MEDIA EDUCATION IN PREVENTING LINGUISTIC MISBEHAVIOR IN ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS

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Abstract

Among the communicative processes that we are currently observing, mass media communication is especially remarkable for its steady tendency towards conscious linguistic misbehavior. We believe that this trend is due to the lack of public demand for mass improvement of media literacy (for example, introduction of courses on media behavior to undergraduate and graduate programs could significantly improve the success of communicative practices in virtual media environments) that could stimulate the trend towards the "correct" Russian language. Nowadays the standard language is explicitly disrespected and the linguistic sign is transformed in an attempt to change the national traditional mentality. We believe that the newly formed style (Internet style) that corresponds to the modern communicative needs of Internet users may and should be included in the paradigm of basic cultural competencies within the modern educational standards and be significantly updated in the following aspects: 1) internal borrowings (vernaculars, dialects, jargons), 2) external borrowings (mainly Anglicisms, Americanisms, etc.), 3) reinterpretation (shifts in the semantics of words), 4) new phraseological units, 5) active processes in word formation. To formally fix the knowledge of the modern Russian language and the rules of its use in the actual communication, both state and private institutions are making attempts to draw attention to this material, which can be conditionally divided into two parts: 1) internally meaningful material, which focuses on teaching and partly on education, and aims to consciously transfer the body of knowledge from the author to the user and to fix it in the language consciousness for a long time (online educational portals: education in Russian (https://pushkininstitute.ru), open education (https://openedu.ru), Federal portal "Russian education" (http://www.edu.ru), etc.; 2) material characterized by an explicitly expressive and shocking external form and small semantic component that aims to make an emotional impact, perhaps without fixing in the recipient's mind for a long time (mainly social networks and the like: communities in the social network VKontakte, VK University (https://vk.com/vku), etc.).

Keywords: mass media, media education, media literacy, standard language, Internet style.

1 INTRODUCTION

The importance of media education in the modern world is enhanced by the fact that UNESCO elaborated the mass media education program "General Curricular Model for Mass Media Education" in 1978. In 1982, UNESCO adopted the Grunwald Declaration on Media Education, and, in 2017, issued "Paris Agenda or 12 Recommendations for Media Education", in which the world experts stated that, in order to better adapt to social and professional changes, increasingly more citizens nowadays need to acquire the skills of critical information analysis of any symbolic systems (images, sounds, texts) and creation of media texts [1]. UNESCO's position is complemented by the "European Parliament resolution on media literacy in a digital world", which emphasizes the need to make media education a compulsory part of academic programs.

Despite the international organizations' viewpoint, media teaching is still not fully integrated into the education system in Russia. Most Russian experts in this field are oriented towards teaching schoolchildren. But the technological revolution challenges the traditional models of teaching and studying at the university and points out the gap between how a person is taught and how he or she studies (see, for example, [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]). According to Norm Friesen: The computer, together with digital networks, will render these familiar aspects of university education obsolete. For critics, the increasing computerization of the university signals the death of 500 years of print-based education. The future, they fear, is one in which Wikipedia entries and Google search results will surpass the utility and legitimacy of printed books and articles [7]. This theoretical statement can be confirmed by an empirical study of Russian universities' students, which showed that: The findings confirm a general tendency, that commonly, less than a quarter of the young audience reveals a high level

development of the media competence's motivational index. A considerably larger part of respondents, about a half, demonstrates a low level of the motivational index. The analysis of the received data proves that a high degree of the media contact frequency and a high level of media competence's motivational index are not directly linked with an ability level to analyze a media text comprehensively. Nevertheless, the levels of interpretational/evaluation parameters of the audience's media competence to a large extent reflect the levels of their informational and motivational descriptors. Moreover, it turns out that the high level of informational index does not necessarily correlate to the level of media competence's evaluation index. On the whole, the survey shows that media competence of modern students needs to be developed [8].

The competence approach and debate about what competences a modern university graduate and a professional in a specific field should master is one of the leading issues in higher education. It is manifested in certain official documents: professional standards, educational standards, curricula, and syllabi. In terms of relevance and popularity of certain competences, as well as their development and prospects, the studies proposed by the international PIAAC program (The Program for the International Assessment for Adult Competencies) are especially noteworthy. The subject of this program is assessment of adults' key competences, one of which is "the personal interest and ability to use social and cultural means, including digital technologies and *communication tools to work with information, generate new knowledge and communication*" (italicized by A.S., O.Sh.). The Program for International Students Assessment (PISA) sets similar tasks, which include monitoring the education quality according to the following indices: reading literacy, mathematics literacy, science literacy, and, more recently, the ability to cope with interactive problems.

