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Introduction to the Special Issue: Issues of Teaching Media Literacy in Russian Language Education

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Introduction to the Special Issue: Issues of Teaching Media Literacy in Russian Language Education

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1. Media Literacy Teaching in Foreign Language Education: Defining Key Concepts

The rapidly evolving political and cultural landscape of the contemporary world necessitates our continuous reevaluation of the competencies required for effective second language acquisition. As global communication and digital technologies continue to advance, the traditional paradigms of language learning must expand to include critical skills that enable learners to navigate and engage with the multifaceted media environment in the target language. In this context, *media literacy* emerges as a fundamental component of foreign language education, not only fostering linguistic proficiency but also emphasizing the significant role of analytical capabilities essential for discerning, scrutinizing, and interpreting information and disinformation as presented in various media forms. Generally understood as “the ability of a person to understand, analyze, evaluate and create media messages in a variety of forms” (NAMLE, 2016), *media literacy* is defined differently for various levels of education, arising from constructivist learning theory, media studies, and cultural studies scholarship in general, as well as the contextually and historically situated understandings of media production and interpretation in any specific cultural and political setting. In this context, the ability to comprehend both the explicit and implicit content of media messages becomes vital not only for academic purposes but also for fostering an informed and responsible global citizenship.

It is not surprising that the *21st Century Skills Map* identifies media literacy as one of the critical skills required of young people in today’s world (Partnership for 21st-Century Learning, 2011). The standards distinguish between *information literacy* and *media literacy*, defining the former as the ability to access information efficiently and effectively, evaluate information critically and competently, and use information accurately and creatively

to address issues or problems (p. 12). *Information literacy* also encompasses a fundamental understanding of the ethical and legal issues surrounding access to and use of information. *Media literacy* complements this ability by including an understanding of how media messages are constructed, the purposes behind them, the tools, characteristics, and conventions used, and the differences in how individuals interpret information, values, and points of view. Additionally, it considers the ways media can impact individual belief systems and behavior (p. 13). Both types of literacy are interconnected and often used interchangeably in teaching practice, emphasizing “active inquiry and critical thinking about the messages we receive and create” (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009, p. 7). Teaching these literacies involves several steps in evaluating published media, including distinguishing factual information from opinions and speculation, evaluating source credibility, verifying message accuracy, differentiating supported from unsupported claims, identifying prejudice, and uncovering underlying assumptions (Silverblatt, 2014).

In addition to information literacy, media literacy is closely connected to *digital literacy*—the ability to use information and communication technologies (such as social media channels, Instagram, etc.) to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills (Kern, 2015). While *information literacy* emphasizes accessing, evaluating, and using information effectively, often in academic or research contexts, *digital literacy* encompasses a broader range of competencies, including the *critical* evaluation of digital technologies as powerful tools for communication, dissemination, and management of (dis) information. *Media literacy* specifically foregrounds the ability to critically analyze media messages and understand their construction, purpose, and impact on audiences. It involves skills that overlap with both information and digital literacy but adds a critical perspective on media content and its influence on public perception and behavior.

A critical semiotic awareness of how meanings are made, framed, and transformed in particular contexts of language use is essential to twenty-first-century learners because they face a singularly pervasive mediascape that is potentially as exploitative as it is emancipatory (Kern, 2015, p. 233).

This critical perspective on media content has led to the recent conceptualization of another type of L2 literacy—*critical media literacy*. The critical media literacy framework outlines how language instructors can build students' critical awareness of how information communication technologies and media channels function within individual societies, emphasizing "questioning the politics of representation, challenging oppressive ideologies, and creating counter-hegemonic media representations" (Gambino & Share, 2023, p. 77).

