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Media Education in Secondary Schools in Russia

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Outline of work structure and content

What is a Russian social, political, economic & Media Education context? What about Media Education's curriculum spaces and teacher education and training? How many professional associations & agencies for Media Education do exist in modern Russia? What do Russian teachers think about Media Education in secondary schools? And what are the main conclusions from the interviews and Media Education lessons' observations? These are the key questions of my study for the EuroMedia project.

Study procedures

Sample selection

Reality bites: as a rule, only some Russian teachers want to use media equipment in their lessons. Many Russian teachers of Humanities (Mother Tongue – Russian Language, Literature, History, Arts, Ecology, etc.) are eager to integrate Media Education into their lessons. The salary of an ordinary Russian teacher is very small (about \$20-\$30 per month). Because of this, young men do not choose this profession.

That's why about 90% of Russian teachers are women, and the majority is middle-aged women. Russian women have a lot of home & family chores to do. They would say about Media Education in the class: "It is an additional job for me. I don't need this because I don't get paid additional money for this". It was very difficult to find teachers (who included Media Education in their lessons of Mother Tongue) who agreed to be observed. That's why some of the selected teachers were the teachers of others subjects (Arts, History, etc.). About 90% of teachers in Russia are women. The observed teachers were women only.

The "old generation" of teachers did not want to be observed & interviewed (as a rule they do not include Media Education in their lessons). That's why only teachers who are interested in media & Media Education were observed and interviewed. I observed 10 lessons in 10 different classes (including 14-16 year-old girls and boys: 126 girls, 95 boys) in 10 different secondary schools. All schools were from the Southern Russian Federal District because Russia is a very big country and I do not have the financial possibilities for research travel to other Russian regions.

Time-scale

My study includes structured interviews with 10 Russian teachers & lesson observation of 10 classes in 10 secondary schools. The procedure took place in 1999 (May 17, 20, 24; September, 7, 15, 24; October, 5, 15, 18, 29). Each interview & lesson observation was recorded (on audiotapes), studied & analysed. Anastassia Novikova was the junior member of this research work.

Conduct of interviews and lesson-observations

All of the selected Russian teachers graduated from the Taganrog Pedagogical Institute or Rostov-on-Don Pedagogical Universities (departments of Languages, Arts, History, Social Pedagogics, etc.). 3 teachers have a teaching experience in secondary school of more than 10 years, 2 of them – more than 5 years, 4 of them have a teaching experience of 3 to 5 years. Almost all these teachers have been teaching media for 3-6 years (70%). They mentioned the following reasons for that: because they need modern illustrative material for the lessons (60%), love cinema & TV & arts (20%), because media text is a very effective model of our life (10%) and means of education (10%), because media is a part of our life and our home (10%).

Teachers define their approach to Media Education in the following ways: Media Education as a subsidiary way to traditional education (50%); Media Education as effective means for the expanding

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of knowledge & development of personality (20%); Media Education games & group activities (10%); Media Education as a means of active practical work with pupils – making media products (10%).

Here are the examples of Media Education lessons that were defined by the teachers as their successful ones:

– "The game "Who is the media expert?". Two teams of pupils were involved in the competition on the media themes".

- _ “The lesson “II World War in the Mirror of Russian Cinema”.
- _ “The lesson “The Trial”. I demonstrated fragments from American film about court’s trials, and I discussed them with pupils”.
- _ “Lessons “French painting in the mirror of French documentary cinema” (with excerpts from documentary about the Louvre collection of paintings). The pupils wrote individual essays about their impressions”.
- _ “A lesson “Environmental Problems on the Screen”. The class watched a film and then discussed ecological problems tackled by the film”.
- _ “Watching the documentary film and class discussion of it”.

It seems that most of the interviewed teachers think that their best lessons were group discussion about specific historical, ecological, etc. problems. Some teachers think that Media Education is a traditional education with the help of technical media resources. Media language is seldom a subject of school lessons.

Findings

Teacher’s school context & available support

The Status of Media Education is not strong in modern Russia. A General National Curriculum for Media Education does not yet exist. Still Media Education in Russia is a compulsory part of the basic education in some secondary schools. There are Associations & Institutions for Media Education (The Russian Association for Film & Media Education, Laboratories of Screen Arts and Media Education as a section of the Russian Academy of Media Education (Moscow)), but their influence is limited. Media Education elements take place at different lessons in Russia: Language, Arts, History, Literature, etc. (plus extra-curriculum media work – school radio & newspapers). As Media Education is not an obligatory separate course, pupils do not take final exams in it. School inspectors basically seldom talk with Russian teachers about media teaching (because mostly they do not know what Media Education is about). However, some school principals encourage the application of Media Education.

