MEDIA EDUCATION AS A FACTOR AFFECTING THE QUALITY OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE USA AND CANADA

ABSTRACT
The paper is aimed at the analysis of the main principles of media technologies incorporation into secondary education of the USA and Canada, revealing didactic foundations of media education, systematizing the ways of forming media and digital competences. It has been determined that rapidly developing digital technologies are the main reason of changes in modern media and affect a person, human activity and society. It has been defined that though media education is considered a separate branch of pedagogical study, its goals and tasks are mostly implemented by “across the curriculum” approach due to the use of diverse academic disciplines in school curriculum. In this context, special attention has been paid to the new role of the teacher in their attempt to form students’ skills of critical thinking. The number of disciplines with incorporated media literacy skills has been identified: English, Technology Education, Health Studies, Journalism, Media Production. It has been stated that young people, who are the main users of modern media tools, often do not have skills of media literacy. It leads to their inability to produce different messages, review them, search for information, cooperate with other users and critically assess the information they are working with. It has negative influence on their personality and may result in some problematic situations. In the USA and Canada, the development of students’ media competence is carried out through the development of its components (information competence, critical thinking, communication skills, and media production skills). They are formed most effectively during the study of social disciplines. In the USA and Canada, media training of secondary school teachers is carried out in the framework of formal, non-formal and informal education. The conclusion has been made that developing media literacy must become an integral part of secondary education.

Keywords: media education, media competences, media literacy, curriculum, secondary schools, the USA, Canada.

АНОТАЦІЯ
У статті проаналізовано основні принципи інтеграції медіа-технологій в освітній процес середніх шкіл США та Канади, розкрито дидактичні засади медіаосвіти, систематизацію шляхів формування медіа та цифрових компетентностей. Визначено, що стрімкий розвиток цифрових технологій є основною причиною змін у сучасних ЗМІ та вплив на людину, людську діяльність та суспільство. Визначено, що хоча медіаосвіта вважається окремою галуззю педагогічного дослідження, її цілі та завдання в основному реалізуються підходом «наскрізного навчальної плану» завдяки поєднанню у ньому дисциплін різних циклів. У цьому контексті особлива увага приділяється новій ролі вчителя в спробі сформувати у учнів навички критичного мислення. Було визначено низку дисциплін з інтегрованими навичками
medialagramatnosti, takhі as: Anglійska mova, Informatyka, Oсnovи zдарья, Журналістика тощо. З'ясовано, що молодь, яка є основними користувачами сучасних засобів масової інформації, часто не володіє навичками медіаagramatnosti. Це призводить до їхньої незадатності створювати різні повідомлення, переглядати їх, шукати інформацію, співпрацювати з іншими користувачами та критично оцінювати інформацію, з якою вони працюють. Це негативно впливає на їх особистість і може призвести до деяких проблемних ситуацій. У США та Канаді розвиток медіакськомпетентності учнів здійснюється шляхом розвитку її компонентів (інформаційної компетентності, критичного мислення, комунікативних навичок та навичок медіа виробництва). Вони найбільш ефективно формуються під час вчителів соціального циклу. У США і Канаді медіа підготовка вчителів середніх шкіл здійснюється в рамках формальної, неформальної та інформальної освіти. Зроблено висновок, що розвиток медіаagramatnosti має стати невід’ємною частиною середньої освіти.

Ключові слова: медіаосвіта, медіакськомпетентність, медіаagramatності, навчальна програма, середні школи, США, Канада.

INTRODUCTION

Due to rapid development of information and telecommunication technologies, which have created new opportunities for access to any information and its accumulation, there are no doubts about the importance of media education aimed at personal development by means of media. The main task of theorists and practitioners of education under such conditions is to direct this process to the formation of the population’s culture of communication with the media, their creative and communicative abilities, critical thinking, interpretation, evaluation and analysis of media information. In other words, their task is to provide the education of a media literate person. Without a proper level of media literacy in modern society, it is impossible to use information content of television, radio, press, and the Internet actively. Media literacy helps to understand socio-cultural and political contexts, perception, analysis, evaluation and creation of media texts.

