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Modeling the media educational potential of the television industry as a post-crisis phenomenon

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Abstract. The modeling of the media educational potential of the television industry as a post-crisis phenomenon is considered. The complex of theoretical and empirical approaches such as modeling, case-study, semi-structured expert interviews was used. According to the results of this research, the fact that the television industry has the media educational potential and employs it in the professional activity is confirmed. There are three models of the media educational potential of the television industry (MEPTI), that are determined by differentiated professional aims: MEPTI in the media training of professionals; MEPTI in the qualification improvement of professionals; MEPTI in improving media literacy of broad audience. The realization of media educational potential is seen in federal and regional segments of the television industry, regardless the type of media companies. However, different forms of media educational potential are applied by the television industry that is seen not only in the collaboration with universities, but also in the autonomisation of media educational practices.

Keywords: media education, television, media communications, media literacy

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Моделирование медиаобразовательного потенциала телевизионной индустрии как посткризисный феномен

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Аннотация. Рассматривается моделирование медиаобразовательного потенциала телевизионной индустрии как посткризисный феномен. Применялся комплекс теоретических и эмпирических методов: моделирование, кейс-стади, полуструктурированные экспертные интервью. Результаты проведенного исследования подтвердили, что телевизионная индустрия обладает медиаобразовательным потенциалом и использует его в своей профессиональной деятельности. Выделены три модели медиаобразовательного потенциала телевизионной индустрии (МПТИ), обусловленные дифференцированными профессиональными целями: МПТИ в медиаподготовке профессионалов; МПТИ в повышении квалификации профессионалов; МПТИ в повышении медиаграмотности широкой аудитории. Реализация медиаобразовательного потенциала наблюдается как в федеральном, так и региональном сегментах телевизионной индустрии, независимо от форм собственности медиакомпаний. При этом зафиксированы разные формы использования медиаобразовательного потенциала со стороны телевизионной индустрии, проявляющиеся не только во взаимодействии с университетами, но и в автономизации собственных медиаобразовательных практик.

Ключевые слова: медиа, медиаобразование, телевидение, медиакоммуникации, медиаграмотность

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Introduction

In the conditions of post-crisis development of interaction between media and educational institutions, television industry most obviously has media educational potential (Yefanov, Pugachev, 2023). Television companies have an opportunity to use technical facilities and industrial experience to prepare the staff and

form active audience with high culture of communication that is directly connected with media culture (Fedorov, 2019; Kirillova, 2020; Oleshko et al., 2021; Urazova et al., 2020). Despite federal state educational standards for specialists' training in media, there is not a unified methodology to educate them. The educational process is based on different approaches and it is the result of a long search of a better model of studying process. Having started working on television, young graduates of the journalism faculty go on improving skills before they are really professional and demanded. Due to the lack of practice in the universities and fast developing media, the education process does not often respond to modern times, does not go step by step with changes in the profession.

Materials and methods

The aim of this research is to single out some models of media educational potential of the television industry in the context of post-crisis development of interaction between media and educational institutions. The complex of theoretical and empirical methods such as: modeling; case-study; semi structured expert interviews (n = 10) are used.

The series of semi structured expert interviews was taken to estimate media educational potential of the television industry. Informants were searched according to their belonging to the group of specialists, that are working on television or are training journalists in the education system.

The interview of the experts (n = 10) was taken in 2023. The experts were the managers of RSTRC (All Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company), STRC "Orenburg", STRC "Nizhny Novgorod", STRC "Alania", RT, "Moscow 24", media holding "Semerek", Orenburg State University, Khetagurov North Ossetian State University and the Academy of Media Industry. The interviews were taken in real communicative space or on the Internet. The received information was processed by data analysis.

The following research tasks were set in semi structured interviews:

- 1) to confirm the relevancy of the realized modeling to single out MEPTI in media training of professionals; MEPTI in qualification improvement of professionals; MEPTI in improving media literacy of broad audience;
- 2) to work out the mechanisms of improving media literacy of broad audience via MEPTI.