Media Education is a cross-curricular subject integrated in traditional subjects (Languages, History, Arts, etc.). But Media Education is also an independent option for specific lessons in some Russian schools & universities. Russian teachers prefer audiovisual media to print media, but only few Russian teachers can use the Internet because of the difficult federal economic situation. Russian school authorities have limited financial resources for expansion of the new media in schools and don’t have any effective programs to support Russian teachers who really & actively use new media in their classrooms. Many Russian secondary schools have a special “computer class”. But personal computers as a rule are out-dated, and most Russian schools don’t have Internet access. The majority of Russian teachers don’t use the new digital educational equipment as the PC, or the Internet. Only teachers of mathematics or PC education courses use new media systematically. The Internet was not used in any of the 10 lessons observed. Computers available in special classrooms don’t have the Internet access. That’s why the impact of computer-based media on methodologies and the organization of Russian schools, is very limited.

As previously mentioned, many Russian teachers think that Media Education is a traditional education with the help of technical media resources. Media language is seldom subject of the school lessons. The percentage of current teaching time given to media work is: 15%-20% (30% of teachers), 30%-50% (70% of teachers), including “out-of-class” media work. 10-20% (in 3 observed lessons), 40%-50% (in 3 observed lessons), 60%-70% (in 2 observed lessons) of Russian pupils have recent experience of Media Education. Russian teachers can distinguish between common teaching and media teaching in this way: “Media teaching is effective for the development of consciousness” (20%); “Media teaching is an effective means of communication & information” (10%); “Media teaching is a more effective means of education” (20%); “Media teaching is more informative means of education” (30%); “Media teaching is effective for development of aesthetic perception” (10%).

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Long term aims

Russian teachers see the long-term media aims for their pupils in the development of their pupils’ personality, critical & aesthetical consciousness (“I want to develop the critical consciousness of my pupils”, “The pupil must distinguish between true & false information”, “The pupil must learn to use the Internet”, “I want to develop the pupil’s personality, including aesthetic aspects”, “I want my pupils to become more media literate”).

Methods, Curriculum content and resources

I do not think that case studies as a research method are very useful for the Media Education project in Russia. Media Education is not included into the existing state obligatory curriculum in Russia. That is why Russian teachers are still unable to accept Media Education in secondary school. They are still confused about the meaning and value of Media Education. The old generation of teachers do not want to be observed & interviewed because as a rule they do not include any elements of Media

Education in their lessons. That is why only teachers who are genuinely interested in media & Media Education agreed to be observed at their work and interviewed. Of course, if the teacher agreed she (as I have already said, 90% of Russian teachers are women) prepared for this “observed lesson” very carefully. E.g., if a teacher uses elements of Media Education in her ordinary lessons very seldom, she can create a special Media Education lesson for research observation only. I do not think that lesson observations & interviews of 10 selected teachers are valid & reliable enough for the scientific project because these 10 teachers are not typical for Russian educational situation. More typical is another situation: no Media Education in secondary schools. Do not forget: The Russian Association for Film & Media Education has about 300 members only (and the Russian population is about 145 million people!).

Younger teachers use some elements of Media Education methods such as discussions with pupils about their experience with the media (60%), the role games on the media materials (20%), practical media activities (10%). The methods of Media Education at the lessons of 10 observed teachers depended on their educational background. Unfortunately, only few Russian teachers have special Media Education training. Basically Russian teachers take their methods of teaching from other subjects (Languages, Arts, etc.). Teachers reported that TV (50%), press (10%), film (20%), video (20%) are the areas of media work most comfortable for them. Teachers tend to avoid the following topics or Media Education concepts: “Language”(40%), “Internet” (20%) and “Semiotics”(10%), “Technology”(10%), “Agencies”(10%). All 10 teachers believe that media technologies are very important in Media Education, but they told about the medium extent of application of these technologies in their lessons. And all of them agree that Media Education improves the efficacy of a lesson.

Most of the teachers find a difference in the response of girls and boys to different aspects of Media Education. For example, they reported that boys are more comfortable with media (20% answers), “boys are more experienced with modern media” (video games, Internet, etc.) (40% answers), “girls are more sensitive about aesthetic perception” (20%).

The most useful media resources, in the opinion of the 10 teachers, are: documentaries (60%), feature films (30%), science-fiction films (30%), TV documentaries (40%), Internet sites (10%).

