

EDUCATION OF JOURNALISTS AND COMMUNICATION SCIENTISTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

OBRAZOVANJE NOVINARA I KOMUNIKOLOGA U REPUBLICI HRVATSKOJ

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Abstract

This paper reports on the research results of the research project "Croatian media communication in convergent media environment: Contribution to the development of education of journalists and media experts in Croatia", referring to a longitudinal study conducted in Croatia from 20th of January 2006 until 20th of December 2012, on a representative sample of 210 journalists and media professionals who work in the programs of education of journalists and media professionals in Croatian universities, colleges and specialized internal journalism schools. The paper further comparatively examined the attitudes and opinions of journalists and media professionals about their knowledge of models of education of journalists in the region, Europe and other countries with developed journalism and traditional media. Models of education of journalists and media professionals can not be compared to education models in other countries with a highly developed tradition in education of journalists and media professionals. Although, the obtained research results point to positive trends that are introduced into educational programs (communication theory, media communication, public relations, media democracy, media freedom, media law and media ethics) and new ICT technologies (new media, Internet and Social Networks) as the core of program development for the education of journalists and media professionals in Croatia.

1. PROBLEM APPROACH

At the present stage of technological development and global implementation of new ICT technologies, communication history of superiority and global hierarchical information

Sažetak

Rad daje pregled rezultata istraživanja znanstvenog projekta "Hrvatska medijska komunikacija u konvergentnim medijskom okruženju: doprinos razvoju obrazovanja novinara i medijskih stručnjaka u Republici Hrvatskoj", koji se odnosi na longitudinalno istraživanje provedeno u Hrvatskoj od 20. siječnja 2006. do 20. prosinca 2012. , na reprezentativnom uzorku od 210 novinara i medijskih stručnjaka koji rade u programima obrazovanja novinara i medijskih stručnjaka na hrvatskim sveučilištima, fakultetima i specijaliziranim internim školama novinarstva. Rad nadalje ispituje stavove i mišljenja novinara i medijskih profesionalaca o njihovom znanju o modelima obrazovanja novinara u regiji, Europi i drugim zemljama s razvijenim novinarstvom i tradicionalnim medijima. Modeli obrazovanja novinara i medijskih profesionalaca ne mogu se usporediti s obrazovnim modelima u drugim zemljama s visoko razvijenom tradicijom u obrazovanju novinara i medijskih stručnjaka. Iako, dobiveni rezultati istraživanja ukazuju na pozitivne trendove koji se uvode u obrazovne programe (teorije komunikacije, medijska komunikacija, odnosi s javnošću, medijska demokracija, sloboda medija, medijsko zakonodavstvo i medijska etika) i nove ICT tehnologije (novi mediji, Internet i društvene mreže) kao srž razvoja programa za obrazovanje novinara i medijskih stručnjaka u Hrvatskoj.

means to control the development of the communication in the world at all levels of communication (local, national, regional and global) is being repeated. This is one of the reasons why the traditional media will not go away - it will always be a need for governments, organ-

izations, institutions and interest groups – they always have had and always will have some control over the channel for communicating with the public. Although the role of the media for centuries remained the same – they are the communication link between the individual parts of the society, and today, they are a link between citizens - education and knowledge required from a modern journalist is greatly changed.

Modern media complement each other, they do not exclude one another, but their simultaneous use of the information enrich the added value that is obtained using multiple media channels. No media can not fully replace the other, because each medium has certain qualities and characteristics that other media lacks. The communication process is in constant flux, not static, and modern media education must follow this mode. More than ever, media are exposed to changes. Changes in technology, changes in the production process, development of mechanics, engineering, computer science, but the final product of the media remained the same - word, image, human thought, the information printed on paper. All these changes can be seen as a cultural, social and communicative process of adaptation technologies in the creation of new models of living and understanding of all citizens on important issues for the development of man and society as a whole. Journalists have a special role in this process of changes.

