УДК 81.001:614.253.4:371.3

EMPOWERING STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING THROUGH MEDIA PEDAGOGY

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The article deals with the problem of media impact on the development of language education. Media pedagogy is noted to be a promising trend for improving the process of building foreign linguistic competence. It highlights the potential for doing interdisciplinary research. The article defines the principles of creating a methodological basis for using media in language teaching/learning.

Key words: *media pedagogy, foreign linguistic competence, language education, student-centricity, information space.*

У статті досліджується проблема впливу медіа на розвиток лінгводидактики. Відзначається, що медіа-педагогіка є одним з найбільш перспективних напрямів у вдосконаленні процесу формування іншомовної компетентності. Вказується на потенціал проведення міждисциплінарних розробок. Визначаються принципи підготовки методологічної бази використання медіа в мовному навчанні.

Ключові слова: *медіа-педагогіка, іншомовна компетентність, лінгводидактика, студентоцентричність, інформаційний простір.*

В статье исследуется проблема воздействия медиа на развитие лингводидактики. Отмечается, что медиа-педагогика является одним из наиболее перспективных направлений в совершенствовании процесса формирования иноязычной компетентности. Указывается на потенциал проведения междисциплинарных разработок. Определяются принципы подготовки методологической базы использования медиа в языковом обучении.

Ключевые слова: *медиа-педагогика, иноязычная компетентность, лингводидактика, студентоцентричность, информационное пространство.*

A rapid information resources enhancement plays a pivotal rolein the educational space. The widely and diversely used media-based modern learning technologies are especially important for Ukrainian higher language education: the educational process information and technological support significantly expands the opportunities for building students' foreign linguistic competence.

It is worth noting that media resources as a technological phenomenon, largely determining tendencies for developing the social system and education, in particular, have been studied for a long time and quite fruitfully. The specifics and prospects media impact on public life and the educational system have been the subject matters of such Ukrainian and foreign authors as Zh. Batai, V. Zachynskyi, S. Its, Yu. Kovalenko, Zh. Lakan, A. Liepa, G. Lipovetsky, J.-F. Lyotard, O. Moroz, H. Onkovych, O. Pometun, I. Sakhnevych, Yu. Yatsenko and others. The historical and theoretical modalities of foreign language training enhancement through media pedagogy were focused on by V. Bebykh, O. Byriuk, N. Divinska, D. Maliavin, L. Nahorniuk, L. Petryk, S. Plotnytska, I. Slesarenko, I. Chemerys, T. Yakhniuk, etc. However by now, a relatively consolidated view of the peculiarities, methodology, axiological aspects and practice of using media tools while building higher school students' foreign linguistic competence has not been created in the educational space of Ukraine. Nevertheless, we can acknowledge that the pundit quarters have already designed the main principles and methods of introducing media into the educational process, which, as information spaces advance, needs to be expanded, detailed and determined by any given set of built and required competences.

The purpose of this article is to identify some methodological and psycholinguistic contexts of improving students' foreign linguistic competence through using media resources.

Media didactics classification is usually based on a typological principle. For example, according to G. Onkovych [2], the typology of media education can be segmented as follows: a media main characteristics type – press, cinema, radio, television, video systems, computer systems; a reception type – audio, video, audio-visual and sign; place, large-scale involvement and usage pattern type – individual, group, mainstream, at-home, business, etc.; an information-content type – moral and pedagogical, political, aesthetic content, etc.; a functional-target type – entertainment, education, work activity, communicative activity, etc.; a learner-centered effective-target type – learning / self-learning, self-knowledge, socialization, etc.

Media resources typological structure is evidently to be constantly transformed: as some media channels become obsolete, the typological media line is constantly replenished with the new ones, the updated and productive ones, against the background of the modern society. However, no matter how the typological framework transforms, it is beyond argument that the very notion of media pedagogy is quite multifaceted and voluminous.

