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## Media Education in Foreign Languages Teaching – Tribute to Fashion or Requirement of the Time?

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*The article deals with one of the most burning issues of modern liberal education – media competences forming and development and in the sphere of foreign language teaching – co-development of belonging to another language communicative competence and media competence at the lessons of foreign language.*

*Keywords: media education, media competence, mediatized socializing, foreign language communication, intercultural communication, linguistic personality, secondary linguistic personality.*

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### Introduction

In the 60s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the word combination “media education” began to be used in the leading countries of the world (Great Britain, the USA, Canada, Australia, France, Federal Republic of Germany and others). In pedagogic science a specific direction has been formed which originates from English *media education* and Latin : *media*, called for helping students adapt better in the media environment, master mass media and communication language, be able to analyze the information received by means of media etc.

In this way a new term appeared and subsequently was perceived by Russian scholars in the field of pedagogics. In the Russian official sources the term “media education”

was introduced later: by A.V. Sharikov at the symposium on educational issues held in Ryazan in 1986.

One may assume that the interest for media education is rather connected with the informational safety problem’s origin without the solution of which a full-fledged development of not only a personality, but of the society is not possible.

A question arises; to what extent this enthusiasm for media education is justified? The very notion “media education” has a lot of definitions. It means both a process of transmission and assimilation of knowledge, abilities and skills connected with mass communication, and a direction in pedagogics supporting the idea of learning mass communication mechanism

by the schoolchildren etc. On the one hand, the development of the society, of the human and all his activity aspects has always been connected with the appearance of different sorts of discoveries in the sphere of mass communication means. In various articles the researchers point out that from 1621, since the time of Michael's ruling, the first tsar from the House of Romanovs, up to 1701 "The Chiming Clock" – the Russian State's newspaper – had been published. As archival documents witness, an interesting history of formation and development has the first Russian printed newspaper which was founded by Peter I. On January 13 (on the second of January, according to the old calendar) in Moscow, by Peter the Great's order, the first of surviving issues of the first printed Russian newspaper came out: "Vedomosti about war matters and other issues worth of knowledge and recollection, which came about in Moscow State and other neighboring countries". Nevertheless, it should be noted, that the first issues of "Vedomosti" in the opinion of historians were also hand-written. It may be said by right that among a good deal of the deeds of Peter the Great there was a creation of a printed newspaper which could be noticeably replicated and spread in many corners of Russia and abroad. Leonardo da Vinci was familiar with a pinhole camera, in Napoleon's times magic lantern was already anachronism. In 1839 Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre carried out the first experience of facsimile – daguerreotype. In 1893 Thomas Alva Edison to whom mankind is obliged not only due to the invention of telephone, but also of a "peep-show", brought the humanity to the threshold of cinematography discovery. At this problem worked the Americans – Latem and Armat, the Russians – Timchenko, Samarski, Akimov, a Polish scientist – Prushinski, an Englishman – Pole. And the French photo fabricators – the brothers Louis and Auguste

Lumière – became the inventors. One may confirm without any exaggeration that these "prototypes" of modern mass communication means formed social procurement, in particular, in the field of education. Namely then, for instance, many scientists became interested in cinematography in educational context. Advanced scientists and pedagogues of the time considered cinematograph as a wonderful alternative for traditional educational models, broadening teaching possibilities.

In the Russian pedagogical literature the question about "cinematography" use at school was raised in 1897. Its unlimited possibilities are being considered in the field of up-bringing, education, cultural and historical inclusion. So far unsophisticated experiments of screen representation of well-known historical events witness this.

In this very period of definition, educational potential's evaluation of cinematograph another pedagogical problem emerges – the struggle against the negative impact of the films which are capable to lead the viewers away from culture and real life, to immerse into dreamland, the world of various entertainments, to blunt emotional and mental abilities, even to suggest vicious ideas, morbid inclinations, to push to immoral acts.

Thus, since the first years of cinematograph existence in the pedagogical model of its use, a cinematographic education problem has emerged, the question about a mediator (no matter who it is: a critic, a teacher or a film itself) capable to control successively interests, needs, to bring up the viewer effectively using the richest artistic possibilities of an engendered art's impact. That is why the very notion "media education", as paradoxical as it may seem, is not innovative.

Though, on the other hand, such an intensified interest to media education at all educational hierarchical levels means, as it may be seen, a particular demand today. It may be observed with

all evidence in the sphere of foreign language teaching as well. Let's try to account for it.

