

A. Nikiforov. Pedagogical and Cultural Educational Activities of Nikanor Onatskiy (1875-1937) in Foreign Publications.

The purpose of the article is to identify aspects of pedagogical and cultural educational activities of Nikanor Onatskiy as reflected in the research performed by representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora. Actuality of the theme is predefined the necessity of returning of the names of teachers-enlighteners of the first half XX centuries, which spared neither forces no health, even life, for buiding of Ukrainian national school. Further perspective is consist in the subsequent study of pedagogical and in a civilized manner elucidative to activity of N. Onatskogo on Slobozhanschina.

Keywords: *Nikanor Onatskiy, teacher, artist, poet, publicman, national revival.*

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Raimonds Strods

FUTURE TEACHERS' MEDIA COMPETENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIETY: THE CASE OF LATVIA

The article is devoted to the study of the necessity of the improvement media competence of teachers in the information society, which can be placed as key change agents and implementers. The necessary strategy that will promote the advance in many branches of the national economy is the focus on teacher education for the improvement of the teachers' media competence will lead to the improvement of the entire society's media competence resulting in positive changes in a wider context.

Keywords: *media competence, teachers, sustainable development of the society, Latvia.*

Introduction. The information quality in the modern society plays a huge role as it can influence our choices and actions respectively that significantly influences the whole society. The improvement of the media competence is to be valued as a vital need in the information society and teachers can be positioned as the key change agents and implementers. The necessary strategy that will promote the advance in many branches of the national economy is the focus on teacher education for the improvement of the teachers' media competence will lead to the improvement of the entire society's media competence resulting in positive changes in a wider context.

Media competence encourages people to search for, evaluate, apply, and create information and technologies in all fields of life in order to achieve the personal, societal, professional and educational aims [UNESCO, 2011, p. 11-17].

The university faculty are the founders of innovations in the educational system. Digital tools offer wide possibilities of improving teaching and learning processes in the higher education space if the innovative pedagogical conceptions are accepted; besides, an innovative teaching process requires the academic staff to develop new competences. They will be able to improve students' media competence if technologies are integrated and new pedagogical strategies are offered in the teacher education programs [Schneckenberg, Wildt, 2006, p. 29-35]. Researchers from several countries [Tømte, 2013, p. 173-182; Hammond, Reynolds, Ingram, 2011, p. 191-203; Cabrol, Severin, 2009, p. 91) emphasize that future teachers are not appropriately prepared for the work in the digitalized educational environment. The research problem emerges from the observation that pre-service and in-service teachers lack skills to integrate information and communication technologies in the study process as well as the pedagogical strategies that would allow attaining educational, educative and developing aims while integrating the technologies. Besides there exists a contradictory and even conflicting attitude in the society and education towards the digitalization of the teaching/learning process.

The European digitalization program [*Digital Agenda for Europe Scoreboard 2012*] indicates that approximately 70% of teachers who have adopted the media competence as a vital element of their professional work have improved it through self-education and during their free time. Some 55% of teachers have on their own attended specifically tailored professional development courses for technology acquisition and in approx. 47% of cases school administration has offered courses for the technology acquisition [European commission, 2012]. Research findings prove that in most cases teachers have improved their media competence thanks to their enthusiasm and willingness to follow the development trends of the time. The author of the study wants to emphasize that the improvement process of the media competence should not just be the initiative of the teachers themselves; there should be support from all management levels of the education system and it should start in the process of teacher education.

Theoretical framework. Technologies are applied more and more in the information society and are integrated in education; however, technologies develop faster than pedagogical strategies for their application and therefore the aim of the study is to explore the future teachers' media competence as the promoter of the sustainability of education. Future teachers will integrate in schools after some 3 – 5

years and several authors [Spanhel, 2006; Barbutiu, Käck, 2013, p. 111-121; Tømte, 2013, p. 173-182; Rubene, Vanaga, Stavicka, 2012, p. 150-170] consider that the media competence is a very important dimension of teachers' professionalism and the study process has to be developed according to learners' needs integrating ICT in order to promote the learners' media competence and the frequency of the media use. It is important to understand several concepts in the context of the study therefore the author has selected the criteria of the media competence most frequently mentioned in theoretical literature that form the skills necessary for the future citizen:

1) is able to access and use media as well as has a good knowledge of the digital functions and tools;

2) is able to create new content of media in different forms;

3) evaluates the credibility of information in different sources and analyses critically the explicit or hidden message;

4) is able to influence media, identify the content of media that is insulting, false or harmful;

5) is able to cooperate with other users of the internet to achieve personal and socially common aims;

6) is able to use media to solve problems of a wide spectrum;

7) has a wide range of the media use [Jenkins et al. 2009; Ofcom, 2006; Literat, 2014, p. 15-27; Koltay, 2011, p. 211– 221; Ashley, Maksl, Craft, 2013, p. 7-21].

