

ANGOL NYELVŰ TANULMÁNYOK

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Some ideas about using mass media in adult education

According to Franzmann (1998) the basic cultural industries are always changing in modern society and in education. Understanding the mass media message is a necessity, and it is not possible without critical thinking, which is equal to confident treatment. The up to date literacy and everyday information can be served from mass media taking into consideration the needs of adults. Adults with their age and experiences can use some different learning forms which significantly differ from the tools of formal teaching (Buckingham, 2003). The media is one of these tools if the adults have appropriate methods to analyze media events from news. The education-culture-mass media triangle has a very diverse link, but mass communication has an accepted priority during formal education (McQuail, 2003). Mediandragogy – as a special term – investigates the personality-forming effects and possibility of mass media, which can make adult learning efficient.

Introduction

Media literacy is an integral part of reading and writing skills, as a basic period of interpretation and creation of texts. The changing of classical literacy transforms the information provider's needs. Connecting the mass media and adult learning is a must, because theoretical knowledge in formal education is not applicable in front of the television or during reading newspapers. In adult education the hands-on technique is important, and mass media could be a teaching tool and content at the same time. Based on reviews in the social environment of adult education, it favours the issues from news content discussion (Baacke, 2007).

Mediapedagogy is a well established course nowadays, but in adult education it is not ordinary. Adult education lacks the targets and content too, nevertheless there are two roles of mass media. The first one is providing public information, the second one is the education function as featured in schools (McQuail, 2003).

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The application of the mass media in the process of education is a challenge, however it is indispensable in the development of competences.

So far media studies' curricula have been theoretical approaches, they cannot help the pattern of interpretation. This solely starts from the varied forms of mediated events' varied forms, and it needs an interpretation method to become a sample of understanding the effects of media presentation. This method is inseparable for media consumption (Reischmann, 2003).

Robinson and Levy (1986) made an interconnection between mass media and adult learning emphasizing an interdisciplinary cooperation order to use an understanding method from the side of journals. Investigating the practical procedures of news, writing could be the basic knowledge to define how to interpret news.

An essential part of media consumption is media competence, because further utilization is a private decision depending on the understanding and the autonomy of the consumer. Technical determination and know-how operation are not enough, neither is theoretical knowledge. The use of mass media includes active and conscious reading or watching (Mcquail, 2003).

The European Association for the Education of Adults determines that media competences are the transition into information society. Media competence has four parts bearing in mind the person and the society, too. The first three are tightly related: understanding ability, the individual processing as reflection, and the understanding of media operation and effects, so the pedagogy of media. The fourth is the practice of mass media which equals to computer based usage. These are an integral section of teaching and learning efforts and of course of adult education (Federighi, 1999).

A resolution of the European Parliament (Council of Europe, 2001) is that media literacy skills in our world are outstanding parts, taking into consideration the selection of information and understanding data. During school time the participants have to learn how to handle information and teachers have to develop their skills and competences.

In adult education media competence means the ability of media exertion, the interpretation of media messages, and decoding special media languages. This last concept is relevant as the presentation frames, so it is the practical side of making news to understand representations which are mediated by journalists. Discerning the communication goals of mass media is another important part of usage, and a necessary ability to judge and measure the presented phenomena (Potter, 2004).

The assortment of consumable knowledge is important, because everyday society is unimaginable without mass media. This communication system is an integral part of everyday life and it has impressive influential effects (Livingstone, Van Couvering and Thumim, 2005). For adults it is a top ranking issue that mass media can be a feasible, effective and easy way to teach them.

Lifelong learning takes into account lifewide learning, too. It means all aspects of life which provide the possibility of learning or collecting useful information (Komenczi, 2009).

As the European Commission says, the new media technologies themselves cannot expand and amplify learning: adults must have their own ability to use mass media critically. The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education had an independent point about media, adult education and learning (Zrinszky, 2005).

Coexistence of cultures and the best knowledge of each other is the intercommunication through the media, and their contribution to erudition and wide aspects of cultural mediation (Griffin, 2003). The stigmatized television and internet load on the other side the function of teaching content and tool at the same time.

The European Commission's Memorandum on Lifelong Learning has had a key message for training institutions. At first the chance of skill acquisition may bring us closer to media literacy. As mass media is an informal tool to learn, therefore it can be the tool of application of skills (Mayer, 2002). At the same time, learners can update their knowledge about the surrounding world (Commission of the European Communities, 2000).