### **Media Competence Development**

In connection with globalization processes in our world and information technologies' development the problems of intercultural communication are put in the focus of attention. At present time education has to solve a very complicated problem – to prepare the youth for life in the conditions of cultures' dialogue, i.e. for intercultural communication. To achieve this goal pedagogical process must be organized with consideration of numerous foreign language media texts and text formats. They circulate in the global information space created by modern mass communication means. The question of a personality's media competence forming is becoming very acute. After comparing different points of view on the definition of the notion "media competence", after generalizing and analyzing the experience of Russian and foreign media pedagogues, under media education goals in the process of foreign language teaching we understand proactively planned and formulated joint-study result of foreign language and the language of authentic mass communication means, and to be more exact: media competence of the secondary linguistic personality. Therefore, at the modern stage of foreign language education's development one may separate a new perspective direction, which hasn't been exposed to research up to now. Development of a competence-based paradigm in the sphere of linguodidactics and media educational goal-setting: the question is about thorough consideration of already revealed sub competences and about presentation of new ones belonging to communicative/intercultural competences as metanotions. Hopefully it will allow to determine the goal and pithy aspects of philological/linguistic education and media education. We are particularly interested in

the question concerning aspects' correlation of a "linguistic personality" forming both as a native-speaker, as well as a person learning a foreign language, and along with it "alien" mass communication means. A person's information space considerably broadens during the period when he/she begins to study a foreign language and "alien" mass communication means. It is known that the media's assimilation process is by far the most contradictive and has its own peculiarities in comparison with the mother tongue. It has been known from time immemorial that "combining in itself verbal-semantic, linguistic-cognitive and motivational structures, language personality performs as "totality of a man's abilities and characteristics, conditioning his creation and perception of verbal works (texts) which differ by: 1) the degree of structural-linguistic complexity 2) the depth and exactness of reality's reflection; 3) a certain target orientation" (Vorozhbitova, 1999, p.15). The same relates without any doubt to media texts. The following fact is undisputable: elaboration of the idea about the "media competent secondary linguistic personality" inevitably reaches the boundary between such disciplines as linguodidactics, theory and methods of foreign languages teaching.

### **Integration of Media Education and Foreign Languages Teaching**

There is a demand nowadays for the following member of the society – a personality capable of interacting with foreign language media information's streams in the global informational space: to carry out the search, to analyze, to critically evaluate and to create media texts spread with the help of different mass media and communication means, in all their variability. These personality's qualities are mainly formed in the system of education by means of all subjects. After all pedagogic aims are the consequence of social ones and social essence of education.

A foreign language cannot stand off from the solution of this problem.

The new society's requirements to the level of a personality's development and accomplishments, new information life conditions must change the substance, the means and the methods of the pedagogical process. In this situation a natural and rather urgent necessity of new conceptions, methods and foreign language teaching techniques emerges. For the time being a new technology of media competence's forming of the secondary linguistic personality is becoming a burning issue.

We believe that the potential of foreign language mass communication means consists not only in the development and correction of the speech, not only in compensation of the absent language environment with the help of visual representation of the verbal situation and so on, but to a considerable degree in media competence's forming of the secondary linguistic personality. This very fact comprises a principally new approach to mass communication means' use at foreign language lessons at the modern stage of the society informatization.

Thereat, we proceed from the fact that media education and "foreign language" have a common genesis. We are going to explain that.

The two phenomena are based on the idea of communication. Communication is a human connection, socializing, semantic interaction between people. An intelligent man – homo sapiens – is, first of all, a communicating man – homo communicans. Having analyzed the essential informational-communicative problems, we came to the conclusion that communication is becoming an increasingly complex social and cultural phenomenon which touches upon different types of activity in all countries and is an inseparable part of political, social, economical, cultural, scientific, educational and technological evolution.

It is well-known that language is the most important means of communication and is used by people to interact between individuals and individuals' groups. Foreign language teaching is educating how to use these means. Today the subject "foreign language" has one of the leading tasks: communication acquisition. Etymological and semantic identity of the term "communication" and "socializing" are persuasively proved by the scientists. Mass communication possesses the widest semiotic potential and delivers a mediated character of socializing, offered by modern technique of information's transmission and receiving.

Since socializing may perform at the same time as a process of interaction between people and as an informational process on numerically big, dispersed audiences, i.e. through mass communication means, consequently, students during foreign language acquisition may master not only interpersonal communication, but also mediatized socializing, what is especially topical in the conditions of communicative infrastructure's strengthening. From the point of view of media education, the property of mediatized socializing implies the choice of not only verbal code of communication, but also of non-verbal one, with the use of artificial and mixed communicative codes providing interaction between a man and a machine. To our mind, foreign language mediatized socializing is an interaction of a person with belonging to another language mass communication means, the substance of which is apprehension of comparative value of this media stuff, its emotional-semantic relationship and hidden constituent. Therefore, it is the development of media competence of the secondary linguistic personality that the modern pedagogical strategy of foreign language teaching must foresee. And to this very social requirement correspond both media education and foreign language as well.