Studies on determining and forecasting the most relevant competences are conducted not only in Western countries, but also in Russia. For example, in October 2015, the Higher School of Economics held the conference "Key Competences of the 21st Century: New Dimensions of the Modern Man's Literacy", where ideas of an activity approach to the competence assessment of modern graduates were expressed (http://piaac.ru/conf2015/). Moreover, the society has been producing and consuming increasingly more information recently, which in turn has inevitably led to conceptual and instrumental changes in the systems of generation, storage, and transmission of knowledge. "In such circumstances, the efficiency of professional activity does not depend on the possession of any specific unquestionable information, but on the ability to manage information flows, to be proactive, to cope with problems, to seek and use missing knowledge or other resources to achieve the set goal" [9]. Therefore, the future expert's set of competences should include such competences that can offset this rapid obsolescence of knowledge and allow successful integration into social and professional activities. These are, first of all, communicative competences, as well as the competences that underlie free navigation in the information flow created by the mass media and Internet communities of social networks. In our study, we made an attempt to highlight the incongruity of the modern educational system, which arises at the interface of the potentialities of higher education standards and the real needs of present and future participants of various communicative processes.

2 METHODOLOGY

We reviewed methodological guidance papers to study the experience of bridging the gap between the low media education level of humanities graduates (Linguistics, Philology, Translation and Translation Studies, Teaching Foreign Languages and Cultures, History, etc.) and widespread technologies for text generation and analysis in the electronic environment, as well as deployment of skills needed for mediatization of humanitarian knowledge. The low media education level is associated with obsolescence of curricula and inconsistency between the curricula and high employers' demands of specialists. The potential audience of the subjects in this field is described in the article by Eric Rabkin "Audience, Purpose, and Medium: How Digital Media Extend Humanities Education" [10]. The need to bridge the gap between the skills for working in media environment and the humanities education, that is, development of in-demand human resources, is due to an acute shortage of funds and resources for developing such competences at universities. This partly accounts for the decrease of demand for humanities graduates and decline in competitiveness of specialized enterprises as employers for young professionals. While universities have been insufficiently funded for several years lately, their material facilities have deteriorated, teaching staff has "aged", and collaboration with modern companies for students' internship has ceased. Without all these elements, it is impossible to develop human resources who can correctly locate themselves in modern media reality [11]. [Greenhow, Christine; Robelia, Beth; Hughes, Joan E. Learning, Teaching,

and Scholarship in a Digital Age. Web 2.0 and Classroom Research: What Path Should We Take Now? IN: Educational Researcher, 2009, http://edr.sagepub.com/content/38/4/246.short (article)].

3   RESULTS

3.1   Media education and media literacy in the modern society: a normative approach

3.1.1   Competences that accomplish the tasks of media education

As far as Russian educational standards are concerned, one of the main general cultural competences, which appears in almost every standard and involves development of communication skills, is "the ability to communicate in oral and written Russian and foreign languages to solve interpersonal and intercultural interaction tasks". It is obvious that, despite its universal character, this competence cannot be equally relevant for all professions. Some graduate programs, such as, for example, philology, linguistics, and journalism should involve a more intensive development of this competence at the professional level. Therefore, the educational standard of "Philology", for example, includes such additional professional competences as:

- *the ability to demonstrate knowledge of basic statements and concepts in the field of general linguistics, theory and history of the main second language(s), and the theory of communication;*

- *the ability to demonstrate knowledge of basic statements and concepts in the field of literary theory, the history of Russian literature and world literature; notion of various literary genres and folklore texts;*

- *mastering the basic skills of collecting and analyzing linguistic and literary data, philological analysis, and text interpretation;*

- *proficiency in the literary form of the main foreign language and basic methods and techniques of diversified oral and written communication in this language;*

- *mastering the basic skills of text generation on the basis of standard techniques and current standards;*

- *mastering the basic skills of revision and improvement (for example, proofreading, editing, commenting, abstracting, referencing, and defining) of various types of texts;*

- *mastering the skills of translating various types of texts (mainly scientific and journalistic, as well as documents) from foreign languages and into foreign languages; annotating and abstracting of documents, scientific studies and fiction in foreign languages.*

3.1.2   Media Education and Professional Training of Journalists

We supposed that journalism can be in many respects a model for developing communicative competences and competences connected with the processes of speech generation and perception, which actually is confirmed by the educational standard of the "Journalism" program. We tried to analyze how the media component enters into the educational process and the regulatory framework (i.e. professional standard).

The professional standard of media, publishing, and printing industries includes the following occupations: 1) media reporter (11.003), 2) TV presenter (11.004), 3) TV and radio broadcasting industry expert (11.005), 4) media editor (11.006), 5) mass media director (11.009).