Media space functioning immensity demonstrates media resources total penetration into all the subsystems of the global social system, in particular, into education and, among other things, into language education. It is the totality that differs the media field from the other, socially significant, technological and cultural manifestations of human and social life. This means that didactics / language education, as an element of the social system, is completely opened to media fields influence, and, consequently, it will not artificially abandon the interaction with them.

Making a retrospective journey into the history of media actualization in Ukrainian students' foreign language training searches out different approaches. Considering them finds several stages, which present the pattern of using media for educational purposes.

The Ukrainian higher school media didactics periodization has been segmented by us into four stages:

The 1st stage lasted from the latter half of the 20th century to 1980's (here the lower range value is conventional, therefore within the last century it can be chosen at discretion, for example, at the turn of 20th century). At that period, while teaching foreign languages, the educators involved chiefly three media lines – newspaper / magazine publications, educational films, television.

The 2nd stage lasted from 1980's to 1990's. At that stage, there were quite significant changes in the methods of using media tools, which were contributed by media space rapid development. At that time, the perestroika-minded scientific and pedagogical community advanced seeking methods for intensive foreign languages teaching / learning, new ways for fostering communicative knowledge and skills. As a result, there were foregrounded such complementary approaches as the communicative / communicative activity, learner-centered / student-centered ones. To successful update the approaches was greatly facilitated by using media resources: newspapers, magazines, movies, documentary / story videos, audio materials, graphic / visual aids, etc. The profession-oriented faculties set up movie clubs at the departments of foreign languages, wherein foreign films

viewing and discussions in the target language were organized. Also in major population centers there were sprung up English-, Spanish-, French-, German-speaking clubs. Starting national societies popularized minority languages: attending foreign language courses (Bulgarian, Polish, Hungarian, etc.), the teachers and students enjoyed authentic reading materials, saw and discussed films and news. As international affairs extended, there appeared religious organizations, where non-canonical religions were preached. That's where specialists from America, Great Britain and other countries gave instructions in foreign languages – mostly in English – to everyone interested with applying various media resources – newspapers, magazines, religious and ethical films. The Esperanto language popularization in the higher education institutions of Ukraine should be mentioned; there came out many media materials concerning studying the international language. During the perestroika period, the student's environment was engaged in learning foreign languages by listening to the popular foreign-language channels (Voice of America, Deutsche Welle broadcasters, some Arabic channels, etc.). While teaching languages, educators used bilingual newspapers and magazines, published in the Soviet Union, for example, the Moscow News (Moskovskie Novosti), the oldest English-language newspaper: bilingual publications allowed people performing a comparative analysis of translation quality, deepened vocabulary and syntax knowledge, developed cognition. At that time (1980's – 1990's), the European School for Correspondence Courses "ESCC" obtained a wide circulation, mainly among students: they subscribed for printed goods, completed with audiotapes, attached to a certain lesson. Thus, at the second stage of introducing media resources in the language education of Ukraine the possibility of using media in teaching foreign languages was fundamentally re-thought.

We refer the 3rd stage to the last decade of the 20th century. Over the period, the active development of previous technologies, ways and means of using media in the students' foreign-language training continued. However, due to improving media capacity and modernizing information and technological channels, some aspects became irrelevant. At the same time, new opportunities for development opened up: new film studios came to hand at the philology departments, the circulation of authentic newspapers and magazines, used in the language education, was on the rise; by virtue of Internet technologies expansion, there arose a fundamental reality,

which defined media education prospects and importance for building students' foreign linguistic competence in the 21st century.

