study some websites (for instance, CV Advice Section by Section, retrieved from:

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/getajob/cvs/Pages/sectionbysection.aspx>, How to Write a Resume, retrieved from: <http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/jobs-careers/applying-for-jobs/how-to-write-a-resume>, or How to Write a CV, retrieved from: <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/cvs-and-cover-letters/how-to-write-a-cv>), compare the information offered by these websites, analyze strong and weak points of every sample and create the most effective template.

The fourth module «Academic presentations» can include such task as:

- Study the text «Planning a Scientific Presentation» (for example, <https://www.cs.ubc.ca/~van/cpsc590/presentations.pdf>, <http://www.biomech.uottawa.ca/english/teaching/apa6905/lectures/presentation-style.pdf> or [http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~hultin/chem7900/Resources/CAPES04\\_Presentation\\_Skills.pdf](http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~hultin/chem7900/Resources/CAPES04_Presentation_Skills.pdf)) and using the template try to write the very first draft of your future scientific presentation. Think and write an essay expressing your agreement or disagreement with these rules and add your own ideas about efficient academic presentation (250-300 words).

Teaching English cannot avoid mastering language skills in general and media educational environment offers many resources to do this. For example, the Lecture tool in Sakai platform in addition to theoretical materials includes Useful links, which offer students connections to authentic online dictionaries Macmillan (<https://www.macmillandictionary.com>) and Oxford (<https://www.oxforddictionaries.com>). Students are offered a task to find the definition of a term in both dictionaries, compare the definitions and analyze the examples offered in there in order to identify the features of the use of a word. In addition, at the lesson students can discuss the interfaces of both online dictionaries, color scheme, usability and, if possible, offer options for enhancement of resources.

Resources of the British Council (<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en>) allow teachers to offer students assignments covering all the activities: reading, speaking, listening, writing. We should emphasize that these resources are not used as a technical means of education, but as a media educational environment. For instance, the website Podcasts for Professionals (<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/business-and-work>) offers a wide range of podcasts, one of them being «Biotechnology: Listen to two friends talking about genetically modified food. Frank is for GM food, but Ann is against it» (<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/podcasts-professionals/biotechnology>). The first step is pre-listening tasks: 1) Here are some words and

expressions you will hear in the podcast. Match them to their definitions; 2) Frank and Ann are having a conversation about GM foods. Put six words you expect to hear in the conversation in the 'Yes' column. Put the other words in the 'No' column. The next task is to state whether some statements are true or false, which is followed by the task to read the sentences summarizing the conversation between Frank and Ann and choose the correct words. All the tasks can be downloaded and completed in the written form instead of the online one. Two questions are recommended for discussion: What are the laws in your country regarding GM food? Is GM food a threat to the future or is it rather a source of hope, in your opinion? Finally, students are to write some words in «Comments» section where they express their standpoint replying to the previous participants and formulating their own questions.

The «Useful Links» section proposes various services, for example, «News in Levels. World News for Students of English» (<https://www.newsinlevels.com/#>). Here we can find one and the same news in three variants for students with different level of English, all of them in text and audio formats. News is very actual, let's quote the news from 19.03.2018 about S. Hawking's death who deceased March 13, 2018 (<https://www.newsinlevels.com/products/professor-stephen-hawking-level-1/>). Students can look through this resource in order to discuss some of the relevant or urgent news during the Warm-up activity at the lesson.

## 5. Conclusion

In order to be adapted to the rapidly changing world every professional has to constantly improve his/her media literacy. Moreover, English language proficiency in symbiosis with media literacy allows professionals to be highly skilled, self-motivated and work all over the world together with the representatives of different countries and cultures.

One of the most efficient and reasonable ways of teaching foreign language in unison with media education aims is blended learning, as the use of media educational environment in foreign language teaching allows preparing Master students for effective communication in the professional sphere. It helps to: 1) improve knowledge, skills and abilities; 2) study on a part-time basis; 3) study at a convenient time in the convenient place and pace; 4) improve perception of learning material; 5) use the world information resources; 6) get access to a variety of media texts; 7) analyze and evaluate professionally oriented media texts.

Considering these ideas, the programme «English in Professional Sphere» was worked out at NArFU. It includes four modules that integrate tasks for contact and distant work aimed at improving English level proficiency via media educational environment. The perspective of this issue proposes testing and further improvement of the developed programme based on media educational environment for training Master students of natural sciences.

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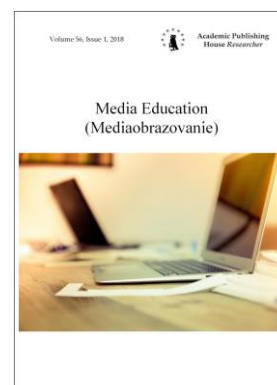


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## Interaction of educational process participants in network online-space: the trends of new media reality development

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### Abstract

The modern development of digital technologies, the transfer of communicative interaction on most socially important issues into a network online space, initiates the growth of citizens' appeals to various forums, blogs, social networks, etc. The availability and depersonalization of the network online space open unlimited opportunities for participants to develop a media reality. The authors set the goal of the study - to determine the key characteristics of educational process participant interaction in the context of a new media reality, to analyze the specifics and the themes of their appeals within the network online space. The main method of research was a qualitative analysis of Internet forum media texts devoted to the discussion of school education. In the course of the study, it was found that the trends of a new media reality development are ambivalent ones. Positive changes include the increase of contact frequency, a higher level of parent involvement in school education issue solution, the increase of awareness about the problems of their children. However, for many parents, the search for problem solutions is shifting from real communication practices with teachers and administration to artificially formed social groups. The opportunities for the replication and dissemination of one's own opinions through the online space is a testimony to their own competence for parents, an indirect factor of a teacher authority reduction. The authors revealed that in the context of a new media reality, the criticism of teacher actions, their professional and moral qualities is increased more and more. The increase of media competence level among Internet users, the development of information selection and analysis skills will contribute to the development of media text critical perception.

**Keywords:** educational process, media reality, media texts, content analysis, online space

### 1. Introduction

The actual trends and the challenges of modern reality, expressed in the change of conceptual notions about the role, the goals and the content of education in the modern world, have led to significant transformations in the basics of the educational sector management in Russia. Today, the trends and the patterns of education development that carry the potential of social solidarity and consolidation come to the forefront, which implies the broadening of public participation in the discussion of the key vectors concerning education system reforming (Frolova, Rogach, 2017).

The globalization of information processes, computerization, the expansion of the interactive space shifts the boundaries of public discourse from normatively regulated areas of discussion towards network interaction, to the Internet (Neskromnykh, Mamadaliev, 2017; Egorova et al.,

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2017). In modern conditions, the level of demand for print media is decreasing, while Internet media texts are becoming more and more demanded due to the availability and the variability of information (Gorun, 2012). In a number of media sources, various kinds of Internet forums begin to play a key role in public opinion broadcasting and development concerning the school education development. It should be borne in mind that Internet technologies and the network online space become the main niche for the existence of mass communication modern form, whereas new media formats for the communication between subjects of the educational space are the main methods of indirect interaction (Kryukova et al., 2017).

In modern conditions, communication and interaction between educational space subjects go beyond the traditional school boundaries. Online applications, social networks offer users the opportunity to publish media texts, edit them and transfer content to other users on a global scale (Loveland, 2018).

The reform of Russian education initiates the growth of the population appeals to the Internet, the broadcasting of their assessments and the exchange of views in the network online space. The transfer of communicative interaction between the participants of the educational process in the network community contributes to the rapid receipt of relevant information, the selection of its most important segment for an individual. The variability of the interpretation, the interactivity and the possibility of an active participation in a discussion transfers a user from the status of a "viewer" to the status of a "co-author", giving unlimited possibilities for media reality development (Chelysheva, 2014; Makeeva et al., 2017).

## 2. Materials and methods

The goal is to determine the key characteristics of participant interaction in the educational process within the context of a new media reality, to analyze the specifics and themes of their appeals within the network online space. The study was conducted in 2018. The main method of research was the qualitative and quantitative analysis of media texts from Internet forums devoted to the discussion of school education. Media texts were selected for the analysis, the authors of which were the parents of modern schoolchildren as a rule.

The following sites were randomly selected as sources of the analyzed media texts: <http://education-reviews.ru>; <http://ratings.7ya.ru/schools/>; <https://www.spr.ru>; <http://www.s-cool.ru/forum7.html>; <http://otzovik.com/>; <https://www.u-mama.ru>.

Units of quantitative analysis were taken such areas as: areas related to dissatisfaction or changes in personnel policy; areas related to infrastructure; areas related to the content and methods of education; areas related to the financing of school education.

The calculation was carried out by the number of reviews devoted to a particular direction for the period 2016-2017.

