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The influence of media on formal and informal education

Maria Claudia Cuc ^{a*}^a Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty Psychology and Sciences of Education, 7 Sindicatelor street, 400029, Cluj- Napoca, Romania

Abstract

The paper "The influence of media on formal and informal education" focuses on practical applicative dimension through which the media is the one that develops new interests, leisure time skills, offers new options for entertainment and culture for the sphere of preoccupations of school children. With excessive consumption of media messages are substituted cultural activities with a valued content, and there are disturbed the learning activities of learners. Promotion in Romanian education of media literacy method must be supported by educational offer nationwide through which learners should be enriched with a tool of intellectual work useful in learning and training experiences. The main challenge of the curriculum is planning some learning situations appropriate to the rational education for media, through which learner can develop his communication competence, critical thinking, cultivate his responsibility, tolerance, develop his aesthetic sensitivity, and capitalize his own experience by relating to experiences and social reality. The study capitalizes theoretical aspects crystallized in educational research concerned with the issue of media influences on formal and informal education in Romanian socio-cultural reality concerned with the training needs of students. Education for media aims to overcome the current state of society that influences the educational field, which represents the mentality of audience.

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1. Problem Statement

In an informational society a challenge for the teacher is designing and implementing educational projects that follow as finality the reorganization of personal experiences of students through the internalization of a value

Corresponding author: Maria Claudia. Tel.: +31475869034

E-mail address: talos.claudia@yahoo.com

system, regardless of widespread of clichés, the vulgarity, cultural fast food that traverses from media message characterized by sensational and daily scandal. In Romania, the ethical issues are not found ... among the most intense preoccupations of media employers or publishers ... so professional maturation of the guild runs parallel to the maturation of the whole society, (Cuc, M.C., 2010, pp.205), which is why, school institution has the role of formation of media competence at learners, but also, the formation of a selective and critical attitude towards mass-media.

2. Purpose of Study

Equipping learners with a set of selection criteria, individual and pertinent processing of media messages contributes to their preparation for the capitalization of media content by a critical reception and making connections, but also, permanent restructuring of the system of knowledge, developing communication, analysis and argumentation competences. Motivation for the proposal of this study is based on the correct reception by the learner of the values and the concrete media content that leads to reflections, analysis and deep evaluations in this cultural media environment, where the centre of gravity is in the consequences of things and phenomena. The study represents a pleading for the efficient way to form a set of axiological criteria, as prior finality of formal education, so that these become essential coordinates of informal education of students, but also a foundation for continuous education.

3. Research Methods

Connecting Romanian education system to the industry of communication represented a challenge, an educative direction that was necessary in actual development of the school institution, by improving education of the students due to valorisation of formative valences of didactic use of the new mass media as a variety of resource of learning.

The individual, under the influences of the new paradigm of communication, developing in a symbolic media society, needs balance at the level of communication relations, a mass-media competence, that at the level of educational demarche represent a pedagogical resource that would lead to the development of processing and interpretation of information messages capacities, to structuring of an individual system of knowledge and attitudes, but also to the information and intellectual formation of the learners, that receive media messages.

Beyond the theories elaborated by sociologists, psychologists, specialists in communication sciences, philosophers, concerning the controversial effects which mass-media has on the individual and postmodern society, in what concerns the authenticity and valorisation of the learning that it proposes, cannot be reduced to silence the increase contribution of media communication in forming and developing human personality. Mass-media through its commercial aspect and on the base of profit contributed to the deconstruction of some practices that have disadvantaged people and groups, but in the same time through its educative function led in the actual school didactic practice to the achievement of the cognitive formative educational objectives, because the school institution may use „mass-media, particularly, visual and audio media and new information technologies, like some technology resources in teaching technology... The introduction of educational technical means in the process of education makes teacher should not be the only source of information for the student "(Albulescu, I., 2003, pp.32). Valorisation of cultural diversity is no longer limited to a particular phenomenon of Romanian society, but refers to the interactive dimension at social and educational level through which system problems are being debated, are being developed common projects, are being built identities along the majority and minority levels, in a framework based on a communication system adequately and efficiently to the complex phenomena, on encouraging achievement of equal opportunities for all, based on mutual respect, cooperation and tolerance necessary affirmation of diverse cultural potential. In this dimension of the dynamics of social economy develops historical Maramures, with positive influences at the level of the relationship between theory and practice or discursive – applicative.

This investigative approach was an action model exercise within intercultural education approach that considers diversity as a source of learning for learners, but also for teachers, where through creativity in the educational process are adopted optimal teaching strategies in constructing a model of intercultural communication competence required by "socio-cultural reality and training needs of scholar audience "(Butnar, S., 2009, pp. 579).

