MSC 2020
International Scientific and Practical Conference «MAN. SOCIETY. COMMUNICATION»

REGIONAL IDENTITY AND TRENDS IN PROFESSIONAL MEDIA EDUCATION IN RUSSIA

Tatyana Kaminskaya (a), Oksana Erokhina (b)*
*Corresponding author

(a) Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University, Veliky Novgorod, Russian Federation, Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russian Federation, tlkam1@mail.ru
(b) Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russian Federation, o.v.erokhina@gmail.com

Abstract

The article is devoted to the role of regional identity for a journalist and the possibilities of its formation in the process of modern professional media education. Nowadays many regions of the country are characterized by the outflow of the most mobile professional personnel, in particular, graduates of universities in the field of media, to capitals and large urban complexes. This process has particularly affected regions that are geographically close to the two capitals of Russia (Yaroslavl, Veliky Novgorod, Pskov, etc.). In the modern world the increasing role of the media is a special problem. Journalists, bloggers and PR specialists influence society and shape the mindset in the conditions of mediatization of all spheres of life as never before. The article is based on the research of expert polling. It shows that when transforming professional media education, introducing new forms of it and taking into account new media trends, not only in the country, but also in the world, it is necessary to pay attention to such an important factor as the formation of identity of University students. The article emphasizes that media education is the most important factor in preventing the destabilizing role of various social and political processes, and in this context highlights the effective aspects of media education. Media education is understood not only as a process of obtaining professional competencies, but also as a process of personal development of a journalist with the help and on the material of regional culture, traditions and practices of commentary.

Keywords: Media education, project-based approach, regional identity

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of territorial (sometimes understood as local, regional, urban, local, etc.) identity as a social phenomenon that can have a deep and sustainable impact on the development of the regional community in modern science is not often it is considered in connection with the media discourse. As a result in modern Russian the society does not use its resource potential as an important tool successful socio-cultural development of regional communities, formation of the "spirit" place and positive image of these territories in the external environment. The role of a journalist in translation and adjustment of positive territorial identity was noted authors in a number of other studies (Kaminskaya, 2017). However, in the context of University educational practices formation of regional identity as professional competence is not considered. Meanwhile, modern theoretical and methodological possibilities professional media education allows us to perceive regional identity as a dynamic construct that can and should be designed and used to solve strategic tasks of regional communities.

Recently media researchers have been interested in the identity concept that is primarily explained by socio-political processes of modernity. On the one hand, the identity crisis in modern Europe and Russia has activated interest in this phenomenon. On the other hand, the media centrality of all spheres encourages interest in in media discourse that actualizes modern life in terms of representations of self-determination. One of the most significant Russian identity research in the media was represented in 2017 at the Ural state University (Astashova, Bulatova et al., 2017). Including theoretical and methodological aspects of identity development research on media texts, authors also presented various identification practices that common in Russia. However, when talking about identity, researchers mostly mean national identity. The notion of regional identity in the context of Russian life gets much less attention. Oftentimes regional identity is interpreted as a phenomenon of a certain territory. For example, Yurkova (2018) represents the Arctic identity of the inhabitants of the Arkhangelsk region. That article reveals the relationship between the Arctic vector in the image policy of the region and regional identity of residents of the Arkhangelsk region.

In many cases regional identity plays a defining role in Russian society. We share the approach of Korepanov (2009), who defines regional identity as an "experienced and realized meanings and values of a particular system of local community that form a "practical sense" (self-awareness) of the territorial belonging of an individual and a group" (p. 57). At the same time, we agree with this author that it is for the typical Russian population. If you live in Russia, your regional identity is crucial, it is more significant than, for example, national or social.