At the present stage of the Ukrainian education modernization, the study of the experience of foreign countries, in which media education is of paramount importance, is relevant. In foreign countries, media literacy has been implemented for almost half a century, but only in Canada, Australia and Hungary has it become a mandatory component of media education.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the principles of incorporating media technologies into the educational process of secondary education in the USA and Canada; to reveal the didactic principles of media education; to systematize the ways of media and digital competences formation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

Topical issues of media education have always been in the focus of scientific research of both home and foreign scholars. The origins and the development of media education were studied by J. Gerbner (1999), M. Griego (2012), R. Hobbes (2010) and others. Many Ukrainian scholars (T. Ivanova, V. Ivanova, L. Kulchynska, Y. Miroshnychenko, O. Voloshenina) have devoted their work to the definition of media education and media literacy, conceptual approaches to their understanding, similarities and differences. Their research confirms the effectiveness of the use of media education technologies in the training of specialists in various fields.
The analysis of publications reveals the views of some theorists on media education as a tool for protection against the negative influence of the media (R. Kubey (2004), K. Ward-Barnes (2010)) and their attempts to help media educators. Foreign scholars (A. Prevett (2009), L. Stein (2009)) study the standards and skills necessary for the application of media education in the learning process. American theorists of media education believe that media education principles are key concepts that guide teachers who teach media literacy and at the same time help to find consensus in the theoretical foundations of media education (Hobbs, 2010). Canadian scholars B. Duncan and K. Wilson emphasize that the principles of media education “give teachers some common ground and opportunities for discussion” (Wilson & Duncan, 2008), because the principles create the foundation and theoretical basis of media education today.

However, the study of mechanisms for the inclusion of media literacy in the content of secondary education of the United States and Canada have not been sufficiently studied by Ukrainian scientists, even though it is becoming increasingly important and up-to-date.

In the process of our research the following research methods have been used: analysis of specialized literature for the study of American and Canadian experience in the implementation of media education and formation of media competence and media literacy in secondary education; description, generalization, synthesis and comparison of the obtained data for outlining common and distinctive tendencies.

RESULTS

Due to more and more active use of telecommunications by young people and children, it is important to remember that mobile phones, smartphones, video games, social networks, interactive whiteboards or Internet (likewise television and radio) will not automatically improve education. The use of digital media by children and young people does not necessarily make them more media literate. Technology in itself is not the “savior” of education. According to R. Hobbs, digital innovations can sometimes even reduce the academic performance of children in school, as they distract them from homework and preparation for classes (Hobbs, 2010).

Research carried out by scientists from Duke University in North Carolina shows that computers are used by children at home primarily for entertainment. Moreover, it is noted that students in grades 5–8 begin to study much worse since they have a computer and Internet at home. The results of the analysis of the academic performance of 150,000 American students in reading and math before and after the advent of the computer at home are very disturbing. They show that students’ grades have significantly deteriorated compared to students from low-income families who did not have a computer at home (Vigdor et al., 2014). Obviously, schoolchildren are distracted from preparing school assignments by social networks, videos from YouTube, online games.

Teachers face an important task – to make digital and media literacy the basis of modern education, both in and outside the school. American scientist R. Hobbs is convinced that under such conditions positive results will be obtained, namely:

– parents will pay attention to how their children use media at home and will be able to balance their activities in front of the monitor with other forms of play and learning to both protect and develop them;

– people of all ages will have an inner need to ask critical questions about the author, the purpose of the message and author’s point of view in each message regardless of its type (political campaign, pharmaceutical advertising, reports, research, opinions of politicians, celebrities) and placement (websites, editorial news, e-mail, blogs, etc.);
– teachers will use instructional methods to explore the role of news and current events in the society, draw parallels with fiction, science, health, history, “build bridges” between real and school life, which will encourage students to lifelong learning;

– people of all ages will be responsible and educated in their communication activities; will treat others with respect, adhere to social norms of behavior, which will develop personal responsibility for their actions either online or offline;

– the main part of learning for students will be the creation of authentic messages for a real audience with the use of digital means, images, language, sound and interactivity, which will develop knowledge and skills, and demonstrate the power and effectiveness of communication;

– people from all branches of activity will be able to achieve their goals due to the ability to search, find, share and use information in order to solve problems, developing their ability to access, analyze, evaluate, communicate and exchange ideas and information, actively participating in social life of a community, nation and the world (Hobbs, 2010).

It should be mentioned that the list suggested by R. Hobbs does not run short of all the positive achievements of the introduction of digital and media education in the pedagogical practice of formal education. Nevertheless, obtaining such results is possible only by incorporating the principles of media education into the educational process.