Lesson focus

The observation showed that the lesson’s objectives were: from 20% to 70% media-based. But all the lessons were specially prepared (as the teachers know that I would come to watch their class) for observation. I don’t think that Media Education applications are so strong in the ordinary teachers’ work. The teachers told that the observed lessons were connected with previous or future lessons in the fields of “category”(40%), “audience”(20%), “representation”(30%), “information”(20%), “aesthetic values”(10%) and “language”(20%). Teachers think that pupils must learn media terminology like «Category» (40%), «Representation» (30%), «Agency”(20%), «Audience»(20%), «Information»(20%), “Perception”(20%), “Language’ (20%) because “pupils must know media category, and they must be able to distinguish sources of information (and what kind of information is it: true or not true)” (10%), “pupils must know the types of sources of information, they must develop the perception of media information” (10%), “Media Education helps to survive in a media-oriented world” (10%), “pupils must broaden their understanding of media” (10%), “media literacy contributes to the development of personality” (20%).

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Detailed analysis

Aims

All the teachers included in this study listed their aims of the lesson observed. For example:

- _ - to analyse moral, psychological motivation of the action of media text characters;
- _ - to explain the specifics of audiovisual language (in the documentary & feature films);
- _ - to explain some Media Education categories (for example, “genre”);
- _ - to discuss the aesthetical values of a media text;
- _ - to discuss the aims of a media agency.

The teachers explained the aims to her pupils basically clearly. However the lesson on the whole showed that some pupils with a low IQ (about 20%-30%) didn’t understand the aims of the lesson. At the end of the every lesson the teacher summed up the results and attracted the pupils’ attention to the aims achieved, but some teachers didn’t allot the time for drawing up conclusions. According to the teaching plan and the program of the course the aims of the lesson were directly connected with the previous learning. Following lessons were based on the previous ones, aims of the lesson (according to the program) became more complicated.

Key concepts

The observed lessons were focused on the following key concepts: «Media Category» (90%), “Media Representation”(40%), “Media Agency”(30%), “Media Language”(20%). The key concept “Media

Category" (for example, "genre", "film", "press", "documentary", "video", "audio" and so on) and "Media Representation" was familiar to 70%-80% of the pupils. The key concept "Media Agency" & "Media Audience" was new for the some pupils. Only few pupils knew the concept "Media Language". The following terminology was used at the lessons to express the key concepts of Media Education: "documentary", "film", "character", "reality", "industry", "audience", "information", "press", "agency", "video", "audio", "art", "aesthetic", "perception", "representation", "category", "language". Most teachers avoided "difficult" themes like "Media Language", "Media Agency", "Media Audience", because they did not have any special Media Education background.

The pupils know the terms like "film & press" (100%), "character"(90%), "art"(100%), "documentary"(100%), "information"(100%), "video"(100%), "audio"(100%). The terminology like "language", "perception", "representation", "agency", "audience" is more difficult for them.

Of course, pupils know the concept "language" from the lessons of Russian language or Literature. But only few if any know the specific of audiovisual media language.

Teachers used "School-produced"(50%) & documentary TV films (40%), excerpts from science-fiction films (20%), feature films (30%), TV commercials (10%) in their lessons (technical equipment were a TV-set, VCR, magazines). The teacher & pupils used these sources in 30%-50% (20% of the observed lessons) and 70% (10% of the observed lessons) of the lesson time. Most teachers were familiar with or comfortable with technological resources.

Typically teachers asked their students the following questions: "What is the category of this film?" or "What is the main idea of the film?", "What are the main aims of this TV-program?", "What is the main message of this documentary?", "What is the main problem of this text?", "Is this problem important to you?", "What information was new for you?", etc.

More rare questions: "Who is the main hero?", "What is his (her) psychology?", "What is the message of the authors' of a media text?", "Why was the picture dark (well-lit)?", "What will happen, if we change the situation in the picture?", etc.

The teachers combined the lectures with group activities: 10-20 min in pairs or in larger groups. All the 10 teachers thought their goals were achieved (or most of them).

Selected Case study

A serious problem that I faced when I started my study was that many teachers (including those who integrated some elements of Media Education at their lessons) did not want their classes to be observed and analyzed. From the 10 classes that I monitored (visited) I chose a lesson by teacher Ludmila G. for the tenth-grade class of a secondary school in Taganrog, on May 17th, 1999. The class

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consisted of 14 girls and 11 boys of the age 15. The lesson's length is 40 minutes. I have chosen the teacher Ludmila G. because she is one of the most experienced teachers at school (14 years of service) and as she said, she had been interested in Media Education for several years.