The method of qualitative-quantitative study of documents implies the search and the processing of media text content, as well as the interpretation of the obtained data (Churasheva, 2007). This method allows you to identify the expectations and the interests of text creators; the values and the norms, distributed in media texts, the specificity of their perception in different audiences (the comments of other users). The specificity of the method is in the fact that it provides the opportunity to study the social context of a document creation, to study a media text as a manifestation, and as an assessment of a new social reality simultaneously (Pashinyan, 2012).

According to the results of the quantitative analysis, the authors conducted a qualitative analysis of the selected media texts and in order to identify the social context of the creation of these media texts and their impact on other participants of the media space.

## 3. Discussion

Current trends of Russian society development cause significant changes in the conditions and the specifics of key actor interactions in the educational space (Smith et al., 2010; Apanasyuk et al., 2017). There are rapid changes in approaches to the organization of the educational process, the development of information and telecommunication technologies (Frolova et al., 2017), a high level of the Internet space use, the development of the digital nature of interactions among young people (Nawaila, Bicen, 2018).

**Table 1.** Quantitative analysis of media texts

<i>Unit of analysis</i>	<i>Total number of mentions</i>
<i>Areas related to personnel policy:</i>	<b>174</b>
- Teachers ' attitude to students	100
- Medical service, care for the health of students at school	41
- Psychological service (unloading, trust) in schools	33
<i>Directions associated with the infrastructure:</i>	<b>132</b>
- The introduction of short-stay groups	9
- Improvement of material and technical equipment and repair of schools	87
- The provision of free school textbooks, library books;	24
- Computerization of schools	12
<i>Areas related to the content and methods of teaching at school:</i>	<b>206</b>
- Profiling of the school, providing students with a choice of choice (choice of classes, subjects, etc.)	67
- Change of training programs (introduction of new subjects: foreign language, economics, foreign literature, etc.)	36
- Reducing the student workload	54
- Improvement of teaching methods, teachers' qualification, assessment system	21
- Reducing the time of lessons to 40 minutes	9
- Cancellation of the EGE	19
<i>Areas related to the financing of school education:</i>	<b>181</b>
- Misappropriation of funds	72
- Increase teachers' salaries, increase funding for school education	51
- More free additional features in the school (clubs, sections, etc.)	26
- Free meals at school	22
- Introduction of a system of financial incentives, prizes, scholarships for academic success	10

The use of technologies for information search and creation, the communication in network communities becomes an important component of public life (Gallo , Horton, 1994; Shearer, 2010). The issues related to the transfer of communication between educational process subjects in the Internet space have a controversial nature due to the vague understanding of ethical and moral constructions of the network community (Sisti, 2007), the lack of media competence among population and the criticality of information perception (Küter-Luks et al., 2011).

Media education allows people to exercise their right to freedom of expression and information (Rowe, 2014), which promotes personal development, and also increases social participation and interactivity (Fedorov, 2015). Without reliable sources of information on the changes in various spheres of life, without a critical analysis of this information using media resources, and without a constant interaction with the media environment, it is impossible to make a balanced, an optimal and an effective management decision in the modern world (Frolova et al., 2018).

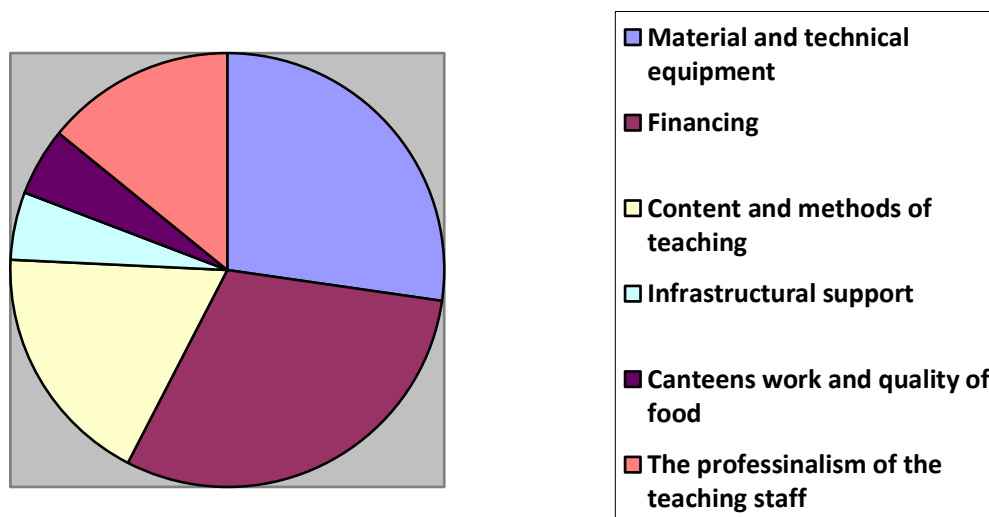
Information and communication technologies can act as a tool for cooperation, participation and shared responsibility in the day-to-day Russian school functioning. The results of foreign studies show the correlation between the degree of integration into the school practice of information and communication technologies as the means of interaction and the effectiveness of a network community creation for the improvement of management, education and education processes (Meneses , Mominó, 2012). In this aspect, the transfer of interaction focus from contact communication to network communities creates new trends in the development of a "space for transaction conduct" between the subjects of the educational process, and updates the issues of media culture and digital literacy (Erstad, Gilje , Lange, 2007).

The Internet is a full-fledged social and cultural (creative) site for certain groups within the defined borders (social networks), and for individual people - the most preferred place of interaction, conditioned by different motivations (Tanatova, 2016).

Thus, the network online space becomes one of the key areas for public opinion development, the replication of assessments and opinions about the contemporary development of Russian school, the transformation of its functions and qualitative characteristics.

#### 4. Results

The comments on the functioning of a modern school are characterized by a fairly limited scope of discussions and a high level of evaluation criticism. The users of network resources most often paid attention to such problems as the material and technical equipment improvement and the repair of schools, as well as the need to increase the funding for school education. The parental community was focused on school life infrastructure provision, the characteristics of the teaching staff, the content and the methods of teaching.



**Fig. 1.** The main problems of school education, highlighted on the Internet forums

"The pool is missing, the building is old, the ceilings flow, it's cold in winter and there are no normal dressing rooms."

"A disgusting school. There is mud and mess here. The area around the school is large and almost empty. It seems that all the money allocated from the budget goes to the headmaster's pocket"

"As for teachers, it's a nursing home to put it mildly ... The average age is a pension one..."

There are many mentions of nutrition problem at schools: the nutrition price and quality is a concern. Most of the forum participants support the need to review the school feeding system. But at the same time, parents Express opposite views on the menu of schoolchildren and the introduction of hot Lunches.

"The problem is that meals are cold often. The child refuses to eat and remains hungry, and food is an integral part of the learning process in fact."

A significant number of comments is devoted to the topic of high school load for schoolchildren and the need for USE preparation. In connection with these trends, the topics of medical and psychological support for students become urgent.

"You can forget about your free time, the parties on weekends, a healthy sleep, the normal psyche of a child in a high school."

Children are too overwhelmed. The child comes home incapable to anything. They are exhausted on any extra - unnecessary subjects"

"The school is so exhausting as no university will exhaust."

At the same time, urgent security topics are ignored, the effectiveness of innovative teaching technologies, there is no constructive approach to the integration of participant efforts in the educational process. The existing practices of resource consolidation by subjects of educational space to solve school problems raises a number of critical remarks, which requires their revision.

As the analysis of media text showed, the topic of an individual approach to a student, the consumer attitude towards the school is one of the key topics.



"There are oxygen cocktails everywhere now, even in kindergartens. I now wonder why they do not know anything about this at school! I explain to them that my child even knows what an oxygen cocktail is and why he needs it, but the class teacher does not know it, and it's very strange!"

"Additional courses after classes, that are free, is a waste of time! A teacher crawls with a textbook around the board."

This trend is associated with the introduction of market economy mechanisms in the educational space of the modern school. The consideration of educational services as "goods" and the parents as "buyers" transforms the socio-cultural attitudes of a school and a teacher perception, whose image is not associated with a high authority.

The consequence of these trends is the confrontation of the parental and the pedagogical community positions. The articulation of negative assessments in a family and their translation in educational institutions promotes the development of certain stereotypes, their negative impact on the educational process. The focus of interactions between the teaching corps and the parental community is centered around the ambiguity of role position perception concerning the key subjects of educational process: client-consumer-customer. A teacher's dissatisfaction with the current situation is reflected in the development of a sufficiently rigid opposite position. So, in one of the Moscow schools was posted the following announcement: «Dear students! Remember that you are students, not clients and always the teacher is right! You do not serve, but give knowledge, learn new things and improve your skills!!!»

The accents of the educational space perception are closely intertwined with the commodity-monetary theme, and differ by an excessive focus on a student servicing and his needs.

The orientation to prestige and the strategies of life success are one of the central discussion themes among schoolchildren parents in online network space. Many parents express the opinion on the need for additional classes, tutor hiring, an individual approach to educational trajectory development, etc., in order to gain the competitive advantages for schoolchildren in comparison with his average peer.

"In order to get normal knowledge in all subjects, you have to hire teachers additionally. Foreign languages are taught very little and haphazardly."