We believe that the substance of these two phenomena, on the one hand, media education with its strongly pronounced social and cultural character, setting goal of media competence's forming, on the other hand, foreign language (foreign language lesson) are so intertwined and interdependent that the only right way is their integration.

This idea is not new. In the last decades it is observed in authorial foreign languages teaching conceptions (Verbitskaya, 2011; Zharkovskaya, 2010; Ivanova, 1999, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012; Novikova, 2004; Ryzhykh, 2006; Khlyzova, 2008, 2010, 2011; Fraifeld, 2006; Chicherina, 2008 and others) and in pedagogical practices which are being formed. Nevertheless the way from innovative ideas in theory of teaching to their realization in pedagogical practice turns out to be long and thorny. However, it is an open secret that educational establishments are the most delayed-action social institutions (A.Toffler). Moreover, today one may confirm with a certain admission that the phenomenon of media competence of the secondary linguistic personality hasn't been yet properly interpreted at the scientific-theoretical level, besides, there's no wide and competent implementation of its forming technology into the practice of foreign languages teaching at schools and universities, and even if it takes place, it happens slowly and randomly.

### **Causes Preventing Implementation of Media Competence's Forming Technology of the Secondary Language Personality**

One may assume that there are psychological barriers some pedagogues have, namely: absence of desire to change, technophobia etc. But the most important thing as the interviewed respondents point out is the fact that media education doesn't fit well into the educational system of foreign language teaching, traditional interpretations

of mass communication means' role in the educative process and the misgivings that media education's introduction into the educative process would lead to radical "breakage" of the former conceptualizations of a pedagogue.

Probably one may agree with this to a certain degree, especially, if we take into account the fact that the attitude to media education among teachers is extremely different. A certain polarization of viewpoints is being observed: from a well-defined optimistic to a diametrically opposed, sceptical-negative attitude to media education in the educative process. As a rule, a considerable part of pedagogues show their committal to traditional forms and methods of training and feel suspicious and sometimes even hostile about the idea of media education's implementation in the foreign language educative process.

During the questionnaire survey of pedagogues we researched the problem of their attitude to the inclusion of media education issues into the foreign language educative process. The results of this questioning (all in all 150 foreign language teachers of the Irkutsk region have been interrogated) are as follows: (Table 1)

The answers to this questionnaire reflect quite objective pedagogues' evaluation related to media education. In such situation one may hardly count on systematical and all-round implementation of media education in the foreign language educative process. Moreover, another aspect of the problem must be taken into consideration and namely: the attitude towards the enthusiasts of media education on the part of their colleagues and educational establishments' heads. Unfortunately, as our research showed, this attitude is sometimes so negative that some pedagogues have to cease their media educational activity or not to start it at all.

One more reason for putting obstacles in the way of implementation of media education

Table 1. Pedagogues' Attitude to Media Education' Implementation in the Foreign Language Educative Process

Questionnaire' items	Yes %	No %	I don't know %	No answer %
1. Media education: will it take place in the pedagogical process of your educational establishment, do the learners need mastering of media knowledge and skills?	58%	40%	-	2
2. Will the learners gain if media education is included into pedagogical process?	64	34	-	2
3. If in your educational establishment a certain amount of teaching periods are dedicated especially to the studying of mass communication means for media educational purposes, will you agree that such training is held within the subject "Foreign Language"?	29	58	13	-
4. Do you share the opinion that the use of mass communication means as a component of media education in the program of teaching and up-bringing must be represented in a wider scale in initial training and refresher course of a foreign language pedagogue?	72	23	5	-
5. a) Do you have a course of media education in your educational establishment? b) Do you have media education's elements integrated into training programs?	0 1.3	98 96.7	2 2	- -

Table 2. Frequency of Using Mass Communication Means at the Lessons of Foreign Language

Mass communication means' types/ Frequency	Often	Seldom	Never
Audio recordings	21	64	15
Telecommunications network	3	8.5	88.5
Radio	0	0.9	90.1
DVD materials	0	13.2	86.8
Video materials	1.1	26.7	72.2
Press	10.9	25.7	63.4

in the foreign language educative process may be the absence of resources' provision and the latter implies not only availability of technical basis, but a pedagogue's training for implementation of media education in the foreign language educative process. The interrogation carried out showed that media stuff is used in their work on the average by 27.7 % of teachers. The frequency of using mass communication means at the lessons is shown in the table (in the Table 2 the results

are given in percents to the amount of the interrogated):

Targeted questionnaire and observation of teachers' activity confirmed our supposition that even in those (not numerous) educational establishments which are rather well-equipped with audio-visuals, and computer hardware, the latter is seldom used in the foreign language educative process. In most cases a tape-recorder is used, though, in many educational establishments it is also "kept on the shelves".