No doubt, Ludmila G. is not a typical Russian teacher. As I have already mentioned, most of the Russian teachers are not excited about proposing innovations, they think that their job is just their subject area. Media Education is an additional work for them, which is not obligatory required by the state department of education, plus it is difficult to find the Media Education frameworks, guidelines programs, and teachers' handbooks. However Ludmila G. belong to the few Russian teachers who believe that the media are part of our life and therefore Media Education should become part of the general education of pupils.

The Interview

Ludmila G. has been working as a teacher for 14 years. Recently she has been teaching History of Art in the 10-11 grades (the senior grades in Russia). Her interest in Media Education dates from the time she realized she needed modern illustrative material for her lessons. But later she understood that media can be not only a kind of teaching aids, an illustration, but the serious means for the development of a pupil's personality. Ludmila G. thinks that Media Education should be integrated into the general curriculum. She also believes that Media Education is most effective in the humanities (whether the subject matter is Literature, History, Arts or etc.).

"I think, - Ludmila says, - that there are several reasons why Media Education is necessary for modern schoolchildren. Firstly, Media Education develops pupils' critical thinking. Secondly, Media Education helps students to evaluate the quality of a media text. Thirdly, literature today is not the only form of expression and through Media Education we can compare an original literary text and its screen adaptation.

Ludmila said that of her best Media Education lessons was a whole-class game called "Who is a media expert?". The class split into 2 teams. Ludmila was a leader and asked questions concerning media culture (genres, famous media texts, their authors, etc.). The teams had to answer them. And the second part of the game demanded creative skills of the pupils (collages, etc.).

Ludmila says that she uses such technical recourses as TV, VCR and projector quite often in her

classes. She regrets that there is no computer in her classroom, consequently no opportunities to use CD-ROM or Internet.

"It's a great pity because often I see interesting CD-ROMs, for example, interactive picture galleries, art encyclopedias, and others. It would be great if I could use all this at my lessons".

Ludmila thinks that she and her students use media approximately 15-20% of the lesson's time. She also has an opportunity to conduct extra-curricular media classes with her pupils (usually these are games or competitions on the theme of media culture). She notes that boys are more interested in new media: "Children in my class are from families with a middle or low income. That is why my pupils do not have computers at home. However some of the boys go to computer clubs where you can play a computer game or use Internet for a fee. Girls visit such clubs very seldom if ever".

Judging by Ludmila's words, the school principal likes her initiative of Media Education. However school authorities lack equipment and budget, and cannot help her like in all other state Russian schools (the number of private schools is small). Teachers get paid a low salary and cannot buy any equipment themselves. Schools have a budget too small to buy such things as computers, video cameras, etc.

Ludmila has incorporated media into her course through such activities as discussions of media texts, including films and television programs. She tries to make her students go beyond simply discussing content and themes of a media text; they should learn to consider the aesthetic value of it, its category and language. "As I teach the course of the History of Art" I show films and TV programs about the "greats" of art: paintings and artists, picture galleries and museums, architecture and sculpture. It is a pity that there is no computer in my class and I do not have it at home, so if the school buys it someday, first of all I will have to learn to use it!"

"I believe in Media Education's future in Russia. For me the main goal of Media Education today is the development of the students' critical thinking and their aesthetic taste".

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Overview of Lesson Observed

Ludmila began a unit on "The Portrait as a Genre" with some elements of Media Education. Media itself were used for about 6 minutes.

Ludmila started with a few questions related to the previous lesson that was about a landscape genre in Art. She asked her students: "What famous paintings with landscapes do you remember?", "What documentary films, programs or feature films with interesting landscapes do you remember? (she means landscapes shot by a camera, not painted ones). "How is a painted landscape different from a landscape done by a camera work in a film?"

After that Ludmila briefly informed her class with the plan of the current lesson: she said they were going to learn about the genre of portrait and would see the reproductions of pictures and audiovisual scenes and then they would discuss it. After this work had been done the teacher asked the class:

"What is the genre of the film you watched?", "What is the main idea of this scene?"

The question-answer type of work was going on for 10 more minutes. Pupils expressed different opinions. The discussion showed that pupils are aware of such terms as "documentary", "film", "reality", "genre".

During the last couple of minutes of a lesson the teacher summed up the results and encouraged the pupils to reflect back on what they had learned (concepts like "Category", "Representation").