The role of mass media in the formation of territorial identity is emphasized by all researchers, since the process of constructing and maintaining regional identity is associated with discursive practices, which are undoubtedly engaged in by journalists and other media professionals. As shown "journalistic practice can influence all manifestations of regional identity, because it has knowledge of places, groups, institutions in different communities. The newspaper operates in the value market, where "symbolic goods" related to economic activity are produced and exchanged. In this regard, the regional newspaper presents a public space according to (Habermas & Pensky, 2001), where various social and political actors meet with citizens-readers" (Yanglyaeva & Yakova, 2019, p. 493).

At the same time, forming of a regional identity by means of media education is not possible without its constant transformation, without bringing it into compliance with constantly changing media practices. Talk about necessity, ways and methods of transformation of professional media education systemically began in Russian scientific community since the 2000s; to date, it has been formed its terminology (Krivyh, 2016), a pool of experts and enthusiasts emerged, is out today media Education magazine, indexed in international databases and thematic conferences on media transformations are held. In reviews different approaches to media education, its transformation in the post-Soviet period of time, and research on the current state of Affairs has always played a key role professional media education (Fedorov, 2015). The researchers note: "The main directions of media education are: media education of future professionals in the field of mass communication -journalists, editors, directors, producers, actors, camera men, etc." (Fedorov & Levitskaya, 2018, p. 12). The practice-oriented model education is becoming more and more popular today.

2. Problem Statement

Today, a large-scale identity crisis associated with the process of globalization is evident all over the world. This crisis has caused many social and cultural problems in Russian regions, including the outflow of young people to the capital cities, the lack of a value and spiritual foundation that binds local communities and a positive sense of self, the idealization of the "other" place, etc. In addition, competition between Russian regions requires local communities to develop strategies for positioning the territory and media efforts to create a positive image of it.

There are two main approaches to the study of the concept of "identity" formed in the scientific research. The first approach implies a primordial interpretation of identity, which assumes an innate character self-identification and the presence of a certain "set" of values and attitudes that practically do not change over time. Within the framework of this topic, the second approach is more productive, formed within the framework of the constructivist paradigm (F. Barth, P. Berger, P. Bourdieu, M. Castels, S. Eisenstadt, etc.). It assumes a more flexible interpretation of identity as a complex phenomenon, the possibility of its change under the influence of various, including external, factors. It also allows for the possibility of multiple identities for an individual in accordance with the diversity of their social roles. Thus, identity can be interpreted as an important component of a person's personality, which emphasizes its cognitive component (Stets & Burke, 1996). In this case, we are talking about a possible competition of ideas about identity: in different cases, different identities are updated, in addition, you need to take into account the purposeful actions of political leaders institutions in this direction. A number of authors focus on strategies of political mobilization that use regional identity to implement the political interests of elite (social) groups (Bell & York, 2010; Habermas & Pensky, 2001). The question of the correlation of national and regional identity becomes particularly relevant: these concepts can be either equivalent, hierarchically arranged, or competing (Archilés & Martí, 2001). The concept of "region" is also being reinterpreted in modern literature: the question of borders in the global world is not only being updated in terms of erasing the usual designations of administrative-territorial entities, but also in the sense of creating new borders that mean a new role for regional identity (Martin, 1995). The most common interpretation of the region as

part of the territory of the state, which has certain distinctive features, but not necessarily clearly defined territorial borders.

The social aspect of the concept of "regional identity" can be characterized through the idea of "regional consciousness", which is formed in the process of creating and interacting socio-political institutions, cultural and historical traditions and practices and their modern interpretations. Institutionalized discourses, symbols, and meanings define a person's identification with a particular territory; regional identity becomes a social construct. In this case, the constructed character of regional identity is emphasized as a special case of social identity (Castells, 2010). Another point of view is presented in the works that emphasize the importance of generalizing the distinctive characteristics of the region in the "regional image", which is perceived by both residents of the region and other people (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Paasi, 2009). In this regard, an interesting point of view is the formation of a "strong" and "weak" regional identity (Raagmaa, 2002), which are formed depending on the stability of the socio-economic structure of the territory, as well as positive associations and patriotism of the population, the existence and prevalence of specific elements of culture and traditions, migration processes.