Digitization of media imposes the need for active participation in technological changes, so that the journalists more or less successfully, are trying to cope and adjust their work to time in which technological developments are affecting their position. Media content is its form adapts to the development of ICT technologies, journalist are forced to adjust to a growing number of Internet users, mobile networks and other advanced communication channels. Technological advances have led to new consumer habits. State of the media is rapidly changing, every piece of information is subject to rapid obsolescence - changed ownership, personnel situation, circulation, technol-

ogy. It is important to take advantage of new media, while maintaining the authenticity of traditional media.

After gaining independence in 1990. Croatian media for the first time found themselves in a pluralistic, market environment. It is apparent from the large number of newspaper publications, which were simply not able to survive the competition. In a short period, the number of publications increased, but many publications were short-lived. It is important to ask who the Croatian journalists - people who create media content? 40% of Croatian journalists have no higher education, higher education is not required for editorial positions, 3146 were members of the CJA, out of which only about 40 of them has master's degrees and PhDs.

To test the opinions and attitudes of the journalists on the education in their own profession, this research was carried out. The research was conducted through eleven survey variables: (a) attitude toward schools of journalism, (b) attitude toward forms of internal training of journalists, (c) relationship to journalism education at the School of Journalism at the Faculty of Political Sciences at University of Zagreb, (d) relationship to journalism education and media experts in other Croatian universities (e) relationship to journalism education at higher education institutions in Croatia, (f) relationship to private schools for the education of journalists and media professionals, (g) attitude towards education of journalists and media professionals at postgraduate and doctoral studies, (h) the relationship to quality educational content, (i) the relationship between the quality of professional teachers of journalism and communications, (j) the relationship to creation of a new model of education of journalists and media professionals in Croatia, and (k) relationship to the development and advancement of education journalists and media experts from the aspect of Croatian accession to the EU.

2. OBJECTIVES AND TASKS OF THE RESEARCH

The relationship of journalism, media, politics and education, historically always existed, and especially today it is an interactive, interdependent relationship and coherent communication nowadays is particularly important when Croatia joins the family of countries in the EU, and when we examine the future of education of journalists and media professionals in the country and in the European region. Educational journalistic, media and political models are constantly changing, since everything around us underlies to changes and transformations /1/.

Education of journalists and media professionals, historically, we can extract in the four basic developmental influential communication models of interactive and coherent communication relationship between journalism, media, politics and education, which are: (1) totalitarian doctrine, (2) liberal doctrine; (3) Control or synthetic doctrine, and today (4) European journalism and media doctrine. Totalitarian doctrines considered journalism as a media service for the transmission of information or the dissemination of news that the ruling class deems desirable. In this order, journalism is extremely ideological and it is reduced to the art of concealing precisely the weaknesses of the political elite. The whole process of journalists and media professionals education in this model is controlled by the ideological system. Journalism in the liberal doctrine, given the social dynamics of communication, develops a liberal paradigm of journalism, education and society. This model of journalism and education of journalists and media experts was influenced by the model of universal market competition /2/ where everyone acts according to its fundamental interests and discretion.

Liberal conception is most closely associated with democracy. Journalism is close to freedom of public informing. Liberal doctrine works good in the service of criticism of errors and inadequacies of the totalitarian doctrine. Education of journalists in this doctrine is the model of chosen communication of competent selected social groups whose communication

supersedes all other (in) competent citizens. Regulatory or synthetic doctrine develops a model of political journalism in the information subsidiary of electronic democracy. Such journalism is not subordinated ("ancilla") or higher-ordinated to politics and such journalism contributes to the development of journalism education and further development of democracy. European media and journalistic doctrine develops journalism and the media as a means of communication on the public stage that allows the exposure of social problems, and personal and institutional conflicts /3/.