Despite these epistemological differences and the plethora of approaches to teaching various types of literacy outlined above, in this special issue of *Russian Language Journal* we choose to focus broadly on *teaching L2 media literacy*, which, in our view, encompasses information and digital literacy. As guest editors of this special issue, we are guided by the idea that the power of media to shape public mindsets is undeniable. Public perceptions of the world are heavily influenced by what is read, seen, and heard through various mass communication channels. These perceptions are not only formed by direct experiences but are also significantly shaped by media. This influence is particularly strong for events that occur far from one's immediate surroundings. For most international crises, opinions and judgments about what is happening, who is responsible, and the potential impacts are largely based on media reports. Distant events become 'tangible' through media coverage, which can also be shaped by what is misrepresented or omitted.

To this end, teaching media literacy has become particularly relevant to the study of Russian as a second language (L2) during a period of massive political propaganda and information wars. The Russian media landscape, characterized by state influence and the strategic dissemination of disinformation, presents unique challenges for Russian (L2) language learners, requiring special training in how to read, listen to, or watch, analyze, and interpret news reports and media coverage in the target language. Understanding the role of media in shaping public opinion has become crucial for students of Russian (L2), who must navigate an influx of fake news and discern intricate linguistic means used by pro-Kremlin reporters to create pervasive political undertones in their coverage of current events, often reflecting hidden political agendas. Media literacy skills enable Russian (L2) learners to critically assess sources, identify biases, and develop a nuanced understanding of contemporary socio-

political contexts, but it also requires novel ways of introducing authentic media materials in the Russian (L2) language classroom. These teaching methods must transcend a traditional view of authentic materials as merely a source of unquestionable linguistic ‘input’, recognizing instead that such materials should be used to foster critical thinking and media literacy skills, which are essential for navigating the complexities of the modern media landscape and understanding the political and ideological nature of language use. By equipping students with the skills to critically engage with media, we prepare them to become not only proficient language users but also informed global citizens capable of discerning the complexities of the media they consume. In this regard, this special issue aims to highlight innovative approaches and theoretical insights into the integration of media literacy in the Russian language classroom, ultimately contributing to broader conversations on the role of media in shaping L2 competence in today’s highly politicized world.

2. This Volume

This volume brings together various perspectives on the teaching of Russian-language media and media literacy. The articles presented here show how Russian-language media can be presented at various levels of instruction, from Novice to Superior and beyond; however, most of the contributions to this issue focus on the challenging move from Intermediate- to Advanced-level proficiency (ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, 2012, 2024).¹ The articles also demonstrate that Russian-language media can be presented to students with a focus on various skills, from reading to listening or watching to writing. All of the courses and approaches described here also include development of students’ speaking skills. Although the articles in this collection take various pedagogical approaches and theoretical stances, they come together in their practical focus: the authors in this collection all tackle the question of how best to engage students with Russian-language media in Russian (L2) language courses and how to enable them to develop media literacy skills vitally important at this time, when war is being waged not only literally and physically, but through words; students’ need to understand

¹ The 2024 ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines appeared after the contributors to this special issue had submitted their articles. Articles therefore cite the 2012 Guidelines.

the difference between reporting and propaganda, to read rhetorical cues, and to read between the lines is greater now than it has been in decades.

One of the challenges in this issue is in the very definition of media literacy. The opening section is devoted to authors' perspectives in examining media literacy through various theoretical approaches and in teaching practice. Sidney Dement takes the approach of Disinformation Studies, an interdisciplinary field that provides tools for instructors from a variety of disciplines to design courses and curricula that enable students to develop media literacy skills. This approach provides instructors of Russian language and culture ways to help students recognize media manipulation and interpret messages conveyed in propaganda. Citing a report for the Council of Europe, Dement distinguishes misinformation, malinformation, and disinformation. *Misinformation* is false information that is potentially harmful, but not generated with the intent to do harm, although it could be further disseminated with harmful intent. *Malinformation* is true, but potentially harmful because of how it was obtained, disseminated, or otherwise used. *Disinformation* is both false and intentionally harmful because of how it is disseminated for strategic gain (Wardle and Derakhshan, 2017, p. 5). Dement writes that in this context emerged the new field of Disinformation Studies, which "reorganizes and broadens the array of concepts at our disposal to describe problematic information in social discourse." He then turns to examples of disinformation from the Soviet Union and Russia that has had an impact on media and societal discourse in the U.S. and elsewhere, from discourse around HIV and AIDS in the United States in the 1980s to information warfare regarding the downing of Malaysia Airlines (MH) Flight 17 in 2014. Turning to the Russian-language classroom, Dement presents a translation into Russian of a Venn diagram published by Wardle and Derakhshan as a means within the multiliteracies framework (Liebschner, 2017) to generate student discussion about terminology in Russian regarding disinformation. Dement posits that "Understanding the technical language of disinformation can help students prepare for the real-world challenges of researching, creating, disseminating, and consuming Russian-language informational texts in the digital age." He asserts that this approach also helps students link their study of Russian to other disciplines, all while developing communication skills applicable to many academic and professional endeavors.