A high level of criticism of opinions leads to the development of stable stereotypes about negative trends in education development.

"A school is not suitable for teaching children, the teaching staff does not care about knowledge or the peace of mind of children. Eleven years in these walls remove the faith in the kindness of people, the love for science and self-confidence."

"Some teachers do not have pedagogical skills at all, nobody can solve conflicts and conduct personal work with students."

The possibility of broad discussion, the articulation of one's own ideas and subjective views on the existing problems, give the status of an education expert to parents. In the event of problems, a large part of the parental community seeks to find support and "expert" help from the same commoners, rather than among professional educators (teachers, administration, social psychologist, etc.). The specificity of interaction between the educational process participants in the Internet indirectly distorts the real situation, contributes to the escalation of the critical attitude, the cautious perception of any innovations. Thus, the increase of communication intensity among parents due to the possibilities of the Internet accelerates cooperation, exchange and the collection of information, on the one hand (Greaves, 2016), and, on the other hand, the transformation of communication channels leads to the replication of "pseudo-expert" opinions, reduces the level of confidence in education institute. "The virtual environment promotes the spread of destructive communities in many ways that undermine the basic values of traditional culture" (Skorodumova, 2017).

## 5. Conclusion

Because of the burgeoning of the Internet and the increasing number of online electronic media resources, the level of demand for print media content is declining. Under the new conditions, digital and mobile media begin to acquire ubiquity, exerting a decisive influence on population values, expectations and interests, primarily among young people (Hashem et al., 2017).

These trends in the development of a new media reality are ambivalent. Positive changes include the increase of contact frequency, a higher level of parental involvement in school education issue solution, the raising of awareness about the problems of their children. However, these trends also have the opposite effect, which consists in a strong distortion of information and the dominance of subjective judgments. For many parents who are active Internet users, the search for problem solutions is shifted from real communication practices with teachers and administration to artificially formed social groups. At the same time the professional users of the Internet acquire a greater expert weight in resolving educational issues rather than the experts in the educational field. The opportunities for the replication and the dissemination of one's own opinions through the online space is the testimony of their own competence for parents, an indirect factor of a teacher authority reduction.

According to the ideas dominant in Soviet media texts, a teacher was positioned as a role model both in appearance and in the world outlook, equated in to the builder of a new society in his socio-cultural role (Chelysheva, 2017). However, in the context of the new media reality, the criticism of teacher's actions, their professional and moral qualities is increased more and more. The possibility of unsupported anonymous criticism discredits the profession of a teacher, transforms the perception of the educational process not as a channel of knowledge transfer, but as a sphere of consumption (seller-buyer).

At the same time, there are the reasons to believe that the level of media competence increase among Internet users, the development of data selection and analysis skills, will contribute to the formation of media text perception criticism. In modern conditions, a special attention should be paid to teaching technologies, which form a responsible approach to the search for and creation of media texts among young people, a thoughtful attitude to new technologies, and Internet information resources (Pietrzak, 2017). Media education is a key factor in negative consequence reduction concerning the spread of subjective assessments and pseudo-expert conclusions that reduce the effectiveness of cooperation between educational process participants.

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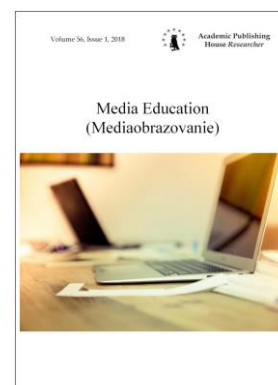
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## Specification of Media Representation of Events in the Regional Information Space

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### Abstract

The subject of this article is the specifics of feeding the information which is topical for the whole society in regional newspapers; in particular it's asymmetry towards the data of the central press. The authors carry out a comparative analysis of the content of media representations of the political event (Navalny's march) in the federal and Khabarovsk print media, which made it possible to reveal a number of formal and substantial differences in the media image of the event, to fix new media phenomena. The theme of media representation is relevant for the theory and practice of journalism, and the transformation in the world and national information space (information warfare, loss of the presumption of information and truth by the world journalism) make this topic even more significant. The research methodology refers to a discursive approach, the authors attempt to analyze the headline complex of journalistic materials, identify the main semantic units of texts, and fix some speech techniques for creating a media image. The novelty of the work lies in the following provisions. The authors go beyond the media-centered approach and in the conclusion analyze the situation of mastering the text by the readership, highlighting two types of audiences according to the criterion of "information literacy". As an explanatory principle, the authors' notion of "a zero signs" is introduced to explain the preterition of the media with respect to certain facts. On this basis it is possible to classify different types of information consumers in the future. The empirical study makes it possible to record differences in the coverage of the event by federal and Khabarovsk print media, and also to reveal interesting phenomena of media representation, in particular, "smoothing out", "suppression", etc., which have a high level of heuristics. The study deserves attention, gives an increment of new information and raises problematic questions of theoretical and methodological plan.

**Keywords:** information space, data transmission, media representation, regional press, zero sign.

### 1. Introduction

The general orientation and the character of the information space development is an acute topic of scientific knowledge. New characteristics of the information space, caused by the change of technology and the deployment of global information systems, are qualitatively changing its essence. A particular interest is aroused by various modifications in the manifestation of this trend that are conditional on the national specifics of the country. The regional level of the information space of the Khabarovsk Territory is an integral part of the information space of Russia, and as such it is not only isomorphic to the information environment of the whole country, but also

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enriches it with its own information components. Therefore, today the significant attention of interested persons is caused by the study of the features of local mass media, due to their partial isolation and independence, despite their involvement in the global information field. In this paper, the information space of the Khabarovsk Territory is segmented and its part created by means of print media is considered.

## 2. Discussion

The perception of the term “information space” differs significantly in the Russian-speaking and English-speaking research traditions. Therefore, it is advisable to consider them in comparison.

In modern Russian-speaking science, there are several approaches related to the study of general and particular issues of the formation and development of the information space. One of them is a technical approach in which the information space is presented as a system that transfers, processes and stores information using technical means. The second can be recognized as humanitarian, where the information space is a collection of knowledge and data that is emerging and constantly changing in the process of the social evolution. Any geographical unit, ideological postulate, traditional belief and sphere of human activity can serve as a basis for its study. Since this research is conducted in the humanitarian approach, it is reasonable to consider the main directions of studying the information space within its framework.

The information space can be considered as a phenomenon of culture (Seregin, 2000), a phenomenon of communication (Nenashev, 2008), as a socio-psychological phenomenon (Chuikova, 2014), and so on. A.V. Seregin believes that the information space of a nation is not only a territorially limited and detached fragment of the global space, but also a qualitatively new habitat of the national culture. A.I. Nenashev adds to this approach a number of other approaches: technological, economic and political, based on the sphere of social life, which dominates the specific period of the development of the information space. L.Y. Chuikova proposes to create in schools an educational ecological information space and to form “access channels” of students’ consciousness to an adequate social information space.

The information space can be arbitrarily large and arbitrarily small, starting from global (Iskevich, Kochtkova, 2017), passing to the territory of a country (Karlova, 2011), a region (Shuneyko, 2017) or a city (Lobanov, 2013) and ending with organization or an educational institution (Chuikova, 2014). For example, I.S. Iskevich and M.N. Kochtkova describe the distinguishing characteristics of locating a crime scene of copyright violations in the global information space, and O.S. Lobanov analyzes the disparity of the existing information systems of St. Petersburg and the ways of integrating them into a single information space. According to A.A. Shuneyko information space of a certain territory does not exist as an integral object, but it is a set of separate segments, distributed in general information flows and having a small specific weight with respect to them.

The information space can cover an entire nation (Seregin, 2000), the population of a country (Zaitova, 2011) or a separate person (Vodyanenko, 2012). So, T.M. Zaitova introduces into the scientific use the concept of “the information space of the population”, interpreting it as a system of data about the surrounding world, continuously formed and changing in the course of interpersonal, group and mass communication of people. In the opinion of G.R. Vodyanenko the information environment of a particular person combines various information environments, the isolation or integration of which he/she regulates independently. The authors believe that the territorial or personal restriction of the information space is always conditional. It is difficult to imagine such a territory or such a person, as well as their totality, who or which would be rigidly delimited from other personalities or territories. The real history knows cases when artificial restrictions or barriers to the dissemination of information are established. For example, information blockades, where the totalitarian regimes put their countries or the practice of interacting with information of the Old Believers. But even in these extreme cases of prohibitions, information in one way or another interacts with the general flows. To say nothing of the times when all and any boundaries are diluted and the localization of information spaces segments becomes extremely relative.

Scientists study the information space of various fields of human activity, such as, for example, healthcare (Gryaznova, 2015) or geodesy (Karpik, 2013), as well as functioning of various

arts such as fiction (Olesina, 2015) or cinema (Fedorov, 2017) in the information space. A.P. Karpik argues that the geodetic spatial information system is an effective tool for making decisions necessary for assessing the territories development sustainability. E.P. Olesina considers the influence which the modern forms of digital literature exert on the psychological state of teenagers and adolescents.