The aim of the research was to analyze benchmarks aimed at the acquisition of media competence resources by

exploiting these resources in formal and informal framework due to the interrelations at the level of education for mass media and continuing education.

Research objectives:

1. Radiography of the existing state of things at the level of utilisation of mass-media as a source of information in formal and informal education.
2. Identifying training needs of teachers in the field of education for mass-media in order to acquire media competence.
3. Highlighting the possible solutions advanced by the teachers for the time that students allocate to the media content consumption and the way they involve in valuing it.

The investigative demarche took into account training needs of teachers in pre-university education, following the acquisition of media competence in socio-economic and educational reality of Romania, located in front of obstacles regarding students' inability to manage the disruptive impact of media communication messages on the harmonious development of their personality, and poor capitalization in a formative purpose of these media messages.

General hypothesis:

The achievement of resources necessary for media competence and exercising mobilization of these resources determine the development of some analysis and argumentation competences that lead to the change of the opinion and attitudes across to media content.

For investigative demarche was required to carry out a sampling operation of the target population considered in the research conducted rigorously as possible. Investigated group consisted of 80 subjects, based on simple random sampling procedures, teachers from pre-university education: teachers teaching at the preschool level (20 subjects), primary level (25 subjects), gymnasium (20 subjects), high school (15), direct actors of educational action. We mention, these teachers were from five institutions and structures related to them with an ethnic and cultural diversity of the school population, with a teaching activity focused on forming the intercultural communication competence and an efficient system of management of intercultural relations. To describe the lot of research were taken into account: initial and continuous training, initial and continuous training, age recorded in the education system and also in the specialty recorded in the system, the number of years since he works in the institution, teaching degree, pedagogical training programs followed..

It was performed also a preliminary interviewing of the subjects of experimental group for the elaboration of some questionnaires relevant to the research, that targeted specific issues noticed by these in educational reality.

The questionnaire applied to teachers was objectified in 14 items, which in terms of content have assumed an expression of opinion in how to exploit the media communication messages, their intrinsic quality, but also typology of mediation of relationship between learners and media, and the recording format of the responses focused more items mainly with open character, allowing expression of opinions, suggestions regarding the efficient management of communication media in educational approach. The questionnaire was applied to a total of 100 teachers in pre-university education, 25 questionnaires were not fully completed or presented errors in issuing the response, data processing was based on data provided by 80 teachers, including 15 teaching at the preschool level, 25 teaching at primary level, 20 teaching with predominantly or only at the gymnasium, 20 teaching predominantly or only in high school. It was considered important to take into account the criteria of differentiation such as experience in education, specialty, quality of class teacher, anticipating the existence of correlations between them and the answers given by the teachers in the context of the investigation.

Working methods and tools were established in line with the objectives that ensure sustainability of observant research in the context of the limited time available for the subjects to respond to the questionnaire. As a complementary method has been used the semi-standardized and non-standardized interview technique, based on which has been aimed to obtain from teachers different impressions, reactions, opinions and suggestions in accordance with the issue debated. In experimental research were considered and research tools and methods used in data collection, analysis of which verify the hypothesis and provide pertinent answers on the topic investigated, and the method of research documents and other documents school curriculum, aiming to measure the results from a

quantitative and qualitative perspective.

4. Findings and Results

By reporting the information obtained from respondents have been outlined the study results, on which basis were structured research findings. The aim outlined in the intervention was reached, outlining the quantitative and qualitative patterns resulting from the projected educational activity that contributed to the achievement of cognitive-formative educational objectives, but also to the formation of attitudes and new styles of conduct under the influence of symbolic models in the media because it has "an underlying inherent pedagogy and... journalists become more obvious - new masters" (Henry, M., 2008, quoted by Albu, G., 2013, pp.111).

The research objectives were correlated with the general hypothesis, which was confirmed ensuring consistency and validity of the undertaken study. In this study, it was found an increasingly availability of the respondents to answer favorable to the development of media competences among learners, allowing them the assimilation of values of socio-cultural society and filtering information in the effort of selection, processing and interpretation of media messages, which give snapshots of the events of everyday reality; a percentage of 84% of respondents claimed that the use of mass-media at school age leads to the annihilation of critical spirit and independent thinking, to passivity and convenience in mind, students looking for some easy forms, but superficial scientific and cultural information, leading the individual at teenage years to a moral, social and aesthetic mediocrity; a percentage of 67% of respondents claimed that media messages wear in their substrate new models of society influencing gender dimension, and thus, the actual mass-media of Romania push things to extremes by illustrating females as unfaithful wives, women dependent on private space in which they live, women who use upstart techniques to achieve their goals, dancers, and rarely is distinguished the woman with a successful career, woman as mother and wife dedicated to family, while male model type is distinguished by infidelity, physical strength, money. Also, 76% of teachers showed that Romanian mass-media is a valuable source of information for the student, as a factor that actively intervenes in the dynamics of its affective states, helping to cultivate sensitivity, the affective and emotional side, and through the media messages of sensation broadcasted at hours accessible to children become a base experience for these in this industry of feelings, substituting the missing component of the emotional and interpersonal dimensions of learner.

