Communicative Media Competence of Acting and Opera Teachers During Online Training of Future Opera Singers in Ukraine and the USA

Nadiia Zelenina[1], Vsevolod Zelenin[2], Eduard Senko[1]

[1]Department of Opera Training and Music Direction, Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine

[2]Department of Political Psychology and International Relations, National Pedagogical Dragomanov University, Kyiv, Ukraine

Correspondence: Vsevolod Zelenin, Department of Political Psychology and International Relations, National Pedagogical Dragomanov University, 01601, 9 Pyrohov Str., Kyiv, Ukraine。

Abstract

The relevance of research on the given topic is that the competence of a teacher largely depends on their communication skills, as well as on the ability to adapt to working in the media space, which is required by modern education. This is especially relevant for the teachers of the art subjects, in particular the skills of an actor and opera singing, because remote training of specialists in these disciplines requires a high level of teachers' competence. The purpose of the submitted article is to study the media competence of teachers of acting skills and opera class during online training of future opera singers, to develop reliable diagnostic methods of communicative media competence and to compare the obtained indicators of teachers of educational institutions in Ukraine and the USA. The basis of the methodology is a combination of theoretical approaches with empirical observations and thematic survey, which allows to reliably investigate the level of communicative media competence of teachers of art disciplines. A comparative analysis of indicators of communicative media competence of acting and opera teachers of higher educational institutions of Ukraine and the USA demonstrated a certain advantage of teachers of American universities in the ability to work in social networks and organize online events, in psychological readiness to work in front of the camera, in tolerance for users of networks; at the same time, the indicators of situational adaptability, organizational skills and mastering of the means of social behaviour of effective communication are practically not different between teachers of Ukraine and the USA. The results of the research allow drawing conclusions about the expediency and necessity of improving the communicative media competence of teachers in Ukrainian universities, because remote teaching of stage disciplines, although it requires additional skills and abilities, can be not only effective, but also has certain advantages.

Keywords: opera singing, online teaching, media literacy, communication skills, remote education, art pedagogy

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of communicative competence is the subject of theoretical and empirical research by scientists around the world. There are approaches to studying different aspects of this concept: from psychologically and socially motivated to linguistic and media competences. A significant contribution to the research of the concept of communicative competence was made by J.C. McCroskey (2016), J.M. Wiemann (1977), N. Chomsky (2006), K.W. Jegera (2019), N.L. Zvierieva (2018), O. Kravchenko-Dzondza (2016). Any competence is a complex of personal resources, a set of functional characteristics, presented as models of behaviour and a specific ability to carry out a certain type of activities in a specific subject area (Baikushikova, 2019). The introduction of the concept of "communicative competence" into the scientific terminology can be attributed to D.H. Hymes (1972) in the 1960s. The concept appeared in opposition to the movement of linguistic competence by N. Chomsky (2006) and developed into a five-dimensional model. According to J.M. Wiemann (1977) communicative competence includes establishing connection/support, social relaxation, empathy, behavioural flexibility and interaction management skills.

The development of the ability of communicative competence is crucial for the effective activities of workers in "people-to-people" professions, to which teachers directly belong. In art pedagogy, in particular, the communicative paradigm occupies one of the highest links in the structure of professional competence. As a system, communicative competence includes cognitive, pragmatic-creative (behavioural) and emotional-motivational components (Lupak, 2020; Zvereva,

2017). Today, there is a globalization of the communication and its spread in the information space, which requires communication subjects to acquire media competencies. Thus, the "media competence" component is included in the communicative competence. The term "communicative media competence" was introduced by A.V. Sharikov (1990) in the early 1990s. The researcher invented this concept to denote media communication as a process of creating, transmitting and perceiving information, taking into account all specific aspects and features of technical systems. The media competence of a teacher is multidimensional and is based on an extensive system of knowledge, abilities and skills. Its components include:

– perception, understanding and critical analysis of media content;

– evaluation of the media in an ethical aspect, understanding of their possible impact on both the society and an individual;

– knowledge about the operation of information and communication technologies and prerequisites for active use of media in communication (Yermolenko, 2016).

The last component of the direction characterizes communicative media competence. By singling out this characteristic, it is possible to list indicators for its analysis:

– level of situational adaptability and mastery of means of social behaviour (level of communicative competence);

– psychological readiness – lack of fear in front of the public and the camera; the ability to show tolerance and tolerance towards Internet users;

– digital knowledge and technical experience – the ability to work in social networks;

– organizational qualities and abilities (Ponomarenko & Zelenin, 2021; Ponomarenko, 2020).