Kelly Knickmeier Cummings examines instruction in media literacy skills with a focus on navigating social media, where, as she writes, “information disorder is a critical concern.” She argues that language classrooms provide a productive space to help students develop social media literacy. Like Dement, Knickmeier Cummings argues that media literacy instruction in the language classroom fosters connections to other academic departments and units across campus. She takes as her framework both the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2015) and the proficiencies in the COIE (critical online evaluation model) (Weisberg et al., 2023); both frameworks encourage cross-campus and cross-disciplinary collaborations. She argues that instruction in social media literacy enacts “social justice best practices” in a media world which can provide outlets for expression but can also present various threats, particularly to those whose voices are already marginalized. Knickmeier Cummings discusses the problem of *homophily*, the love of same, in social media discourse. As she writes, citing Daniel Kahneman (2013), homophily can create a ‘small world’, a sense of “cognitive ease” which can become a target for manipulation by unreliable narrators on social media. This lays the groundwork for a “democratization of disinformation” which only media literacy skills can combat (Chesney & Citron, 2018, pp. 150-151). She proposes classroom instructional models that aim toward Kahneman’s “slow thinking” and “critical analysis of ‘small worlds’ in digital spaces” (Knickmeier Cummings, citing Kahneman, 2013). Citing the COEI framework and the *World-Readiness Standards*, she presents a table of proposed activities in the Russian-language classroom which integrate these two frameworks in allowing students to explore social media with a critical awareness of both its possibilities for language and culture learning and its potential dangers. Knickmeier Cummings seeks to “provide thoughtful, actionable, and inclusive instruction” to build social media literacy and to support “safe digital citizenship” for language learners as they explore the ‘digital wilds’ (Sauro and Zourou, 2019).

Yulia Denisova provides rich material in her article on Russian authoritarian discourse of the 20th and 21st centuries. She argues that instructors in Russian-language classrooms must teach students to recognize and decipher underlying propaganda messaging and distinguish it from legitimate political discourse. As an example of the

former she discusses the “Russkiy mir” project, launched in 2007 with the goal of disseminating a positive image of “the present state of Russian politics and society” across the world in what she calls “an excellent platform for training propagandists.” In order to train students to read and decode propaganda messaging, Denisova designed a unit entitled “Russian Authoritarian Discourse: Characteristics of Propaganda Language” within a course on Russian culture of the 20th and 21st centuries. The course features a history of propaganda development and dissemination and analyzes the language of propaganda, including both text and images. Citing Christian Baden’s definition of propaganda as “a form of public communication about political affairs which claims a monopoly on truth and interpretation” (Baden, 2019), Denisova focuses on a strategy in contemporary Russian political discourse: the claim that ‘everybody lies’, which places propaganda on a level with any other form of communication. She argues that the repetition and regeneration of propaganda language gave rise to the new phenomenon of ‘empty speech’, perceived as meaningless not only by its authors, but by its projected audience. This phenomenon prompted a reaction in the form of rich irony, a vehicle for new and creative expression. Denisova then turns to the developing language of Russian propaganda today, and to the verbal and non-verbal language of opposition. She thus provides students with knowledge and tools to interpret both the language and imagery of propaganda and of critical opposition, and instructors with strategies for media literacy instruction in the Russian (L2) language classroom and beyond.

