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NOVGOROD CULTURE AS A PRECEDENTIAL TEXT FOR
NOVGOROD JOURNALISM

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Abstract

The article presents ideas about media education issues, which have received serious theoretical understanding, revealing their diversity, as evidenced by the variety of scientific research in this area. Today it is a process related to the mediatization of all spheres of public life, and, above all, the educational sphere: from pre-school to adult education. Modern information technologies that determine the rules of the game in all spheres of life, including education, as well as the media centrism of the society make it necessary to form its digital culture. The main role is given to the pedagogical community; however, one cannot exclude the traditional family influence, which lays the foundations for children's communicative behavior. Media education is particularly relevant in training Journalism majors, manifesting itself, inter alia, in professional competencies related to the creation of media content. It is shown that educational technologies used in the discipline "Culture of Veliky Novgorod: History and Modernity" contribute to a deeper development of this competency, as well as the inclusion of students' texts in the cultural discourse of Novgorod journalism. At the same time, Novgorod culture appears to be a precedential text of regional journalism, while digital technologies help expand the boundaries of its presence in the media space. The highest degree of precedence is predominantly in the texts of historical and cultural subjects, given the significant history of Veliky Novgorod. However, texts of modern culture make up a significant part of the Novgorod media field content.

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Keywords: Media discourse, media education, Novgorod culture, precedential text



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1. Introduction

Today, the term “media education” can be considered established, its appearance in national science dates back to the second half of the 20th century, despite the fact that resorting to the media in the learning process has a long history. Researchers offer various interpretations of this concept, but often the definition that was formulated in the materials of the UNESCO conference “Education for the Media and the Digital Age” in 1999 is taken as the basis. In accordance with it, “media education is associated with all types of media (print, graphic, sound, screen and other forms) as well as various technologies. It makes people understand how mass communication is used in their communities, to master the ability to use the media when communicating with other people” (UNESCO, 2001, p. 152).

Media education today is a multidimensional process related to the mediatization of almost all spheres of life, but primarily the educational one. The current scientific agenda includes more and more studies dealing with issues of school media consumption, which, despite their relevance, are still “not a topic for public discussion in the educators’ professional community” (Frolova & Obraztsova, 2019, p. 751) and, in the opinion of school teachers, “students are introduced to traditions and customs created in the family, and not at school” (Ibid., p. 752).

The transition of the society from the laws of consumption to those of informatization made this trend even more relevant while the strengthening of the role of media in the society and its shift from a literary-centric to a media-centric principle accelerated this process.

2. Problem Statement

With the Runet development, the basic requirements for media education in our country have somewhat changed, related to the transformation of the information and communication system as a whole. In this connection, the important task now is digital culture formation, first of all, of the younger generation, who refers to it as a real environment. Wide informatization and rapid digitalization of all areas of life, especially the economy, “require not only the working population, but also each member of the society to possess a fairly wide range of new generation skills based on computer literacy” (Baskakova & Soboleva, 2019, p. 245). In this aspect, we can talk about the importance of a more specific concept - information - communication literacy, defined “as the ability to use digital technologies, communication devices and networks to receive, evaluate, disseminate and create information” (Ibid., pp. 245-246).

Koryagina and Kravchenko (2019) believes that modern “information technologies are a new culture in which not only new meanings, but also new cultural values are continuously constructed. In these conditions, the goal of information technology development is not to protect citizens from undesirable information, but, on the contrary, to create conditions for personality development in dialogue with the media. (p. 765)

Moreover, in real practice, "the prospects for effective education of a creative personality in modern conditions of world cultural and economic upheavals acquire special acuteness and become ideological, managerial and, in a broad sense, educational challenges that require creative solutions" (Galazhinsky &

Kabrin, 2019, p. 207). In other words, the new conditions require students to be able to act creatively under the conditions of “a renewing transcultural worldview, in which the synergy of sciences, arts, technologies and culture as a whole becomes more tangible” (Ibid., p. 207).

At the beginning of the 21st century, following foreign colleagues’ models, Russian educational system introduced a competency-based approach to teaching, which involves students’ developing the competencies they will need in the future – from universal to professional ones, based on the implementation of professional standards in the field of future practical activities. Introducing media education since early childhood, by the time a school graduate chooses his/her further study direction, the basic skills related to using media in getting an education will have already been formed at a level sufficient for primary needs, allowing to switch to a more complex model of media education, for example, in a university. The ability to navigate in the media environment, to search, critically analyze and select information in it is one of the universal competencies of a future Bachelor in any field of training.