The concept of the American specialist training system is aimed at the popularization of art in society and its integration into the world art sphere. Also, art education in the USA aims at revealing the personal qualities of a future specialist by means of art. The methodological principles of the education of opera singers in Ukraine are aimed at the future specialist's acquisition of quality knowledge and practical skills, which will contribute to success in professional activities and ensure leadership in their field. Although both in the USA and in Ukraine, the art industry receives a variety of support – from ensuring the development of a creative personality to stimulating the development of the theatre business as a whole – legislative initiatives are presented in America much more broadly and more specifically. For example, the normative document Every Student Succeeds of 2015 (Nabatov, 2021.).

Teachers of practical stage disciplines faced an acute task within the outlined years – to carry out effective preparation of practical cycles in the conditions of remote learning. This problem requires the latest methods and techniques of pedagogical activities. On the other hand, the use of multimedia technologies in art training increases the effectiveness of education, because multimedia provides an opportunity to diversify cognitive activities. The experience of modern scientists in the field of online education confirms that the education system should be based on technical and pedagogical innovations. Remote education, in particular the education of specialists in artistic disciplines with the use of media technologies provides high-quality training of specialists, but the training system requires a thorough development of new methodological principles (Zvarych, 2021).

The main goal of the scientific research is to compare these indicators of the teachers of acting and opera skills during the online training of future opera singers in the universities of Ukraine and the USA in 2019-2021.

2. Materials and Methods

The following methods were used in the research: theoretical (analysis of psychological-pedagogical and scientific-methodical literature on the problem under study; study and generalization of the research results on communicative media competence of acting and opera teachers; classification and systematization of scientific-practical and research data) and empirical (questionnaire and testing, comparison of research results). Experimental research base (Ukraine): Pyotr Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, S.S. Prokofiev Academy of Arts of the Tavrida National V.I. Vernadsky University, Kharkiv National Kotlyarevsky University of Arts, Lviv National Musical Academy named after Mykola Lysenko, Odesa National Music Academy named after A.V. Nezhdanova. In the USA: Juilliard School (New York, New York), Manhattan School of Music (New York, New York), Boston Conservatory (Boston, Massachusetts), Francisco Conservatory of Music (San Francisco, California), Academy of Vocal Arts (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), Musicians Institute (Los Angeles, California).

The research paper comprises three main stages. At the first state, an analysis of scientific literature and the results of research on the topic was carried out, as well as the theoretical foundation of the paper was created. The research object was characterized, the goal was set, relevance was outlined, and the experiment plan was drawn up. A comparative analysis of the training system of opera singers in the USA and Ukraine was carried out, the essence of the art education system in both countries was described. At the first stage, a study of prospects and obstacles in remote learning in the

professional training of opera singers was also conducted.

The second stage was marked by the development of research methodology. Based on the model of media competence developed by scientists on the research topic, the methodology for determining the level of communicative media competence of teachers was developed taking into account the components and indicators. As a result of the theoretical analysis of the available methodological approaches, a diagnostic questionnaire was proposed to determine the level of communicative media competence of teachers of acting and opera singing. It consisted of two hours, the first of which contains questions with the possibility to answer "Yes", "No" or "Sometimes", while the second one is devoted to evaluating the skill, frequency of use, etc. from 1 to 10, where 1 is the minimum manifestation of the indicator, and 10 is the maximum. The questionnaire contained a query about how easy it is for a person to speak in front of the public, communicate in non-standard situations, as well as the ability to use social networks, organize online events, presentations, etc.

With the help of a methodological questionnaire, an analysis of the communication skills of teachers of Ukrainian and USA higher education institutions in the media space was carried out. Empirical scientific research was carried out in the period from 2019 to 2021. Teachers from Ukrainian institutions (n=53) and teachers from the USA (n=48) took part in it. Also, at the second stage, comparison of the obtained indicators was carried out.

At the third stage of research, the results were systematized and relevant research conclusions were formulated. Based on the research results, conclusions were made about the level of pedagogical readiness of art teachers to work in remote learning conditions, the state of their media literacy and communicative competence. The conclusions and results of the research can serve for the development of further experiments, the creation of preparatory programs and advanced training courses.

