Creative Potential of Media Education as a New Paradigm of the Information Age

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Abstract — The article aims to study the creative potential of modern media education as a new paradigm of the information age. The article is based on the many years of experience of the author, a well-known cultural scientist, media theorist, and specialist of the university system of media education, who has been developing her personal methodology for more than twenty years. Considering the practice of different media schools that have developed in the countries of Europe and the USA, as well as in post-Soviet Russia, the author proves that media education is a comprehensive approach to personality development, combining various humanities (cultural studies, pedagogy, psychology, art history, semiotics, etc.). The experience of implementing media education in the curriculum of humanitarian disciplines shows the effectiveness of the formation of a comprehensively developed personality, which provides competitive advantages to future professionals and confirms the effectiveness of methods of media pedagogy. Analyzing the experience of educators from different countries, as well as personal experience, the author proceeds from the fact that UNESCO identifies media education as the highest priority sphere of cultural and pedagogical development of the XXI century, and therefore media pedagogy has great prospects.

Keywords — *information age, media technologies, media education, media studies, media culture, digital revolution.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of this study is due to the fact that media education as a new paradigm of the information era at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries is firmly entrenched in the system of social. And human sciences as a priority, and the terms "media education", "media studies", "media literature" are included in everyday life of the modern school and university education. Moreover, Russian society through the activation of the media educational component at all levels of the educational system began to carry out the transition to a knowledge society.

We immediately note that UNESCO, attaching great importance to media education, considers it as part of a specific autonomous field of knowledge in pedagogical theory and practice. The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences and Humanities states that "media education is the study of media, which is different from learning through the media. Media education is associated both with the knowledge of how media texts are created and disseminated, and with the development of the audience's analytical abilities to interpret and evaluate their content, and media research is based on practical work on creating media texts, which is aimed at achieving media literacy goals" [1].

The formulation of these problems determined the research concept, the object of which is media education as a new paradigm of the information age, and the subject is the development of its creative potential. The main task of media education is the formation of a personality's media culture, which includes the "culture of the production and transmission of information, as well as the culture of its perception". It is also an "indicator of the level of personality's development, able to "read", analyze and evaluate media text, engage in media creativity and learn new knowledge through the media [2]. The priority of audiovisual media technologies in modern culture (cinema, television, digital photo, computer products, social networks, etc.) and the new features of screen communication, as the basic factors of modern media space, have identified the main directions of modern media education programs for schools and universities of the humanitarian specialization. Moreover, one of the challenges of digitization of culture was the effect of "capture of consciousness" on the part of audiovisual presentations as reality events, and "virtual reality" (cyberspace) - a favorite habitat of modern youth.

The living conditions of mankind in the 21st century have required a transition to a new society strategy based on a combination of knowledge and effective information and communication technologies. And media education, bringing together these components, contributes to the formation of a new consciousness and the education of an active person in civil society in the era of a globalized world.

All of the above indicates the relevance of the research topic and the growth of the creative potential of media education in the digital revolution.

II. MATERIALS AND RESEARCH METHODS

The materials of this study are based on the analysis of different practices of media education as a sphere of pedagogical and sociocultural activity. The empirical base is the author's many years of experience at the Department of Art, Cultural Studies and Design of the Ural Federal University named after the First President of Russia B.N. Yeltsin (formerly Ural State University). The main methodological principle of the study is the interaction of the theory of media culture and the practice of media education, focused on the formation of the creative potential of the

individual. The methods of analysis and synthesis help to generalize and classify a variety of materials, thereby contributing to the concretization of the variety of forms of media education that have developed in world and domestic practice at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries. The study is interdisciplinary in nature, as it integrates pedagogical, cultural and general scientific approaches and methods. The integrated approach in this study serves as the basis for considering the problems of personal and professional self-determination of students in the context of their development. The use of a synergistic method based on an interdisciplinary study enables the author to use an integrated approach to the study of media education, combining humanities and social sciences (cultural studies, pedagogy, psychology, semiotics, etc.) that contribute to the formation of personal media culture.