Results and discussion

There are several views on journalistic education in the modern theory of journalism. The differences are in number of classes in the curriculum that are focused on practical skills. The supporters of total students' involving in the production process are mostly practical journalists that are working at present in the industry or ones that have certain professional experience (Blokhin et al., 2016; Lee, 2022; Shesterkina et al., 2021; Volkova et al., 2021; Volkova, 2019). They place high demands on the logistics support of the education process, they also demand on students the skill of making media texts. The students are offered to focus on one type of media and prepare for a certain work in print media, on radio, on television or on the Internet.

However, there is another approach of the students training (Fateeva, 2019; Young, Ronquillo, 2022; Zhilavskaya et al., 2020), when the fundamental academic training is brought to the fore and the emphasis is placed on the students' broad outlook. The teachers are concentrated on forming academic knowledge of their students, while applied skills are got in the practical training, where students try new skills that they will improve in their professional activity.

In the middle 2010s in Russian educational area the innovative approach for specialists training in media (in its broad meaning) started developing, this approach is considered to be the part of general system of media education. A new direction of training for "Media Communications" appeared in HSE University (later in another Russian universities) in 2015 (Kachkaeva et al., 2020; Sharikov, 2016; Yefanov, 2021). The educational program combines communication training, data analysis, media management, producing, and fundamentals of directing and media products creating. On the official website of the university they explain the new direction by the necessity to respond the challenges of the new era in specialists' training¹. Graduates are prepared not only for their work in media but also in culture industry, for instance, in production centers and recording studios, in the computer games and animation industry, in the sphere of telecommunications, connected with content making, in book publishing business, social marketing and also in press offices and in marketing agencies. In the direction of "Media Communications" students study general professional subjects like philosophy, history, sociology, psychology, they also study such subjects as web-design, media marketing, photography and image processing, video editing, website creation, animation production, the creation of mobile applications, the projects of virtual reality and projects with the usage of multimedia technologies in the modern art. There are academic teachers as well as specialists of the industry, the representatives of media holdings, the developers of multimedia projects in the educational process. This approach forms practical skills that might be used not only in the journalism.

There are innovative approaches in the universities that are interesting to be researched. L.P. Shesterkina in her work "Forming of Innovative Model for Journalists Training in the Terms of Formation of Convergent Media: Humanitarian and Technological Aspects" describes the educational experimental model, that was implemented in the beginning of 2000s in South Ural State University. The model is based on the creation of registered electronic Media in the university for the practical activity of the students. The students' material becomes the content for not only the university television and radio company "SUSU-TV" but it also becomes a personal portfolio for the final examination in addition to the traditional academic form. L.P. Shesterkina describes the advantages of this approach in the following way: "The company provides the students with ongoing practical training, arranges students' self-study and practical classes for getting skills of professional journalistic work of different competence and qualification level according to modern staff requests of Media" (Shesterkina, 2011, p. 294). At the moment of its creation it was the only licensed university television and radio company in Russia, that

¹ Bachelor's program "Media Communications". (2015). HSE University. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 2, 2023, from https://www.hse.ru/ba/media/passport?ysclid=ljiensvbw665594548

was broadcasting on the Internet, on radio and on television and cable networks around the clock.

L.P. Shesterkina described all steps of "SUSU-TV" creation in details; she also analyzed the effectiveness of such kind of media in journalists' training. Her conclusions became the part of her doctorate thesis; some positions were taken in the curriculum of the journalistic direction of South Ural State University. All students from all courses and all forms of educational process take part in the content making for "SUSU-TV". This work is obligatory in the educational process according to the curriculum. L.P. Shesterkina mentions that daily making of the informative product increases professional skills and also helps in establishing business contacts with press offices, news agencies, advertisers: "The students' staff TRC "SUSU-TV" use all genres of journalistic in their work – operational, analytical, artistic and publicistic. The special place is taken by the production of radio and television sketches and documentaries. The television and radio company keeps the balance between informative, educational, social, political, entertaining, cultural programs and also shows different opinions on controversial issues; it protects the social peace and social moral, positioning itself as "the first noncommercial channel" (Shesterkina, 2011, p. 13).

