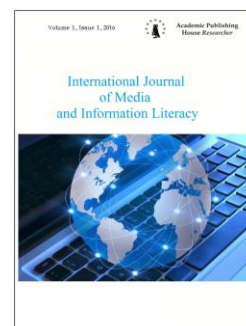


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Media Education Trends in Georgia

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Abstract

The study offers an analysis of the development of media education in the Republic of Georgia from 1992 to the present days. In the course of the study, a comparative analysis of individual scientific research in this area is carried out, the main stages of the historical development of media education in Georgia (1992–2019), goals and objectives, structure and content, as well as the basic concepts and development prospects in the near future, are identified. Notably, the most significant projects are initiated and funded by foreign foundations and/or directly by embassies of foreign states, thus acting as a “soft power” tool. The content analysis of such media literacy programs shows that quite a lot of them use propaganda techniques such as labeling and framing aimed at shaping prejudiced attitude towards Russian media, thus narrowing the wide scope of media literacy objectives and competencies to be developed. The authors come to conclusion that the role of authentic media education resources and curricular, produced by Georgian teachers, should be strengthened as an effective tool for ensuring lifelong education of citizens and sustainable development of the independent democratic State of Georgia.

Keywords: media education, media literacy, media competency, Georgia, journalism, critical thinking, soft power tool.

1. Introduction

Having gained independence in 1991, Georgia strongly pursued a pro-Western direction in terms of foreign and national policy, including policies and practices of the European Union countries in the field of education. Today it builds its educational system in accordance with the Bologna doctrines, recommendations of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe and the principle of lifelong learning. In accordance with this approach, the development of media competence at all educational levels is of particular relevance.

Media education worldwide is connected with the development of information technologies and, above all, the global Internet. It is the ubiquitous distribution, universal accessibility and absolute freedom in posting any information in the Internet space that is making specialists – teachers, journalists, church representatives, etc. reflect on the development of knowledge and skills that contribute to the selection, use, critical analysis, assessment, creation and distribution of media texts, analysis of media functioning processes in society (Fedorov, 2017), i.e. the media literacy. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the peculiarities of the development of media education in Georgia from 1992 to the present.

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2. Materials and methods

As a material of this study, the theoretical, methodological and practical aspects of media education in Georgia in the post-Soviet period are considered. In the course of the study, a comparative analysis of individual scientific research in this area was carried out, the main stages of the historical development of media education in Georgia (1992-2019), goals and objectives, structure and content, as well as the basic concepts and development prospects in the near future, were identified. In the course of the study, historiographic, comparative and descriptive-analytical methods were used along with theoretical analysis and synthesis.

3. Discussion

The development trends of media education in the countries of the former republics of the Soviet Union have been of research interest for many researchers (Fedorov, 2014: 14; 2020; Chelysheva, 2013). Some issues of media education in Georgia – formal, informal, within the national curriculum, supplementary, self-education throughout a person's life, have been covered in the 2010s (Chelysheva, 2013; Santeladze, 2012; Natelauri, 2018 and others).

In 2006, professor A. Fedorov conducted an expert survey among Russian and foreign educators on media education development trends in 9 countries. One of the respondents was a Georgian teacher, director of the College of Media, Advertising and Television Arts, and a documentary film director Zurab Oshkhneli, who pointed out the absence of any achievements in media education in Georgia “because of the lack of a concept as such”. Oshkhneli complained about the lack of literature on media education, in the Georgian language in particular. The few books available in English or Russian cannot satisfy the needs of either students or teachers, since the students do not learn Russian any more, and teachers have not mastered English yet (Fedorov, 2007).

Apparently, the issues of media education, aimed at the development of media literacy of the Georgian citizens, were not relevant up till the beginning of the 21st century because it is difficult to talk about media literacy in the absence of media diversity. In European countries, the problems of critical thinking, the ability to make sense of the huge flow of information from different sources make it necessary to prepare the population for interaction with the media. In Georgia, the level of development of the media sphere in large cities and rural areas is drastically diverse. In the latter, the number of TV channels is limited to one to three, only Tbilisi news are broadcast, the number of newsagents' is minimal, for example, there are only four in Akhaltsikhe, there is one weekly newspaper for the whole Samtskhe-Javakheti district, there is no local radio station but there are some providers of the Internet (Mchedlidze, 2010).