3. Results

The developed questionnaire, which aims to evaluate the level of communicative media competence of art teachers, consists of two parts. The first part is designed to establish the presence and level of development of communicative and organizational abilities, which is the basis of communicative competence. The survey results are presented in Figure 1.
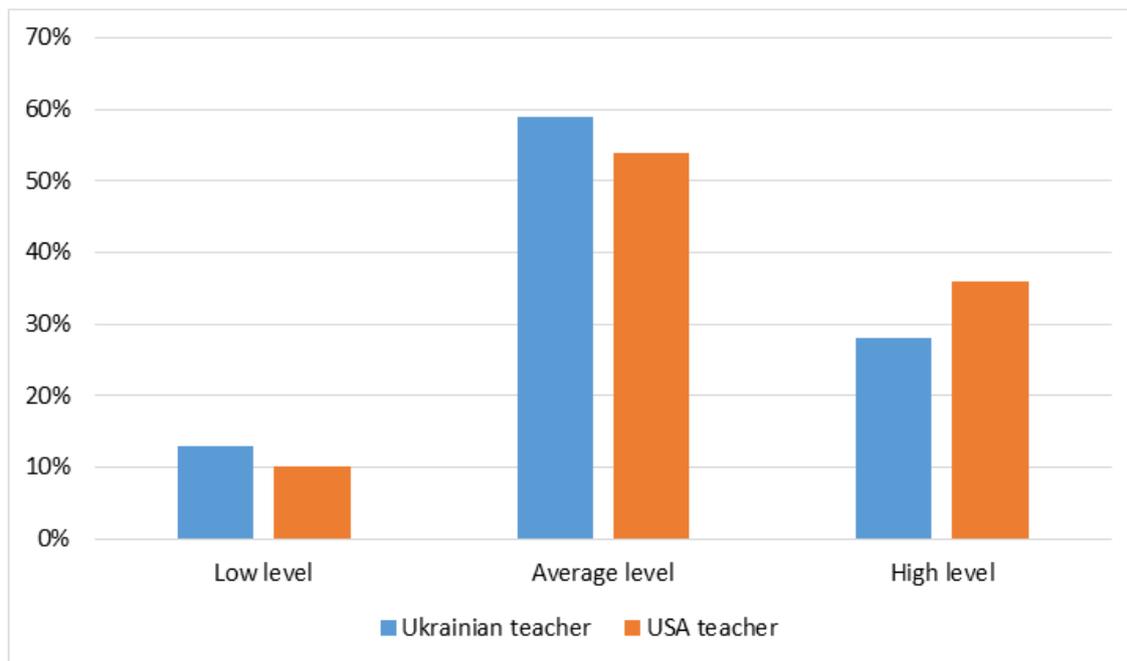

Figure 1. Comparison of indicators of the level of communication and organizational skills of acting and opera teachers in universities of Ukraine and the USA

13% (7 people) of Ukrainian teachers and 10% (5 people) of USA teachers have a low level of communication and organizational skills. These teachers are characterized by the lack of need for communication, difficulties in establishing interpersonal contacts, stiffness and awkwardness when being in a new company and among a large number of people. They avoid independent decisions and initiative, do not take responsibility for full-fledged organization and independent implementation of any events. 59% (31 persons) of teachers of Ukraine and 54% (26 persons) of teachers of the USA show an average level of communication. Such a result indicates an average manifestation of communicative and organizational abilities, these people can defend their point of view, strive for communication, but their desire is not

characterized by stability and consistency. They rarely participate in organizational work, but they can do it if necessary. The same applies to making independent decisions. A high level of communicative competence was found in 28% (15 people) of Ukrainians and 36% (17 people) of Americans. A high level of manifestation of abilities characterizes people who quickly orient themselves and make decisions in new non-standard situations, strive to expand the circle of acquaintances, show initiative and make independent decisions, are not afraid of responsibility and actively organize events (Gulmira et al., 2022).