It is customary to expand the boundaries of media education and bring it to an ever higher level in the higher education system. This becomes even more important in the case of training Journalism majors, for whom media education issues become not only basic, but also laying the foundation for future professionalism. The transition to a competency-based approach in Russian education has not received a full-fledged academic assessment of performance yet. Therefore, the search for new approaches is welcomed in pedagogical practice. Modern educational technologies associated with the use of interactive and experimental forms, combined with the traditional ones, can give a positive effect even in the long run. Such technologies can become especially productive in teaching auxiliary disciplines, allowing to expand students’ scientific, cultural, value horizons.

3. Research Questions

- 3.1. What methods are used to master the media competence by Journalism majors for whom this knowledge is not only educational, but also professionally determined?
- 3.2. How are students’ texts devoted to culture issues and written as assignments for “Culture of Veliky Novgorod: History and Modernity” course included in the Novgorod media field content?

4. Purpose of the Study

To identify ways to fill the cultural discourse of the Novgorod media field with students’ texts, as well as to point out the Novgorod cultural media discourse precedential texts created as part of "Culture of Veliky Novgorod: History and Modernity" course.

5. Research Methods

Using observation and Novgorod media content analysis methods, we will consider ways of forming regional media agenda by means of students’ texts resorting to the precedential phenomena of the Novgorod

culture. For example, media competence associated with the development of professional knowledge on the basis of general cultural one, formed during the period of school and primary higher education, is being actively developed, in my opinion, in the course “The Culture of Veliky Novgorod: History and Modernity”. For Novgorod-born students, such a course is based on the existing knowledge of Novgorod’s history, which had recently appeared in the school curriculum, allowing to consolidate new basic knowledge by creating author-specific content on the topic. Students from other regions have basic knowledge on the topic from the course of the general history of Russia. Getting acquainted with the history and culture of the Novgorod land, particularly by means of creating their own texts, students demonstrate their interest in this field of knowledge, a desire to replenish regional media content and a willingness to include cultural topics in the Novgorod media discourse. “The modern cultural space is the coexistence of many discourses: philosophical, artistic, scientific, etc. Moreover, all these discourses intersect, interact with each other, since they are the embodiment of a single value system” (Kokarevich, 2019, p. 53). In this study, it becomes important to include student texts in cultural discourse and their functioning within the framework of the regional system of cultural and historical values. Despite the lack of consistency in such publications, due to the peculiarities of the traditional culture, which rarely provide significant informational reasons, “at the same time, the media are one of the most important sources of information about culture, which actualizes the study of the nature of its representation in journalistic texts” (Zharovsky, 2020, p. 175). It should be noted that “... the regional agenda is not formed in isolation, it reflects cultural, social, political and economic factors, mainly depending on the characteristics of the region and type of periodical” (Novak, 2018, p. 131). The cultural theme in this case is inferior to the political and economic, but in regions with a rich historical and cultural heritage, as in the case of the Novgorod region, it can make up a significant part of the content. This, in particular, affects the creation of the symbolic capital of the place, which, according to Bazikyan (2017), becomes “the basic resource for building a positive image of a particular territory” (p. 594).

A special role here is played by the high precedence of Novgorod cultural objects, more precisely, the Novgorod culture itself appears to be a precedential text of the regional media agenda. In contemporary scientific studies, precedence is considered primarily “as a dialogue between the sender and the addressee in certain temporary and sociocultural conditions” (Remchukova et al., 2017, p. 95). Precedent names have been considered by researchers in various aspects, but “in most studies this term is used in a broad sense as “any secondary nomination”, which is sometimes regarded as a kind of language game emphasizing the creative nature of the precedent nomination” (*Ibid*).

I choose as a basis the definition by Karaulov (2010), the author of the term, who calls precedential those “texts that are significant for a particular person in a cognitive and emotional relationship, having a superpersonal character, i.e. well-known to the surroundings of this personality, including both predecessors and contemporaries, and, finally, those that are repeatedly addressed in the discourse of this linguistic personality ”(p. 216). I also take into account the definition suggested by Slyshkin (2000), who proposes to understand precedential texts as “any sequence of sign units characterized by integrity and connectedness that has value significance for a certain cultural group” (p. 28). Thus I have to note that for a group that can be arbitrarily called “Novgorodians” the number of precedential texts in the regional media, mainly of historical nature, is quite large. Here it can be seen that it is directly related to texts (in a broad

sense) that store “the living memory of citizens, the names of urban space elements, legends, traditions, sayings and jokes passed on from generation to generation” (Shmeleva, 2018, p. 1). “Along with them, printed texts (documents, periodicals, books, including scientific descriptions) record official memory, which often diverges from the living memory of citizens in the selection of significant facts and their assessments” (Ibid.).