In spite of the fact that there was no formal concept of “media education” in the discourse of Georgian teachers, media education activities did take place. As early as in 1989, the Youth Television was created on the state channel, later renamed the Media Education Center of the Ministry of Education and Science in accordance with the Israeli model, then taken as a model. Soon, due to financial difficulties, the Center was abolished and renamed as the College of Media, Advertising and Television Arts, which, nevertheless, did not solve the funding problem. The 1990s turned out to be a difficult period for Georgia as a whole, including the education system. The result of the economic crisis in which the country descended into, was the decline in the quality of the education. As N. Natelauri notes, schools had problems with elementary teaching aids, textbooks, etc., the payment to teachers went down, as a result they simply quit their jobs, schools closed down, which resulted in less students overall, but at the same time, more students in each class (Natelauri, Saghirishvili, 2018).

Fundamental changes in the education system occurred in 2005, when Georgia joined the European Bologna Process and signed the Lisbon Convention, which necessitated bringing the entire education system in the country into line with European standards of education. The European education system, according to the “Resolution on media education and new technologies” of 1989, suggests that media education should start as early as possible and continue throughout school years as a compulsory subject for study (Council of Europe, 1989).

The 2002 UNESCO recommendations emphasize that “Media Education is part of the basic entitlement of every citizen, in every country in the world, to freedom of expression and the right to information and is instrumental in building and sustaining democracy. ..., it should be introduced

wherever possible within national curricula as well as in tertiary, non-formal and lifelong education” (Recommendations..., 2002).

In this regard, Z. Oshkhneli recognized the development of media education in Georgia as an inevitable natural process: “We are joining the Bologna and Copenhagen agreement. Therefore, if Europe needs the media education system, it will be necessary for all countries that are going to integrate their education system into the European one. First, we need to accumulate information about European media education, practice, programs, including educational television broadcasting and its effectiveness”. The author also considers it important to introduce mandatory integrated or specialized media education courses in the curricula of secondary schools (Fedorov, 2007).

The need for the development and implementation of integrated and special media education courses in the programs of Georgian secondary schools was also pointed out by I.V. Chelysheva in 2014, who singled out a practical approach as the leading theoretical platform for media education. The researcher also noted an active interest in the practical use of media technologies in the educational process of schools and universities, Georgia’s participation in large-scale projects on the introduction of media technologies in education, the main purpose of which is the development and use of media in various spheres of life including educational process. I.Chelysheva draws attention to the active participation of Georgia in various international educational projects of the European Community (Horizon 2020, Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) actions, Joint Research Center), which opens up significant prospects for Georgian media education (Fedorov, 2014). Z. Oshkhneli also hopes for a positive impact of foreign experience on the Georgian government (Fedorov, 2007).

Among other issues of media education in Georgia, experts highlight the problems associated with the development of the information society, the organization of media centers, the development of methodological and technological platforms for media education models, and the further development of media educational tools (Chelysheva, 2017).

Despite the importance of media education, its place in the education system of Georgia has so far remained uncertain and in most cases is almost exclusively supported by the international community of sponsors. Today there have been significant changes in this issue, which determines the significance of theoretical studies of various aspects of media education and media competence in the post-Soviet space.

4. Results

Despite the fact that the educational systems of the EU countries and former Soviet republics differ significantly, the common European space of higher education, ensured by the ideas and mechanisms of the Bologna process, has become a definite guideline and perspective for the development of education systems for post-Soviet countries, including Georgia. The need to reform the higher education system has led to fundamental changes at all levels of the educational system: preschool, general secondary (primary 1-6 grades, middle 7-9 grades and secondary 10-12 grades), secondary vocational, higher and the post-graduate level.

According to the data provided by GlavExpertcenter, published on the website of the National Information Center, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia developed the so-called Restructuring Program introduced by the Education Act of June 27, 1997 (Education..., 1997). The Program emphasizes improving the quality and effectiveness of primary and general secondary education, strengthening institutional capacity and mobilizing public and private resources. The implementation of this program and the strengthening of the education system began in 2001. The priority areas include the professional development of teachers and the development of educational standards.