The second part of the questionnaire determines the level of media competence as a component of communicative competence of acting and opera teachers of universities in two countries. The results are presented in Figure 2.
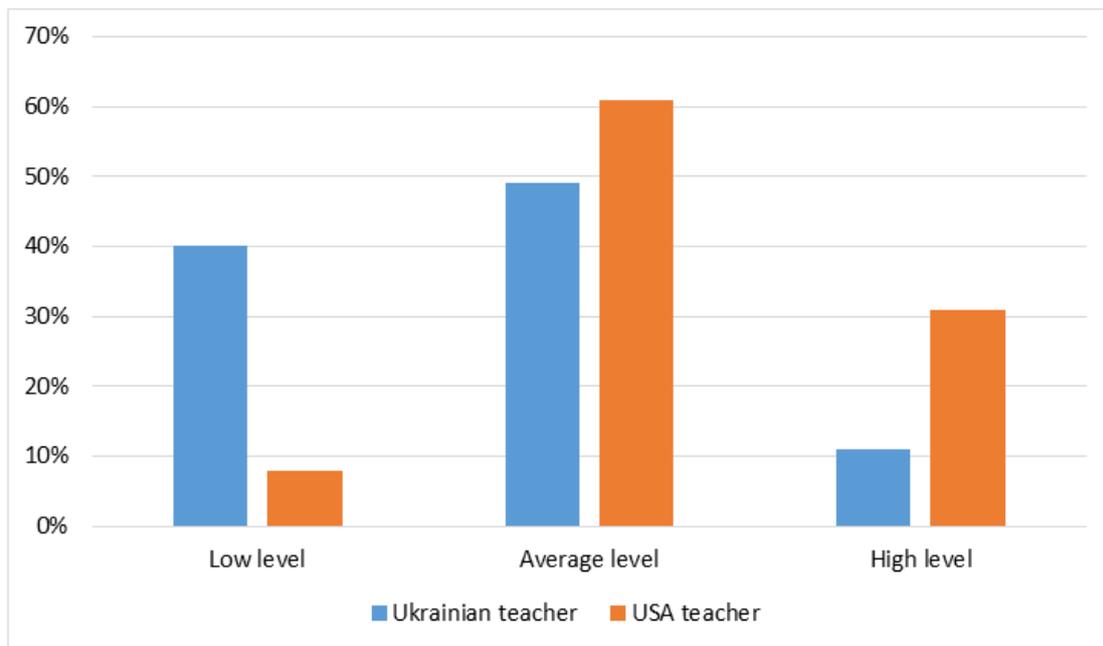

Figure 2. Comparison of indicators of the level of media competence of acting and opera teachers in universities of Ukraine and the USA

When analysing the level of media competence, it is worth outlining the components that characterize it. A.V. Fedorov (2007) singles out five components of a teacher's media competence: information, activity, methodology, creativity, and motivation. The first characterizes knowledge in the field of media education, necessary for scientific and pedagogical activity. The activity component is the organization and conduct of educational events in the conditions of online education, as well as conducting research of media-pedagogical activities. The methodology component includes skills and abilities for the development and implementation of methodical support for remote learning. Creativity component: creative approach to pedagogical activities, absence of stereotypicality in teaching methods, originality of presentation of material in the conditions of online education. The motivation one includes motivation for online pedagogical activities, the desire to develop in this direction, to acquire knowledge, skills and media education skills.

The following results were obtained after analysing the data shown in Figure 2. A low level of media competence is typical for 40% (21 people) of acting and opera teachers in Ukrainian universities and for 8% (4 people) of teachers in the USA. This indicator characterizes low media awareness, inability to independently organize and successfully conduct online training sessions, difficulty in developing methodical support for online learning, lack of originality in online teaching methods and techniques, lack of motivation to improve qualifications in the field of media education. 49% (26 people) of teachers in Ukraine and 61% (29 people) of teachers in the USA have an average level of media competence. The average level of the studied indicator describes the availability of knowledge in digital systems and media, the ability to organize and independently conduct online educational events, certain difficulties in the development of remote learning methods and techniques, the share of creativity in teaching activities and the desire to improve qualifications in media education. A high level of media competence was found in 11% (6 people) of teachers of Ukrainian higher education institutions and 31% (15 people) of teachers of art disciplines at the USA universities. These teachers have a wide range of knowledge necessary for online professional activity, easily organize and successfully conduct educational activities remotely, have no difficulties in developing methodical support for online education, are strongly motivated to develop media literacy skills and acquire knowledge of media education. Also, their teaching activities can be characterized as anti-stereotypical and creative.

