

## **IV International scientific conference «MEDIAEducation»: vectors of integration in digital space**

### **MEDIA EDUCATION IN YOUTH MEDIA: SPECIFIC METHODS OF ORGANIZING THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS**

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#### **Abstract**

The article raises the issue of enhancing efficiency of media-education activity through youth involvement in creating various media. Author describes the development of amateur children and youth editions in Russia, determined by the formation of the information society. Particular attention is paid to the problem of improving the media literacy of young people.

The author presents the experience of the editorial board of the regional children's and youth newspaper Sami (Russia, Altai Region), which authors are children, so the editorial board carry out educational functions. The experimental approach described in the article used traditional forms of editorial work as forms of educational activity. The organization of such forms of work as an editorial meeting and a press conference is described in detail. It is told what educational problems they solve. The article presents the technology developed by the professor of the Altai State Pedagogical University Ivan Shalaev and gained recognition in Russia. This is a motivational program-and-goal-oriented approach, the key concept of which is the formation of a motivational complex for students. Ivan Shalaev developed a typology of stimulus situations that contribute to the formation of a motivational complex. The author of the article considers the technology of modeling stimulus situations in the conditions of the editorial board of juvenile media, describes the results of their use.

The author proves that using the motivational program-and-goal-oriented approach enhances the efficiency of media education and teaching teenagers basic journalism skills.

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**Keywords: journalism, youth media, media education, media literacy, motivational program-and-goal-oriented approach, supplementary education.**

## **1. Introduction**

The relevance of media education increases with the need to navigate one's way in the varied and diverse sea of information as well as verify, question, properly interpret and use the information received. Mastering these skills is the key to self-fulfillment in almost every aspect of modern life. Nowadays a person's media literacy has shifted from being a point of scientific interest to being one of priorities of our educational system. A rapidly developing information society, social processes saturated with information as well as increasing digitalization of many aspects of life make the need for developed information and communication skills critical for an individual (Vartanova and others, 2017). The increasing relevance of media safety and hygiene place importance of mastering the media skills in terms of not only personal self-fulfillment, but also individual and group safety (Dzyaloshinsky and others, 2015).

In this regard, youth journalism becomes increasingly important by serving as an instrument for developing media literacy in teenagers. This is achieved through compiling and analyzing information, preparing media texts and interacting with the audience (Zhilavskaya, 2017).

## **2. Problem Statement**

Media education has a very limited presence in the current school system of Russia. There are several factors underlying this situation. One of such factors is that teachers lack professional skills that would help them develop media literacy in students. The lack of professional skills in its turn is linked to other reasons (Demidova and others, 2019). One of such reasons is that pedagogical universities do not offer courses that would prepare teachers in this regard. The results of an expert survey conducted among university directors in Russia and CIS countries reveal the awareness of the problem as well as an interest in developing the corresponding courses (Zhilavskaya, 2019). Although it is a positive trend indeed, it is mostly prospective and has little impact on the present situation.

Because of the pressing need for developing media literacy and lack of any state-run program, Russian schools put together their own makeshift system of media education. Such media education has many forms. One of the most common forms is publication of amateur children and youth media in various educational institutions, which also has strong historical roots in Russian educational system (Simakova and Topchii, 2017).

By engaging in publication of their own local media, students compile, analyze and process information, publish their own articles and receive "feedback" from their audience. These activities in their turn help students learn the patterns and functions of information systems, ways of interacting with information, develop skills required for effective browsing and interpretation of information. Students also learn how to generate their own media and information products – in other words, they develop skills and capacities that will potentially help them achieve success in any area of life (Zhaplova, 2019). Past experience seems to indicate that the creators and participants of these amateur media (regardless of the scope: school, district, municipal or regional) often take this activity to another level by becoming either journalism and media majors or going into related areas, such as advertising, public relations, language and literature, political science, social science, etc. Such students typically display consciousness of choice, consistent motivation and a developed professional capacity. The fact that the educational community recognizes and understands the importance of amateur publications in developing information culture in students has produced great results in the first decade of the 21st century. This understanding helped further the development of information culture in Russian education and dramatically enhanced the number of children and youth media. Moreover, the beginning of the 21st century saw the modernization of educational system in Russia, when the technical facilities and resources of schools improved significantly, allowing the publication of newspapers, magazines, almanacs as well as enabling professional development. The development of digital means of communication in the past decade expanded the informational potential of population as a whole and students in particular. It is now much easier for them to search for, obtain and exchange information as well as get involved in discussions on topics of interest. The media teachers saw their job context change dramatically as well: they now have a much wider range of opportunities for creating children and youth media available to them as well as a different social and pedagogical setting. All these factors greatly advanced the development of amateur children and youth media as a system; the educational impact of said media on the students increased as well (Belousova, 2019).