Maria Shardakova provides a conceptual framework for instructors with a paradigm for instruction in Russian media literacy through Russian language courses at all levels. She cites frameworks that inform the proposed paradigm, including the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2015), the Common Core used in K-12 education in the United States (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization guidelines (UNESCO, 2011). The UNESCO guidelines identify five competencies which comprise media and information literacy: information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety, and problem-solving (Carretero et al., 2017). Shardakova notes

that the five competencies overlap with the five Cs in the *World-Readiness Standards*: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. She then presents a model for teaching media literacy at all levels of instruction in Russian. She outlines, in table form, tasks that enable students to demonstrate these five competencies at all ACTFL levels, from Novice to Superior (ACTFL, 2012), and she integrates the competencies with the three modalities of interpersonal, interpretative, and presentational communication as defined in the *World-Readiness Standards*. The model presented in Shardakova's tables and commentary is intended to be flexible in its application, from specialized media courses to the incorporation of media in general Russian language courses. The premise of this model, Shardakova writes, is that "teaching should include reflection and critical thinking at an early stage" so that students learn early to connect language and intended meaning, which can include bias and manipulation. Shardakova concludes the article with recommendations for the future, in both teaching practice and research directions. Recommendations include cross-disciplinary collaboration with the common goal to develop students' information and media literacy, as well as further research on students' "independent engagement with intercultural digital content outside the classroom" including media preferences and self-representation strategies. This research, she argues, would provide us with a deeper understanding of our students and their media use, and would inform our teaching practice.

The second set of articles in this issue includes reports of instructional practices in the Russian (L2) language classroom from the Intermediate to the Superior level and beyond. These articles intersect and complement each other in enlightening ways.

In their article "Students as Co-Creators of a Russian Media Literacy Course," Katya Jordan and Jennifer Bown discuss a fourth-year course designed to develop media literacy among other career-readiness skills. The course design was informed by the ACTFL *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (known in the field as the "five Cs," listed above) and the *21st-Century Skills Map* (Partnership for 21st-Century Learning, 2011), which identifies information and media literacy as critical skills in today's world. In addition, although the course was developed independently of the literature on Open Architecture Curricular Design (OACD), it shares important features with OACD: structure around a

theme-based syllabus rather than a textbook, ongoing learner involvement in course design and content selection, systematic tailoring to learner and cohort needs, and the role of teacher as mentor/advisor, guiding students as they pursue their projects (Leaver, 2021). Jordan and Bown categorize OACD as an inquiry-based approach to learning (IBL), in which students often generate their own research question(s) (Chiappetta Swanson et al., 2014; Zakrajsek & Nilson, 2023). Students, in essence, “become co-creators in a course curriculum”; the authors, citing Archer-Kuhn et al. (2020), Lu et al. (2019), and Zakrajsek and Nilson (2023), contend that this approach fosters academic achievement and encourages the development of “critical thinking, reflective learning, and problem-solving skills.” Since learners come to this fourth-year course at various proficiency levels, they become familiar with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL, 2012), complete a self-assessment using can-do statements, and prepare a course contract based on one proficiency-based goal they would like to reach and a plan for how to attain that goal during the course. The course consists of an introductory module on media literacy; a module featuring an individual research project which culminates in a five-minute presentation; a third module focusing on a second research project completed by pairs of students, which includes an audience survey and a presentation of survey results, as well as reflection and self- and peer assessment; and a concluding module, which consists of a group research project on a new topic and culminates in a 50-minute class presentation. Assessments for the final project include reflections and peer evaluations, an edited outline, a list of sources, an audience survey, and digital slides. Grading is based primarily on effort, signaling an emphasis on process over product and easing the stress students can feel at the lack of a textbook. While this course has developed over years, the authors note that Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine has increased the course’s focus on media rhetoric and has directed greater attention toward the changing Russian-language media landscape, further honing students’ information literacy and critical thinking skills. Future outcomes for the course include the creation of public-facing products such as a website.