In this context, an important task of the school (which is abbreviated to K-12 in the United States and Canada) is to teach younger generation to be “wise consumers and creators of media.” And, as the president and founder of the American human rights organization Media Literacy Now, E. McNeill, points out, they should use all kinds of media wisely, not just videos that students post on YouTube or on an information website of their school. The main thing, in his opinion, is to use “all media wisely and permanently” (Merrin, 2014).

Despite the fact that media education is now perceived as a separate area of pedagogical research, its goals and objectives are implemented in school curricula by means of other disciplines (and not only one, but several disciplines studied simultaneously). This approach was called cross-curricular (“across the curriculum”) (Stein et al., 2009).

It is reasonable to analyze disciplines that form digital and media literacy of students in the United States and Canada. Our study showed that in both countries it has traditionally been the case that media education of children and young people took place at school during English Language Arts classes or during the English Language classes. Thus, teachers of the English language are naturally inclined to digital and media education (Griego, 2012). Researchers can easily trace this inclination because of the English Language teachers’ recognition of their students’ interests and the usage of media devices and media resources to develop their critical thinking skills through creation and comprehension of media messages. In addition, literacy is the area of every teacher’s professional activity. M. Griego and R. Hobbs note that despite the fact that today the concept of “literacy” can be expanded to include different media and various texts, the classical definition of the term is based on print media (Griego, 2012; Hobbs, 2010). Therefore, the role of an English teacher is often to develop and transfer critical thinking skills from popular media back to the printed ones. In this process, various behavioral patterns of teachers are traced. Some are very reluctant to give up the role of “a sage on the stage” when they are involved in media education. Others do not like to waste time working with modern pop culture texts during their classes. They believe that students would rather get acquainted with high literature during these classes, because apart from English lessons,
they will have no such opportunities. Another group of teachers is convinced that syllabuses are overloaded, so it is unreasonable to expect an English teacher to use all types of media texts and develop all skills. Despite the lack of conformity on media education, most English teachers integrate aspects of media education into existing syllabuses.

Analysis of the methodological literature on the development of media skills in English Language Arts classes testifies that teachers develop all components of media competence in their students: information literacy, critical thinking, news comprehension, visual and digital literacy, using various pedagogical technologies. Students learn how words, images, graphics, and sounds affect the content of a message and identify their features.

In general, in 50 US states, media education is implemented in one way or another in the English Language syllabuses (Ward-Barnes, 2010). In the Canadian provinces, the development of media literacy during the English Language classes is regulated by the Atlantic Province Education Foundation. Methodical assistance to English teachers aimed at the development of their students’ media competence is provided through the online resource Media Smarts. Media competence is formed within the development of general speech skills: oral and written speech, listening, reading, reviewing, expressing one’s opinion and other forms of information representation.

Summarizing the content of the English Language classes in both countries, we noticed a similar feature – the development of media competence of schoolchildren through the development of its components. Information competence is formed by means of the development of students’ research skills, their ability to understand news through reading and writing review of non-fiction, search for inconsistencies in written texts and real life. Critical thinking develops due to the comparison of various social texts with reality. Communication skills are activated during the analysis and discussion of filmmaking technologies. Media text production skills are developed when students create multimedia presentations of their projects, transform textual or graphic information into digital, use different media to create a story and transfer it to the screen. Thus, the activities of the English Language teacher should be focused on achieving the goals set in the syllabus and compliance with educational standards, as well as on the satisfaction of personal and social interests.

The analyzed materials allow us to draw a conclusion about the inclusion of media education goals into the study of social sciences, which took place later than the above-described English Language experience. However, the vast majority of teachers of social sciences, as evidenced by the results of their survey (Tuggle et al., 1999), consider media education the most necessary and appropriate for teaching social disciplines at school.

As a rule, syllabuses in general education disciplines include the task of developing media competence into general learning outcomes, which corresponds to educational standards (and that is the case with the English language). However, it should be noted that teachers prefer to simply inform students about known historical facts and events, without resorting to critical research and presentation of their own point of view. According to R. Hobbs (Hobbs, 2010), this technique is more typical of higher school, where students conduct various sociological studies (traditional and with the use of the latest technologies) and develop media skills. In school, within the framework of general education disciplines, information and media literacy is developed through the assessment of sources and quality of information while carrying out historical research, comparing the rights and responsibilities of citizens of two countries or their cultures, finding similarities and differences. It can also take place in the process of analyzing the individual’s role in the history and at
the present stage; while explaining, analyzing and comparing the effectiveness of different methods of public influence on the policy of the country, government, etc.