The proposed versions of comprehending the information space: its definitions, structure, features of functioning and evolution prospects are directly dependent on the scientific field in which research is conducted (culture studies, linguistics, political science, etc.), and the scientist's own position. So, for R.V. Gromov (Gromov, 2002), the information space is a totality of the set of information flows which interaction is directed at mass consciousness with the aim of its desirable transformation. G.R. Vodyanenko (Vodyanenko, 2012) defines it as a space of relationships and relationships that is formed as a result of the process of people's interaction with each other in the course of their active mastering the potential of the information environment (objects, events and real-world phenomena). V.V. Kulakov (Kulakov, 2008) considers the information space as a specific form of a social space, while M.A. Bogdanova (Bogdanova, 2006) presents it as a territory equipped with information resources and having journalistic and auditor characteristics.

At the same time, in modern English-language scientific literature, the term "information space", widely represented in Russian-language sources, practically is not used. Monitoring of the articles placed in an online scientific citation indexing service Web of Science does not give any work where this term would appear in the title. It occurs in a different meaning, related to specialized computer technologies (a technical approach of studying information space in Russia). The English-speaking tradition of media research manages without this term, just as it does without the term "media space" and "communicative space". Instead, more specific designations are used: the news media (Allern, Blach-Ørsten, 2011), discourse (Higgins, 2004), mediatization (Hepp et al., 2015), news communication (Clausen, 2004), shaping the news (Benson, Hallin, 2007), soft news (Baum, 2002), etc.

Foreign scientific discourse is much more actively than the Russian one discusses the issue of the formation and broadcasting of news in the central and regional press. For example, L. Clausen investigates the process of "domestication of news" (Clausen, 2004). According to the author, the strategies used by national producers can be identified through comparative content analysis at 4 levels: global, national, organizational and professional. The article describes the processes of homogenization and diversification of news content that concurrently work in international news communication. The authors do not presume to challenge this statement in principle, but they believe that it is necessary to add one more level – translational – to these four one, which will take into account how the same news is broadcast in editions of various types. The simultaneous occurrence of the processes of globalization and "domestication" does not at all cancel out the fact that if we choose any one vector for consideration, the dominant process will be only one of them and it will level out the other. From our point of view, this is happening in the regional press.

A significant difference between the regional press and the national one is the language of the narrative. According to observations by U.G. Gurun and A.W. Butler (Gurun, Butler, 2010), when characterizing local companies, regional newspapers use far fewer negative words than when it comes to nonlocal companies. The authors attribute these variations to the financial involvement of media owners. Without denying this fact, it should be noted that, as will be shown below, the provincial press in Russia as a whole is milder in assessing any facts than the central one.

An important place in the Russian study of the information space is occupied by the problem of the transformation of information and the specifics of media presentations that contribute to the emergence of an artificially organized social reality (Karlova, 2011; Galimova, Tsvetova, 2017; Chibisova, 2017; Yanglyaeva, Yakova, 2017). In their work, E.Sh. Galimova and N.S. Tsvetova research the dynamics of media presentation of such a literary phenomenon as the so-called village prose created by a heterogeneous media, while O.V. Chibisova studies the construction of regional identity by the local mass media in the Khabarovsk Territory. M.M. Yanglyaeva and T.S. Yakova generalize that mass media, create and fix models of space-time relations, conditioned by the laws of that genre and form, within which the media fulfill their task. In addition, a significant part of media products is fabricated for economic and political benefits, for the sake of achieving which the public consciousness is subjected to manipulative influence (Alekseev et al., 2017).

At the same time, English-language studies approach the problem of media transformations of reality from another perspective, attaching the greatest importance to how far from the actual state of affairs the created media products can digress. For this purpose the scientists coined a new term “media credibility”. Its main dimensions are source credibility focusing on the characteristics of the source of information and medium credibility focusing on the channel through which the message is sent (Golan, 2010). The audience-based variables such as age, income, education, gender, and race have an important influence in their assessments of media credibility. Of a certain interest is the analysis of the perception of the degree of reliability of online news from different sources by print and online newspaper journalists (Cassidy, 2007). W.P. Cassidy argues that print newspaper journalists rated Internet information as considerably less credible than did online newspaper journalists. He accounts the results of the survey for Internet reliance and professional role conceptions as significant predictors. Scott Maier (Maier, 2010) connects the analysis of users’ perception with the analysis of source differences. The scientist studies newspapers, network television, cable television, and radio and comes to the conclusion that 60% of the topics coincide on news Web sites and legacy media, while only a third of news stories in blogs and social media correspond with those of mainstream media.

This state of affairs should involve detailed analysis of the information broadcast by these various sources. Meanwhile, unfortunately, now researchers use a single set of analytical operations for texts from all these sources. Such a disproportion can lead to distort conclusions and misguide theorizing. According to M. Kohring and J. Matthes (Kohring, Matthes, 2007), the multidimensional trust scale for media materials should include 4 components: trust in the selectivity of topics and facts, trust in the accuracy of depiction and journalistic assessment. From our point of view, it is necessary to take into account the fifth factor – the selectivity of the addressee. Our study shows that this factor is no less important and directly related to the four listed. The choice of the addressee is most clearly traced when opposing the central and regional press. These (and a number of other facts) gave J. Albright a reason to call the current stage of media development the era of fake news (Albright, 2017). He sees the main problem in the devaluation of the reader’s confidence, which can be overcome by playing in a story of facts and information.

The construction of a media reality can cause disorientation of a person in the information space, the size of which directly depends on how good he/she is at comprehending the essence of the processes behind this construction (Yanglyaeva, Yakova, 2017). By the way, E. Galimova and N. Tsvetova note that “the pragmatic aspirations of the modern professional literary criticism and journalistic community provoke an oppositional rise in the status of readers’ statements about the artistic work” (Galimova, Tsvetova, 2017: 650). In this connection A.I. Luchinkina (Luchinkina, 2015) introduces the concept of information-psychological immunity as the ability to process and critically analyze received and transmitted information. It should be emphasized that a person’s ability to resist disorientation is directly related to the level of his/her communicative competence. Knowledge of the processes occurring in media, in particular, described in this article, broadcast through the media education system, can significantly increase the level of information immunity.

The problem of the synthesis of media education and media criticism received an extensive coverage in the works of A.V. Fedorov and A.A. Levitskaya (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2017). They are convinced that the main task of both is “to teach the audience not only to analyze media texts of any types, but also to understand the mechanisms of media texts’ creation and functioning in society” (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2017: 39). D. Buckingham outlined a strategy for developing media education on an international scale (Buckingham, 2001) and I.V. Chelysheva specified it for Russia (Chelysheva, 2016).

This research is also carried out in the mainstream of the listed directions of studying the media, but it has, in contrast to all the above-mentioned, a number of significant features. Mainly because the consideration of the information space in it is based on the comparison of objectively occurring events and the subjective social reality, constructed by the means of mass communication, which have turned from the means of transferring information to the system of its own production at the present stage. Secondly, it has a linguistic character and the identification of the content specificity of the media, namely, the newspapers of the Khabarovsk Territory, is conducted in comparison with the specific content of federal newspapers. For this, thirdly, the

authors introduce a new semiotic term – a zero sign – which is a specific way of transferring semantics.

### 3. Materials and methods

Any event causes an information flow that fixes verbal forms of its circumstances, character, consequence, and so on. The more significant the event is, the bigger information flow produces. At a certain stage of its broadcast, the information flow is embodied in a publication in the mass media. From the moment of its incarnation, it loses its natural character and partially passes into the category of artificial formations. Between the event itself, the information flow and information receivers, there integrate media with the information policy implemented by them.

Any information policy is to keep silent about one type of information, to accentuate another type of information and to invent a third type. In linguistic and semiotic terms, this amounts to the fact that publications constantly create zero signs and new materially expressed signs. A zero sign in the media arises from the suppression of actual information-significant events, of which existence the data receiver has learnt from other sources. A zero sign is a meaningful, functionally and semantically independent absence of an object or action within the framework of a certain text, the necessity of which presence is strictly prescribed by some social regulations (rules) or context (Shuneyko, Chibisova, 2017). New materially expressed signs arise on the basis of injecting false information in the text. The purpose of this study is to understand how this process is carried out in the regional press of the Khabarovsk Territory with a focus on the nature of the occurrence of zero signs.

### 4. Results

Identifying the intensional specifics of the regional media, rather than its extensional specifics, involves the use of various procedures. All these procedures are based on a comparison of the regional press with the central one. The object of comparison is the nature of the presentation of the material, the way of broadcasting information-relevant events, the identification of the differences in the newspapers that print about the same thing. The most consistently and clearly it can be revealed when considering how the central and regional newspapers cover the same information occasions.