This doctrine refutes the old doctrine of journalism where information is always the one that brings general "understanding." Information, investigative reporting is accurate and is instruction to the public about what is happening in the environment or to specific actions that will improve the quality of life of all citizens /4/. Given the epochal changes within human knowledge, morality and politics, and education of journalists and media experts experienced great changes under the influence of the strong development of new media and new information and communication technologies. European media doctrine along with the new media technology, leads to the media polilogue instead of the media monologue. The entire media rhetoric that appears in the new dialogue-polilogue forms (forums) has changed, what allows citizens to discuss all the issues through new media, social networking, using the (non)arguments to coordinate their views and opinions, which are becoming a prerequisite for new rational and regulatory actions by all citizens.

This new milestone in journalism is reflected on the process of education of journalists and media professionals at all levels of education in the Republic of Croatia (national, regional and local). Journalism education is converted into education in the Communication science as a general science of communication that deals with disclosure of public information, along with various ways of conveying information to citizens, journalists (agency news, newspapers, radio, television, new media,

internet, social networks and mobile communications). Public communication is transformed into a public mass polylogue and education for journalism and the media become public educational university and higher education platform on which journalists and media experts educate in modern information and communication society.

The aim of this project is to investigate and find out the views and opinions of journalists, media professionals and university teachers on the state and future of journalist and media professionals education at all levels of education in Croatia through the eleven survey variables: (a) attitude toward journalism schools; (b) relationship to forms of internal training of journalists, (c) relationship to journalism education at the School of journalism at the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Zagreb, (d) attitude towards education of journalists and media professionals at other Croatian universities (e) relationship to journalism education at higher education institutions in Croatia, (f) relationship to private schools for the education of journalists and media professionals, (g) attitude towards education of journalists and media professionals at postgraduate and doctoral studies, (h) the relationship to quality educational content, (i) the relationship to quality of professional teachers of journalism and communications, (j) the relationship to creation of a new model of education of journalists and media professionals in Croatia, and (k) relationship to the development and advancement of the education of journalists and media professionals from the point of Croatian accession to the EU.

Separate research objective of this project (Case Study Croatia) is further detection of journalists and media professionals information about their comparative knowledge about the education of journalists and media professionals in the region, Europe and other countries with a developed tradition of journalism and media.

The main research task is to find a competent opinions and attitudes of journalists and media

professionals on existing models of education of journalists and media professionals at all levels of educational institutions in Croatia. In this regard, specifically point to a possible model for the future development of education for journalism and media in Croatia.

A special research task is historical and comparative analysis of generational development of education of journalists and media professionals in the past six decades, education for journalism and media in our media and communication area of Croatia.

Additional research task in this study is to highlight the new development technology trends that are introduced into educational curricula for the education of journalists and media professionals with spectacular deployment of new ICT technologies, new media, Internet and social networks in the context of Croatian membership in the family of the European Union (1st of July 2013).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

As the main objective of this study was to find out the historical development of the education of journalists and media experts in the last six decades in media space of Croatia and detect relevant views and opinions on the education of journalists and media professionals in Croatia, we applied in the survey research method scaled questionnaires to a representative selected sample. Scaled questionnaire detected eleven fundamental relations relevant to the education of journalists and media professionals in the past six decades in terms of the further development of the education of journalists and experts Croatia. In each evaluated criteria (variables) there are five special qualifications (extremely positive attitude, positive attitude, good attitude, poor attitude and very weak attitude).

Fundamental research communication research methods (instruments of communication research) were: survey, corrective interview, an additional method of dirigist interviews and analysis of programs (information)

content from the responses about the education of journalists and media professionals at all levels of education in Croatia (from internal school to doctoral studies) .

The study used applied communication research methods /5/ relating to the detection of education for journalism and media communication: a) the structuring of educational information, b) coding educational programming, c) spatial and temporal formation of schools and educational institutions, and d) evaluation method of educational cycles and program content.

4. HYPOTHESIS, SAMPLE TIME AND TIME FRAME OF THE RESEARCH

The main research hypothesis (H) is based on the fact that the education of journalists and media professionals (especially experts for public relations and communication management) is a higher education activity carried out by institutions of higher education (universities, colleges, art academies at universities, polytechnics and colleges in the Republic of Croatia).