According to the analyzed materials, in the USA media education skills are formed during the study of the following general education disciplines: History, Economics, Geography, Civil Sciences, Politics, Culture (Cubey, 2004). Scientists report that media education has been introduced into educational process of secondary schools in 34 states of America by means of the above mentioned disciplines (Ward-Barnes, 2010).

News comprehension skills and the ability to distinguish inaccurate information became nationally important in the United States, especially in 2016, when fabricated information was perceived as reliable during the presidential election. The problem of recognizing fake news has spread to schools as students face difficulties in determining the reliability of online information. Researchers at Stanford University found that 80 percent of students perceived advertising that mentioned its sponsors as a “reliable source of objective information.” Therefore, at the federal level, the Stanford Civic Online Reasoning Program has been launched, which is now being implemented in 12 states and teaches students to use the criteria of information reliability. Schoolchildren must learn how to determine what is fake and what is credible. In Ohio, new educational standards for secondary education include the development of media and technological literacy. Florida has passed the Media Literacy Act, which is called “library media.” Other states today are in the process of defining media literacy as a mandatory requirement in school syllabus (Merrin, 2014).

In Canada, digital and media literacy are taught within areas of knowledge such as citizenship, law, government, authority, cultural diversity, time, continuity and changes, decision making, people, society, economics, and environment.

The analysis of the development of digital and media competences in the study of general education disciplines in the USA and Canada made it possible to identify reasons for the effectiveness of their development in the context of social disciplines. One reason is that media can be quite attractive to uncover information about people, places and events in artistic or journalistic style. Secondly, media form attitudes and opinions about history, government and politics (Gerbner, 1999) and outline the civic position of the student. Media education through general education disciplines deepens students’ understanding of the role of the media in the formation and dissemination of knowledge about the world. It also promotes the development of analytical skills and the ability to distinguish fiction from real facts. In addition, it is an important tool for studying issues of democracy, citizenship and political processes in their countries (Stein et al., 2009).

The comparison of the features of media and digital competences development in both countries gives reasons to conclude that they are similar, in particular in the list of social disciplines. Other similar features are a small number of separate media education programs in social sciences and an insufficient offer for schoolteachers in terms of improving their skills in the development of media education within social sciences.

The development of schoolchildren’s media literacy occurs during the study of Art disciplines. A retrospective analysis showed that the development of media literacy in schoolchildren is due to the use of films in Art classes since the 1960s and 1970s. Films were considered as works of art that students could analyze and evaluate. But even today, modern media are considered to be types of art that need to be evaluated and studied (Stein et al., 2009).

Art teachers focus on the development of visual techniques for conveying a communicative message through the analysis of paintings and photographs taken from
Students use these skills to create their own work of art in a variety of media, critically discuss ethical issues related to copying and borrowing images, techniques, or ideas. It should be mentioned that the main task of the teacher in this context is to listen to students, understand what they try to express through their work, i.e. to understand the content and teach them to understand media messages of others, rather than disseminate their work among the mass audience (Hobbs, 2010).

Because art is enjoyable, it is believed that media education in Art classes has positive influence and develops students’ ability to enjoy art, appreciate the beautiful, enjoy media production. A disadvantage in the development of digital and media competences of K-12 students in Art classes may be the right to choose a work of art, which primarily belongs to a teacher and depends on his/her preferences. What students really like can be ignored by the teacher, and, as a result, students will not get pleasure from their favorite media texts.

The desire to protect children from large-scale marketing of unhealthy products, such as alcohol, tobacco and sugary foods, has stimulated the introduction of media education in school disciplines related to health sciences (K-12 Health Studies). These disciplines now address issues such as student health, body characteristics, self-esteem, obesity, eating disorders, hygiene, smoking, drug and alcohol use, violence, sex and risk behavior (Griego, 2012; Hobbs, 2010). Health Education syllabuses are based on generally accepted scientific facts and universal norms about a healthy lifestyle. Their goal is to form students’ skills of healthy lifestyle. Some teachers are creative in achieving this goal and use media education technologies for this purpose. For example, critical research and analysis help students demonstrate the importance of health-preserving techniques in different educational communities. Students are often asked to create a media text using a variety of media tools to raise awareness of the impact of behavior on health problems among the school community. In 45 US states, media education is present in Health Education syllabuses (Ward-Barnes, 2012).