These considerations formed the basis of this study and determined its nature and mechanism of conduct. There was chosen one important information occasion – Navalny's march, which took place on March 26, 2017. The choice is due to the fact that this event, significant in the political and cultural context of the country that affected all the regions of Russia, could not but find a response in all newspapers as one of their main tasks is to cover what is happening.

The starting point of the analysis was the most voluminous materials that were placed in the central publications. Obviously, their volume is determined by the volume of the printed organ, that is, by purely technical factors, and, strictly speaking, it cannot speak about intensional specifics, since different text volumes with different compression ratios can meaningfully broadcast the same information.

For this reason, the materials of the central press used for comparison were subjected to a thematic analysis. That is, there was identified the totality of the topics that were broadcast in these materials. After that, it was examined whether these topics are implemented in the regional publications and, if yes, how. The result is a clear set of topics and the nature of their implementation, which consistently demonstrates how the same informational occasion is broadcast by the central and regional press.

The very first stage of the analysis involves a simple identification, whether there is a mention of an information occasion in the newspaper. Twenty newspapers were examined for the information about Navalny's march: two central and eighteen regional newspapers (out of a total of 71 newspapers identified in the Khabarovsk Territory information space analysis, which is 25 %).

In 12 out of 18 regional newspapers, no mention was made of an information occasion which is a rather significant event for the whole country.

The list of newspapers that have not reported the event is the following:

1. *Priamurskiye vedomosti* – a regional weekly social and political newspaper – the founder Committee for Press and Mass Communications of the Government of the Khabarovsk Territory – circulation 1,500 copies.



2. *Nash gorod Amursk* – a city weekly informational newspaper – the founder Administration of the Urban Settlement “Town of Amursk” – circulation 1,300 copies.

3. *Anyuyskiye perekaty* – a regional weekly social and political newspaper – the founder Administration of the Nanaian Municipal District of the Khabarovsk Territory – circulation 1,750 copies.

4. *Sel'skaya nov'* – a regional weekly social and political newspaper – the founder Administration of the Khabarovsk Municipal District – circulation 1,800 copies.

5. *Rabocheye slovo* – a regional weekly social and political newspaper – the founder Municipal formation Verkhnebureinsky Municipal District – circulation 1,500 copies.

6. *Vyazemskiye vesti* – a regional weekly social and political newspaper – the founder Administration of Vyazemskogo Municipal District – circulation 5,050 copies.

7. *Za stal'* – a corporate weekly newspaper – the founder PTC “Amurmetal” – circulation 500 copies.

8. *University life in KnAGU (Universitetskaya zhizn' v KnAGU)* – a corporate monthly newspaper – the founder Komsomolsk-na-Amure State University – circulation 1,000 copies.

9. *Priamurskiy kazachiy vestnik* – a specialized monthly newspaper – the founder the District Cossack Society of the Khabarovsk Territory – circulation 3,500 copies.

10. *Boyevoye bratstvo Priamur'ya* – a specialized monthly social and political newspaper – the founder Khabarovsk Territorial Department of the All-Russian Public Organization “Boyevoye bratstvo” – circulation 2,000 copies.

11. *Present Khabarovsk* – an advertising and informational newspaper, issued 2 times a week – the founder LLC “Present” – circulation 18,000 copies.

12. *Express Courier №1* – a city weekly advertising newspaper – the founder D.L. Shevchenko – circulation 26,000 copies.

The mere fact that three quarters of regional newspapers did not mention a significant information occasion needs to be adjusted or, at least, to be clarified in three points.

1. From the general list, it is necessary to exclude two advertising newspapers, which should not carry this type of information. Similar central newspapers also do not carry it. Everything is extremely correct here.

2. From the general list it is also possible, but with substantial reservations, to exclude two corporate and two specialized newspapers. This exception is not yet fully evident., because, for example, *Energetik of FEGC* (a monthly corporate publication founded by the JSC “Far Eastern Generating Company” with a circulation of 3,000 copies) in No. 4 (801) for April 2017 responded to the described event in a very specific and indicative manner. On page 5 under the heading “Against corruption”, there was posted the material “Vasily Marchenko: We work strictly in the legal field”, which is an interview with the director of internal audit of JSC “FEGC” Vasily Marchenko “about how the company is working for the purity in its ranks and why”. That is, the suppression was combined with mentioning the actual topic in a completely different vein. The publishers have chosen a win-win situation in the face of authorities: we know what is happening in the country, but we do not speak about it, moreover, we emphasize that we are doing fine and everything that happens has nothing to do with us.

3. District newspapers can explain the suppression by the fact that the events happening in the country immediately lose relevance for their territories. The publishers know, but do not talk about what they know.

But even taking into account these clarifications, two of which are extremely arbitrary, it turns out that at least 12 % of regional publications do not cover the information that is very important for the country as a whole. Thus, these publications serve the de-actualization of the information and at the same time dilute it. Considering that in rural areas the number of Internet users and accepted TV programs is fewer than in urban ones, the role of such suppression is significantly increased. Informing the population is done in doses, taking into account a number of considerations that are not acceptable in the format of a free press.

No less interesting picture is observed when analyzing exactly how the information is fed. The following newspapers were taken for analysis:

1. *Essence of Time (Sut' vremeni)* – a daily All-Russian political newspaper – the founder S.Ye. Kurginyan – circulation 8,000 copies.

2. *Moskovskij Komsomolets* – a daily All-Russian social and political newspaper – the founder CJSC “Editorial office of the newspaper “Moskovskij Komsomolets” – circulation 950,000 copies.

3. *Moskovskij Komsomolets in Khabarovsk* – a regional annex to the federal edition – the founder CJSC “Editorial office of the newspaper “Moskovskij Komsomolets” – circulation 12,500 copies.

4. *Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk* – a regional annex to the federal edition – the founder JSC Publishing House “Komsomolskaya Pravda” – circulation 10,000 copies.

5. *Khabarovskiy ekspres* – a city weekly social and political newspaper – the founder S.A. Glukhov – circulation 12,100 copies.

6. *Khabarovskiy kray segodnya* – a weekly regional social and political newspaper – the founder ANO “Center for Support of Social Initiatives “Open Region” – circulation 10,000 copies.

7. *Dal'nevostochnyy Komsomol'sk* – a city social and political newspaper issued 2 times a week – the founder Administration of the city of Komsomolsk-on-Amur – circulation 10,000 copies.

Below is given an example of the implementation of the topic, which is mentioned in all seven newspapers under analysis, “the general state of people”, dividing it into three parts: the description of the rally in Moscow, Khabarovsk and Komsomolsk-on-Amur.

*Moskovskij Komsomolets* (Moscow). ... The first deafening whistle was heard when a young fellow raised a sign “Let’s bring Medvedev to justice” over his head. Due to the fact that the action had not been agreed on, there were practically no participants with posters there. Those who dared to display them were almost immediately detained by the police. “It should be hung on Pushkin, in this case they will not detain anyone”, at the top of her voice screamed a woman who was standing on the nearby bench. So the poet became the first protester who could hold banners with impunity. <...> The protesters initially reacted with a laugh to a monotonous voice in the loudspeaker, which called for “expressing their civic position on an agreed platform in Sokolniki”, and then they completely stopped noticing it.

*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk* (Moscow). Two streams converged on Tverskoy Boulevard. “The participants” of the procession and the unhappy, trying to get into the subway through this human traffic jam.

– Guys, do you have nothing else to do?! – a man of about 50 years was rowing with his hands in the human stream as if against waves in the sea. – You had better clean your yards, organize a subbotnik!

However, no one answered him.

And when the people began to crawl away from Tverskoy in all directions, many amicably moved to the cash desks of the nearest “McDonald’s”. The tail of the queue began at the entrance.

– Rally is rally, – some guy laughed, – lunch is to be on time.

*Essence of Time* (Khabarovsk). ... On the warnings of law enforcement officers about the illegality of the action, the activists responded with cries of “Politsai!”. <...> The activists tried to provoke a conflict with the forces of law and order. According to unconfirmed reports, some of the provocateurs were detained, to which the crowd responded with cries of “Traitors!” and “Salary is worth more than honor!”

*Moskovskij Komsomolets in Khabarovsk* (Khabarovsk). ... Everything that was happening (arrests of activists) all those present accompanied by shouts of “Shame!”. Then they went on a “peaceful walk” to Komsomolskaya Square.

*Khabarovskiy ekspres* (Khabarovsk). ... Then the chief of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia in Khabarovsk, police colonel Alexander Prokhorets went out to communicate with the participants of the rally. He also explained to the citizens that they had gathered for an unauthorized event, and even tried to convince people that they themselves do not understand who they support by going out into the street. However, the head of the city administration of the MIA was ridiculed and cut short.

*Khabarovskiy kray segodnya* (Khabarovsk). ... It is advisable that the animators from politics should study legislation in more detail. And try to understand that defiling through the streets (even, alas, without an orchestra), maybe useful in the sense of an influx of adrenaline. But in terms of approaching the declared goal it is a very dubious waste of time.