However, the fact that youth journalism in Russia is developing outside the public school framework makes this way of teenage self-fulfillment largely recreational. The educational aspect of youth journalism mostly places it along the lines of supplementary education regardless of the framework of the educational institution that carries out this activity: whether it is a public school or supplementary education institution (Khilko, 2017). Supplementary education, however, is not as regulated as public

education – a circumstance that makes it more dynamic and fluid. The creative unions that focus on producing youth media help develop the skills and capacities necessary for successful adjustment of teenagers to the society as it is today (Kuzmina and Masharova, 2017) and sometimes even to the society of tomorrow (Kondratyeva, 2019). Being a member of a youth media editorial staff helps teenagers to master technological skills as well as contributes to their civic education, develops their view of the world and sense of self (Tsybalyenko, 2010).

### **3. Research Questions**

Supplementary education is an area for unregulated self-fulfilment for teenagers. Their activity is not evaluated based on some standards, and the attendance of supplementary education institutions is not as regulated as that of public schools. In the meantime, creative unions in the media sphere that function as supplementary education institutions play an important role in developing media literacy in at least some representatives of modern youth.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

This study aims at discovering methods to increase efficiency of media-educational activity within the framework of youth media creative unions.

### **5. Research Methods**

While searching for methods to increase the efficiency of media-educational activity in youth media, the professional community discovered the so-called motivational program-and-goal-oriented management (MPGOM) methods developed by Professor Ivan Shalayev of Altai State Pedagogical University (2007). These methods came to be used in organizing educational activity in youth media. Creating stimulus situations aimed at developing motivation is one of the key methods of MPGOM theory.

The author of the MPGOM theory defines motivation as "the act of inducing people to increased activity aimed at appealing to their motivational sphere. The motivational sphere of an individual is comprised of needs, beliefs, world view, ideals, inclinations, self-esteem, expected opinion of a group of people" (Shalayev, 2007). Developing motivation for action is what forms the basis of the MPGOM method. The system of stimulus situations developed within the MPGOM framework is a set of management methods using which can stimulate students to marked increases in activity, displays of initiative and personal fulfilment. Simulating stimulus situations in educational activity helps develop an optimum motivational complex dominated by inner motivation based on the motivational sphere of individual. It must be noted that the motivational complex created with the help of this or that MPGOM method may differ depending on the student and their personal experience, value systems, civic maturity, socialization level and other personal characteristics.

Despite the fact that interiorization of the management task is one of the goals of using MPGOM, this way of solving these tasks is very different from authoritarian command-and-control and manipulation. The difference lies in the fact that although the stimulus situation is supposed to push the individual towards independent action and create a sense of psychological discomfort at the first stage that would require dealing with it in some way in order to achieve harmony, the manner, sequence and intensity of these actions is determined by the individual themselves depending on their personal needs.

The pattern of psychological pressure that forms the foundation of stimulus situations was developed based on the teachings of Hans Selye, a Canadian psychobiologist who introduced psychological science to two opposing types of stress: distress (negative, unhealthy stress) and eustress (positive, healthy stress). The notion of stress itself (meaning constraint, strain in Latin) only means a human condition that is a resulting reaction to various powerful external and internal stimuli (stressors). These stimuli may include both fatigue, fear, unhappiness, illness and exhilaration, success, positive changes in life – in other words, something that changes the usual order of things so much that a person needs to readjust. In the first case, this is distress (grief, feeling unwell, exhaustion) while in the second it is eustress, meaning positive stress. Both types of stress may trigger similar body response and similar consequences. However, eustress is characterized by invigoration and the feeling of being full of energy (Selye, 1982).

A detailed distress-to-eustress transition mechanism in creating the stimulus situation has been developed within the MPGOM framework. Each successive form of stress has three stages. During the first distress stage the individual experiences tension that stems from suddenly becoming aware of one's personal shortcomings that manifest through comparing oneself with an exemplary model. The second stage is a resistance stage characterized by intense introspection and decision-making. The third stage reveals a decrease in self-hatred since the decision has been made and this nerve-wracking and taxing state is replaced by a "call for action." The first eustress stage is characterized by a certain degree for

tension and agitation for the anticipation of coming though with the decision made to achieve the goal. The second stage is characterized by resistance aimed at overcoming the obstacles lying in the way of the decision made. The third and final eustress stage reveals a decrease in tension due to achieving the set goal.