Our study showed that the process of developing students’ technical skills in using computer technology took place during Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) classes (K-12 Technology Education). Nevertheless, critical thinking skills went unnoticed. However, with the advent and development of new media and communication, the requirements of new businesses, the need for more critical and experienced professionals with a high level of technical competences, school classes in technical disciplines began to include elements of media education such as youth media, digital ethics, online security, etc. However, interdisciplinary approaches that presuppose relation to historical disciplines, cultural studies or social sciences are rarely taken into account during such classes.

In North Carolina (the USA), the development of media literacy was included in the syllabuses of Technology Education in all schools of the state in the mid-1990s (Hobbs, 2010). Nevertheless, US educational institutions pointed out the importance of developing more than just technical skills during Computer Literacy classes. They advocated the integration of the content and the development of computer skills, proclaiming that the latter should not be developed in isolation. Some “computer classes”, in which only technical skills are taken into account, really do not help students learn to apply computer skills meaningfully.

Analysis of technology sciences syllabuses in the Canadian provinces shows that syllabuses have mandatory interdisciplinary connections between technology and media education. Technological literacy is seen as the ability to use technological systems, technological activities and make reasonable decisions on various technological issues. In
the context of digital and media competences development, students learn to identify risks of using media, learn and apply security rules, develop risk management skills, learn to identify cyber fraud, follow the rules of ethical behavior online, study computer ethics on copyright, social interaction, censorship, citation, plagiarism, etc.

Another possibility for students to receive media education in K-12 is an alternative approach, when necessary media education competences are formed during the study of certain disciplines of media education. They can be called differently. One option is K-12 Journalism or K-12 Media Production. As a rule, Journalism is taught in high school. The task of the discipline is to teach high school students how to prepare a school newspaper, school announcements on internal radio, to create a blog for school news or a page on social networks, to highlight the life of the school and the local community. Teachers use technologies peculiar to youth media, which help students to represent interests and values of young people in the production of new media messages.

However, as researchers warn (Hobbs, 2010; Skull et al., 2014), in the production process there is rarely time for critical reflection. At the same time, addressing various aspects of local school life and its audience through media production develops the interdisciplinary application of media practices in various school disciplines, which is an undeniable advantage. Students apply the acquired knowledge in practice, in activities that are in demand and relevant. In addition, the need for such activities is caused by the necessity to address social issues important to young people.

It should be stressed that, in contrast to the integrated approach, the alternative approach is not so widely implemented in the educational activities of the school. Despite this, positive changes are taking place. Thus, in the curricula of American schools in 2010, there are separate media education courses in 7 states (Ward-Barnes, 2010).

Nevertheless, when it concerns the effectiveness of media education and its implementation in the educational process, government educational organizations, educational administrations, researchers and teachers are aware of its direct connection and interdependence on the level of teacher training for media education. Nowadays, the biggest challenge in education, including media education, is the transformation of the role of the teacher, who is no longer an actor on the stage, but rather “a guide on the sidewalk.” We completely agree with this view, because the task of the modern teacher is not just to pass a certain amount of information to his/her students, but unobtrusively direct their efforts to find the right information. The priority in the professional activity of a modern teacher is the facilitation of the educational process, cooperation with students on the principles of equality, humanism and democracy.

American scholars point out that a critical component of the effectiveness of any media education program is the appropriate training of teachers for its implementation. However, media education of teachers themselves is not universal and ubiquitous. They note that despite the inclusion of media education tasks in the syllabuses of disciplines, teachers, in the vast majority, are left alone with the responsibility to implement the set tasks, i.e. without proper training in the formal education system to carry out such activities.

Research conducted by scientists of Stanford University shows that students increasingly need qualitative media education. If educators are unable to provide them with the appropriate level of media education, the results may be irreversible, and as the above mentioned scholars point out, even “lead to the loss of democracy in society” (Meehan et al., 2015).
According to the analysis of the relevant literature (websites of American and Canadian universities, public organizations, electronic educational platforms, scientific literature, etc.), media training of teachers in both countries is carried out in the following ways:

– in the framework of formal education, when future teachers receive the first and second levels of higher education;

– in the framework of non-formal education, when teachers acquire necessary media skills through various scientific, educational and methodological activities organized by school administration, non-profit professional associations, which is a form of their professional development;

– in the framework of informal education, when teachers are engaged in self-development and self-improvement of their professional skills.