*Dal'nevostochnyy Komsomol'sk* (Komsomolsk-on-Amur). On March 26, the citizens of Komsomolsk marched against corruption along the streets of the City of Youth. The march was timed to coincide with opposition rallies throughout the country. It all started with a meeting dedicated to the project "Urban Environment". Immediately after it, a column of young people moved along the streets of Komsomolsk from the embankment of the city, chanting slogans "No corruption". The column passed along Mira Avenue and turned towards Lenin Square.

When comparing these text fragments with each other, one should bear in mind that the differences between them can be caused by a mass of external factors: the volume of the newspaper, the manner of reporting that it supports, the methods used to attract the reader's attention, the individual style of the journalist, the nature of the described realities, etc. But whatever they are caused, they show a rather curious tendency. The dynamics of the transmission of the event in the central press is higher than in the regional press. It seems that the central press is focused on an accelerated chronotope, while the regional one – on a slow-moving chronotope.

This is most clearly seen from the comparison of the general nominations of the event and the predicates used in its description, since they fix the convergence of the space-time coordinates at a single point. The central press uses nominations and predicates associated with dynamic actions: the action, two streams converged, a human traffic jam. The regional press uses nominations and predicates associated with neutral, slow actions: a peaceful walk, an unauthorized event, defiling through the streets, procession, marching, and the column passed.

It seems that behind the difference in chronotopes there is not only the different rhythm of life that has become a common place when the capital and the province are opposed. Probably, this difference signals more direct and indirectly cautious ways of presenting information.

The general set of topics and the specifics of the nature of their implementation in the central and regional press are recorded with the help of the following summary table 1.

From the summary table of the nature of the implementation of topics, it is possible to draw various conclusions. We confine ourselves to those that directly point to general trends. These trends were formulated as obvious consequences from the analysis of the translation of a topic and their totality. In a number of cases, the nature of the translation of different topics implements one trend. And all of them together show the direction of the information policy, which is adhered to by most newspapers in the Khabarovsk Territory.

**Table 1.** Topics and the nature of their implementation

	Essence of Time	Moskovskij Komsomolets	Moskovskij Komsomolets in Khabarovsk	Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk	Khabarovskiy ekspress	Khabarovskiy kray segodnya	Dalnevostochnyy Komsomolsk
Circumstances of preparation	√	√	√	√	√	√	0
Political component	√	√	0	√	0	√	0
General state of people	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Availability of slogans	√	√	0	0	0	0	√
Availability of symbolics	√	√	0	√	0	0	0
Behavior of the police	√	√	√	√	√	0	√
Youth participation	√	√	0	√	√	√	√
Availability of statistics	√	√	√	√	0	√	√
Journalistic evaluation	√	√	0	√	√	√	0
Analytical assessment	√	0	0	√	0	0	0
Possible consequences	√	0	0	√	0	0	0
Portrait of Navalny	0	√	0	0	0	0	0
Photos from the rally	0	√	0	√	√	0	√
Contact with other rallies	√	√	√	0	√	0	0

1. The sharpness of the event is smoothed out. This happens already at the level of the names of materials. The comparison of the titles of materials in the metropolitan and regional press shows that the semantics of acute conflict are replaced by the semantics of randomness and insignificance: “Political War” in the column “Summary from the theater of military operations” (*Essence of Time*), “Alexey Navalny led fighters against corruption on the street” (*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk*), “More than a thousand people participated in the Khabarovsk anti-corruption rally” (*Moskovskij Komsomolets in Khabarovsk*); “Protest with sneakers on the neck” (*Moskovskij Komsomolets*); “March against corruption” (*Dal'nevostochnyy Komsomol'sk*); “Teenagers detained at the meeting of Navalny: Uncle Lesha, your ‘nets’ dragged us into the paddy wagon!” (*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk*); “You are being fooled. And you can walk” (*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk*); “The explosion in social networks, but not in society” (*Khabarovskiy kray segodnya*); “A rally that was not there” (*Khabarovskiy ekspress*).

2. The scale of the event is decreased. This is achieved by excluding the general context. All-Russian action takes the form of a provincial demonstration. Compare: “In Russia, going out into the streets was tested. It was organized by forces clearly not burdened with respect for legislation. Street actions, mostly illegal, took place in more than 70 cities of the country” (*Essence of Time*). And: “On March 26 at 13:20 on the area near the city pond people began to gather for so-called anti-corruption rally. <...> ‘The peaceful walk’ of the crowd of many thousands, which had got considerably depleted by the time, ended near police station No. 6” (*Moskovskij Komsomolets in Khabarovsk*). “At the end of the rally, the citizens decided to turn the event into a procession. Khabarovsk residents went on a ‘peaceful walk’ along the central street of the city” (*Khabarovskiy ekspress*). “Throughout the movement of the column, it was accompanied by police officers. <...> The participants walked strictly along the sidewalk, and crossed the road through a pedestrian crossing to the green light of the traffic light” (*Dal'nevostochnyy Komsomol'sk*).

3. The political component of the event is hushed up, and social struggle is transferred to the category of personal struggle for power. Accordingly, the mass social confrontation is replaced by a personal confrontation. And this shifts the focus of attention from the political problem to specific individuals. “A modest fighter with corruption went out to a rally in sneakers for \$289” (*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk*). “With an unsystematic bid for power, the main thing is always (always!) – ‘What do we oppose?’ No matter whether it is a ‘velvet’ revolution, rebellion, civil conflict or even war, a necessary condition is destructivism (*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk*). “And then again the question arises: beside another conquered step on the way to power (does anyone think that all who are ‘against the authority’ do not want to be it themselves?), what did they want to achieve?” (*Khabarovskiy kray segodnya*).

4. The protesters’ voice in the regional press is reduced to zero. In this way they become an impersonal mass that does not have a proper opinion, dutifully or unwillingly fulfilling someone else’s will. “The teenagers came to an illegal rally because of the promised money” (*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk*); “When a nation is made a fool by its new advocates, it’s already a shame. And it’s scary.” (*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk*); “The ideological inspirers of the action placed many people in an ambiguous position before the law” (*Khabarovskiy kray segodnya*); “... tried to convince people that they do not understand who they support when they go out into the street” (*Khabarovskiy ekspress*).

This is most clearly manifested in the fact that central publications actively cite specific cries and slogans of protesters. For example, the newspaper *Essence of Time* writes: “The protesters chanted slogans ‘Russia without corruption’, ‘Bring Medvedev to justice’, ‘Khabarovsk is against corruption!’, ‘We are power here!’, ‘Russia without Putin!’”. *Moskovskij Komsomolets*: The crowd was carrying posters “Corruption is stealing the future!”, “Don’t give up yourselves!”, “We are the power here!”, “We are many!”, “Dismiss the government!”, “I would like such a house like a duck has!”, “We are not slaves to you!”, “Down with the police state!”, “We are wicked. And our mood is not very good”, “It’s not cultural to steal!” The regional newspapers do not cite them at all or mention them casually: “Before the beginning of its movement, the police detained six people, who because of their posters were considered organizers of the action” (*Dal'nevostochnyy Komsomol'sk*). Moreover, sometimes the voice of protesters is replaced by the translation of the voice of the authorities, for example, by the transmission of words of the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia for Khabarovsk (*Khabarovskiy ekspress*).



5. The central press pays attention to the symbols of the movement. “The new symbol of protest was the sneakers, which the participants of the action hung around their necks. <...> Everywhere people carried rubber, plastic or inflatable yellow ducklings” (*Moskovskij Komsomolets*). The regional press either objectifies this symbols “When the riot police dragged Lescha into the paddy wagon, he rested his foot in the ... sneaker. One company took advantage of the opportunity and solemnly announced that this was its product” (*Komsomolskaya Pravda Khabarovsk*), or does not mention it at all. This is an important symptom. A symbol is an integral part of any organized movement. The absence of a symbol marks the absence of an organized unity and reduces the participants to the rank of an occasional crowd.

The actions of the authorities, youth participation and statistics are described by the central and regional press in equal detail and do not bypass attention.

Analytical assessments of what is happening are brought only by the central press; the regional one does not mention them at all. This clearly fits into the general nature of the event’s broadcast, its de-actualization. Analytical evaluation can only be of something large and important. The very fact of its absence reduces the scale and importance.

It is noteworthy that an open direct journalistic assessment is present in most publications. This is natural: there is appraisal in any journalistic text. It is hard to imagine an absolutely neutral text. If there are two main objects of description in the text, the positive and negative estimates are distributed unequally between them. At the same time, it can be said that the central press is trying to maintain neutrality, while in the regional one the negative assessment is given to the opposition, and the positive one is on the side of the authorities.

## 5. Conclusion

Summarizing all these trends, we can say that the information policy of the regional press is aimed at lowering the significance, importance and political component of the event. It is implemented in the ways listed above.

The nature of the effect of this type of information policy on the reader can be different. It is determined by the degree of awareness of the reader, is reduced to two major types and entails unequal consequences.