Snezhana Zheltoukhova describes one module in a bridge course designed to enable students to move from Intermediate to Advanced-level proficiency and to prepare students to transition from language-focused to content-based courses. Zheltoukhova takes a task-based

instructional approach to enable students to develop their Russian language proficiency and their media literacy simultaneously. Guiding principles outlined in her article include the use of authentic materials, the development of real-world tasks as well as scaffolding to make work with authentic texts feasible, clear outcomes for each task, various forms of interaction, and opportunities for students to reflect on their learning. In order to integrate the module into broader learning objectives on information literacy at her home institution, Zheltoukhova worked within the larger framework of its Quality Enhancement Plan, which encourages faculty to employ any of the frames within the ACRL Board's (2016) *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. Selecting as a frame "Information Creation as a Process," Zheltoukhova designed the module to focus on the ability to analyze texts for reliability; she adapted questions posed by Wilson (2019) to guide students in their analysis of the text by examining its source(s), message, and the possible beneficiaries of that message. She designed a series of tasks to enable students to identify propaganda in Russian-language texts. Zheltoukhova notes that one of the main challenges in teaching this material during wartime is that it can be deeply distressing and demotivating for students. She invited a native speaker of Russian from Ukraine to speak with students about her experiences; students noted that the personal interaction helped them process disturbing material about the war. She also created low-stakes assessments and asked students about their own media consumption, encouraging them to explore connections between class topics and their own academic, professional, and personal goals. Zheltoukhova encourages further research on addressing student stress while teaching media literacy and critical thinking skills.

Cori Anderson and Daniel Brooks describe a current events blogging project that can be incorporated into any level of the Russian-language curriculum; it "serves to both enhance students' proficiency with the TL and accomplish the goals of increased media literacy and cultural awareness." Students follow current events through both Russian-language and English-language news sources intended for North American and other English-language audiences, as well as sources from languages and cultures that students know well. The blog project entails not only students' summaries of sources they have examined, but also comments on other students' summaries. The project concludes with a

summary reflection. The use of Russian increases at each level: English predominates in lower-level blog posts, while Russian plays an increasing role at more advanced levels, in both reading and writing. Students at the second- and third-year levels present their findings in Russian. Students also learn to assess the accuracy of various online translation tools. Student reflections show an appreciation for exposure to new topics studied by their peers and reveal a greater awareness of media biases—both in Russian-language media and in student perspectives. After four weeks, the authors report, students demonstrate greater levels of proficiency through the use of new vocabulary relevant to their areas of study, as well as “more nuanced levels of media and information literacies.” Students are also able to “indicate the sources and effects of media bias” in Russian and in their own culture(s) and to note differences in coverage and presentation of current events in different languages and cultures. They learn the importance of seeking multiple sources on any topic. Students also note the value of the interaction embedded in the blogging project. The project has, the authors conclude, made students “more curious and critical consumers of Anglophone and Russophone media alike.”

Alexandra Shapiro takes an interdisciplinary and practical approach to the teaching of media literacy, through the lens of journalism as a profession. The journalism module is part of a course for students at the Intermediate High to Advanced levels. The module focuses on “media literacy skills as they are practiced and acquired by journalists.” One of the most remarkable features of this course is its invitation to guest speakers, Russian-speaking journalists from independent media in various countries, to speak directly to students via Zoom about their profession and about the challenges of practicing journalism under the Putin regime, particularly since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the exile of many journalists from Russia as a result of new laws on speech related to the war. The module opens with a study of what is and is not allowed in Russian media, using Vladimir Pozner as what Shapiro calls a “perfect example of a journalist still living who has appeared on both pro-government and independent media.” Students are then assigned a series of activities designed to help them recognize elements of journalistic objectivity or its absence. The conversations with guest journalists which followed these activities focused in part on issues related to journalistic objectivity and the idea of “unbiased” journalism.