For example, according to the professional standard of job performance (source http://fgosvo.ru/uploadfiles/profstandart/11.003.pdf), the competences of a media reporter are the following:

1   Ability to independently search for events, occurrences, and facts, as well as knowledge of technologies and methods of information search;

2   Ability to identify, find, and develop interesting topical issues, as well as to study the specifics and peculiarities of the topic;

3   Ability to use modern means of communication, as well as information and communication technologies to search for information;

4   Ability to use the techniques of effective communication;

5   Ability to analyze a large scope of information;

6   Making contacts, preparing questions, conducting interviews and opinion polls;

7   Ability to use communication techniques and speak in public;

8   Ability to study and analyze the collected information;

9   Ability to use methods for processing and editing of information using modern technologies;

10   Methods for verification and validation of information;

11   Preparation of the processed materials for publishing;

12   Knowledge of grammar and stylistics of Russian and foreign languages;

13   Ability to arrange the materials in accordance with the genre rules.

Thus, many functions of the reporter's work are connected with search, analysis, evaluation, verification, and preparation, etc. All these activities base on new information technologies in the modern media environment.

3.2   Introduction of media education into the educational process

The seminar "Itineraries and strategies for moving within the new education model" of the Agency for Strategic Initiatives and the Skolkovo Business School that was held on March 2, 2016, presented the global trends in education. One of these trends implied "protocols of networking cooperation and their expansion in business, education, and public life". As far as education is concerned, the situation is the following: on the one hand, MOOCs, online educational portals, and electronic educational resources are being actively developed (university training programs/modules - education in Russian (https://pushkininstitute.ru), state educational platforms - Open Education (https://openedu.ru), Federal Portal "Russian Education" (http://www.edu.ru), independent virtual sites - Coursera (https://en.coursera.org), EdX (https://www.edx.org), Future Learn (https: //www.futurelearn.com), Khan Academy (https://ru.khanacademy.org), etc. And their number is constantly increasing, providing new opportunities for self-development and self-education. On the other hand, a regional survey among the potential consumers of this content (students) shows their willingness to acquire new knowledge by means of these technologies, but the lack of awareness and understanding of how to combine it with their major education, as well as a rather vague prospect of using this knowledge in their professional sphere, do not allow them to take full advantage of these opportunities. In this respect, the table below is revealing.

Table 1. *Results of surveying students of different graduate programs*

Questions	Humanities students (50 respondents)	Technical students (50 respondents)
How relevant is, in your opinion, the substitution of some face-to-face subjects by online courses within the curriculum? (on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest)	5 – 27% 4 – 18% 3 – 36%	5 – 44% 4 – 33%
What subjects is it worth introducing? • aimed at the development of professional skills (in your field / specialty / program) • aimed at the development of additional skills (not directly related to the profession) • aimed at the overall development / broadening of the mind	10% 50% 40%	20% 45% 35%
What do you expect upon completion of online courses?	No expectations at all, as I do not like this idea. Improvement of professional skills. Acquisition of new skills, broadening my mind. Improvement of knowledge in my field. It will reduce the time spent on studying unimportant subjects.	Self-development. Acquisition of specific skills in one field or another. Access to education at any time. Good. Positive. Acquisition of additional knowledge and skills.

Which online platforms do you know?	40% – Open education 20% – Future Learn 40% – Education in Russian	40% – Coursera 40% – Open education 20% – Future Learn
Did you complete any online course before the academic year (2016-2017)?	12% – yes 88% – no	66% – yes 34% – no
Are you interested in studying subjects online?	54% – yes 37% – difficult to answer 9% – no	66% – yes 34% – difficult to answer
Your suggestions about using online courses in the educational process.	Online courses are very good for learning languages. A convenient platform is necessary. Better notification of courses. Most important is that online courses do not interfere with basic education. Not to discard traditional lectures. Broadening our minds and acquiring new additional knowledge	Using online courses for the subjects aimed at developing general skills, but not the professional ones. For subjects that do not require a lot of explanation/analysis, online courses are a great way to increase the efficiency of mastering the subject material on the whole, and also to reduce the time spent on organizational activities.

Thus, we can state that the society has come across a crisis, which consists in the fact that certain state and private initiatives of maintaining and developing new technologies for imparting knowledge in accordance with the present and, what is more, the future needs of the society, are confronted with the inertia of the educational system that fails to keep up with the active transformation processes at all levels of social development.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The domestic and foreign experience reveals the need to introduce media linguistics into the Russian educational practice, although the way of its implementation remains undecided. Presently, meadiatization of classical education is relevant not only for Russia, while foreign researchers also point to the increased number of students' complaints about the lack of applied skills especially in the field of media research. This fact calls for a balance between theoretical training and mastering practical digital media skills in the field of humanities.

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