Support research hypotheses are:

(H1) The education of journalists and media experts preferredly performed at the University studies (7 public and 3 private) that train journalists and media professionals to carry out journalistic and media affairs at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies in the Republic of Croatia;

(H2) The education of journalists and media professionals in the polytechnics and colleges is to acquire higher education and specialized knowledge to carry out journalistic and media activities in the Republic of Croatia;

(H3) Education of journalists and media experts at expert studies and specialist graduate professional studies is training in journalism and media activity in order to acquire competent skills for direct entry of journalists and media workers in the working journalists and media process in the Republic of Croatia;

(H4) Education of journalists and media professionals at the level of internal schools and specialized schools and annual seminars and workshops remain permanent professional orientation of journalists and media institutions and the free choice of all employees who are specifically looking to engage in journalism or media profession (public relations or communications management);

(H5) Of the total registered 3,260 journalists and 2600 media workers (specialists in public relations, communications management, media designers and experts in other types of media activity) in Croatia, only 46% of employees have a university degree;

The study was longitudinally conducted in the framework of the research project "Croatian media communication in convergent environment" (Project No.128-0000000-3620) /6/ with a representative sample of 210 journalists and media professionals who work in the programs of education of journalists and media professionals, and the Croatian universities, colleges and specialized internal schools and the Croatian university institutions (Zagreb, Pula, Rijeka, Zadar, Split, Dubrovnik, Osijek, Varazdin and Koprivnica) and high schools (Zagreb, Varazdin, Rijeka, Sibenik, Split, Dubrovnik, Osijek and Karlovac).

The survey sample included traditional Croatian media institutions (Vjesnik, HRTV (TV 1, TV 2, R 1, R 2, R 3), HINA, IKA and Croatian Journalists' Association) and newspaper (Vjesnik, Večernji list, Slobodna Dalmacija, Novi list, Jutarnji list) and weekly newspapers (Danas, Slobodan tjednik, Globus, Gloria, Glas koncila, Feral Tribune, and Auto moto revija) and radio stations (Catholic Radio, Narodni radio, radio Antena, Plavi radio, radio Sljeme and regional radio stations) and TV stations (RTL, TV NOVA and CMC) and MEDIA SERVICE, Kršćanska sadašnjost and WAZ (Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung).

Control sample was carried out at the School of Journalism at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Zagreb and at the Department of Tourism

and Communication at the University of Zadar.

Supplemental interview was applied only in cases of additional explanation and clarification of responses, randomly from a group of 210 respondents. The study was carried out in a longitudinal time limits between 20th of January 2006 and 20th of December 2012.

5. COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS OF EDUCATION OF JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA EXPERTS

Development prospects of the education of journalists and media professionals in the new education system in Croatia are based on the affirmation of journalists and media dialogue (two-way flow of information), in which every citizen becomes truly communicative being. In this model, each citizen develops and is expressed in the communication field of equal exchange of views and opinions with other people through journalism and media communications. Such a strong development of new information and communication technologies (New Media; Internet, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, broadcast, Most Popular, Music, Sports, Entertainment, Syllabus; Likend; Society Network; ... Web communication; Online Relations, Online Journalism, and Mobile communication) acts interactive and provocative on the existing system of education of journalists and media communication science in Croatia.

New ICT technologies are strongly influenced by the power of communication and transformation of the education system dealing with journalism and media communication principles. New Information Society requires new journalism and media knowledge. The vision of the future of journalism and the media is based on the historical principle of so called reverse educational proportionality. The greater scientific knowledge and more developed media and journalism technology, it is less likely to collective functioning of life and government, and fairer personal and civic participation is in expansion /7/.