To my mind, Ludmila G.'s teaching models is typical for Russian teachers who try to integrate Media Education into their work. Having content requirement of what she has to teach she seeks opportunities to devote some time of her classes to elements of Media Education. But I have to say that she is not familiar with textbooks, guides and other resources specifically on Media Education. Ludmila G. uses literature and teacher's guides on art & aesthetic education of schoolchildren. It is obvious that teachers who are going to teach Media Education must themselves develop the competency how to do so.

General conclusions: issues and problems

My study revealed that as Media Education is not an obligatory component of the state Russian schools program, the majority of teachers (especially the older generation) does not implement it. It should be noted that actually it is even worse: the large majority of teachers has no idea about the existence of Media Education or what it is about. Well, some school teachers use media in their classroom just as an illustration for the lesson's theme. A media text is not a matter of study in that case. And only few teachers do try to integrate elements of Media Education. For the most part, these are "advanced", interested, competent teachers who graduated from Teacher Training Institutes where a special course on Media Education was taught and who have an access to quality resources including theoretical books, textbooks, model lessons, or magazines on media literacy. Nearly all of teachers I have interviewed belong to the second group of teachers who use media in their classes and they implement some elements of Media Education but intuitively, without any Media Education

training background. The interviewed teachers follow the “Popular Arts paradigm” and “Critical paradigm”. Sometimes their attitude to Media Education is a synthesis of these two paradigms. It is true for the teacher Ludmila G. too.

In contradiction to some other countries (for example, the USA), the school education is centralized in Russia. The Ministry of Education works out the national basic school program, the one and compulsory for all schools. The number of elective subjects is very small compared to the obligatory ones. As I have already mentioned, the state educational curriculum does not include Media Education. Some institutions take media literacy initiations: the laboratory of Media Education of the Russian Academy of Education (Moscow) wrote an experimental educational standards on Media Education at schools (integrated into the curriculum), the Kurgan Teacher Training Institute uses its own programs of Media Education (Spitchkin, 1999). However these innovations are realized just in few schools. That is why the development of Media Education in Russia depends on the individual efforts of teachers (relatively young as a rule), who try to integrate Media Education in different subject areas or conduct extra-curricular classes (or clubs) on media culture.

The major barrier that impeded the development of Media Education in Russia is the poor technical equipment of schools. As a rule there are no modern computers, DVD-players or video cameras at schools. The Ministry of Education is aware of this problem and in future promises to provide technological resources in the areas of sound and video equipment, but currently teachers have no opportunities to use the technological advances at their lessons.

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One of the institutions that provide assistance for the Media Education is the Russian Association for Film & Media Education. Teachers and university professors who joined it write doctors' thesis on film & Media Education, elaborate models of Media Education, curriculum materials for schools and universities, publish books (Fedorov, 1989, 1994, 1999 and 2001; Penzin, 1987; Sharikov, 1990; Spitchkin, 1999; Usov, 1993 and others), provide workshops and seminars on Media Education. These efforts are aimed at developing pupils' and students' personality – developing an appreciation and aesthetic understanding of the media creativity, critical thinking and ultimately, critical autonomy. I can generalize Russian models of Media Education into following types: 1) educationally-informational models (the studies of the theory and history of media & media language); 2) instructionally-ethical models (consideration of moral, philosophical problems on the media material); 3) developing models (the social & cultural development of a creative person in aspects of perception, imagination, visual memory, interpretations, analysis, critical thinking, etc.). However the Association for Film & Media Education has about 300 members and its influence on masses of teachers is very limited.

Teachers that I interviewed define their approach to Media Education in this way: Media Education is subsidiary to basic education; Media Education as effective means for the development of personality; Media Education is a new possibility for the creative games & group forms of media work; Media Education is the means of active practical work with pupils. Most of the interviewed teachers think that their best lessons were whole-class discussion about specific historical, ecological, etc. problems. Sometimes teachers confuse Media Education with audio-visual aid in an ordinary lesson. Media language is seldom studied in school lessons.

Russian teachers report that their long-term media aims are the development of pupils' personality, critical & aesthetical consciousness with the help of advanced media equipment, including Internet.

Patterns & gaps of teaching

It seems to me that a good tendency about Russian Media Education is the willingness of teachers to develop their pupils' critical & creative thinking, their aesthetic appreciation of a media text. They use different forms of work, including role plays, team competitions, etc. The obstacles on the ways of Media Education are: media has not got an official status or curriculum foothold, no financial support. The majority of teachers use media in their classroom just as an audio-visual aid for their subject. Most of the teachers did not study modern media culture when they were students, are not familiar with such key concepts as “Media Language”, “Audience”, “Agency”. They are more comfortable with components that the traditional courses contain, such as a genre (category) study, the critical analysis of texts, and discussion of content.