As one of the main strategic documents on school education, the “National goals of general education” should be mentioned, approved by the Decree of the Government of Georgia of October 18, 2004 No. 84. On the basis of this document, educational standards or so-called National Curricula (hereinafter referred to as NC) were developed for different levels of education (Natelaury, Saghirishvili, 2018).

Over the past 10 years, the substantive aspect of NC in terms of media literacy, as one of the key competencies in the schoolchildren training program, has undergone significant changes. Whereas the first-generation NC 2006-2009 (National Curricula, 2019) there was no reference to

media literacy at all, in the modern NC, media literacy ranks with digital literacy among the top target competencies within the framework of the general educational program.

Society of the 21 century is unthinkable in isolation from information technology, and in this connection, Georgia, as some other post-Soviet countries, is developing media education on the basis of digital technological education. NC for secondary schools 2008-2009 provided for the integration of information and communication technologies (hereinafter referred to as ICT) in all academic disciplines in order to develop students of the following skills:

- use ICT tools, information and software in compliance with ethics and existing legislation;
- show a positive attitude towards ICT tools as an important tool for cooperation, deepening one's knowledge, realization of one's interests and aspirations, fruitful work;
- use ICT in publishing and other creative activities, for publishing various messages, posts to communicate with peers, teachers, and for sharing the information with the wider community;
- use ICT tools to obtain information from various sources, its further evaluation and analysis, as well as information storage, data processing and analysis, and sharing with other users.

The goal of an integrated ICT course in NC 2008-2009 was to educate “a person who can independently find information, manage it, evaluate, analyze and, relying on it, make decisions independently... in order to realize their responsibility to the interests and traditions and the values of their country; create values yourself and contribute to the development of society” ([National Curriculum, 2019](#)). It can be correlated with the goal of modern media education, aimed at the development of creative, communication skills, critical thinking, perception, interpretation, analysis and evaluation of media texts, teaching various forms of expression with the help of media technology ([Fedorov, 2001: 38](#)).

In the 2011-2016 NUP media literacy competencies are emerging along with digital information competencies. ICT stands out as a separate mandatory subject within the subject group of technologies. According to Article 43 of Order No. 36/N. dated March 11, 2011 “On approval of the National Curriculum 2011-2016”, the goal of this group of disciplines is to help students increase the level of media and digital competence; mastering specific technologies in various fields and developing the skills necessary to apply these technologies both in integrated training with another subject and through autonomous training ([Order..., 2011](#)). In this context, the formation of media competence comes down to elementary computer literacy. The Article 48 of the same document deals with the nine so-called cross-disciplinary priority competences, the development of which is defined as critical for self-realization and integration in the modern world. The second place is taken by “media erudition” – the ability, on the one hand, to perceive, interpret, apply and create multimedia texts of different types and forms, and on the other hand, the ability to orient in the media space, select and critically evaluate the information received contributes to the development of critical thinking. The development of priority competences is provided along with specific ones within the framework of various subjects. Meanwhile the NC 2011-2016 emphasizes the importance of media in the modern world as the most powerful cultural weapon that encompasses all spheres of human life ([National Curriculum, 2019](#)).

Continuing the process of reforming the education system, in May 2018, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia presented a new National Curriculum 2018-2024, which provides for the introduction of NC at the elementary level in the 2018-2019 academic year, and in the 2019–2020 academic year – at the middle level of school education. Among the target competencies within the educational program, digital literacy and media literacy are identified. The latter is regarded as a combination of knowledge and skills necessary for media analysis, methods of their production, as well as critically evaluating their impact on the recipient of information. This knowledge and skills will provide the ability to create media products of all genres and forms in the media space ([National Curricula, 2019](#)).

Along with media literacy, the new NC involves the development of digital literacy – knowledge of social, ethical and safety standards in the use of information technology. According to the plan, by the end of Grade 2, students should know that the texts they have created – verbal texts, drawings, music pieces, photo and video materials - are their intellectual property. By the end of grade 4, students should learn to respect texts created by other people and use them with the permission of the author, for example, their classmate, and publish their own texts in a protected media environment. At the final stage of primary general education, by the end of grade 6, students should realize that when using any materials, it is necessary to refer to their author and to avoid plagiarism.