It is important that university television company managed to increase the coverage because some projects were shown on professional media platforms. For instance, one of the programs was on air after the students' editorial office had taken part in the competition of the regional government. The opportunity of regional broadcasting makes the work of the students' editorial office closer to professional journalism, as students have to develop not only university's topics but also the problems that are interesting for broad audience. Let us emphasize that all the work of the experimental television company has been analyzed by different researchers. L.P. Shesterkina describes the achievements in the following way: "The faculty of journalism and the television and radio company "SUSU-TV", responding to challenges of the modern time in the terms of innovative model for journalists' training, have developed not only the case of convergent editorial office TRC "SUSU-TV", built the model and implemented it in the structure of university television and radio company and the educational process, they also have found out the way the journalists' activity has changed in terms of convergence, they have analyzed the work of convergent editorial office, singled out the main difficulties and controversial issues in the professional sphere and in the educational process of journalists. One of the problems is underestimating of some students the role of a universal journalist, who must get the skill to work in different media formats and use the technologies of convergent media without any difficulties" (Shesterkina, 2011, p. 268).

However, the model supposes making the corporate media. We can find the confirmation on the official website "SUSU-TV", where the main aims and tasks of the company are written. The first of them is: "To enhance and promote the image of the university as the world leader of modern educational space"². It is

² Broadcasting Company of the South Ural State University (2006–2014). (n.d.). SUSU-TV. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 2, 2023, from https://tvr.susu.ru/index.php?option=com content&view=article&id=53&Itemid=65

evident that the management of the university considers this television and radio company to be the mean of making a business reputation and they can not help but interfere with the editorial policy. However, the topics should be chosen according to the requests of the audience but not the management. Young journalists must know it. It is not a secret that we can see special-order materials in the broadcast of any television companies that work under media business laws, however, professional media, valuing their audience, manage to keep the balance between journalistic, image and promotional materials. Otherwise they will lose their audience.

State Television and Radio Company "Orenburg" have been using their media educational potential for many years. The company needed young journalists and new ideas in 1990s, as they would help to keep up with the times. There was not professional training for journalists at that time in Orenburg. Having studied the experience of journalists training in different universities of the country, STRC "Orenburg" and Orenburg State University decided to start such trainings. In 1999 the faculty of journalism opened in OSU. Students got theoretical skills in the university, while they got practical skills in the television company. STRC "Orenburg" set up their experimental creative and production laboratory and gave about 500 of broadcasting time to student programs. The company allocated fee funds and appointed experienced journalists to be the heads of the laboratory, having set them free from broadcasts. It was a longtime experiment, as a result the company could solve the staff issues. 9 students were employed as media workers before their defense of the thesis. But this result is not the only one. By words of the assistant principal of STRC "Orenburg" (he took the position at that time) and professor of OSU U.M. Karasevich, the practical importance of the experiment was in "solving tasks of forms and methods for professional training of qualified specialists in cooperation between university and state television company, in singling out the prospects for improvements in the educational process in faculties of journalism of Russian universities" (Karasevich, 2004, p. 69).

There were not similar experimental platforms, made by the cooperation of classical university and television company in Russia at that time. This model of specialist training was the topic of dissertation research of U.M. Karasevich. Its main difference from the model of SUSU was that student programs were aimed at the audience of STRC "Orenburg", while all teachers were working journalists, that is they combined teaching and making journalistic materials in the competitive environment, and this is a very important thing, as "being the participant of transformative practice, the journalist changes herself" (Karasevich, 2004, p. 11). All students were school children short time ago, they do not have enough life experience and it is difficult for them to estimate the events impartially. Besides theoretical knowledge and the knowledge of media texts making, students should have the skill of getting more information, they should be able to analyze and estimate facts, and they should size up the media field. Experienced practical journalists answer all this questions to make the educational process non-formal.