III. CONTROVERSIAL PROBLEMS OF MEDIA EDUCATION

The works of many foreign researchers and practitioners reflect different points of view on the goals and objectives of media education. So, one of the pioneers in this area, the English media teacher L. Masterman, whose work was published in post-Soviet Russia, focuses on the fact that the main "concept of media education is representation", and the goal is "the formation of critical audience thinking" [3]. Masterman's idea united many media educators in the 1990s: C. Bazalgette, Ch. Worsnop, J. Gonnet, B. Duncan, R. Kubey, S. Faylisen, R. Ferguson, E. Hart and others. Masterman's works were also published in post-Soviet Russia.

In the new millennium, other priority areas in the media education system have appeared. For example, for the American Researchers R. Berger and J. MacDougall, the main issue was the combination of media theory with practice: "How we teach ought to change, as well as what we teach" [4]. Such an approach, in their opinion, will allow the individual better fulfill his professional and creative abilities in the future.

E. Morrell and J. Duncan-Andrade introduced the term "critical media pedagogy", the purpose of which is the systematic activity of educators in developing the young people's skills to critically perceive information received from different sources. According to the authors, the result is the learners' ability to independently create texts that reflect their everyday socio-cultural experience, which is very valuable for the formation of an active civic position and professional maturity [5].

The acquisition of skills in the field of information and communication technologies is also a necessary element in the training of a specialist of any profile, but especially of the humanitarian sphere.

J. Potter in his work "Digital Media and Learner Identity: The New Curatorship" suggested a model of teaching digital media through "new curatorship" [6], which was supported by educators from different countries as the most promising: based on it, the relationship "expertise, apprenticeship and participation" has been reconsidered.

H. Schmidt substantiated the theoretical significance and practical necessity of creating educational programs of media literacy in universities, as "the skills associated with media communication are becoming more and more in demand in the light of the constant development of technology and the emergence of new ways and means of communication, as well as new professions" [7].

It remains debatable which media should be taken as the basis for the study of communicative culture in colleges and universities. English researchers A. Weedon and J. Knight in their article "Media literacy and transmedia storytelling" write: "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" [8]. It is obvious that new media and, accordingly, new communication technologies that need to be studied, are becoming increasingly priority.

According to S. Ashley, the problems faced by many media educators from different countries are for the most part standard: limited time for studying, a large number of students and a different range of audience abilities. In this regard, many educators surveyed say that "they 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" [9].

In addition, the debatable problem of modern media education is the use of social networks, since they have entered the daily life of the younger generation. Digital literacy research proves "the need to develop tools and techniques to help students become skilled digital citizens" [10]. Subsequently, the author states: "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 educators, 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" [10].

Evidently, modern studies in Europe and the USA clearly trace the idea that media education is the most humanitarian form of pedagogy if it focuses on a practice related to the creative self-realization of a future specialist and his competitiveness in the labor market.

In post-Soviet Russia, the following main areas of media education practice have developed: 1) professional media education (we are talking about training journalists, screenwriters, editors, directors, media critics, managers, producers, etc.); 2) media education of future teachers in universities, pedagogical universities, the system of continuing education institutions; 3) media education as an integral part of the general education of pupils and students in schools, secondary specialized educational institutions, universities; 4) media education in cultural and leisure centers; 5) remote

media education using computer technology and social networks; 6) independent (continuous) media education, which is carried out throughout the life of an individual.

In the Russian system of media education, which began to develop rapidly in the 1990s, a variety of scientific studies appeared, presented in the works of O.A. Baranova, E.N. Vartanova, Y.N. Zasursky, N.B. Kirillova, M.M. Korochensky, A.P. Novikova, S.N. Penzina, G.A. Polichko, Yu.N. Usova. A.V. Fedorova, N.F. Khilko, I.V. Chelysheva, A.V., Sharikova, O.V., Shlykova, etc.

One of the main goals of media education highlighted in these works is the formation of media literacy and media competence of students. Head of the Russian Association of Media Pedagogy A.V. Fedorov, who is one of the leading experts in Russia, believes that it is media competence "that more precisely determines the essence of an individual's ability to use, critically analyze, evaluate and transmit media texts in various forms, types and genres, and analyze the complex processes of media functioning in society" [11]. That is why it can be considered as "a key element in the concept of a citizen of a globalized world" [12].

The formation of students' media literacy "develops the abilities, knowledge and attitudes necessary to analyze the ways in which media actively construct reality, as well as the level of assessment and aesthetic perception of different media texts" [13].