In the Hungarian education system, the National Qualification Register regulates the needful education in terms of adult learning. In relation with basic adult education we keep count of two books, but these publications are confined only to the basic concepts of mass media. The main topics are television, public relations, advertisement, violence on screen, film design and the internet. The mass media is usually used as a teaching tool and is not used as a way of thinking about culture and society, which are represented in media. The acquisition of relevant knowledge from informal and/or mass media environment is a part of orientation needs – lifelong knowledge about mass media. There is no specialized curriculum especially for adults.

The empirical research was designed to provide a comprehensive overview of adult learning to use the mass media and especially the communication function without previous learning about it.

Our assumption was that using mass media in adult education is frequent, but presumably without learning about it. Prior expectation was that using mass media in adult education is only

occasional. Analysing answers to a questionnaire we were interested in how adults use mass media's newscaster function. Regarding the themes of the nature of the questionnaire our goal was to collect quantitative data about media usage from participants in adult education. Our analysis is descriptive (Héra and Ligeti, 2006).

Methods

Trainees were questioned about the usage of mass media during adult education, the questionnaire consisted of Likert scale and in some places of open questions. The questionnaire was compared to Germany and the UK in 2015, where persons were also involved in adult education. The coverage of data was done with the help of University of Jena.

In our survey the person from the research subject had a training contract. The written questionnaire was used with snowball sampling.

The received 213 response elements have been reduced to 150 questionnaires, filtering out any repetition (the same response from the same group), which could have confounded the results. The method of non-probability snowball-like sampling has been provided as representative (Csíkos, 2009).

The short survey questions were as follows:

- 1) Question A: Do you use mass communication news from newsreel concerning different themes in order to discuss different topics? If yes, how frequently? (Ratio scale 1-7);
- 2) Question B: Did you use during the seminars news from the newsreel? If yes, how frequently? (Ratio scale 1-7);
- 3) Question C: When dealing with the material did you use special magazines? If yes, how frequently? (Ratio scale 1-7);
- 4) Question D: Did you study communication skills during this time? If yes, how many terms (half years, semesters)? (Response options open);
- 5) Question E: Did you study media skills during your studies? If yes, how many terms (half years, semesters)? (Response options open);

For the sake of comparability, the questionnaire was also completed in Germany and England by 150 people respectively who were adult learners as well.

Results

Based on the results, our hypothesis is correct, but the extent of use is very different in Hungary and in the UK or in Germany as shown on Table 1.

Questionnaire	Hungary (n=150)	England (n=150)	Germany (n=150)
Question A	average: 2.3	6.5	5.6
	range: 1–4	3–7	2–7
Question B	average: 2.2	4.9	5.1
	range: 1–5	2–6	2–7
Question C	average: 2	5.5	4.8
	range: 1–4	2–7	2–7
Question D	average: 1	4	3
Question E	average: 1	3	2

Table 1. Results of the questionnaire, comparing different media usage

Taking into consideration our media education system, we believe that the data from the two countries will be significantly better. Of course, in Germany there is a well established method to teach children how to use media. It is called media competence. In England there is the media literacy concept, which has been used for a long time. Both of these paradigms mean that the newscaster function can be used during education. In Hungary it is not wrought, especially in adult education. This may be one of the main differences viewing the data.

As we have seen, usage is frequent in the other countries. Hungarian educators do not use mass media when talking about actual events (Question A, B). The ranges are highly scored both in Germany and in England. The usage of special magazines in relation to education is also not significant (Question C). In Hungary the respondents have fewer lessons than in other countries. The last two questions could be the explanation for the foregoing answers, because without well-based teaching, mass media's news could not be used with success.

Discussion

Analysing the responses the use of education is to be related to approximately two-thirds of the cases, however, it is not preceded by a preliminary study of the media (question D). The news services of mass communication are used regularly with regard to the consumption of more than 70% of the respondents.

The data show that in England and Germany the media is an integral part of studies. The studies are more in direct connection with the development of abilities, Accordingly, the use is more common than in Hungary, taking into consideration the news.

The data are only indicators, which serve as a primary foundation of studies, with the possibility of depth analysis their current form is not suitable. Of course, this is just a quick and quantitative pilot study to assess other merits, but definitely an interesting indicator of the domestic adult education and media relations.

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