It should be noted that Article 76 of the NC 2018-24 in the ICT standard specifies free educational electronic resources recommended for use in teaching and learning. Among them, there is *Scratch* (Scratch, 2019), an educational non-commercial project of the *Lifelong Kindergarten* research group aimed at educating children, providing resources for learning and self-expression using information technologies in 150 countries around the world in 40 languages. With *Scratch*, you can create your own interactive stories, games, and animations, and then share your creations with other people in the online community. To date, the project has about 36 million registered users.

Since 2013, another international project, *Code* (Code, 2019) has been successfully developing, recommended for Georgian schoolchildren and teachers. In collaboration with the ministries of education of many countries, with international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the project's developers and partners are trying to make IT the part and parcel of the international educational discourse so that schoolchildren could be taught to do intellectually complex things communicated to them in an entertaining way.

The purposeful search for teaching methods in the context of globalization and technical progress of the modern level is fully justified. However, moral education should be an integral part of the learning process. In his interview to *Sputnik Georgia* magazine, Paata Amonashvili, an outstanding Georgian teacher, doctor of psychological sciences, a writer and developer of school programs, rightly notes that any technique is a tool for achieving certain goals, and any tool requires some skills to use it. The introduction of additional technologies in schools is, of course, the right direction, it cannot be otherwise. But it would make me happy if students were taught how to properly manage these tools. For they also have the power to destroy a person, a soul. It is necessary not only to equip children with technology, but also to empower them how to use this technology in a humanist, constructive way (Amonashvili, 2019).

In 2019, according to the current Minister of Education of Georgia, Mikhail Batiashvili, the *Model of New School* was tested in 50 schools - an educational environment that will give every student the opportunity to realize their personal potential and provide the knowledge and skills needed in the 21st century. "The new education reform is aimed at ensuring the development of integrated thinking among schoolchildren. It is important not only to provide students with knowledge, but also to develop their analytical and critical thinking. The development of creative abilities is just as important" (Ministry..., 2019). At the first stage computer classes have been updated in these schools, equipped with Internet and Wi-Fi. Further on it is planned to introduce electronic educational resources with the support of Microsoft and Tallinn University (Estonia) and thereby ensure that children from an early age can get involved in the field of programming and technology.

Thus, since 2019, in schools participating in the pilot project, primary school students have begun to learn IT using the Finnish textbook *Hello, Ruby*, translated into Georgian. In addition to the textbook, a board game and a special online application designed to inform students about threats in the media space and the rules for safe use of the Internet will be created.

Hello, Ruby is just one of five planned for the 2019-2020 school year media education projects. At the end of 2018 in Georgia, the Department of Media Literacy headed by H. Ivanishvili was established. The Department's priority task is to develop a national online platform on media education. With the support of the British expert Martina Chapman, a media literacy strategy has been developed, aimed at developing skills such as "the basics of computer science; evaluation and analysis of the information received (online content); recognition of false information (misinformation, propaganda, harmful information); critical assessment of the source of information and determination of the possible motivation of the author; effective and safe participation in activities based on electronic resources" (Which..., 2019).

By 2023, 2 thousand schools in the country should be transferred to the new model of school education. The obvious fact is that any reform involves appropriate financial funding. In 2019, it is planned to allocate a significant part of the country's budget (about 10 % of GDP) to education: 750.5 million lari (more than \$281 million) for school and pre-school education, 167 million lari (more than \$62.5 million) for higher education (Which..., 2019). By comparison, in 2017, the budget of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia amounted to 3.1 % of GDP (Georgien..., 2017). Significant financial support is also provided by foreign partners. Thus, in the framework of

the US *Millennium Challenge Account* program (<http://www.mcageorgia.ge>), in 2014 alone, 140 million dollars were invested in the Georgian education system, of which 76.5 million in schools, 16 million in secondary vocational education and 30 million in higher education programs, namely, cooperation programs between American and Georgian universities, including three Tiflis (Tbilisi) state universities (Georgien..., 2017).

The reform process in Georgia has also involved preschool education. The reform is aimed at personal development of preschoolers, the introduction of new curricula, retraining of teachers and the creation of electronic resources for parents. The main purpose of early and preschool education has become the preparation for school.