Figure 3 shows data on the level of communicative media competence of art teachers in educational institutions of the two studied countries. In other words, the low level of the indicator is typical for 27% (21 people) of Ukrainian acting and opera teachers and for 9% (4 people) of USA teachers.
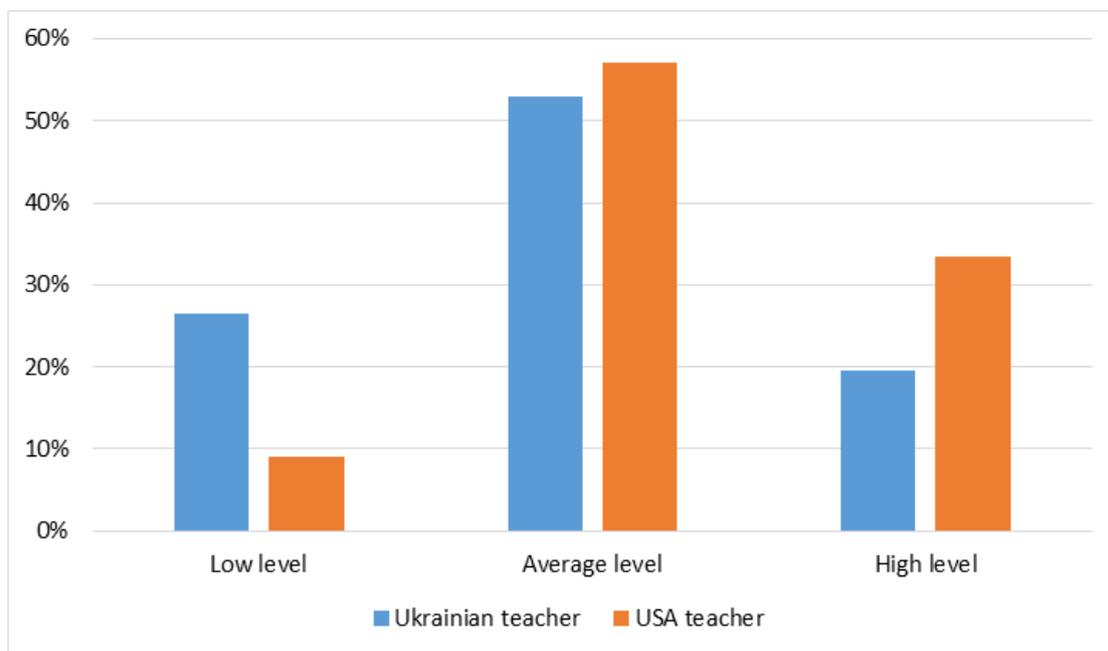

Figure 3. Comparison of indicators of communicative media competence of acting and opera teachers in universities of Ukraine and the USA

Specialists with a low level of communicative media competence do not possess deep technical knowledge, which is necessary for the successful implementation of professional activities in the media environment. They do not use social networks and messengers for pedagogical or artistic activities and do not take an active part in educational events or any other events conducted remotely. Educators with a low level of communicative media competence use online education tools only when necessary and do not conduct professional activities with the help of digital tools.

The average level is typical for 53% (26 people) of Ukrainian specialists, for 57% (29 people) of USA teachers. This indicator describes the presence of certain knowledge of media literacy, which allows carrying out pedagogical and artistic activities online. Teachers sometimes use social networks to distribute educational information and messengers to communicate with the students, as well as media tools in the development of methodical support for the educational process. Specialists with an average level of the studied indicator sometimes attend online events and can organize classes remotely. Some of these teachers have pages in social networks or pedagogical channels, but they do not actively manage them and do not show a desire to develop them. 20% (6 people) of teachers at Ukrainian higher educational institutions and 34% (15 people) of teachers at the USA universities have a high level of communicative media competence. They have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully carry out professional activities in the media space, have experience in creating presentations, Google forms, photo processing or other means of methodical support of online learning. Teachers attend remote events and professional conferences, and some of them maintain their own blog or educational channel on artistic topics.

Such monitoring of the communicative competence of teachers, which examines the professional qualities of a teacher in various aspects of training, allows drawing conclusions about the quality of education in the country, plan further professional development and guide specialists on the path to improving knowledge, skills and abilities. Comparing the obtained indicators within educational institutions of two or more countries helps to assess the problem on a more global scale and to make adjustments in the training programs of specialists. Therefore, the indicators of communicative media competence of acting and opera teachers obtained in the research can be used for further research of the formation of this competence.