Analyzing complex problems and prospects of development of education of journalists and media professionals in Croatia we futuristically assume that journalism and media in Croatia create development through four specific communication transitional developmental approach to education of journalists and media professionals in Croatia in the last two decades /8/. Development and perspectives of education of journalists and media professionals must be based on four essential journalistic, political, educational and communicational assumptions:

(1) The development and prospects of the education of journalists and media professionals must be based in the structuring of a new system of education of journalists and media communication theorist. The new system of education of journalists and media professionals must leave the old model of media (final submission of information to the Croatian people) and establish a new journalistic and media inductive stream of public communication (from the citizen to the government) with permanent alignment of all the information on Communication principle "everyone with everyone, about everything, totally, arguments and with personal responsibility" /9/.

So journalism and media communications become public civic forum where, on the one hand, they gain information about issues and problems and on the other hand, they gain solutions and answers to many questions.

(2) A new system of education of journalists and media experts must be build on a new educational conceptual communicative qualifications framework in which systematic transformation can truly happen - the system of public information into the system of public two-way communication /10/. New educational model focuses its attention on two systemic problems of education of journalists and media competent expert (political and communication aspect);

(3) Since the real change and improvement of any system of education of journalists and media experts occurs at the individual communicative action of individual journalists and

media institutions, it is necessary to develop journalism and media communications as media discursive platform on which citizens can communicate on the principle of "public dialogue" /11/. Public journalism and media dialogue seek reform of the entire journalistic and media system at all levels of global, regional, national and local journalists and media communication;

(4) The analysis was conducted on the current system of education of journalists and media professionals who are educated at Croatian universities and higher education institutions that educate journalists and media professionals. The results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis showed that until now journalists and media experts were educated in the function of the old unidirectional, monologue journalism and media discourse. We suppose that in such learning environment, journalists and media experts can not perform historic transformation of public information in the new two-way system of public communication for all citizens based on the communication model "everyone with everyone, about everything, totally, argumented and with personal responsibility". From the development perspective of Croatian journalists and media professionals education, that becomes professional and personal limitation in the implementation of a new system of public communication on the territory of the Republic of Croatia /12/;

Certainly, for a systematic analysis of the development and prospects of the education of journalists and media professionals in Croatia, with the stated previous four strategic directions, in terms of improving academic programs for the education of journalists and media professionals, as well as changing the whole concept of journalists and media personnel education, it is necessary to look at twenty-year transition problem that Croatian journalism and mass communication media in the past two decades faced.

We can say that the Croatian journalism and the media in the past two decades, based its European path of joining the European Union (EU) on ten synthetic communicational, tech-

nological, economic, political, media and journalistic hypothetical assumptions, which are: (1) System transition from model of public informing to model of public dialog communication, (2) the question is how Croatian journalism and the media can rid of old media and journalistic policies (top-down) and party and proprietary influences, (3) Establishment of a new model of media communication with plural civic dialogue paradigm of democratic journalism, (4) how to establish a clear and transparent ownership relations in the media (ownership structure and concentration of media ownership), (5) Insisting on a clear political and journalistic commitment to public radio, public television and transparent media services, (6) The establishment of new forms and models of systematic education of journalists for the application and use of new ICT technologies in journalism (Internet, Social Networks (Social network), Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Broadcast, LinkedIn and new media), (7) How to create the conditions for new pluralistic, democratic, autonomous and free journalism ("eyes and ears of all citizens) and not the organ of special interest groups and political parties, (8) Alignment of media law and journalistic ethics with the European standards in the field of electronic media, journalism and public communication; (9) the preservation of media, journalists and civil liberties (freedom of expression of public opinion and public attitudes), and (10) media and Journalists' respect for human rights and religious freedoms (media law, media ethics, tolerance, civic and journalistic freedom) /13/;

Croatia now has a modern legislative framework that encourages media competition and free media market. In accordance with the rules of the European Union, sphere of electronic media communications, mobile telephony, the implementation of a unified European emergency call number (112), regulation of media rules on the length of commercials on public television, the rules for the promotion of European cultural heritage and broadcasting films from the overall European audiovisual productions in particular regulated /14/. In accordance with the development of infor-

mation society and media, sphere of new electronic media technologies and electronic commerce is also regulated.