The 4th stage covers the early 21st century. In the 21st century, the information technology quality has been changed – at the beginning of the century the modern civilization entered a fundamentally new communication era, the fact is to be interpreted. The forms, content channels and strategies of media sources functioning have significantly expanded and varied. There was a community of information users, who appear to be existed in parallel with the rest of society. In the new century, the media revolution led to fostering a "parallel" psychological type, in particular, represented by a student community. Under such conditions, teaching / learning foreign languages takes on a multiple methodical form: the didactic process is executed in an information realm in conjunction with the various addressees, offering individual / exclusive solutions to the problem of teaching foreign languages. A "teacher – student" interaction has broken up due to the other participants' intervention in the educational process: a foreign language teacher progressively functions as a moderator, "didactic conductor", managing a polyphony – an international, multicultural, polylingual full orchestra. Against that background the gamut of inconceivable perspectives and dangers opened up. The educational process methodological support in the new century has been crossed over to the comprehensive use of the growing technical Internet potential. In particular, via Skype, the various forms of linguistic didactical interaction are practiced at the higher educational institutions of Ukraine: videoconferences, video disputes, movie tutorial, teleconferences, roundtables, etc. Teachers and students use communication / methodological / author's tools and services (for example, a professional language translation service) provided by specialized sites, blogs, lingual-oriented chats. Thus, in the 21st century, a new media education reality arises, that, among other things, radically changes the ideology of language education.

Therefore, in the language education of Ukraine, building foreign linguistic competence has been carried out in the evolution of four information and technological media spaces, whose functioning is of international and national education experts' great attention. Media pedagogy is one of the key subjects of the modern educational system in many countries, and therefore the UN and UNESCO pay quite predictable attention to it: "The United Nations Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organization has been promoting media education since 1982, when UNESCO gathered experts from numerous countries to debate media education in Grьnwald, Germany. The Grьnwald Declaration encouraged promotion of media education in school systems. At the Toulouse Conference in 1990 delegates from 40 countries discussed the future of the media education worldwide and appealed to the need to provide guidelines for the development of specific curricula and teaching / learning materials" [3].

The process of applying media resources in the higher language education is largely determined / regulated by "Concept of Implementing Media Education in Ukraine", dated 29 September, 2010, approved by Resolution of the Presidium of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, dated 20 May, 2010, minutes No. 1-7/6-150. The resolution designated the main lines for education and media interaction. In particular, the resolution draftsmen, while determining the significance of media resources, among other things, noted the inconsistency of their use for educational purposes. The Concept establishes that "Media (...) has a contradictory impact on the younger generation education, often becoming the leading factor of its socialization, spontaneous social education. Permissive information market, excessive shoddy media goods power, ideologies and values contrary to morals, causing a decrease in the society immunity to socially adverse information effects, are added. Thus, it becomes necessary to develop media education, whose one of the main objectives is to prevent man's vulnerability to media violence and media manipulations, escape into the virtual world mazes, media dependence amplification" [1]. Crucially, there is a nationwide recognition that the media technologies fundamentally transform the educational system and the education doctrine as a whole – before everything else, concerning media suppression of the personality and social networking addiction. Within that narrative, the scientific expert community has faced completely new, previously unrealized, tasks to be solved and challenges to be pinpointed in the educational space. In other words, it is referred to improving / developing methodological grounds for using media capacities in theeducational science, in particular, in language education.

Reasoning from this fact, it should be acknowledged that developing these grounds is extremely complicated for a variety of reasons:

1) the subject of media space, which constantly escapes the scientific interpretation, has not been developed at length as for its relation to the educational space, particularly to the language education;

2) borders and junction points between media and education institutions are to be defined;

3) media tools interaction mechanism has not been developed in the language education format;

4) in Ukraine, the higher school teaching staff media competence requires improvement;

5) the educational process organizational and pedagogical, technical and methodological support in teaching foreign languages should bebrought in balance with the media industry realities.

There are other aspects looking for a more specific interpretation.

The above analysis points out that the issues of using media resources for educational linguistic purposes require a fundamental, but not static, methodological substantiation.

In our opinion, to develop the methodological foundations of introducing media into the process of foreign language education should be determined by the following principles: a) psychological complementarity; b) lability / transformability; c) consistency; d) anthropo- / student-centricity; e) conceptual openness.