Thus, the problem of constructing territorial identity has many aspects, opportunities and contextual manifestations. We consider only one aspect of the formation and functioning of territorial identity: the aspect of professional media education. The choice of this aspect is explained by the fact that the meanings of territorial identity are generated in the most symbolic, mentally determined and influential public discourses produced in a variety of media texts (from statements of politicians to movies). In addition, territorial identity can be defined as a symbolic resource: a) forming the socio-cultural microenvironment of the regional community, its consolidation and unification, etc.); b) projecting the meanings of the uniqueness of a place into the process of forming its attractive image, which solves the socio-economic problems of the region (the influx of tourists, investment attractiveness, etc.).

In the conditions of mediatization of all spheres of life and rapidly changing media reality, the training of professionals in the field of media is significantly transformed. University teachers of media specialties are experiencing a number of challenges of our time. This is, first of all, the robotization and digitalization of journalism, the crisis of professional identity of journalists in the conditions of blogging, the transformation of formats and genres. Today, we need to talk primarily about the project approach to media education, the use of new technological solutions and platforms, and the inclusion of students as future opinion leaders in the life of regional communities.

3. Research Questions

3.1. Is it important to form a regional identity in the process of university professional media education as a resource for journalists and the territory of their training?

3.2. How can regional identity help in the professional activities of graduates?

3.3. What ways and methods can be used at the University to form a regional identity?

4.   Purpose of the Study

In this article, we analyze the possibilities of professional media education for the formation of regional identity among students of media specialties and its resource potential for their further professional activities. Expert opinions on the role and processes of regional identity formation among students serve as a guide for setting goals in the field of media education.

5.   Research Methods

To achieve the goal of the study, we use the method of inclusive observation of future media workers as teachers of media specialties at two universities. Observations show that over the past ten years, initially, when applying for media specialties, most applicants from regional universities plan to move to cities and large urban complexes after receiving their diploma. At the same time, students of the capital's universities who came from the regions do not seek to return to their regions, wanting to gain a foothold in the metropolis.

The method of expert interviews was used to identify the self-reflection of the journalistic university community in relation to the regional identity of students and foresee the prospects of regions in the conditions of youth outflow. Ten leading teachers and heads of media departments of regional universities expressed their opinion. As part of the use of this method, the questions outlined in this article were asked.

Most experts agreed that the formation of regional identity within the University is important, but two (20% - belonging to major cities) are of the opinion that people of media professions are "people of the world", and it does not matter where they will self – actualize. Experts stressed that the purposeful efforts to form an identity at the university are small: "Those who were born and raised in Yekaterinburg are additionally connected with it through family and family ties, the university's merits are not here".

In terms of the positive role of students ' commitment to the region, they noted "a strong connection with the region at the level of personal ties: relatives, friends, acquaintances in areas related to the profession. What matters is a comfortable and reliable circle of communication that is formed over the years of study". The experts pointed out the importance of knowledge of the region, which "can help graduates become specialists (experts) in certain areas, topics related to their small homeland. For example, a journalist may specialize in some regional aspect (for example, the culture and history of the Pskov region), on which the editorial office previously did not have a qualified specialist (a high-class specialist on a narrowly focused problem at the regional level). In addition, a sense of belonging to their small Homeland will contribute to a deeper immersion of the journalist in the problem of their research, and this will directly affect the quality of their work (material).

The focus of students on the ideology of personal success, especially career success, was indicated, so "opportunities to go to the capitals are welcome. Some of them return later, but not out of patriotism, but because they were not able to establish themselves economically and professionally in Moscow or St. Petersburg".

With regard to the ways and methods of formation, it is important to observe that "regional identity (as well as its other varieties) is not static, it changes in connection with the life circumstances of a person". In the process of studying regional identity as a phenomenon and recording expert interviews possible

directions and actors of media education were identified in terms of forming regional identity among students of media specialties.