Chilingir (2011) speaks of culture that "as a whole is hypertext, consisting of texts of religion, works of art, folk art, laws, etc." (p. 15). The author of the article considers precedential texts to be "... spontaneously or deliberately selected texts that are regarded generally known in a particular speech culture, and therefore special forms of their use are allowed, they do not need any special references. The knowledge of precedential texts, the basic set of which is different for each culture (subculture) and changes over the time, is considered an element of cultural ownership "(Ibid., p. 16). Karaulov's wide interpretation of precedential texts allows to include in their number a variety of units – not only verbal, but also non-verbal: architectural objects, works of painting, music, etc.

6. Findings

Resorting to the material of the Novgorod culture, the following points should be noted.

For Veliky Novgorod and the entire region, whose history begins according to documentary evidence since the 9th century, the entire layer of precedential texts reflected in the modern media discourse is not only voluminous, but also understandable to a wide range of contemporary Novgorodians. It is difficult to imagine a city dweller who has heard nothing about “The Monument to the Millennium of Russia” or the Novgorod Kremlin. A wide range of precedent nominations is associated with the name of St. Sophia Cathedral, the oldest church in Russia, built in the middle of the XI century. Shmeleva (2018) in the article “Literature and Cultural Memory of the City” writes:

Novgorod was thought of as the House of Sofia, the wisdom of God (while Pskov was the House of the Trinity), Sofia was the heavenly patron of the city <...> St. Sophia Cathedral (unlike the Trade Quarter) is really present in today's urban environment, it is difficult to imagine a Novgorodian who has not been to it. <...> St. Sophia Cathedral constantly gives occasion to write and talk about it: Easter and Christmas processions, the return of the dome cross from Spain and its placement in the altar, ornithological protection of the domes. (p. 3)

Mentioning Sofia among the names that “are“ carriers ”of memory about named objects, which is replenished with new information or “erased ”by time, but remains part of the cultural memory of the city”, T. V. Shmeleva concludes that “the name of a city object, regardless whether it is given to perpetuate someone / something or just to distinguish a named object from others, becomes a guardian of memory both in the scale of the city’s culture and in terms of biography for the townspeople ”(Ibid.).

When acquainting with the history and culture of Veliky Novgorod, journalist students get familiar with the precedent texts of Novgorod culture from a new point of view, develop the skill of identifying precedent names in the regional cultural media discourse, thereby continuing the tradition of receiving and transferring cultural knowledge between generations.

There are social connections between members of society, both located in the same time and space, and distanced from each other. These connections, which determine the correlation of members of society, provide, among other things, the texts of mass written communication, which form a special textual system of discourses existing and emerging here (Sibirko & Bogoslavtseva, 2014, p. 236).

First of all, such texts are published in special sections of the Journalism Department academic newspaper called "The Antonovka" or in its thematic issues. Despite the educational status of this printed periodical and its insignificant circulation, it, nevertheless, makes up a segment of the regional media field being distributed among students, employees and university applicants. Sometimes it goes beyond its scope, for example, as a special issue, it is distributed among the participants of the traditional international conference "Novgorodika" in September 2009. So the text by Sofia Shvetsova (2018a) "About great love for a small homeland" was published in the heading "Our local lore" in "The Antonovka" newspaper. The publication tells about a meeting with A. A. Lukin, a Novgorod ethnographer, on whose initiative the Church of the Intercession of Our Lady was restored in the village of Vitka, Novgorod Region. "How strongly our place of residence influences the perception of the most valuable cultural monuments with a century-old history. We live in Veliky Novgorod and look at the Kremlin and St. Sophia Cathedral in the same way as at billboards or shopping centers. They are already boring to us and do not cause any feelings. However, to be fair, there are very special people. Their soul responds with love to every house, to every tree in their native land. We chanced to communicate with one of such people - the author writes" (Ibid.). Describing the meeting with A.A. Lukin, S. Shvetsova notes his enthusiasm for the history and culture of his small homeland, despite the completely unrelated profession of the hero - he used to be a missile officer in the past. In the conclusion of the article, the author notes: "It is not enough just to know the history of your small homeland - it is important to do something for its well-being. This is what active local history means" (Ibid.).