Within the framework of formal education, future teachers can acquire media training as a special training in the field of communications; as a separate (compulsory or selective) training course (either in a traditional format or online); as a component of each course taught at the university.

The importance and effectiveness of the latter cannot be underestimated. Media education elements in each course of the teacher-training curriculum will not undermine its content in any way, but will bring many benefits to future teachers in terms of pedagogy (Meehan, 2015). However, the effectiveness of this method depends entirely on the creativity of the university lecturer, and its analysis seems quite problematic, as it requires generalization of the practical activities of teachers of different disciplines in different specialties and specializations. Moreover, not all teachers network their experience of incorporating media education into the learning process as part of a specific training course.

To analyze the role of media education in teacher training within formal education system, we addressed the description of the results of its implementation, presented in the scientific paper of a group of American researchers from Baylor University in Texas (Meehan, 2015).

Thus, at Baylor University, first-year students of pedagogical specialties must take the Introduction to Secondary Education course. At the beginning of the semester, they are introduced to a number of different topics, including adolescent development, assessment, multicultural education, lesson planning, etc. During the theoretical training, each student is attached to two schoolchildren from a rural secondary school as a tutor, whose task is to form the schoolchildren’s skills of reading comprehension. The student must work out a mini-lesson, which is considered to be a part of his/her tutoring experience. According to empirical research, modern secondary school students use mobile phones, the Internet, video games, TV, books. Thus, trainee-students should know the essence of digital and media literacy. University professors explain the importance of digital and media competences to them and introduce them to the key questions that are to be asked in the process of reading and analyzing different media messages. In this course, Baylor University teachers address key concepts and relevant questions developed by the Center for Media Literacy (CML) and the National Association for Media Education (NAME) with consideration of media education principles (Thoman et al., 2004).

Students can watch a short video about school reform and practise by asking who created the message, for whom, whose voice was not taken into account, and so on. After practising in the classroom under the guidance of the teacher, trainee students integrate these questions and concepts into their tutoring activities, i.e. teach to critical reading. As a rule, they start with usual exercises (deconstruction of advertising texts, analysis and
evaluation of articles from magazines and newspapers). Then, they will move on to acquaint their students with the methods of persuasion used in media. Finally, they can ask their students to create a media product, such as a commercial or a magazine cover, for a particular pop star or famous athlete so that they can apply persuasion techniques in practice. To do this, students search for the information on the Internet, asking critical questions.

During the semester, trainee students acquire their own skills of critical perception of information, in particular on various pedagogical issues and curriculum development. In addition to their own study and application of methods of critical analysis and evaluation of information, students acquire necessary skills of a professional teacher who is ready to work in a diversified school environment.

Despite the significant and thorough media training of future teachers in universities and colleges of the United States and Canada, scientists still consider it insufficient. It especially concerns consequences of media products consumption by children and adolescents. Due to this, universities in both countries are implementing diversified media education programs for their students, preparing future teachers for contemporary challenges. As a result, media education is becoming the most important supplement to the classical training of future teachers and is making the latter truly innovative. After all, in the world of digital media, full of ideas, thoughts and arguments, future teachers, like their future students, must have media skills to “be aware of what is happening around, not to be passive and vulnerable.” (Skull et al., 2014).

CONCLUSIONS
Thus, the need to form media literacy and media competences in modern society has led to the integration of media education into the content of secondary education in the United States and Canada. The goals and objectives of the media education are implemented in school curricula and syllabuses by means of other disciplines, or as a separate course. The development of media competences of secondary school students is carried out through the development of its components: information competence, critical thinking, communication skills, and media production skills. Our analysis of the development of digital and media competences in the study of general disciplines in both countries made it possible to identify the reasons of their effectiveness in the context of social disciplines. They are related to the ability of media to attractively present information about people, places and events in artistic or journalistic style and the formation of attitude to national history and politics by means of mass communication.

The prospects of further research are related to a detailed and thorough study of secondary school teachers’ possibilities to undergo training aimed at the development of media literacy and media competence in the framework of formal, non-formal and informal education of the USA and Canada.

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