The first type is realized when the newspaper falls into the hands of the reader, who uses not only a single source of information, that is, besides this edition he/she draws information from the Internet or, at least, from TV and the central press. Such a reader perceives the lack of information as zero signs, reads their semantics “the publishers for certain reasons do not consider it possible to report this and that and that” and come to the conclusion. The degree of trust in the publication is significantly reduced with such a reader. The second type is presented when the newspaper falls into the hands of a reader who does not use other sources of information. In this case, the classical form of suppression is realized, on the basis of which the reader develops a distorted view of reality. It should be emphasized that, in essence, the first and the second type are destructive ways of transferring information and in the long term they can bring nothing good to some particular publications. The publishers maintaining this type of information policy, it guarantees a reduction in demanded circulation.

The findings of this study are limited to the publication of a number of newspapers in the Khabarovsk Territory and may be considered unrepresentative for the entire regional press. However, the comparison of the regional press with the central one has made it possible to identify certain trends (smoothing out the acuteness of the event, reducing its scale, concealing the political component, etc.), which open up prospects for further research in this direction.

The training of a literate reader and media education as a whole presuppose not only the existence of a reliable factual base, but also a correct definition of those dominant trends that are realized in the press of this or that type and level. In this sense, the conclusions obtained as a result of the research can serve not only as an obvious illustrative material for characterizing the current state of the regional press, but also determine the nature of the correct or adequate perception of the materials placed in it. In other words, the formulated tendencies can be perceived as elements of general recommendations on information security, knowledge of which is necessary, ideally, to anyone interacting with media objects.

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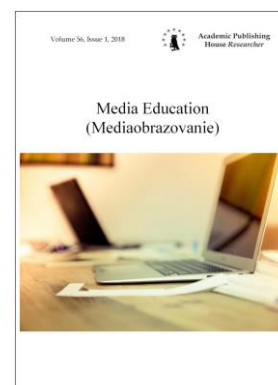
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## Film genre and contents presupposition: the influence of the title and trailer

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### Abstract

The article researches the influence of the original English film title to forming the genre and contents presuppositions of the viewers. It's very important for studying the process of choice of the film to view from the cognitive, translation, advertising, commercial perspectives. The empirical research with Russian-speaking recipients was conducted which aimed at investigating the process of creating the presuppositions to genre and contents of the film only perceiving and translating the title of the film and then the process of correcting the opinions after watching the trailer of the film. Understanding the title faces some barriers connected as the research shows with the direct literal interpretation of the title which happens due to several factors: lack of linguistic and cultural background by the viewers belonging to another culture and due to failure of the original title because of its inadequateness, ambiguity or inexpressiveness. These barriers are fully or partly leveled by the trailer. The sufficient level of destroying misunderstanding depends on the linear development of the trailer plot and enhancing the wish to view the film is supported by a complex parallel and spiral development of plot lines in a trailer.

**Keywords:** film title, title functions, title translation, presupposition, film genre, film contents, trailer

### 1. Introduction

Specificity of the perceived by the individual information depends on the row of factors among which there are the type of information; the persons who transfer and get information; the language and code of information etc. In a case when information is transferred in a form of a film the problem becomes deeper since the film represents the artistic audiovisual work which is “*a fundamentally new complex of optical, acoustic and kinetic sensations and in the conditions of transmedia, constantly improving the poetics and its expression potential and broadens its perimeter of receptive-media impact*” (Tsvetkova, 2017: 127).

Film as a complex media multimodal representation of the world is the object of a certain linguistic and cultural environment and while being transferred to a representative of another linguistic and cultural environment it may be distorted or misinterpreted. Thus we face a number of barriers hindering the adequate understanding of the transferred content of the message.

The barriers are provided by not enough knowledge of the film language and culture and by the means of the information transference which may be verbal, non-verbal and mixed, comprising both kinds. The process of getting the information is not a final stage in the interaction of two

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different cultural environments. The received message should be decoded and reacted by the recipient; and the correct decoding is influenced by the means representing this information.

## 2. Material and methods

The research aims at the revealing the role of a title of the film in the process of content presuppositions and the change of the last due to visualization through the trailer and their impact on the recipients' perception of the film idea in the process of interaction of textual and audiovisual types of information. We consider the film as information transferred by an English-speaking representative to a Russian-speaking recipient and a title and a trailer as means of getting this information.

The main methods of research are the questioning, semantic and contextual analysis, translation transformations analysis.

## 3. Discussion

The texts produced in one culture show to the individual belonging to another culture the picture of the world characteristic to this culture helping to acquire some knowledge of national mentality adaptation. One of the forms of representing the national mentality is cinema art as films reflect specific features of popular mentality and national picture of the world. J. Silbey presents a film as «individual, institutional and cultural memory» (Silbey, 2014: 24), placing it squarely within the realm of contestability. The viewers correlate the knowledge, values and subjective mental spaces, while perceiving the content of the film with preferable reliance on their own system of cultural coordinates. In E. Semino's opinion, from a cognitive point of view, text worlds can be seen as resulting from the application of certain portions of the recipient's background knowledge (schemata) to the interpretation of texts. The person's perception of a particular text world will depend on «the extent to which his or her existing schemata are confirmed or challenged during the process of interpretation» (Semino, 1995). In W. Lippmann's opinion the problem of reception of the other hasn't been solved till nowadays as there is a tendency to interpret something alien from one's own attitude and stereotypes. The stereotypization being the need of our own culture may lead to the deformation of the other (Lippmann, 1921). But our own and the other are in dialectical unity, so the other forms something like a screen in which everything which is inherent to us is reflected (Leinen, 2007: 138).

The cultural transposition is based on macro- and micro-structural units. By V.S. Vinogradov, the macro-structural elements in verbal and image information include implicit pragmatic presuppositions, communicative situation and implications (or subtext) which contain intertextual components (allusions, symbols, puns) or additional hidden content deliberately laid by the author into the text (Vinogradov, 2004: 19). This information may be represented in the meanings of lexical units and idioms or otherwise be included through allusions and hints to some historical or cultural facts.

As the film text concerns, the macro-structural components are the textual and image peculiarities typical for the culture transferring fragments of valuable experience and culturally significant information (Fedorova, 2009: 143).

Micro-cultural components inherent to the film contents are numerous: specific realities often contradicting common views of cultural and language subject and possessing ethnocultural uniqueness (Fedorova, 2009: 144), archetypal content (Noakk, Znamenskaya, 2014) which stimulates the interest of the recipients to the cinematographic production and others categories of a person, event, object, space etc (Babenko et al., 2005) and others. One of them is the title of the film. The film title fulfills many functions the main of which is to identify the film among a lot of others in the media space by defining its semantics and author's intention. According to O.Yu. Bogdanova, it's the title that creates an idea of the text as it's «a meaningful knot, completing the chain of successive links» (Bogdanova, 2009: 14).

A. Veleva-Borissov indicates several film title functions: nominative, identifying, anticipative, appellative and informative, proving the fact that the title begins its life long before the film starts to go on stimulating the imagination and represents the quintessence of its image-sense (Veleva-Borissov, 1993). F.M. Yarmuhamedova highlights the following functions of the film title: nominative, informative, sense-forming, stylistic, or attractive, and mnemonic (Yarmuhamedova, 2014: 266).



M. Eronnen and M. Rodi-Risberg, basing on Ch. Nord's classification of title functions, who differentiates between essential and optional sets (Nord, 1995), point out that the naming, informative and phatic functions are performed by each and every title for the very fact that it exists and is used in a communicative situation: every title is the name of a cultural product; every title informs about the existence of a cultural product bearing that name; every title establishes a contact with the potential user (reader, viewer etc.) (Eronnen, Rodi-Risberg, 2013). S. Pena-Cervel, also dividing all film titles' functions on essential and optional sets, pays attention to pragmatic and commercial factors in their functioning as the film titles signal to attention of the viewers and enhance the commercial attractiveness of the film (Pena-Cervel, 2016: 306). It happens due to the fact that an interesting title stimulates the audience's desire for viewing and hooks audience's attention.

A title may allude to other texts or other titles: it may therefore perform an intertextual and/or an intertitular function (Hoek, 1981). As it is pointed out by Ch. Nord, "like other texts, titles form part of the text corpus of a culture community with which they are linked by intertextual relations: they quote other texts (and titles), and are quoted in turn" (Nord, 1995: 281), e.g. Agatha Christie's *Hickory Dickory Dock* is a title taken from a nursery rhyme, and Joyce's *Ulysses* alludes to Homer's *Odyssey*.

L.V. Ukhova and Y.M. Chernitsina underline the role of advertising function of the film title and after the research have exposed that 42 % of viewers choose the film to watch by intriguing title (Ukhova, Chernitsina, 2015: 105). The question arises in which way the original film title is interpreted by the viewers of another culture and how their presuppositions of genre and content are formed and what role the trailer plays in correcting these presuppositions.