Limitations of research

I have to admit that my part of work in the EuroMedia project was very limited as far as the representative reflection of the real state of things in Russia Media Education concerns. It goes without saying that there is a point in the comparison of the lesson observation and the results of the analysis of interview. For example, it is possible to find out if there is a difference between the “theory” views of a teacher and their practical implementation. However we must keep in mind that a teacher prepares the lesson to be observed much more carefully than an ordinary lesson. That is, his everyday lessons maybe worse. Moreover there is another variant: during a common lesson a teacher feels more comfortable and free, and during the observed lesson he/she becomes shy and nervous, cannot

focus on goals and objectives.

I did not have an opportunity to interview a large number of teachers (I think that if the experiment included more teachers, its results would be more objective). I am also quite sure that more teachers would have agreed to be observed at work and interviewed if they got paid a financial bonus. Today Russian teachers are sick and tired of working hard for small money, and as a rule, are not eager to become part of the experimental observation for free.

General Comments about Media Education in Modern Russia

National social, political and economic context

I can distinguish the following Russian social, political and economic context since 1991 (the year of liquidation of the Soviet Union): the beginning of economic reforms and the revival of private property;

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the sudden division of society into the few rich and the vast majority of poor people; the crisis of reforms; attempts to solve economic problems with the help of the money borrowed from foreign countries; the decay of Russian industry; unemployment; the virtual abolition of censorship's effect on Russian media producers, giving them the first opportunity to turn to the most vital themes that were banned before.

Media Education context

Provision & development

Just like the education on the whole, Media Education in Russia resided under harsh ideological pressure for many years. Access to media information (films, books about movies, etc.) was denied by censorship. However Media Education in Russia has existed for about 80 years.

Contemporary Media Education can be distinctly divided into three main directions: Media Education of future professionals - screenwriters, directors, cameramen, actors, film-critics, etc.; - Media Education of future media educators in universities; Media Education as a part of traditional education of pupils and students in primary schools, high schools, colleges, universities, etc.

The history of the Russian Association for Film & Media Education goes back to the Russian Association for Film Education. The first attempts to instruct in Media Education appeared in the 1920's but were stopped by Stalin's repressions. And a new history of Russian Association for Film Education began the 1960s. The end of the 1950s - the beginning of the 1960s was the time of the revival of Media Education in primary & secondary schools, children summer centers (Moscow, Petersburg, Voronezh, Samara, Kurgan, Tver, Rostov, Taganrog, Novosibirsk, Ekaterinburg, etc.), the revival of film clubs, Media Education seminars, & conferences. Today Media Education in Russia is not compulsory for all schools & universities. Media Education can be integrated into aesthetic subjects (literature, art, music, artistic culture, aesthetics), linguistics (Russian and foreign languages), historical & philosophical subjects (history, philosophy, legal studies) and some other courses. Another variant: optional Media Education courses. Unfortunately, Media Education in Russia has been facing and is still facing numerous difficulties (financial, technical et al.). Many Russian schools and universities don't have the money for modern audiovisual and Internet equipment. And many teachers do not get their salaries paid regularly.

Curriculum space

Media Education is not compulsory in Russian schools (except for some secondary schools on an experimental basis). Some primary & secondary schools offer optional Media Education lessons to their pupils.

Russia has no compulsory General Curriculum in the field of Media Education, but the Laboratory for Media Education (a section of the Russian Academy of Education, Moscow) publishes the programmes and literature concerning Media and Film Education. The key themes of these Media Education programmes are "media language", "media audience", "media perception", "media category", "media technology", "esthetic qualities of media text", "media representation", "media agencies", etc.

Some Russian teachers consider the basis of media training to be practical, hands-on studies of media materials, but some teachers prefer theory to practice: analyses of the aesthetic value of films and TV programs with the audience. For example, Moscow's Cinema Lyceum and some other schools conduct group discussions of the merits and demerits of media texts from the viewpoint of their artistic conception.

Teachers' education and training (pre-service and in-service)

Pre-service teacher education has existed in Russia (Pedagogical Universities in Kurgan, Tver, Voronezh, Rostov, etc.) since the 1960's. For example, a course in Media Education has been offered in the Taganrog State Pedagogical Institute since 1981. Its students are trained to teach Media Education classes in schools. To fulfill diploma requirements some of them write reviews and essays on themes of Media Education. Some special Media Education courses (or short seminars) exist also

for in-service Russian school teachers (Moscow, Kurgan and so on).