In response to challenges in the field of higher education in the General Strategy for Education and Science for 2017-2024, three strategic objectives are identified: modernization and quality of higher education, lifelong learning and universal access to quality education (Unified..., 2017: 32). It seems to be impossible to ensure the quality of higher education in modern conditions outside of media literacy education. Speaking of professional media education, American experts state that “media educators in Georgia lack resources, in-depth knowledge of emerging multimedia platforms, the latest tools, and subject-matter expertise to provide quality training in journalism. This lack of capability and skills, coupled with scarce resources mainly in the field of new technologies, impede the creation and utilization of comprehensive, cross-disciplinary, and relevant curricula based on fundamental journalistic competencies” (Georgian Media..., 2020). In this regard, on the website of the US Embassy in Georgia in July 2018, the program “Strengthening journalism education in Georgia” (Media educational..., 2019) was announced. \$250,000 has been allocated for the implementation of this program to support the professional development of Georgian media educators in state and non-state universities.

Despite the fact that Georgia lacks the latest technologies, traditional ones are being implemented, namely, future journalists are actively involved in professional activities from their student hood. So, on the basis of the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA), the radio station employs graduate students of the university.

In addition to traditional media, new digital media are rapidly developing in Georgia today. This process is directly related to providing access to the global network in the country. Today, there are more than 755 thousand Internet subscribers and about 160 Internet providers in Georgia.

Since 2013, the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) has helped Georgian professional journalists and youth, interested in mass media, to explore new media technologies based on the capabilities of the global network as part of the *G-Media* program, funded by the USAID – US Agency for International Development. According to the head of one of the directions of the *G-Media* IREX program, Dachi Grdzlishvili, you do not need an expensive computer and a sophisticated software to work on the Internet, the main thing is the ability to use the appropriate tool. In the framework of the New Media Initiative (INM) program, employees of 13 regional media were trained to work with the latest Internet technologies. IREX also financed the educational courses of journalism for schoolchildren, which, on the one hand, allowed the regional media to act in a new capacity – as a media education organization, and on the other hand, the students were able to get an idea of the real work of the media (Keshelashvili, 2013).

Last year, the Georgian National Communications Commission (GNCC) launched the Media Literacy project. To begin with, in May 2018, an American media expert, professor at the University of Long Island, Mitch Semel, held a two-day workshop for journalists. On the eve of this event, the chairman of the National Commission, Kakha Bekauri announced the creation of Media Academy in Georgia to increase media literacy in the country. The commission plans to develop media literacy in four directions: 1. A 3-6-month course for media managers, producers and journalists. The goal of the course is to assist media representatives to increase the knowledge and qualification of multimedia content. 2. The development of media criticism that will help journalists and producers in their work and to function as a guide for consumers to choose which media products to use. 3. Raising awareness of consumers in order to help them distinguish real and fake news and good and poor quality products. 4. Creation of Media Lab, which will support and fund start-ups in digital media. Start-uppers who develop interesting projects in the direction of digital media will be given a chance to receive funding from Media lab (Morrison, 2010).

It should be noted the close cooperation in the field of media education of the National Cinema Center of Georgia with the Ministries of Education and Justice. Since 2013, the project "Cinema at School" has been implemented with the purpose of enlightenment through films and the development of creative abilities of schoolchildren, in which 211 schools, including rural ones, schools in borderline and remote regions of Georgia, have demonstrated films for children with further discussion and analysis with experts' participation. In 2015, in addition to schools, the Crime Prevention Center joined the project. Film expert Nino Mkheidze ran film screenings for troubled teenagers (Project..., 2015). On the website of another project of the Georgian National Film Center "Cinema at School" reports on its work from 2014 to 2018 are published (Project..., 2015). The goal of the project was to teach young people to analyze audiovisual texts. The project involved hundreds of Georgian schools (altogether about 4,5 thousand film screenings were attended by over 46 thousand students), students not only watched and discussed films, got acquainted with famous cinematographers, but also filmed short videos, drew posters, took photographs, etc. The project also promoted the creation of school film clubs.

Some regional initiatives also produce interesting projects. The Discussion Club Gori funded by the municipal authorities, set up the two day festival of documentary films "Art for Human Rights". As the title suggests, topics ranged from human rights and political regimes to racism, migration, etc. After each film, the discussion of specific social problems in Georgia with guest speakers, experts and public activists, school students, took place (Aptsiauri, 2013).