6. CONCLUSION

In the context of the development of modern education of journalists and media professionals today's development and prospects of the education of journalists in our region should be seen as a communication process of building a new national system of public communication of all Croatian citizens. Journalism and media communication connected with education in the new system of public communication, must help all citizens in a diverse exchange of information on global, regional, national and local world (science, politics, economics, social development, religion, life and privacy) /15/. Unlike institutional education, journalism and media communication (as functional media education) act synergistically, permanently, on the education of all the citizens, from childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. Therefore, education, journalism and media communication are directed to each other. They are among themselves dialectically connected with the power of education, journalism, media and communication in daily interaction that builds a coherent modern information and communication society. Historically it is known that always education, journalism and media communication are just developed as a system of public communication in any society (kinetic communication, verbal, print communication, electronic, Internet, on-line journalism, multimedia communication, video communication, media design, social networks, etc.).

Education, on the other hand, as a rational and economical communication, strongly effects on the prospects and development of journalism and media communication in any modern society. Also, the strong development of new information and communication technology (ICT) affects and promotes education of journalists and media professionals/16/. The educational curricula for the education of journalists and media professionals are constantly

reforming and improving in line with the development of new journalism and media technology (acquisition of new journalism and media skills, competencies and new learning outcomes for mastering modern journalism and new media technology). New journalistic knowledge and modern media competence, which presses in contemporary forms of education at all levels of education (secondary, tertiary and university and specialist) establishes a new system of journalism and the media of mass communication. The development and introduction of new specialized academic disciplines in the education of journalists and media professionals in Croatian journalist and media specialist and university courses such as Systematic Communication; Media Communication, Internet, Web communications, on-line journalism, Online Relations /17/; Public Relations /18/, Personal PR, Media campaigns; Lobbying, Crisis Communication, New Media, Social Media, Visual Communication, Graphic and media production, Network Marketing, Business Communication; media design, electronic media, public awareness; Public opinion, Intercultural Communication /19/; Communication management/20/, media management, qualitative and quantitative methodologies, communication research methods, statistics, Media Ethics, Media Legislation, Digital Media /21/, and Investigative Journalism, what became a firm guarantee for excellent development prospects of the education of journalists and media professionals at all levels of education (from graduate, specialist, post-graduate and doctoral studies in journalism and communications, media communication and public relations).

Contemporary reformed policy of journalists and media experts education affirmed a two-way flow of information, media and civil dialogue in which every citizen becomes truly communicative being in a fair and equitable process of communication through journalism and media communication in the process of dialog communication, coordination, debate and achieving social consensus with the general principle of journalism and media dialogue "everyone with everyone, about every-

thing, argumented and with personal responsibility" /22/.

The conducted research on the development and prospects of the education of journalists and media professionals in the Croatian media and communication spaces, in the process of Croatian accession to the EU, we can conclude that the development of journalism and media communication education constantly innovates and improves at all levels of higher education, specialist, graduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies. Existing curricula and its program content, equipment, teaching staff and educational technology, and quality of study meet the minimum educational and pedagogical standards that are comparatively comparable with similar study programs in developed countries, European and Western educational traditions of journalism and media /23/. Finally, we conclude that the Republic of Croatia in the last two decades, is developing media and journalism in a positive atmosphere addressed in the phrase "Media, Journalism and the European Union" (Past, Present and Future) /24/. Media and journalism education future of Croatia in the European Union (EU) has already started and its full communication value, according to the provisions of the Croatian accession to the European Union (EU), Croatia expects on historical date - 1st of July 2013. Educational, journalistic and media challenges, as we see, are great, and we hope that the education of journalists and media experts can be even more progressive in terms of searching, implementation, evaluation, control and full affirmation of freedom of the media and the promotion of genuine civic and national values that affirm education, media and journalism pluralist democracy. The set of educational, media and journalism pluralistic and democratic goals is only possible to achieve with Croatian membership in the family of the member states of the European Union (EU).

Notes

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