Theoretical position and frameworks

I can generalize Russian models of Media Education into the following types: 1) educationally-informational models (the studies of the theory and history of media & media language); 2)

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instructionally-ethical models (study of moral, philosophical problems on the media material); 3) developing models (social & cultural development of a creative person in aspects of perception, imagination, visual memory, interpretations, analysis, critical thinking, etc.) (Fedorov, 2001; Penzin, 1987; Sharikov, 1990; Usov, 1993, Spitchkin, 1999).

I can distinguish also some of the Russian Media Education's principles: development of the personality (the development of media perception, aesthetic consciousness, of creative capabilities, of individual thinking, analysis, etc.) in the process of study; the connection of theory with practice; transition from training to self-education; connection of training with life; consideration of individual peculiarities of students. The main functions of Media Education are the following: tutorial, adaptional, developing and controlling. The tutorial function presupposes the understanding of the theories and laws, the adequate perception and analysis of a media work, capability to apply this knowledge in other situations, logical capability. Adaptional function manifests in the initial stage of communication with media. The developing function implies the development of creative, analytical, and other capacities of personality. Task controlling functions - the providing conditions for the analysis of media works (Penzin, 1987; Sharikov, 1990; Spitchkin, 1999; Usov, 1993, etc.).

Here are the main stages of my Media Education Model (Fedorov, 1989; Fedorov, 1999; Fedorov, 2001):

Verification module (the determination of the levels of students' media development and level of media perception);

2) Module of practical creation & perception (mastering creative abilities on the media material and the formation of the audiovisual perception of the structure of media works films (including their types and genres, ties with other arts, etc.);

3) Module of analysis (the development of abilities of analysis in the sphere of media art);

4) Module of media history (acquaintance with main events in the media art history, with the contemporary social & cultural situation).

I suppose that there's a point in introducing students to the media history only then, when they have already developed their media perception, the ability to analyze media works, creative approaches.

This model includes the cycle of creative practical exercises in the field of media: 1) literary-simulation (the writing of scenario's plan, text of mini-scenarios, etc.); 2) theatrical games (simulation of practical creation of media works, including magazines, films, TV-programs, etc.); 3) "pictorial-simulation" (the creation of collages, of pictures on the themes of media works and so on) (Fedorov, 2001).

Here are the main stages of the development of abilities of the analysis of media works (from Ury Usov's conception):

_ the consideration of contents of key episodes, the most suggesting ones; detecting the artistic qualities of a media work on the whole;

_ attempt to understand the logic of the author's thinking (reconstruction of the development of main conflicts, of characters, of ideas, of audiovisual image, etc.);

_ the comprehension of the author's concept;

_ appraisal (by the audience) of the author's concept (Usov, 1993).

Professional associations, agencies and support

The first Russian Council for Film Education in Schools & Universities was created as the section of the Russian Union of Filmmakers (Moscow) in 1967. This Council was transformed into Russian Association for Film & Media Education in 1988. Honorary President of Russian Association for Media & Film Education is Ilya Waisfeld (b.15.08.1909), currently working in the Russian Institute of Cinematography, Moscow. The Head of the Russian Association for Media & Film Education is Gennady Polichko (Moscow Institute of Management). Head of the South Russian Section of Association for Media Education is Alexander Fedorov (Taganrog State Pedagogical Institute). The number of members of the Russian Association for Media & Film Education is about 300: primary & secondary level schoolteachers, high school, university, college, lyceum teachers & professors, leaders of film-clubs, etc. The Russian Association for Film & Media Education includes also members

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of the Laboratories of Screen Arts and Media Education (the Sections of Russian Academy of Education, Moscow). Unfortunately, the "epoch of reforms" of the 1990s had its impact on Russian Media Education. Now the Russian Association for Film & Media Education has not got any financial support from the State. This Association lost all financial resources in spite of the number of successfully realized projects (international Media Education conferences in Tashkent (1990) & Moscow (1992), Russian-British seminar (1992, 1995), the special courses for media teachers in Moscow).

The basic directions of the Russian Association for Media & Film Education are: Media Education Practice in School & Universities; Media Education Projects & Presentations; Media Education School & University Programs, Teachers' Training Programs; Media Education Conference & Seminars; Media Education Publications; Media Education Researches.