Georgian media education activists encourage schoolchildren not only to discuss films, but to produce them as well. At the art school in Nikozi, children create animated films. In this frontier village, on the initiative of Metropolitan of Nikozsk and Tskhinvali Isaiah, an annual festival of animated films is held. During the period of his secular life, Metropolitan Isaiah studied animation at the University of Theater and Cinema named after Shota Rustaveli (Svanidze, 2014).

As part of the ongoing educational reform, it is planned to create new and develop existing electronic educational resources. For example, upon the initiative of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia and with the support of LEPL – Educational Management Information System, a web portal EL (EF Portal, 2018) was created, which provides educational and cognitive resources created and provided by its partners aimed at simplifying the teaching process, fundamental study of the issues, development of creative thinking, raising motivation. The portal contains such educational and edutainment resources as e-books, video and photo materials, etc. In addition to receiving information, users can participate in discussion, ask questions, leave comments, and suggest new topics for discussion. The Caucasus Network for Children (CNC), founded in 2013 by the Education Support Program of the Open Society Foundations initiated the "Introduction in Media literacy" and "Media literacy for teachers" courses. "Introduction in Media Literacy" is an open, free access course intended for high school pupils, students, and everyone interested, aimed at learning the theories of media literacy, how the media affects human opinion, attitudes and behaviour. According to their data, more than 90 people have accomplished this course. The distance learning blended course of "Media Literacy" is intended for teachers and equips them with methodical material and use practice (The Caucasus..., 2018).

The educational foundation portal *Educare Georgia* (Educare Georgia, 2018) as the main goal defines the activities to ensure the availability of world-class education through the Internet and modern technologies for everyone. The project is aimed at creating electronic educational resources, translating them into Georgian and popularizing in Georgia, teaching schoolchildren, students and teachers to use modern technologies, expanding access to the Internet. The authors of the project are convinced that it is education that is the main means of reducing poverty and developing the country; that everyone can get a quality education regardless of gender, age, nationality, place of residence, financial and physical capabilities, and make all possible efforts to acquaint Georgian students and teachers with international resources and online platforms that allow them to listen to lectures by specialists from leading universities in the world.

On the way to its goals, *Educare Georgia* initiates various projects. For example, under the leadership of Georgy Dzhibladze, the social platform *Charte.ge* (Charte.ge, 2018) has been operating since August 2017, where anyone can donate some money to pay for the Internet connection in rural areas or buy a computer for students who cannot afford it. According to the authors of this project, in

Georgia today there are about 78 thousand children in need of such support. The project started in the Tsilkan settlement and Tserovani and today has about 470 participants.

One of the most popular trends in media education in Georgia is teaching to identify fake news. For example, Georgian, Moldovan and Ukrainian students participated in media literacy camps, as part of the Strengthening Independent Media project in 2016. While declaring their mission as “to increase citizens’ access to reliable information about local, regional, and international issues of public importance”, in fact, the thread that runs through this course is “defense” against “Russian propaganda”, – “all 3 countries are affected by propaganda and fake news, especially from the Russian government,” Angela Sirbu, Project Director of the Strengthening Independent Media in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine project says (Gugunishvili, 2018). “We expected students to learn how to recognize quality media content as well as manipulative and fake news, and how to react if the press misinforms the public”. The project director’s words are very symptomatic for current political situation when Russian media are being labeled as “biased”, and “manipulative”, while labeling is, in fact, one of the media manipulation techniques, and according to Cultivation media theory (Gerbner, 1998), repetition of the same message, does lead to imposing certain attitudes and beliefs in the audience’s minds. Thus, cultivating just one issue of media literacy (such as critical evaluation of information) using just one case study (“Russian soft power”, “Kremlin propaganda”) the authors of such courses deliberately limit media competence development of their students, using the manipulative technique of mainstreaming the audience’s thinking into one direction, and misguiding them to believe that media propaganda is only inherent to Russian media. The organizers of the camp proudly declare that by the end of the course “students were better able to identify the functions of different web tools and how to use them; demonstrated a better knowledge of how Russia uses the information space; and proved that they learned some practical information on internet security” (Gugunishvili, 2018). The legitimate question arises, why Russia becomes the one and only target of their research? Why are other countries’ media not analyzed? Does it mean all of them are unbiased and do not produce politically engaged media messages? Significantly, media education theory reminds us that one of the most important questions when analyzing a message is “What is omitted from the message? Why? How does this selection affect the message’s impact?” The above selection is obviously biased against a single country’s media.