Research carried out in different years by the Association of Film Education and Media Pedagogy, proves that most Russian media educators are oriented towards solving the following tasks:

– developing critical thinking ability of the audience;

– preparing young people for life in a democratic society;

– teaching the language of media as a factor in decoding the media texts and their aesthetic perception;

– teaching the audience the theory and history of media culture;

– developing communicative abilities of the individual;

– developing creative thinking in young people as the ability to express themselves using different media [2].

Famous Russian media teacher A.V. Sharikov believes that "media education is the process of forming a culture of mediated social communication in a person" [14]. Although this is one of the components of the entire system.

The issues of the theory and practice of media education in Russia and abroad have been the subject of research in the journal *Media Education*, edited by A.V. Fedorov. The journal has been published since 2005, and since 2017, it has been indexed in the Web of Science database.

In recent years, domestic and foreign media education sees its main problem in digitalization, which has replaced informatization and computerization - "the modern global trend in the development of society, based on the conversion of information into digital form. Digitalization of education is a priority area of the state's educational policy that is dynamically developing based on understanding the importance of digital resources in ensuring continuity, accessibility and quality of education. The development of educational platforms (Coursera, Edx, Universarium, Lectorium, etc.) created competition for the traditional organization of the educational process, necessitated the transformation of existing forms and methods of educational activities (interactive electronic environment, online learning, digital technology, Internet resources, virtual communication, etc.). It is digital devices and technologies that are the new "cultural and historical tools" [15].

In 2017, Russia hosted the International Forum "Media Education in the Pedagogical Sphere: Experience and New Approaches to Management", which raised important issues related to the media education management system. The posed problems indicate a growing interest of the pedagogical community in various forms of interaction between media and education in such areas as:

– media education management system;

– regional models for the development of media education;

– media and information literacy as a key competence of a modern teacher;

– media culture and information security;

– media center as a media educational technology for the formation of communicative competencies of students;

– the use of media educational technologies in the system of patriotic education [16].

The above issues prove the multidimensional nature of the solutions to media education problems in modern secondary and higher education.

IV. MEDIA EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY AS A SOCIO-CULTURAL PROJECT

The main tasks of media studies in a humanitarian university are: to prepare a new generation for life in the context of globalization and digitalization, for perception of various information; to educate a person with an active civic position and critical thinking, who has mastered new ways of communication using modern information and communication technologies, among which audiovisual (on-screen) became the leading ones.

It should be borne in mind that the essence of the "digital transformation of education is the achievement by each student of the necessary educational results through the personalization of the educational process and through the use of the growing potential of digital technologies, including the use of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, development of a digital educational environment in educational institutions ..." [15].

The author's practice in the media education system proves that this is a complex process of influence, in which several

scientific disciplines participate, including not only pedagogy and psychology, but also cultural studies, political science, law, philology, economics, and art history. The difficulty is that in this matter the theory is clearly lagging behind practice, which is often an experiment in the field of pedagogical activity.

Media studies at the Ural Federal University were included in the curriculum of cultural studies and management of social and cultural activities in the early 2000s, when the subjects, such as Intercultural Communication, Management of the Socio-cultural Sphere, Culture of Mass Communication and Media Culture and Basics of Media Management, were included in the curriculum of the graduating department. In 2006, the study of these subjects resulted in the creation of the Ural Scientific and Methodological Center for Media Culture and Media Education as a regional public project. In the same year, the department of cultural studies and socio-cultural activities together with the Russian Institute of Cultural Studies (Moscow) held the All-Russian scientific-practical conference "Screen Culture in the Modern Media Space: Methodology, Technologies, Practices" [15], and in July 2007 - International scientific conference "The Fate of Russia: Vector of Changes" together with the B.N. Yeltsin Foundation. The work of the section "Media Culture of New Russia" resulted in the publication of scientific and methodological materials [17].

In 2010, a master's program in Audiovisual Communications and Media Technologies in Social and Cultural Activities was introduced at the Department of Art, Cultural Studies and Design, which has become a new direction of studies - "media studies".