6. Findings

Important directions of professional media education today, in our opinion, are, on the one hand, design and technological approaches, on the other-the formation of cultural and regional identity of journalists for the subsequent possibility of embedding them as opinion leaders in regional communities.

Summarizing the approaches of leading scientists and data from an expert survey of university leaders and leading teachers in the field of professional media education, we can formulate the following directions of the university's efforts in the formation of regional identity of students:

1. Broadcast "success stories" of media personalities in the region, told mainly in the first person;

2. The curriculum includes bachelor's and master's degrees in media majors such as "History and culture of the region", "Regional journalism", "regional Studies";

3. Project activities of students on new technological media platforms with regional image content (results of ethnographic expeditions, review of cultural events and innovative initiatives of the territory);

4. Mandatory regional component when writing research papers by students.

7. Conclusion

Nowadays it is more important than ever to use the potential and directions of professional media education in the process of forming and using the potential of regional identity for the individual student and society as a whole. Sociologists and political scientists consider regional identity a resource for regional development and a driver of youth initiatives. Practice specialists in the field of media education agree that regional identity can be formed in the process of higher education. At the same time, the introduction of technological innovations in the educational process and the project approach is an important, but not the only effective way to include media education in the context of solving social problems.

Acknowledgments

References

Archilés, F., & Martí, M. (2001). Ethnicity, Region and Nation: Valencian Identityand the Spanish Nation-state. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 24*(5), 779-797.

Astashova, O. I., Bulatova, E. V., Enina, L. V., Ilina, O. V., Kablukov, E. V., Kalganova, S. O., & Chepkina, E. V. (Eds.) (2017). *Problems of constructing the identity of Russians in the media discourse under the influence of the concept of "information war"*. Moscow; Yekaterinburg: Cabinet scientist.

Bell, S. E., & York, R. (2010). Community economic identity: The coal industry and ideology construction in West Virginia. *Rural Sociology, 75*(1), 111-143. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1549-0831.2009.00004.x

Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond "identity". *Theory and Society, 29*(1), 1-47.

Castells, M. (2010). *The power of identity: The Information Age Economy Society and Culture*. Blackwell.

Fedorov, A. V. (2015). *Media Education: History and Theory*. Information for All.

Fedorov, A., & Levitskaya, A. (2018). Media literacy education mass media education in commonwealth of independent states (cis). *Media Education, 1*, 7-17.

Habermas, J., & Pensky, M. (2001). *The postnational constellation: political essays. Studies in contemporary German social thought*. The MIT Press.

Kaminskaya, T. L. (2017). Territorial identity as a resource for regional journalist. *Information age, 1*, 83-86.

Korepanov, G. S. (2009). Regional identity in the discourse of regional development sociology. *RUDN journal of sociology*, *4*, 56-65.

Krivyh, S. V. (2016). The development of theoretical concepts of media education. *Academy of Professional Education, 6*, 3-12.

Martin, D.-C. (1995). The choices of identity. *Social identities. Basingstoke, 1*(1), 5-19.

Paasi, A. (2009). Regional Planning and the Mobilization of "Regional Identity": From Bounded Spaces to Relational Complexity. *Regional Studies, 47*(8), 1206-1219.

Raagmaa, G. (2002). Regional Identity in Regional Development and Planning. *European Planning Studies, 10*(1), 55-76.

Stets, J. E., & Burke, P. J. (1996). Gender, Control, and Interaction. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 59*, 185-217. https://doi.org/10.2307/2787019

Yanglyaeva, M. M., & Yakova, T. S. (2019). The Role of Mass Media in Constructing the Regional Identity: the Media Geographic Approaches. *Theoretical and practical issues of journalism, 8*(3), 485-496. https://doi.org/10.17150/2308-6203.2019.8(3).485-496

Yurkova, M. V. (2018). Arctic aspect of the Arkhangelsk region inhabitants identity formation. *Tomsk State University Journal of Cultural Studies and Art History*, *29,* 163-171. https://doi.org/10.17223/22220836/29/15