Creating, implementing and resolving the stimulus situation is aimed at making a transition from distress to eustress. This transition results in the individual feeling invigorated, experiencing a spike in activity and intensified action towards interiorizing management goals. However, the transition pattern between discomfort and harmony, the nature of actions undertaken and their intensity is determined by the individual based on their personal characteristics and goals. Therefore, the results of resolving the stimulus situation may differ depending on the type of personality. Moreover, the MPGOM methods were never intended to meet very specific management targets, since their initial intention was always to provide quite a wide range of results based on the creative approach, personal initiative and motivations. In the course of stimulus situation the group is presented with an exemplary model – a "visual representation of ideal behavior or mode of operation" (Shalaye, 2007).

As a rule, this exemplary model has qualitative and quantitative characteristics that allow to determine its actual achievement measure in mathematical form. Such features as the indications for using stimulus situation, the conditions required for its creation, actual achievement measure of the exemplary model and the range of assumed results must be assessed beforehand by a supervisor (or a teacher if the MPGOM method is used as part of the educational process). To execute the MPGOM methods properly, the supervisor (teacher) should make use of managerial empathy (the ability to understand the inner world of one's subordinates (students) and adjust one's own line of behavior accordingly), reflective management (the ability to look at oneself from someone else's point of view and predict responses to one's actions) as well as analytical methods (Shalaye, 2007).

## 6. Findings

The practical focus of youth media activity, its disposition towards creating a media and information product determine the working methods typical for editing and publishing process that takes place in professional media. One of the most successful MPGOM methods is creating a critical self-assessment situation (CSAS). CSAS means "generating a set of social and psychological circumstances that would allow team members to take a detached view of themselves, with all their virtues and shortcomings laid bare and see how these virtues and shortcomings affect the public and personal value of the nature of cooperation" (Shalaye, 2007).

Briefing became one of the key working methods for children and youth newspaper *Sami* ("Doing it ourselves") since it provides room for creating stimulus situations that favour the development of inner motivation in students. Briefing as part of educational process is a group session where students discuss the most urgent topics, choose some of them for the upcoming newspaper issue and distribute the tasks between members of the creative team. Further briefings include analysing and adjusting the production workflow, content status of the issue and, last but not least, analysing the released issue that is followed by drafting a new issue while taking previous slips and weak points into account. Such sessions help to reveal leaders that are capable of pointing out urgent topics more clearly and directly, proposing ways of dealing with this or that topic and taking the most difficult and sensitive tasks upon themselves. During further briefings students share details of their work, recount the decisions they had to make while researching and analysing information. The exemplary model is thereby introduced in an unobtrusive manner, and both students and the teacher (supervisor) are able to voice their opinion on whatever their colleagues has done – verbally, non-verbally and sometimes very emotionally. The conditions for everyone to take a look at themselves and compare their own results with others are subsequently created. The less active authors are able to see all kinds of interesting topics and challenges offered by their colleagues and understand that to boost their creativity they need to become more informed and pay more attention to whatever is happening around them. Realizing that the least interesting tasks are relegated to the less inquisitive and competent staff members helps the "first-timers" (and the more passive teenagers) to see their inferiority compared to their colleagues to try and get rid of it altogether.

It is necessary to note that besides the formation of motivational complex briefing as a kind of activity contribute to formation of professional skills in the range of different journalistic knowledge such as the system of publicistic genres, which is necessary to know for choosing the form that fits some theme better; system of methods of information gathering, that is needed to judge forms and techniques of working on different types of text; system of channels and sources of information, orientation in which helps to search and interpret information.

The form of inculcation of exemplary model has developed at the initiative of students. During the discussion of the new issue they choose the best text by secret voting. One that received the highest

number of votes is put on the "honor roll". So the exemplary model is not just demonstrated - it is actualized. The form of selection of the best text allows to consider this choice as the objective one. Author of this text obtains a kind of award by being placed on the honor roll. Other students perceive his example as incentive to self-improvement.

Briefing also creates the preconditions for constructing a situation of delegated initiative. A problematic conversation, an interesting discussion of topic matters that occurs during the planning of an issue encourages students to propose topics, to produce original and creative ideas. Media teacher who directs the conversation in a focused way is able to help student to comprehend and formulate questions that worry him. Moreover, teacher can carefully lead student to the matter whose relevance is obvious for teacher but still unconscious for student.