The popularity and relevance of this program is associated with the need to produce qualified media managers who will be able to manage the audiovisual sphere of culture, using modern media technologies as a factor of social modernization. As part of this educational program, students not only studied the basics of audiovisual culture, but also mastered the state's media policy and its role in transforming the socio-cultural environment of Russia, international information law and the legislation of the Russian Federation in the field of media technologies, photo, film and television archives and audiovisual business.

At the same time, students were actively involved in modern audiovisual creativity, an indicator of which is many cultural events in Ekaterinburg: the Open Festival of Documentary Films "Russia", "The Night of Museums", the International Film Festival "Kinoproba", the Ural Industrial Biennale, and others. As for the theory of audiovisual culture, students were involved in research work, speaking at the recent All-Russian and International conferences, such as: "Revolution and culture. XX century" (with "Information Revolution" as one of the main sections), "Faces of culture in the era of social change", "Man in the world of culture: new paradigms of science and education", "Media culture and media education", and others. Methodological assistance in organizing the research work is provided by a collective monograph "Information Age: New Paradigms of Culture and Education", prepared by the instructors of the department [18].

In 2020, a new practice-oriented program "Event management and production in the audiovisual sphere" will be introduced in the educational process of the university. It will become an integrated platform for the media educational process. Its prospects for graduates are obvious and are as follows:

– management activities in the audiovisual field;

– production of special audiovisual projects (production of film, television and video films, animation and computer graphics, advertising video clips; creation of Internet sites, etc.);

– festival management;

– work as an expert analyst of the modern art market;

– scientific and pedagogical activities, including a media education system.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Summing up the results of the study, it can be noted that the practice of media education, shaped at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries, gives its results, thereby proving that "media pedagogy is a way of forming a harmonious personality in its relations with media and socio-realities, as a set of techniques that provide the development of creative, communicative abilities, critical thinking ..., interpretation, analysis and evaluation of media texts" [19].

It is no coincidence that media pedagogy is becoming more and more in demand and necessary in a number of tasks posed by the modern Russian cultural policy. Due to the fact that audiovisual (screen) technologies have become the basic factors of modern media space (digital cinema, television, photo, computer art, social networks, etc.), they determine the main directions of media education programs for humanitarian schools and universities. Among the main goals of media pedagogy, the author distinguishes the formation of a personality's media culture and the development of its creative potential, as well as the education of an active citizen in the era of the digital revolution and in a globalized world.

In Russia, the prospects of media education are directly related to the process of social modernization, the formation of the basics of the information society and civic consciousness. That is why one of the possible directions of media education at leading state universities of the country can be the opening of a new specialty "Medialogy", as an integrated humanities science that will unite many subjects, such as Theory and History of Media Culture, Intercultural Communication", Media Management, Media Semiotics, Media Pedagogy and others. [2]. The new comprehensive program, partially tested at the Ural Federal University at the Department of Art, Cultural Studies and Design, will allow graduates of humanitarian universities to become full-fledged specialists in the field of mass media, in accordance with the goals and objectives of the information age.

Due to the fact that UNESCO distinguishes media education as the highest priority of cultural and pedagogical

development of the 21st century, media pedagogy has great prospects. It is no coincidence that it is becoming more and more in demand and necessary in a number of tasks posed by the modern Russian cultural policy. The rapid development of mass media, information and computer technologies, the popularity of new media among the youth, the expansion of experience in communicating with a variety of digital TV channels, Internet sites, and interactive computer programs opens up great opportunities for the development of the entire system of domestic media education.

The urgent task of media pedagogy is the formation and development of not only students' academic literacy skills in relation to their professional choice, but also the practical orientation of their subsequent activities. Access to modern information and communication technologies and media resources allows educators to focus the attention of future specialists on relevant topics and problems of the time in the context of the development of world and national culture. And media literacy gained in the process of education increases not only the level of competitiveness of a specialist in the labor market, but also allows him to be in demand in his professional field.

One of the main problems is the digitalization of the educational environment as a factor in the personal and professional self-determination of students. This goal involves solving a number of problems - not only identifying problem areas and the benefits of digitalization of the educational environment, but also solving the issues of personal and professional self-determination of young people in the educational process of schools and universities.

All of the above indicates the relevance of the research topic and the increasing role of media education in the system of school and university education.

For this reason, media education is a priority in humanitarian higher education.

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