The education system in which the learner-centred approach prevails one must be aware of the today's learner whose needs differ considerably from those of the previous generations and this aspect influences also the competences that teachers need in order to work qualitatively and effectively in the digitalized education space. Teachers' media competence is formed by several aspects, firstly the digital literacy – how the teacher can use different programs and tools in a multifunctional way. Secondly, new pedagogical strategies in using ICT and thirdly, the skill to evaluate ICT so that their application is meaningful and in different educational contexts and situations [Schneckenberg, Wildt, 2006, p. 29-35]. In the world with 7 thousand millions of population with limited natural, social, cultural and economic resources we have to ensure sustainable development and therefore the necessary solution for sustainable development is the change of people's thoughts and action habits which can be significantly influenced by the teacher who implements education for sustainable development. Sustainable development in the UNESCO documents is defined as one of the most important education development trends in the 21st century and the author of the study has discovered a close relation between sustainable development and media competence. It needs to be explained that sustainable

development is understood as development that ensures the satisfaction of today's needs without causing threats to the satisfaction of needs of the future generations [United Nations, 1987]. Teachers' media competence promotes sustainable development of the society reaching and implementing the uniting criteria of these processes in one's professional activities. Critical thinking, the skill to evaluate the credibility of the information and to make unbiased decisions independently should be promoted in the teacher education process. The other uniting criterion is the problem solving skill in the social, economic and environment context so that the future teacher is a capacitated member of the society. The improvement process of sustainable development and media competence is characterized also by the perfection of the cooperation skill so that teachers are oriented to the attainment of common aims [Ryden, 2011; Tilbury, 2011; Jenkins et al. 2009; Literat, 2014, p. 15-27].

Methodology of research. In order to explore the media competence of the future teachers the mix method approach was used. The study applied the adapted questionnaire for assessing the media competence developed by the American researcher Henry Jenkins which consists of three parts: 1) *media use*; 2) *assessment of the media competence*, including twelve categories of data analysis: the ability to experiment, simulations, behaviour, feeling inspired, cognitive processes, performance, collective intelligence, reasoning, the range of media use, the use of internet, interactivity, visualization; 3) *social involvement* [Jenkins et al. 2009]. The future teachers evaluated the statements included in the questionnaire on the Likert scale from "fully agree" to "fully disagree". All in all, 170 future teachers of Latvia were surveyed and 26 teacher education programs were represented.

The basis of the qualitative study is formed by 6 partly structured interviews with the in-service teachers who are still studying and whose length of work is 1 – 4 years. The selected respondents are students of teacher education and pedagogy programs in University of Latvia. The interview questions crystallized from the media competence assessment survey. The interviews were interpreted based on the criteria developed by the author of the study after the analysis of the theoretical literature:

- 1) assessment of the learners' media competence;
- 2) improvement of the learners' media competence;
- 3) meaningful integration of ICT in the teaching/learning process;
- 4) the use of media for learners' support in the education process;
- 5) inspiring learners for the cooperation process.

Implementing the mix approach the obtained data was summarized after the analysis, conclusions were drawn and recommendations for the improvement of the future teachers' media competence were put forward.

Analysis and results. Future teachers revealed their habits of media use and understanding of the digitalization of the education process in the frame of the study and **the description of the future teachers' media competence** was developed as a result:

The average age of the future teachers is 26 years and 91% of respondents is women and 9% men. The findings show that almost all future teachers have access to different technologies and internet to be able to join the information society and promote digitalized education space. On average the future teacher spends 17% of the total time a week in the virtual environment which serves as evidence that the internet environment forms an essential part of life. Reading of news, studying of documents, viewing videos in the social net *Facebook.com* still has a minimum predominance and takes 5.9 hours a week on average and a bit less time is devoted to books and other printed media, namely 5.4 hours a week. In general 71% of respondents consider that it is easier to find information in the internet than in books that serves as indication of developed information literacy and desire to work more with electronic materials; however, 58% of respondents mainly are passive developers of the media content. Findings show that 85% of the future teachers has a developed digital literacy as they experiment and explore the functions of electronic devices while technical competence of the computers probably is less developed because respondents in general do not dismantle the technologies or experiment with them to understand their functioning. The future teachers are also good problem solvers and take failures in problem solving as the possibility for learning that is an essential prerequisite for functioning in the digitalized educational space. 81% of respondents consider that learners should be provided with the possibility to use ICT in the learning process that indicates their readiness to integrate ICT starting the work in school. 77% admit that they would feel confident using ICT in the teaching/learning process and 73% consider that pupils understand better the learning content if it is given in a digital format than presented orally and 84% mention that pupils are more interested in the learning process if ICT is being used. The findings substantiate the need to digitalize the education. The research testifies that it is necessary to integrate ICT meaningfully for them to promote the academic achievement and rather unanimously 89% of respondents consider that ICT should be meaningfully applied in the teaching/learning process; besides, it is also necessary to evaluate their appropriateness and this indicates that future teachers would be able to act