### Conclusion

From our point of view, the cause of such situation consists, first of all, in the fact that in teachers' training schools there was no targeted educational guidance on media competence's forming of the future pedagogues, to say nothing of education which was carried out in absolutely different social and cultural situation connected neither with practically free media stuff's market, nor with stormy mass communication means' development and space virtualization.

To our mind, nowadays, in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it seems justified to consider media competence's forming technology of the secondary linguistic personality as a necessary constituent in foreign language teaching. Sharing the viewpoint by N.Y. Khlyzova who defines media competence of the secondary linguistic personality as an "integrative personality's characteristics which consists of totality of special knowledge, skills, attitudes allowing the personality to function in the world information space, to carry out intercultural communication both at the interpersonal, direct level, as well as at

the mediatized level, mediated by modern media means" (Khlyzova, 2011, p.70).

We would like to focus our attention on technology itself. The introduction of a fundamentally new technology under which we understand pedagogic process's organization in accordance with a specific theoretical paradigm doesn't break on the whole the logic of the foreign language educative process. The component parts of media education's technology of the learners at foreign language lessons are: a goal set; a substance constituent (integrated course "Foreign Language and Media Education"); a technological component (organizational), (specific forms, methods, ways, means of media competence's forming of the secondary linguistic personality); an expert-evaluative component (diagnostics of the level of formed media competence's of the secondary language personality) (see Fig. 1).

The aim of the media education's technology is a qualitative level increase of foreign language communicative competence of the students, and namely – forming of the media competent secondary linguistic personality. We believe

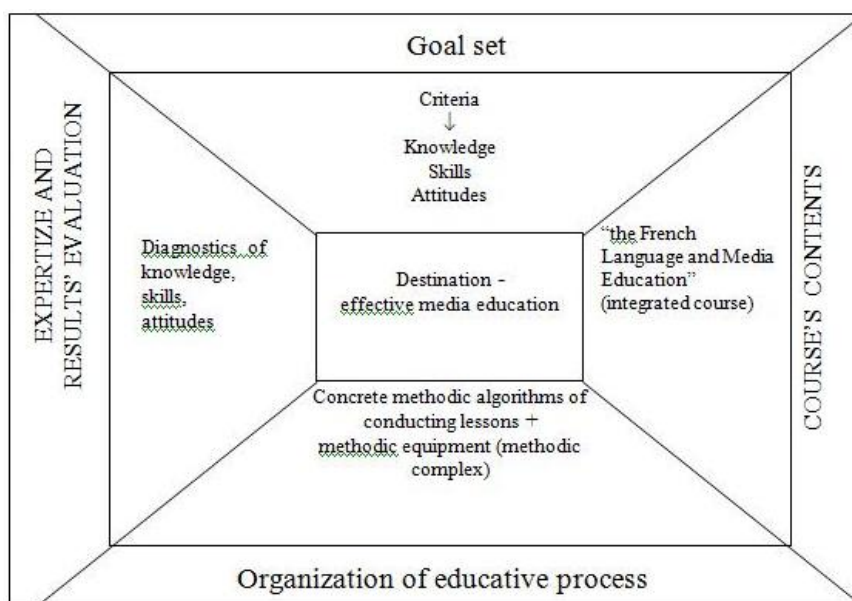


Fig. 1. Technology of Teenagers' Media Education by Video Means at the Lessons of the French Language

that there are all grounds to consider the scientific idea about forming of media competent secondary linguistic personality and its methodic embodiment as a necessary one, from the perspective of nowadays requirements to foreign language teaching and personal enhancement. To sum it up, answering the question put in the title of this article, we may confirm with all evidence: media education in foreign languages teaching is the requirement of the time.

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## **Медиаобразование в обучении иностранным языкам – дань моде или требование времени?**

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*В статье поднимается один из наиболее актуальных вопросов современного гуманитарного образования – формирование и развитие медиакомпетентности, а в области иностранного языка – соразвития иноязычной коммуникативной компетенции и медиакомпетентности на занятиях по иностранному языку.*

*Ключевые слова: медиаобразование, медиакомпетентность, медиатизированное общение, иноязычное общение, межкультурная коммуникация, языковая личность, вторичная языковая личность.*

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