In the same section, two more student texts were published on the theme of culture - about the museum of wooden architecture "Vitoslavlitsy" and the Desyatinniy Monastery. Both texts were also written as course assignments, but are imbued with the emotional response of the authors to a deeper acquaintance with the previously known places of the Novgorod land. A return to previously acquired and, therefore, no longer relevant knowledge and a rethinking of one's attitude to it, an attempt to see familiar places anew, to look at them from the height of newly acquired knowledge plays a significant role both in the acquisition of important general cultural competencies and in the students' own cultural identification - authors of texts.

In the section "Veliky Novgorod through the Eyes of a Student" a series of students' notes has been published, in which the authors describe excursions to memorable places of the city and their impressions of them, mentioning memorable cultural nominations: St. George's Monastery, Antonovo, Vitoslavlitsy.

Medieval precedential texts supplement the cultural discourse of the region only in connection with some significant events, not so often associated with them. The socio-political agenda is little tied to culture. The specialized cultural online periodical "Culture Field", which had previously functioned in Novgorod, partially filled this gap, but at the moment it does not work as a media outlet. Therefore, the cultural niche of the regional media discourse is filled with current events. Acquaintance with the modern cultural component of the city in all the diversity of its institutions is another course target. However, it is impossible to fit its full spectrum into the framework of training sessions, so students, as independent work, attend

cultural events during the semester and publish texts about this in the media. The opportunity to publish such texts used to be provided to students by the university periodical "Novgorod University", which only recently has ceased its work, as well as other media outlets in Veliky Novgorod: the online periodical VNovgorode.ru, 53 Novosti; portal "Gazon Media".

Other media in Veliky Novgorod also posted students' cultural texts on their pages. For example, the online "VNovgorod.ru" published M. Nikolaev's report on readers meeting a writer A. Usachev in the "Bukvoed" store in Novgorod under the title "A Children's Writer Andrei Usachev: "Do not Entrust Children Only to School" (Nikolaev, 2015) or an article by S. Shvetsova "2018 Golden Button Carnival Costume Festival: how it went on" (Shvetsova, 2018b). The publications by A. Smirnova in the online periodical "53 News" under the titles "The Maly Theatre's Shakespeare Exhibition Was Nicely Closed in the Museum of Fine Arts" (Smirnova, 2019a) and "How to Get to the Theater? Become a volunteer!" in the "Lawn Media" portal (Smirnova, 2019b). Students present the published works as test papers, often getting involved in cultural subjects and continuing to write on a topic of their interest later on. In general, the cultural theme often attracts students, but in the process of getting to know the cultural institutions of the city and the region closely, they choose their thematic niche and sometimes become permanent authors of online media or press centers. For instance, most often students are attracted by the activities of the Novgorod Maly Theater for Children and Youths, which has been actively collaborating with the university and the Journalism department for many years.

Culture-focused texts created by students complement the cultural media discourse, which actively uses the Novgorod precedential texts, thereby increasing the degree of their precedence. Novgorod Kremlin, St. Sophia Cathedral, Desyatinniy Monastery, Vitoslavlitsy, the Monument to "The Millennium of Russia", etc. are the texts with a high precedence degree, actively used not only in the regional, but also in the national media discourse. Students' publications play a certain role in this, including those written as part of "The Culture of Veliky Novgorod: History and Modernity" course. Most of them still belong to the historical component of the cultural heritage of our region. However, modern culture is gradually entering a wide discourse, saturating it with the precedential Novgorod texts of the current moment. These include such precedents as Chitay-Gorod, the Novgorod Maly Theater and the Tsar Fairy Tale Festival associated with it, "the exhibition wave" of the Novgorod Contemporary Art Center, Novgorod libraries and museums, etc.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the objects of Novgorod culture, represented by many historical and modern institutions, become objects of journalistic interest quite often. Novgorod's rich cultural and historical heritage contributes to an active interest in it from both journalists and the public, thereby increasing the recognition of Novgorod precedents, creating a significant regional discourse that is easily identified by the "Novgorodians" cultural group. The "Culture of Veliky Novgorod: History and Modernity" course as one of the professional media education vectors at Novgorod University connects the media competencies and knowledge about Novgorod culture in the minds of future journalists, convincing that it is a precedent text of the Novgorod media discourse.

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