U.M. Karasevich set the following tasks: to systematize theoretical knowledge about the interaction between pedagogy and specialized practice in the educational process, to define more effective forms of this cooperation and to develop methodical recommendations for journalists training: "Speaking about professional moral, there is an instrumental approach to its standards in the journalistic teams and it regulates only some aspects of journalist work, but not the personality. We tried to realize the main goal – extra task of the journalist training – to establish creative and valuable position of the student in theory and practice as the basis to form the professional competency of students-journalists" (Karasevich, 2004, p. 11). To broadcast on the federal channel RTR that was presented by STRC "Orenburg" for the educational model, students made storylines, where they made up topics themselves, consulting their practical teachers. As it was real broadcast, there were high demands on the material. Storylines were regularly analyzed. The authors were trying to find "weak" and "strong" sides in their works and then professionals analyzed them. This approach helps to single out certain point of view. U.M. Karasevich describes the so-called precedent approach: "A student analyses the case with the group to make a certain decision in given conditions and in real working media" (Karasevich, 2004, p. 60).

After the experiment Orenburg State University equipped production platforms, where students could keep getting professional practical skills. The specialists from STRC did not take part in that process anymore. However, the production laboratory quickly turned into a press center of the university and it was not an important link in the educational process from the position of media literacy distribution, however, the company had done a lot in getting some practical skills by the students.

Media education is not just getting practical skills, it can not be effective without safety, aesthetic, cultural and another functions. If the management of the educational institutions does not realize this thing, the technological competence of the students will be used for meeting practical needs of educational institutions but not for revealing creative potential of the students and their personal growth. The process will be more effective only if professionals of media industry will be invited to take part in it, as they have all necessary production skills, they know how to influence on the audience using media texts, these specialists are able to define the needs of the audience and have a big experience to single out and analyze insecure media content.

Experimental educational models of U.M. Karasevich and L.P. Shesterkina are similar as both of them offer for educational process professional media, as they have media educational potential to train demanded journalists. "As a result of this research, pedagogical conditions for television journalist training are defined, the problems that pedagogical staff of the faculties of journalism have are singled out. The training of journalists of advanced specialization should be taken into account. The marketing interests need universal journalists – professionals" (Karasevich, 2004, p. 125), – concludes U.M. Karasevich. "The main goal of the research is to explain theoretically, develop and implement in educational practice the innovative model for journalists' training in terms of convergence, media and needs of modern media practice of journalist of the universal type" (Shesterkina, 2011, p. 14), – writes L.P. Shesterkina.

Authors' works of L.P. Shesterkina and U.M. Karasevich are correlated with media educational potential of the television industry (MEPTI) in media training of the professionals. However, except the given model, we can single out MEPTI in qualification improvement of professionals and MEPTI in improving media literacy of broad audience. The series of semi structured expert interviews (n = 10) was taken in 2023 to give an expert opinion of media educational potential of the television industry and to confirm the singled out models on the empirical level.

The lack of qualified specialists is one of the reasons why the majority of experts were all for using media educational potential of the television industry in media training of the professionals. The head of the media company in Tyumen, who was the student of the journalistic faculty of OSU and the participant of the experiment, that has been described above, thanks to that experiment she got "a good theoretical and practical basis" (Karasevich, 2004, p. 142), has her own vision: "It is necessary to realize that in universities they prepare students for working on unreal market. I can say that in four or five years television will not be like the one we watched yesterday. However, the specialists are needed right now. That is why television company are interested in specialists' training. Educational, work and pre-graduate practice should be close to real working conditions of television companies, ideally it should be done together with television companies, that take students – interns. Television channels should give a request to universities for graduates with certain characteristics" (expert 1).

Speaking about the realization of media educational potential of the television industry, some experts mention the importance of cooperation between universities and television companies in regions: "Famous universities of capital cities do not need technical base and media specialists as much as the regional universities do. A strong journalistic school can not appear on empty place, professionals are necessary. It is written in the curriculum that a student should have practical skills of video making, shooting and working on the air, only practical journalists can teach it. Regional universities are interested in having working journalists - teachers" (expert 3). Specialized education does not guarantee the employment. Even having some practical skills, a graduate can be not demanded. To understand what he is expected in professional media and what personal features he should develop is possible only in the process of work in the company: "High journalism education does not give students any creativity and new ideas." Everything is developing so fast at the age of social media and it is necessary to move away from patterns, a journalist should know what is interesting for the audience" (expert 4).