Collective discussion makes this process more effective due to the fact that students have different life experience, point of view, mindset and temperament. This leads to a discussion of the subject from different angles, revealing many aspects and nuances of the phenomenon. In such an atmosphere of heuristic creativity, original ideas are born, and understanding of processes and phenomena comes. Meanwhile, every student who has made a discovery, even if it is small one, considers it as a result of his own work, so he perceives working on the material which idea was suggested by himself especially responsibly and creatively, even though the idea was born in a collective discussion or was unobtrusively prompted by the teacher. If the media teacher deprives the child of the feeling that he himself found or invented something, if teacher authoritarily gives an editorial assignment, the child is less enthusiastic and responsible towards it, less inventive in finding interesting forms and solutions both when collecting information and when working on text, so result has a lower quality. Thus, the creation of a situation of delegated initiative helps to improve the quality of the information product which is an amateur youth newspaper, as well as the growth of initiative, social activity, creativity, in a word, the personal development of its authors.

The formation of motivation for self-improvement, professional growth, civic maturity through awareness of personal responsibility is also carried out by constructing the situation of the mindsetting. The attitude toward the social function that a journalist performs is of great importance for the self-esteem of students who works for the editorial board of an amateur youth newspaper. The student's understanding that he is involved in the creation of an information product that will be presented to his peers throughout the region, that his personal point of view will be presented to the entire readership creates serious motivation for an active participation in its publication. A significant factor in creating a situation of mindsetting in the Sami newspaper is that the Sami media teachers are practicing journalists who combine pedagogical activity with journalistic work. It allows them when discussing topic matters on the lessons to give examples of resolving problem situations through publications in the media from their own journalistic practice or from the practice of colleagues in the journalistic community into which the Sami media teachers are integrated. It helps to increase the prestige of the journalistic profession, give the example using not abstract stories described in the literature but concrete cases taken from the experience of the real people familiar to Sami student which is Sami media teachers. It both increases their pedagogical authority and reduce the distance between teacher and student due to the fact that it is emphasized that they both involved in the same business and carry out the same mission. In this regard professional achievement of teachers are perceived as the personal example and make students seek to this ideal.

Another distinctive working method used in *Sami* newspaper is the weekly press-conferences with the leading journalists of our region. These press-conferences are called ONTHURSDAYATFOUR (VCHETVERGVCHETYRE) based on their timing. These are carried out in the form of group sessions that allow participation of teenagers of all ages, levels of self-realization and working experience in *Sami* newspaper and create an environment where teenagers may compare their own achievements with those of others. Professional journalists give their feedback on the most interesting and profound issues as well as engage in discussions with student participants, which reinforces the effect. Such press-conferences also allow teenagers who may be entertaining the idea of becoming a journalist to interact with professionals, get answers to questions relevant for learning this trade – from technical and pragmatic to philosophical and ideological aspects.

Regular surveys of students conducted all the way through the educational process lead us to the conclusion that using editorial working methods (briefings, press-conferences) as means of organizing the educational process helps to create a system of social and psychological mirrors as well as build a critical self-assessment situation. Stimulus tension is created as a result, which is further dissipated through creative activity thus spurring the realization of intellectual potential of future journalists and increasing the motivation and growth of the level of media competence of members of educational and editorial process (Yumasheva, 2015).

An expertise of result of learning - that is a newspaper - was conducted to answer the question in which degree using of editorial forms to organize activities helps to increase the efficiency of pre-university journalists training. To analyze them there were distinguished some basic parameters of quality of periodicals that is relevance, informative value, language culture; the scales of rating the quality of newspapers were developed. Experts from among teaching staff of journalistic faculty of Altai state university appraised according to the scales editions of newspapers over the past two years. The first block consisted of editions that were released before using editorial working methods in teaching practice. The second block included editions over the last year. Results of expert appraisal demonstrate constant increasing of indices that is not essential because of high rates on the initiation phase.

The clear demonstration of this tendency was found in the results of participating the Sami newspaper in professional competitions of journalists skills. Students who were studying at the Sami editorial office over a period of existence of the newspaper successfully represented it on competitions and festival on different levels from regional to nationwide. Using of MPGOM technique and introduction of editorial working methods has led to the winning competitions aimed at ripe journalists working in professional editorial boards. These competitions are "Gold fund of press", "Gold gong", "10 best newspapers of Russia", "PROeducation", Altai governor's award for best published work.

## 7. Conclusion

The experiment was conducted in a youth media outlet *Sami* ("Doing it ourselves") – a children and youth newspaper published in Barnaul with the help of a supplementary education institution. The results demonstrate that using specific MPGOM methods stimulates the creation of an optimum motivational complex dominated by inner motivation; the efficacy of creative self-realization of teenagers in a youth media increases as the youth media becomes an effective tool for transforming reality. Further publication of youth media increases the efficiency of media education for the students involved in the editing and publishing process as well as develops their potential and stimulates personal growth.

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