purposefully to promote the digitalization of the educational process. The future teachers are positively disposed to organize the teaching/learning process in the internet environment but the respondents lack experience how to do it and 89% very willingly like to acquire new pedagogical methods for using media in the study process. However, there are rather contradictory findings because the future teachers consider that it is important to organize for pupils different cooperation forms while they themselves prefer only cooperation in real life. Probably, the future teachers lack experience of developing cooperation in the internet environment. It has to be admitted that 31% of the future teachers lack the skill how to state the credibility of the information found on the internet and it is connected with critical thinking. An important criterion of the media competence is a wide range of the media use which though was not found in the majority of the future teachers because a great part does not construe the virtual space of full value, they do not find time to try out the new technological tools and do not know ways how the use of technologies can help save time. The majority of teachers considers that different internet portals can be used communication with pupils to inform them about the topicalities and to support them in the learning process which is an important criterion of the teachers' media competence.

The findings show that it would be necessary to discuss with the future teachers the possibilities of using ICT in different school subjects. The media competence is connected also with the intercultural competence and 58% of respondents consider that the use of internet makes people more open to other cultures; however only 48% of these respondents mention that other cultures are really understood by using the internet. The findings could be connected with the ethno-centric thinking of the future teachers, the idealization of values of one's own ethnos and views. The respondents' sample of the future teachers does not prove the hypothesis put forward by other researchers that the media competence promotes the social activity because only 27% of respondents participate actively in the solution of local or national level issues using the media.

All in all, 77% of respondents consider that the majority of the future teachers assess positively the ICT, the use of internet in the teaching/learning process and only 9% have the opposite opinion, but 14% have no opinion about the desire to integrate in the digitalized educational space.

Conclusions and discussion. The study led to the conclusion that the future teachers have a potential to integrate in the digitalized educational space, yet the teachers lack theoretical knowledge in the context of media pedagogy, skills to use meaningfully in the teaching/learning process as well as pedagogical methods for

integrating media. The majority of the future teachers when discussing the digitalization of education emphasize the skill to integrate the technologies meaningfully and in order to do so it is necessary to integrate technologies in the teacher education process implementing the technology enhanced learning approach in the study process. Guidelines to be implemented in the teacher education process to promote the integration of young teachers in the digitalized educational space were formulated on the basis of the analysis of theoretical literature and empirical research findings:

1) future teachers should be able to define clearly the aims that must be reached by all participants of the educational process. Namely, firstly, on the theoretical level be aware of the possible benefits and threats of integrating the media. Secondly, understand the role of media in the modern society; 2) future teachers should be very competent users of technologies. This means that it is necessary to promote also the information literacy, critical thinking, digital literacy, habits of safe internet use and cooperation skill in the virtual reality; 3) teachers should be able to manage the teaching/learning process for pupils equally successfully both in the real and virtual world. This means that future teachers have to master new pedagogical strategies how to integrate technologies meaningfully in the teaching/learning process. It should be mentioned that the ability to integrate ICT meaningfully develops in long term using the technologies regularly; 4) tools should be offered how to evaluate one's media competence in order to find out sub-competences which need to be improved. When integrating technologies in the teaching/learning process it is necessary to document and to evaluate all the processes in order to improve one's professional activities, to be able to state benefits and share the discoveries with the colleagues.

Theoretical and empirical research resulted in formulating recommendations for the improvement of future teachers' media competence for the sustainable society:

1) *future teachers* are to make a demand in higher education space and show initiative for the development of a digitalized study environment in order to ensure knowledge and skills for meaningful integration of ICT and pedagogical methods for the media use;

2) *future teachers* need to experiment with digital tools to discover new possibilities for integrating technologies and to improve the media competence;

3) *future teachers* need to evaluate critically their role and input both in construing the media space and solving different local and national issues;

4) *practising teachers* need to seek and find possibilities how to attract financial means for attending further education courses, for the improvement of the media competence;

5) to develop understanding in the *society* about the digitalization of education as a new paradigm of education;

6) *on the national level* to increase support to the digitalization of education, its popularization and the improvement of teachers' media competence.

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Стродс Раймондс. Медіакомпетентність майбутніх вчителів як запорука сталого розвитку суспільства: досвід Латвії.

Стаття присвячена дослідженню медіа-компетентності вчителів, яка повинна бути оцінена як нагальна потреба в інформаційному суспільстві, а вчителі можуть виконувати роль ключових агентів змін і їх реалізаторів. Необхідною стратегією, яка буде сприяти просуванню багатьох галузей народного господарства, є зосередження на педагогічній освіті та поліпшенні медіа-компетентності вчителів, що в результаті призведе до поліпшення медіа-компетентності всього суспільства та позитивних змін в широкому контексті. Медіакомпетентність спонукає людей шукати, оцінювати, застосовувати, створювати інформацію і технології в усіх сферах життя для того, щоб досягати особистих, соціальних, професійних і освітніх цілей.

Ключові слова: медіакомпетентність, викладачі, сталий розвиток суспільства, Латвія.