#### 4. Results

To investigate the content presuppositions and the genre expectations of the recipients after introduction to the film title only and successively after the viewing the trailer the survey was conducted. The viewers were suggested a questionnaire containing seven columns: the title of the film in English which they haven't seen, the variant of its translation, content presuppositions and genre expectations before viewing the trailer and the variant of its translation, content presuppositions and genre expectations after viewing the trailer. The viewers used dictionaries - *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* and *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English for Advanced Learners* - for the translation of the original film titles. The two stages of the experiment (the first stage – translation and interpretation of the film title and the second stage – viewing the trailers from the sight [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), giving changed variants of the title translation if any and genre establishing) lasted for 3 hours. 100 Russian recipients, aged from 18 to 30, with equal ratio of men and women, took part in the experiment producing their opinions on 40 titles and film trailers which they haven't yet been acquainted with.

After analyzing the answers to questionnaires it is obvious that a lot of presuppositions about a film basing on the title only highly depend on the direct meanings of the words comprised.

The difficulties may arise from 1) *the lack of linguistic-cultural knowledge*.

Let us consider the title *Skyfall* (2012). Most of the recipients translated the title literally on the basis of meanings of the parts of the complex word "sky" and "fall". Thus the title was preferably translated into Russian with the main formed sense of "falling sky". The main presuppositions of genre and content are "science fiction", "catastrophe film", "super hero film". *Skyfall* is the name of the Scottish kin estate where James Bond has been living. The Russian viewers are not familiar with this information and for the Englishmen it is an obvious toponym. So the genre presuppositions are not adequate to the real content of the film. After the watching the trailer the presuppositions changed due to juxtaposition of audiovisual and verbal rows to "action film", "Bond film" and the translation of the title was transliterated in Russian letters as it got clear to the respondents that *Skyfall* is a place name. We may evaluate the translation of the film title in Russian in release with the addition «007: The coordinates of *Skyfall*» as quite effective for viewers' perception and interpretation. It at once hints upon the James Bond's adventures including his MI5 (British Security Service) call sign 007 well-known in the whole world. It happens because the title excites the intercultural knowledge and links since James Bond as an imaginary spy has become a universal myth of a hero. Thus we may confirm the statement of

S. Schwan and S. Ildirar that extended prior experience is required for appropriate interpretation of cinematographic titles and images (Schwan, Ildirar, 2010).

Sometimes it's difficult to translate the title as it comprises a neologism. The example is *Textuality* (2011). The recipients translated it literally. And the genre recognition varied from drama and horror through science fiction to comedy and melodrama. After trailer is seen the interpretations of the title got a little different angle: *SMS-life*, *SMS*, *Subtext*, *SMS-love*. The genre was also established as "comedy" and "melodrama". The spiral organization of the trailer with a parallel development of plot lines urged a lot of interest by the recipients and the wish to solve the riddles left by the entangled structure of the trailer. The professional translation of the title is quite interesting as it demonstrates the transfer of pun as in the original.

The difficulties in forming presuppositions may spring up from 2) *misinterpretation of idiomatic (metaphoric) or ironic meaning of the title*.

The analysis of the perception of the film title *The Bank Job* (2008) shows that a lot of recipients translated it as "Banker", "Bank officer", "White-collar" connecting the word *job* in a nomination with a direct meaning *work*, and leaving behind the metaphoric transference of the meaning interpreted *the bank job* as *work in a bank* and defined the genre as "a comedy film". Some part interpreted the title as "Robbery" and offered the characteristic to the film as "an action film". After watching the trailer the variant of the title was the only one containing the meaning "robbery", and genre was defined as "an action film", "criminal thriller". I think that adding the part "in Baker-Street" in Russian translation "Robbery in Baker-Street" may hint to the Russian viewers to one of Sherlock Holmes' films and perhaps this misinterpretation may urge the viewer to include it in the list of preferences but another side is disappointment from misinterpretation.

The idiomatic title of the film *Knocked Up* (2007) was mistranslated by the majority of the recipients. The predominant variants were connected with the basic meanings of the word *to knock* – "to bang, to tap, to beat, to strike, to hit" thus the film got the title in Russian "Bang", "Knock" / "Knock in the door". The genre was described as "a thriller", "a sport film". Only some recipients have discovered the idiomatic meaning of the phrasal verb *to knock up* which is connected with the state of waiting a baby and translated it as "Pregnant", "With a baby" with the corresponding genre presuppositions as "a family drama" or "melodrama". After the viewing the film trailer, which has a structure with parallel development of plot lines, the recipients selected other names to the film with a meaning: "Sudden pregnancy", "Surprise" and genre turned into "comedy", "youth comedy", "romance". The professional translation is a lucky one as it euphemizes a quite rude slang phrasal verb and adds to the title an element of amiable tease or humor making the viewer to smile.

Interpreting the title of the film *Intolerable Cruelty* (2003) all the recipients translated it directly and came to the conclusion that it's "a horror film", "thriller" or "action" because the word *cruelty* is associated in Russian mentality mostly with violence. After watching the trailer, which has a spiral organization with a lot of shots from different parts of the film and pack shorts in the middle, the ironic subtext was identified and the genre expectations changed to "melodrama", "comedy". The viewers suggested the variant with gender identification of a woman which is cruel or that the word *cruelty* in the title should be put into quotation marks for revealing the transferred meaning of the word and ironic sounding of the nomination. We may conclude that the interpreter who has suggested the professional title translation should have given (which is not the case) the pragmatic adaptation of the film title for the Russian speakers hinting to the ironic transference of meaning.

The difficulties in forming presuppositions of film genre and contents may be determined by 3) *the polysemantic structure of the key word in the title*.

If we take as an example the title of the film *Taken* (2007), we see that polysemy influenced the selection of the variants offered by the recipients. It results in a number of different adaptations – which vary in meanings from "be caught or locked" to "lend" and "bribe". The genre definitions are also multiple – "a thriller", "action", "comedy", "horror", "drama". One part of the recipients expected the film to have a plot with the aliens kidnapping people; the other part considered it to be about the criminal run away from prison; the third anticipated the violence towards stalked and taken people. The change of the opinion happens after representing a trailer which has a sequential linear chronologically ordered chain of shots depicting the development of the plot, revealing the idea of the film and explaining the semantic correlations of the title with the contents of the film.

The trailer contributes to creating adequate impression of the film and excludes potential viewer's cognitive dissonance.

Presuppositions may be formed in a wrong way 4) *if the original title gives no specializing units or explaining means to words of broad semantics.*

The first example of this type is the title *Faster* (2010). The recipients can't be aware of what or who is faster and faster of what or whom. There are no explaining details or additional lexical units for specification of the meaning. Thus a lot of recipients gave literal translation. The majority of the recipients were sure that it's a film about sport races. Some thought it being a biographical film or adventure film. There appeared other variants of translation of the title after watching a trailer with the meanings: *shooter, fast gun, quick draw*. The genre identification was also changed to "a thriller", "action". Visualization through the trailer that has a cyclic form of organization helped the viewers to reject false presuppositions and correctly identify the genre of the film.

The title of the film *The Holiday* (2006) gave a number of options for interpretation the noun «holiday» as a holiday, vacations and leave from work. Before the trailer the majority had an opinion that it would be a travelling or picnic story about young people spending nice time with funny twists of the plot and romance. Another part thought that it is a horror film perhaps about Christmas holiday in a house locked by the snow storm with a killer or maniac murdering one person or everybody. After the trailer all the recipients suggested the variant - «Leave » defining the genre as "comedy", "melodrama", "romance". The trailer has a structure with parallel development of plot lines without any mixture of them and ends by a cliffhanger which cast a spell on the recipients.

Difficulties with presupposing genre and contents of the film may be connected 5) *with improper ambiguous title in the original misleading the viewer*. It is true if we consider the title of the film *Looper* (2012). Adapting the form of the word in search of the equivalent the recipients rendered the title directly having found the meaning of the word in the dictionary stating the genre as «a thriller» or «action», «autobiography» or «film about aviation». The reaction is different after watching the trailer. The first presuppositions were not confirmed, then, the video row spirally developing allowed the viewers to understand that it's a film about time travelling. So the genre identification altered to «science fiction». The translation of the title also changed to transliteration. The work of a professional interpreter should be recognized as successful as it states the genre of the film quite unequivocally giving a variant that it's a time loop.

## 5. Conclusion

The research shows that the title plays an important role in presenting a film to public and predicting the genre and contents of the film. But there are a lot of difficulties facing the process to the target of correct decoding. They are the lack of linguistic-cultural knowledge and intertextuality, not enough linguistic awareness of stylistic connotations, idioms, neologisms etc., the difficulties with word polysemy and broad semantics, extralinguistic factors promoting strangeness, ambiguity and inexpressiveness of the original titles. The work of professional interpreters is aimed at leveling these aspects and suggesting the pragmatic adaptation of the title which will explain or hint to genre and contents indications. The research proves that in the choice of the film to view the recipient should be guided not only by the title but also by the trailer which helps to clear up for some extent the essence of the film message and its genre through different types of audio and video organization.

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