5. Conclusion

As a result of the analysis of the development and main perspective directions of media education in Georgia (1992–2019), the following conclusions can be drawn.

Georgia seeks to adapt the country's education system to the global community and to fully integrate into the European educational space. At the state level in Georgia today we can witness the awareness of the stipulation of providing media education as an integral constituent of quality education at all levels.

However, it is not enough to realize the need for the media education skills among the population, it is necessary to create conditions for this. According to the General Strategy for Education and Science for 2017-2024, there is a significant difference and lag between the various socio-economic strata within the country, as well as between urban and rural, Georgian and non-Georgian schools. Most teachers use information technologies only for simple communication and conduct lessons in traditional way, which only confirms the unsatisfactory level of competence in the field of media education and ICT (United Strategy..., 2017).

The process of the development of media education in Georgia as a whole proceeds according to the same scenario as in other countries - former republics of the Soviet Union. At the first stage, the need for IT-technologies is formed, which becomes an integral part of all spheres of social activity. Then comes the understanding that the introduction of technology alone is not enough, it is necessary to prepare the population for its use. Thus, the need for technologically competent users is shaped. Then, naturally, a need for obtaining the next level of competence - media competence arises, which is formed in the process of media education. It can be argued that at the moment in Georgia, with the support of the state and the international community of sponsors, media education is developing in all major directions, as distinguished by A. Fedorov (Fedorov, 2014).

1) media education of future professionals - journalists, cinematographers, editors, producers, etc., for example, the 2018 *Strengthening Journalism Education in Georgia* program, the G-Media 2013 International Research and Exchanges Program (IREX), GIPA radio on the basis of the Georgian Institute of Public Development;

2) media education of future teachers in universities, pedagogical institutes, in the process of advanced training of teachers of universities and schools in media culture courses – mandatory advanced training programs for teachers of all levels of education according to the General Education Strategy 2017-2024, National Curricula, etc.;

3) media education as part of the secondary and higher education, which, in turn, can be integrated with traditional disciplines or autonomous (special, elective, club, etc.) – ICT, integrated across the disciplines in the NC 2008, and the standard of mandatory self-discipline ICT in the NC 2011 and 2018, the project of the National Cinema Center of Georgia *Cinema at School* 2014-2018;

4) media education in institutions of additional education and leisure centers (community and youth centers, art clubs, drama and music centers, etc. – Festival of animated films in Nikozi 2014;

5) distant media education of schoolchildren, students and adults through television, radio, mass online courses - projects of the Georgian public television and radio broadcasting (GPB); the Georgian National Communications Commission (GNCC) Media Literacy 2018;

6) independent / continuous media education (lifelong learning) - projects of the Educational Foundation *Georgia Education*, the festival of documentary films *Art for Human Rights* in Gori, 2013.

More and more structures are becoming interested in raising the level of media literacy of all segments of the population of Georgia. Notably, the most significant projects are initiated and funded by foreign agents, such as the U.S.Embassy (Media Literacy project, Georgian Media Partnership program, Emerging Filmmakers Training, English Language Training for Media in Georgia, Media Educational program, etc. ([U.S.Embassy...](#), 2018), Open Society Foundation ([The Caucasus Network for Children](#)), Stiftung für Internationale Rechtliche Zusammenarbeit e.V. Ubierring ([Media Societies – Georgia 2018](#)), Embassy of the Netherlands in Tbilisi (Program Promoting Media Literacy and Critical Thinking in Schools ([The Media Development...](#), 2018), Deutsche Welle Akademie ([Myth Detector Lab for Media Literacy](#)), The German Marshall Fund of the United States ([Kremlin Influence Index, 2017](#)). Against this background, we just have to hope that new Georgian media educators are aware that educational initiatives funded by foreign foundations act as a “soft power” tool. The role of authentic media education resources and curricular should be strengthened as an effective tool for ensuring effective lifelong education of citizens and sustainable development of the independent democratic State of Georgia.

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