The same percentage shows that among adolescents, in groups that have common views and attitudes, values and interests, opinion leaders take the information, process it and transmit it within the group and its members often do not resist to this informational manipulation. The answers given by the respondents in the survey based on a questionnaire and interview-based survey provided data and information about how to use the mass-media as a source of information in formal and informal education space: a percentage of 95% point out that educational system in Romania has no official curriculum documents by which to design and implement specific media use in educational activities, school programs emphasize that there is a connection between educational aims, educational and instructional contents of promoted educational media products; 86% of respondents in the didactic activity would use media products as didactic auxiliary, but in schools is not yet a well planned logistics base, personnel specialized to use software for the subjects included in the curriculum; 79% of teachers point out that mass-media does not exploit at the level of Romanian society the educative function, and through a limited number of TV shows are drawn some recommendations to certain content received by students; and 92% of respondents claimed that in the media of Romania the structural media content is subordinated to informal education, which submits false values to the students through the circulated culture media, being in disagreement with the universal cultural values, specific to Romanian society. A solution advanced by teachers is the introduction in the media contents of clear explanations for both parents and students on the educational dimension and how they must be received by the school audience. Also, another solution would be the integration in the grid of programs of some TV shows based on interactive games, whose finality is education for mass-media and its effects, too, completing the cognitive, affective and behavioural experiences obtained through the experience of learning in school, family or other social institutions. A percentage of 63% of teachers claimed that a possible solution would be the partnerships with media institutions and involving learners in achieving structural content media that promote positive attitudes, development of relevant behaviours, of some successful social and professional models. A percentage of 89% of respondents have advanced as solution the need to transform the media into an active educational partner, through a close collaboration with the school, implementing a new subject in educational offer, education and mass-media, which deliver media content in desirable learning and training experiences and develop to learners the media competence.

The same respondents advanced as solution the generation of an analysis scale of media content at the level of language and communication area, in order to develop communication skills, competency of text editing and argumentation of personal opinions. Media becomes after the accumulation of relevant learning experiences for the student, a reading grid of social practices "(Claude-Jean Bertrand, 2001 quoted Albu, I., 2003, pp.70) through which they will acquire meta-media knowledge.

From the responses of 86% of respondents it was confirmed that through continuing education programs, in accordance with international standards, should be disseminated examples of good practice in meta-media knowledge, acquiring resources necessary to media competence and their mobilization in identifying solutions to problematic situations of media message management in a society where communication media represents "a catalyst for change in social products "(McQuil, D.; Windahl, S., 2001, quoted by Marian Feldrihan, C., 2009 , pp.274). Through interview-based survey we appreciate that information obtained were a real support for improvement of continuous training of teachers to promote education for the media in a society dominated by "a sort of structural frivolity "(Lipovestsky , G., 2009, pp.93), where the rating is required in cultural production and in the creative fields, developing, "a precooked cultural food, a pre-thought one. "(Bourdieu, P., 2007 cited by Albu, G., 2013 pp.109), and teachers through educational projects initiated in the institution and in close collaboration with institutions subordinated to non-formal education optimizes the system of relationship of students with the media and prevent its transformation from a disturbing factor of personality of learner in an improvement factor of the culture and professional level. It was noted that elaboration of counselling programs, continuing training and education for the media represents a poor shape, with a small number of specialists in the field, incoherent offer of services and products and curricular auxiliary products.

All these solutions advanced by practitioners are a relevant issue in professional training, but also in identifying the best intervention strategies regarding the formation of media competence, because the impact of mass-media on learners personality cannot be ignored, given the condition in which postmodern society is under the influence of diversifying educational needs, requires new resources in its evolution.

5. Conclusions

From the perspective of the radiography of state of fact was observed that at the level of the actors there is a concern that in recent years became increasingly clear, coherent in terms of forming media competence of learners through collaborative activities of school institution with media institutions, in order to promote the educational character of media content which is distributed on the media market in Romania. School needs changes evidenced in partnerships that have as finality involvement of learners in documentation and production of some media content through which can be stimulated the intellectual activity, to develop emotional experience because the attitudes formed after the reception of media content have changed the behaviour and led to the undermining of moral norms of learners. Changing conditions are influenced by the way of dissemination of good practices, by the complex nature of education for the media, the design of educational approaches that reflect everyday life in which we are anchored, and also through a close cooperation with international specialists.

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