After these conversations, students were presented with ethical dilemmas that journalists face and assigned presentations on recent cases in Russian investigative journalism. Students also created a piece of either biased or objective news reporting, building on previous activities. Finally, students were asked to compare the experiences of journalists in Russia and in the U.S. and to discuss cross-cultural differences in journalistic practices. In a related module on human rights, students learned about examples of human rights restrictions, such as the law on “foreign agents” and laws restricting LGBTQ+ life in Russia. Final student assessments note a heightened awareness regarding news sources; students acquired a “habit of questioning information,” similar to conclusions in Anderson and Brooks’s blog project. As in Anderson and Brooks’s project, future iterations of this course may include comparisons of English- and Russian-language news coverage to further develop students’ media literacy skills for broader applications. The ethical dilemmas and cultural comparisons presented in this course provide ample material for connections with other disciplines.

Olga Mukhortova discusses a course on media analysis designed to develop reading and listening comprehension for students at high levels of proficiency, ILR 2+/3 (Interagency Language Roundtable, n.d.). Since the goal of this course is to help students attain proficiency levels at ILR 3, 3+, and 4, the course includes a variety of highly sophisticated materials from various academic fields, including history, linguistics, literary and cultural history, and social sciences, as well as tools for linguistic analysis. Mukhortova’s article is structured around analysis of the three terms in the course title: Russian media analysis. She presents to students the complexities of what the word(s) “Russian” mean with reference to the language and the cultures where Russian is used; the varieties and complexities of Russian-language media, both state-sponsored and independent, in Russia and in other countries; and various scholarly frameworks for analysis. Mukhortova points out that attainment of Superior-level language and cultural proficiency not only requires the knowledge of the ILR proficiency descriptors that allows for self-assessment, but involves the development of higher-order critical thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom & Krathwohl, 2020). In addition to analysis of the three paradigms of Russian, media, and analysis, Mukhortova provides an overview of the course syllabus,

including reading and listening assignments, examples of assessments, and appendices with lists of state-controlled and independent media sources from various countries. The article provides a treasure-trove of materials and tasks for teaching at the highest levels of proficiency.

The third set of articles is devoted to the use of video resources for instruction in media literacy. In his article “Digital Dissidence: Russian Foreign Agents and the Media of Opposition,” Matthew Mangold describes several video resources for the Russian (L2) language classroom, particularly in digital documentary journalism. He focuses on four figures whose work includes “oppositional material significant for its high linguistic and production quality, evidence-based approaches, and wild popularity”: Aleksei Pivovarov and the historical narratives featured on his YouTube channel *Redaktsiia* [Redaction]; Yuri Dud’ and his phenomenally popular interviews and full-length documentary films on various aspects of life in Russia past and present, and since 2022 on culture outside Russia; Irina Shikhman and her program *Let’s Talk* and series of documentary films which pay “special attention to the impact of limited free speech, corruption, and unchecked state power on public health and women’s rights” (Mangold); and Karen Shainyan, whose series *Queerography* sheds light for general audiences on the lives of queer people in various Russian cities outside the capitals. As Mangold notes, since most of these documentary films contain subtitles, they can be used at various levels of Russian (L2) language instruction and for various purposes: linguistic, cultural, historical, and as part of instruction in media and information literacy, as some of them examine the “mechanics of propaganda” in Russia past and present. He notes that all four figures have been designated as “foreign agents” by the Putin regime – surely a sign of their truth-telling power.