The principle of psychological complementarity suggests that the mechanism of introducing media technologies in the educational process would consist of psychological / psychic comfort aspects for a recipient, absorbed in the modern media world. Since the personality – information space communication consequences have not been investigated enough, one has to judge from the elementary-reflexive comfort thesis: educational / didactic cooperation in the Internet space should be comfortable, evoke no focusing illusion, mental disorders. Therefore, the first principle, which should be grounded in developing the mentioned methodology, contains the postulate of a psycho-physiological scope.

The principle of lability / transformability assumes that while creating a methodological basis for didactically oriented media application, one would take into account that the media world is always incomplete, constantly mobile, "liquid" by its nature. Where once media yielded to control and supervision, today it is impossible: the media world is the total boundless self-organization of individuals, transmitting their individual data / private authorities to the general impersonal database. Therefore, applying media in building foreign linguistic competence should take into account the fact that there is no media as an integral subject in the modern information and technological patterns – the media world is subjectless, deconstructed and, being constantly mobile, it is never equal to itself.

The consistency approach suggests that methodological grounds would be built as a unity of uncontroversial concepts which systematically correspond to the nature of media pedagogy and media space.

The principle of anthropo- / student-centricity expands the principle of psychological complementarity, establishing that in providing ateaching / learning process, one should take into account students' personal interests. The mediause methodology is assumed to contain tools for developing the individual's potential, protecting a student against the possible negative impact of media space and preserving communicative security.

The concept of conceptual openness suggests that methodology would reflect the essence of a subject. Thus, due to the fact the nature of the modern mass media, primarily the Internet resource, is "liquid", the conceptual basis of this methodology should be labile, transformable, modular, open to be expanded.

Designing methodology for using media resources in foreign-language training, based on the above principles, does little more than moves us closer to the problem partial solution. Improving the strategy of students' foreign language training through media pedagogy is a question requiring amplification by interdisciplinary efforts, as, in our opinion, it can hardly be solved due to the pedagogical community enthusiasm only. It would be advisable to conduct a comprehensive study with contributions made by linguists, educators, media experts, programmers and complex information machines developers, neurologists, anthropologists, social workers. Perhaps, having taken a relatively consolidated position on the problem of using media for educational goals one would expand this educational segment. Consequently, a timely question is whether media linguistic trend should be developed in language education, if the fundamental nature of media, being complicated, more and more escapes our cognition; the aftereffects of students' involvement into the unknown are not clear.

Looking for solutions, we should turn to the point of view of those who have opened the information space to the world in actual fact, and who, through their scientific work, predetermined the present circumstance in media. A creator of the global network, Norbert Wiener, in his interview with "U.S. News & World Report" expressed the opinion that "computers are being used intelligently today…in 10 per cent of the cases" [4, p. 85]. The main reason of this "a startlingly low figure" is, according to N. Wie-

ner, "because it takes intelligence to know what to give to the machine. And in many cases the machine is used to buy intelligence that isn't there" [4, p. 85]. In his opinion, "The computer is just as valuable as the man using it. It can allow him to cover more ground in the same time. But he's got to have the ideas. And in the early stage of testing the ideas, you shouldn't be dependent on using computers [4, p. 85].

Such a qualitative judgment raises some fears for sharing the enthusiasm of those who are sure of the apparent benefits of using information devices for educational purposes. Moreover, the mentioned above viewpoint delineates in details the mechanism of cognitive / educational competence loss through its being gradually transferred to the machine. Probably, to prove this fact is the university students' total use of very imperfect Internet translation programs. It seems reasonable to say that as the translation software improves, students transfer / transfer their language / foreign language competence to the global machine. This leads to reducing the quality of higher school students' linguistic competence in a great measure, and translation profession may become unclaimed, or disappear as superfluous.

Thus, developing the sphere of media pedagogy in order to form students' foreign linguistic competence requires a more detailed research, it needs carrying out scientific expert examination.

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