However, not all experts are supporters of using the television platform for students' education. Some of them think that it is enough for universities to attract media workers to take part in the educational process: "The system of education is responsible for journalists' education. Media takes big part in this process, as professional journalists from television channels, newspapers, Internet editions often teach in the university. A working journalist is better than any student books" (expert 5).

We have reviewed forms of media companies' participation in the process of journalists' high education. However, it is necessary to pay attention to MEPTI in qualification improvement of professionals – working journalists.

All experts that have taken part in the research and that deal with journalist material think that media workers must get professional training. This approach is

necessary to keep high quality of media content, thus giving a chance for a student to distract from the routine, that is important for objective analysis and self-analysis: "It is a good shake-up for a person, who makes content day by day. A journalist might just choose a comfortable way of working without any motivation to improve and develop his skills. Education is always a reason to renew professional competence" (expert 3). However, this argument is not a single one. Many directors, editors, operators and sometimes even TV presenters and correspondents do not have professional education. It mostly takes place in regional television companies. Young employees start working intuitively, without having fundamental theoretical base.

Qualification improvement is not just the opportunity to do usual work on a higher level. It lets broaden the horizons, get the new ways of interacting with the audience in dynamically developing media space: "Television in the meaning of the TV-set, is dying, but there is still television watching. People like watching the content on the Internet, that is made by professional journalists from television, however, this content must go step by step with the time and it should not look like a dinosaur in comparison with another content on the Internet. So the requalification is studying new trends" (expert 5).

Thus, we have reviewed MEPTI in media training of professionals and MEPTI in qualification improvement of professionals. While taking interviews, we needed to know what experts thought about MEPTI in improving media literacy of broad audience. We proceeded from the fact that modern audience have become more active, they take part in programs with a bigger interest and they make their own content that can be used by channels.

However, speaking about media literacy improvement as about getting skill of working with data, experts give opposite opinions: "The news consumer does not need any skills and special knowledge. News content is interesting just because it does not demand any special knowledge by audience. A television channel does not have the task to learn how to distinguish fake from checked information. A journalist must be able to do it, but for audience it is enough to know where the information is true" (expert 4). Other experts have another opinion and give their arguments: "A journalist lives in the information stream, checking the sources every day. He can share this skill with the audience" (expert 1); "It is beneficial for some content makers when the audience do not ask a lot of questions. The audience must realize that they should not trust information that is not confirmed with the facts, there is a blue tick in social nets, that means that this is an official source" (expert 2). Some experts understand the necessity of media education, but they do not fully agree with the opinion that the television industry has a lot of power for it: "Actually, nowadays the problem is in a big flow of information, not everybody can filter it, singling out interesting and important news. This situation is complicated and, to my mind, does not have a solution" (expert 3).

The participants of the research agree with the statement that there should be high demands to the work of professional journalists: "We need to grow our consumer but now with distribution of skills, but with our qualitative content, not "yellow" and scandal one, but competent and professional" (expert 4); "News content should be made a respect to the audience with different points of view. This model should be taken by the audience and they should demand the same from social nets" (expert 2).

Conclusion

The obtained results let us come to the conclusion, that the television industry has media educational potential and uses it in the professional activity. There are three models of media educational potential of the television industry, caused by differentiated professional goals: MEPTI in media training of professionals; MEPTI in qualification improvement of professionals; MEPTI in improving media literacy of broad audience.

The realization of media educational potential is seen in federal and regional segments of the television industry regardless the form of media company ownership. There are different ways of using media educational potential by the television industry, that is seen not only in the collaborations with universities, but also in autonomization their own media educational practices. The tendencies of modern media communications (mostly connected with the prosumerism) update the meaning of media educational potential of the television industry.

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