Karen Evans-Romaine focuses on the teaching of media literacy through narrative, both as narrowly defined with the context of the ACTFL (2012) Guidelines for Advanced-level speech, and as discussed more broadly by De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012), in the context of an advanced course focused on the development of listening and speaking skills through Russian-language media. Evans-Romaine argues that taking narratives as a guiding framework not only serves the purpose of developing Advanced-level listening and speaking proficiency, marked in part by the ability to interpret and speak in

paragraph-length narratives (ACTFL, 2012), but also provides students with analytical tools: students are confronted with competing narratives about the same historical events and with different responses to similar questions on the role of censorship and propaganda in Russia and on the role of the journalist and documentary filmmaker in crafting narratives. Narratives in the context of interviews thus become “co-constructed texts” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 96). Finally, as the course is offered at what is often the end of students’ undergraduate careers on campus, either just prior to graduation or to academic-year capstone study abroad, narratives about larger questions provide students with examples of others’ reflections on their lives and careers, giving students models for crafting their own narratives at an important turning point in their lives. Models may include direct chunks of speech, defined by Boris Shekhtman as “islands” (Shekhtman et al., 2002, p. 121) from which students can build more extended discourse at the ACTFL Advanced and Superior levels.

Finally, Eva Binder and Magdalena Kaltseis examine the television show *60 минут* [60 Minutes] as a “lesson” in propaganda for students at the Intermediate High level of proficiency. They adopt a critical language pedagogy (CLP) approach to teaching political and controversial issues in the Russian language classroom. This approach aims to promote social and democratic responsibility, respectful interaction, and reflection on social inequality (Gerlach, 2020, p. 24). Binder and Kaltseis take a small segment from *60 Minutes*, entitled *Границы толерантности* [The Limits of Tolerance], which focuses on conservative and liberal attitudes toward family and relationships as well as racism. Because of the sensitivity and potential offensiveness of the material, the authors scaffold segments carefully, preparing students, setting boundaries for discussion, and explaining the pedagogical goals for viewing this show and this episode. They present segments from this program in order to demonstrate strategies applied in talk shows to manipulate public opinion in Russia today. The authors then provide both a close analysis of a segment and examples of teaching activities in the Russian (L2) language classroom to develop students’ analytical, interpretative, and discourse skills in Russian, including pre-viewing, while-viewing, and post-viewing activities for learners at the Intermediate High level. They conclude the article with recommendations for use of similar materials to

develop critical information literacy in the classroom, including working in instructor teams, as this work is inherently interdisciplinary and the development of student tasks is labor-intensive. The CLP approach they take with this controversial material alerts students to the techniques used in media to manipulate and influence viewers and encourages students “to become critical thinkers and responsible citizens.”

3. The Future of Media Literacy Education

The authors of these articles present various directions for future teaching and research in media literacy. In providing readers with a rich array of resources and classroom tasks, the authors encourage instructors to collaborate in creating and gathering materials, lesson plans, assessment and evaluation instruments, reflection tasks, and curricula from the ACTFL Novice through the Superior levels. Authors provide a variety of theoretical approaches and frameworks from which instructors can draw and thus encourage instructors to both share and develop new paradigms for teaching, teacher professional development, and research. A number of the authors in this volume note that the critical thinking and analytical skills developed in these courses are applicable to a wide variety of disciplines, reflecting the *World-Readiness Standards*; this both encourages instructors to work with colleagues in other disciplines in creating multidisciplinary courses and curricula, and provides those in the language teaching profession with evidence regarding the value of learning languages as part of a liberal arts education for students pursuing a wide variety of disciplines and career paths. Finally, authors in this issue suggest, explicitly or implicitly, future directions for research: on mechanisms of manipulation, disinformation, and propaganda through media (Dement, Denisova, Binder & Kaltseis), on student engagement with media, including social media, and their self-representation strategies (Evans-Romaine, Knickmeier Cummings, Mangold, Shardakova), on the role of stress when learners are confronted with distressing material from the media (Zheltoukhova), on the use of both L1 and L2 in teaching media literacy (Anderson & Brooks, Dement, Shapiro), and on assessment of critical thinking skills as acquired in media literacy modules and courses (Jordan & Bown, Mukhortova, Shardakova). Authors together demonstrate the critical importance of instruction in media literacy, now and in the future.

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