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Organization Of Media Education In Higher Education And Mechanisms For Developing Students' Creative Thinking Through Media Methods

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Abstract: This study is devoted to improving the mechanisms for organizing media education in higher education institutions and developing students' creative thinking through media-based methods. The paper analyzes the theoretical foundations of media education, its didactic potential, and its role in the educational process. The effectiveness of media text analysis, role-playing games, case studies, debates, and project-based learning in fostering creative thinking is substantiated. Ways of developing students' analytical, interpretative, and reflective skills are identified. The issues of forming critical perception and information processing competencies through media education are highlighted. Innovative mechanisms for managing the educational process are proposed. Practical recommendations for implementing the research results in higher education institutions are presented.

Keywords: Media education, creative thinking, media methods, educational process, critical thinking, innovative mechanisms.

Introduction: In the current context of a globally information-driven society, one of the primary tasks of the higher education system is to prepare specialists capable of independent thinking in digital environments, critically analyzing information, and proposing creative solutions. Media education plays a particularly significant role in effectively achieving this objective. Media education not only involves the use of information technologies but also encompasses the development of competencies to analyze, create, and evaluate media products.

Organizing media education in higher education institutions requires a systematic approach. This process must be implemented at institutional, organizational-methodological, and pedagogical levels. At the institutional level, a concept for the development of media education is developed, relevant subjects are included in curricula, and the material and technical base is strengthened. At the organizational-methodological level, programs, educational-methodical complexes, and digital resources aimed at developing media competencies are created. At the pedagogical level, the content and forms of the educational process are updated using media methods.

Media education can take various forms: integrated into traditional lessons, as a separate subject, elective courses, online platforms, or blended learning formats. Additionally, interactive forms such as project-based learning, case studies, debates, podcast creation, and video content production enhance the effectiveness of media education. These approaches transform students into active participants and stimulate creative thinking.

The mechanism for developing creative thinking through media methods involves several stages. The first stage is information reception and analysis. Students compare information obtained from various sources, evaluate its reliability, and critically analyze media texts. This process not only develops critical thinking but also creates conditions for the emergence of creative ideas.

The second stage is processing and interpretation. Students transform existing information based on their perspective and generate new content. For instance, writing a video script, preparing an infographic, or producing a social video demonstrates their creative approach. Divergent thinking becomes active at this stage, enabling students to propose multiple solutions to a single problem.

The third stage is media product creation. During practical activities, students make independent decisions regarding design, content, and form. This encourages innovative thinking. Group media projects also develop communication and collaborative competencies.

The fourth stage is reflection and evaluation. The created media product is analyzed, with its strengths and weaknesses discussed. Reflection enhances students' self-assessment, improvement capabilities, and fosters creative growth.

Management mechanisms for developing creative thinking are also crucial. Higher education institutions should create an innovative environment, ensure academic freedom, and support student initiatives. Teachers' media competencies should be enhanced through professional development courses, and digital laboratories and media centers should be established.

Effectively organized media education in higher education develops students' media literacy, fosters independent thinking, and unleashes creative potential. This process is implemented through stages of critical information reception, creative reprocessing, innovative product creation, and reflection. Consequently, specialists capable of meeting the demands of a digital society-analytical, creative, and innovative-are formed.

In the modern educational environment dominated by mass media and digital communications, the content of the learning process has significantly changed. Education no longer focuses solely on knowledge acquisition; it requires the ability to understand, critically evaluate, and transform information into new ideas. From this perspective, media education emerges as an essential pedagogical tool for developing students' creative thinking in higher education.

Students acquire new knowledge through working with media content, learning to distinguish between different forms and structures of information, and increasing their understanding of media texts. They engage in intellectual operations such as information analysis, reinterpretation, synthesis, and application across different fields. As a result, students develop high cognitive activity, independent thinking, and a creative approach.

Interactive methods occupy a special place in effective media education. Techniques such as brainstorming, problem-solving, aesthetic analysis, debates, and role-playing encourage students to actively reflect. These methods promote independent discovery rather than passive reception of knowledge. Particularly, media-based tasks require students to simultaneously act as analysts, creators, and evaluators.

Play-based activities are an important didactic mechanism in media education. According to pedagogical psychology, games enhance attention, memory, thinking, and ingenuity, strengthen intrinsic motivation, and foster independence. Voluntary and choice-based participation in games creates a positive emotional environment, providing psychological conditions for creative thinking.

Various game types are applied in media education: improvisational, theatrical, role-playing, imitative, and director-oriented games based on media materials. Such activities transform students from passive recipients of information into creative producers. For example, simulation exercises like "Editorial Board" or "Media Project" involve students taking on roles such as journalists, editors, designers, or bloggers, creating media products by writing texts, selecting headlines, designing visual images, and adapting content for audiences.

During these activities, students produce content in various genres-news, articles, interviews, advertisements, or social videos. They utilize techniques ranging from simple illustrations to computer graphics and digital editing. This process develops practical skills in information processing, aesthetic judgment, and creative thinking.

Role-playing activities are especially effective for mastering media content. Students adopt the perspectives of different social roles, evaluate media events from multiple viewpoints, or reinterpret film plots in different historical contexts. Small-group

dialogue creation, role-based performance, and collective discussion activate creative thinking because students generate new meanings rather than merely repeating information.

The mechanism for developing creative thinking through media education is implemented in several interconnected stages:

1. Reception and comprehension – understanding media content and evaluating information sources.

2. Analysis and interpretation – reinterpreting content and comparing different perspectives.

3. Creative reprocessing – creating new media products (videos, podcasts, articles, infographics).

4. Reflection – evaluating and improving the created content.

These stages develop divergent thinking, i.e., the ability to propose multiple original solutions to a problem. Group activities strengthen communicative and social competencies.

The teacher acts as a moderator rather than a controller, distributing roles, supporting the creative environment, and guiding discussions. Students make independent creative decisions, enhancing their personal and professional competencies.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, organizing media education in higher education using role-playing and analytical methods establishes an effective mechanism for developing students' creative thinking. Students observe, analyze, reinterpret, and transform media texts into new ideas, becoming independent, critical, and innovative specialists.

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