Resources (textbooks, materials, technology)

The Moscow publishing houses have published many Media Education books for schoolchildren & teachers. Articles about Media Education were published in the magazines "Pedagogica", "Cinema Art", "Ecran", "Specialist", "Cultural & Information Work", etc. One of the main Media Education sources is a scientific research. The first Ph.D. dissertations devoted to the problems of Media Education emerged in the '1960s-'1970s (O.Baranov, Y.Rabinovich, I.Levshina, S.Ivanova, U.Usov, etc.). The first dissertations devoted to the Media Education of pupils opened the way for the investigation on the Media Education problem in Russian universities. The most notable works on the Media Education theme in universities emerged in the 1980s – 1990s (S.Penzin, S.Odintsova, A.Fedorov, etc.). The first works touching the problems of the Russian Media Education on the whole (A. Sharikov, A.Fedorov, L.Zaznobina) were written in the end of 1980's - middle 1990's.

The Russian Laboratory of Screen Arts headed by U.Usov carried out the last big experimental project in the sphere of Media Education in the early 1980's. The project was made for teachers and students of several dozens of secondary schools in Moscow. In the 1990's researches on education were mostly locally oriented. Some educators wrote their Ph.D. thesis on the experimental work conducted just in one school class.

Since the mid 1960s Russian educators (U.Usov, S.Penzin, A.Sharikov, A.Spitchkin, L.Zaznobina and others) have published dozens of programs on film and Media Education.

I can distinguish the following types of the tutorial Media Education programs (basic education, distance education, combined education):

_ programs for the future professionals in the field of media: screen-writers, directors, cameramen, film-critics, etc. (L.Zaitseva, K.Isaeva, I.Waisfeld, I.Trutko, M.Vlasov, S.Gerasimov, R.Urenev and others);

_ programs for secondary schools (L.Bagenova, Y.Bikhovskiy, E.Bondarenko, U.Usov, U.Rabinovich, L.Zaznobina, A.Sharikov, E.Yastrebtseva, etc.);

_ programs for universities and colleges, including pedagogical institutes, the institutes of the teachers' training (E.Gorbulina, O.Nechai, S.Penzin, G.Polichko, U.Usov, A.Spitchkin, A.Fedorov A., etc.);

_ programs for the complementary education of the audience in centers of the aesthetic and artistic education: in the so-called "houses and the palaces of culture" – sort of "community centers", in film-clubs (I.Grachenkova, R.Guzman, etc.).

According to the types of Media Education's models these programs can include the history and theory of media, creative, practical, games, discussions. As to the typology of the tutorial material of programs, they can be linear or spiral (Fedorov, 2001; Penzin, 1987; Sharikov, 1990; Usov, 1993).

Specific initiatives and projects

An important Media Education initiative was the creation of the first Russian web-site (English version) for media educators: www.mediaeducation.boom.ru (the main author of this site is Alexander Fedorov). This web-site informs the educators about the history, theory, methods and projects of Russian media & film education. Another example of a recent Media Education project is a summer school in Uglich (1998-2001) and Children Festivals of Visual Arts in the children summer camp "Orlyonok", media education conference in Taganrog (2001).

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Possibilities for future research

I suppose that in Russia today it is impossible to hold a large-scale experimental research including teachers from different cities and towns without a financial support. However if the study has some budget in future, I think it will be possible to find out the true picture of Media Education in this country. To my mind, the research should include teachers of different subjects living in different regions of Russia. It should also include practioners and researchers from the Russian Academy of Education, the Russian Association for Film & Media Education and a representative from the Ministry of Education. The future research should also contain the analysis of the available school programs,

books, and doctors' thesis devoted to Media Education.

Future development of Media Education

I think that modern Russia needs the concrete strategies of development of the Media Education projects. This strategy must concentrate their intentions not only on the technical media equipment of Russian schools, but also on the new methodologies, of consuming digital images and information. Russian education needs a productive cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the Association for Media Education, Educational web-sites' & CD-ROM producers.

A current development: Russian Media Education News Scientific Research Group created the file of documents for the official registration of new specialization for Russian universities: Media Education. Russian Ministry of Education positively answered for this initiative: university level specialization (for future teachers) media education was officially registered with the number 03.13.30. in June 18, 2002. Sept. 1, 2002 was the date of official including of specialization media education in the real process in Russian pedagogical university level. First start of this new specialization was in Taganrog State Pedagogical

Institute (Depart. of Social & Cultural Development of Personality, the head: Prof. Alexander Fedorov).

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