4. Discussion

Today there is a world trend of transition of the educational environment into an information space, where the use of media is an important means of education and training of future specialists, as well as an integral part of communication between teachers and students. The multifunctionality of information and communication technologies opens wide horizons for improving and rethinking the methodology of the education system. Therefore, the modern teacher is required

to acquire a wide range of competencies that will allow them to successfully carry out their professional activities. Thus, the teacher must have the ability to create elements of media culture, media texts, conduct a media dialogue with consumers of information represented by students, understand the essence of media functioning and media cultural standards. All this is described by the term "media competence", which is included in the broad concept of "communicative competence" (Shvorak & Karpik, 2018).

During the last twenty-thirty years, a teacher's communicative competence remains one of the most important points in the content of teacher training. In the process of communication training of teachers, their communicative competence increases, in particular, the level of mastery of its components – competences of social sensitivity, unobtrusive verbal communication, involvement in interaction, integrative conflict management style, etc. increases. This was proved and experimentally verified by Serbian scientists L. Zlatić et al. (2014). The authors studied the communication skills of teachers and students of pedagogical specialties who underwent communication training in Serbia during 2006-2011. In the course of the study, the authors analyse the results of the level of communicative competence of pedagogical students who attended communication trainings in addition to the basic training courses on the basics of communication included in the education program. These include, for example, Psychology of Communication, Communicology, Social and Interpersonal Skills, Communication Skills in Education, etc. The second group of the study consisted of practicing teachers who, in addition to advanced training courses, focused on the acquisition and development of communicative competence directly or indirectly, as well as attended the same communication trainings (Zlatić et al., 2014). The obtained data of this study indicate certain similarities and differences between students, future teachers who are only preparing for teaching, and teachers who are already practically implementing professional tasks. Students show greater flexibility and inclination to change their behaviour, because undergo the period of formation of professional qualities. Therefore, educational programs should be aimed at shaping behaviour, not at changing and correcting it. New knowledge is better perceived by specialists at the beginning of their professional development. This should be taken into account by methodical educational programs for the training of future specialists, as well as programs for professional development courses.

The analysis of the scientific literature allows concluding that the communicative media competence of acting and opera teachers has not been sufficiently researched. However, media competence as an independent characteristic is quite a popular topic for study by modern scientists. Thus, I. Aguaded-Gómez et al. (2015) investigated the media competence of the residents of the Spanish region of Andalusia. The authors emphasized that media competence is shaped by various influencing factors, and they also experimentally confirmed the influence of demographic factors on the level of media literacy of citizens. The latter once again confirms the relevance of the comparative analysis of communicative media competence indicators of Ukrainian and USA teachers, highlighted in the presented paper. Analysis of media competence in social networks also occupies a significant niche in research. In any society, people need to communicate with each other. Social networking platforms allow people to connect with each other in a digital society. Therefore, communication competence is a very important ability in modern times. S. Zhu et al. (2018) believe that awareness in working with social networks is important for career growth, quality education, marketing strategies, etc. Researchers believe that students should acquire competence in interaction with social networks during their studies, because the use of social networks can contribute to the formation of the professional identity of an individual on the Internet, as well as career growth, while the incorrect use of social networks reduces individual productivity and the level of concentration. Using social networks, one person can negatively affect another through cyberbullying, disclosure of confidential information and personal data, etc., so the authors developed a system for assessing the level of media competence in social networks.

Modern scientists also pay attention to the issue of ethical media competence. As a result of the research, C.R. Müller et al. (2014) came to the conclusion that at a high level of ethical media competence, the frequency of media use almost does not affect the spread of cyber victimization (becoming a victim of a crime committed in a digital environment as a social type) and negatively affects the formation of cyberbullying (bullying that carried out in a digital context, which is characterized by repeated intent to harm, by the forces of imbalance). Therefore, promoting the acquisition of ethical media competence is an appropriate measure to prevent the risk of increasing the frequency of media use for the purpose of cyberbullying or cybervictimization. Media competence, communicative, ethical, media competence in social networks and any other is achieved in the process of media education. The analysis of indicators of communicative media competence of teachers of Ukrainian universities and educational institutions of the United States demonstrated that the program for improving digital literacy can be oriented towards the American system.

Since the 1970s and 1980s, education workers in the USA began to realize the limitations of a biased attitude towards digital sources of information and the need to shift emphasis from print media to other media. Some educational institutions introduced the subject of media literacy, which allowed to study cinema, television, advertising and news as an important mass culture that exerts a media influence on society. Already in the early 1990s, media literacy was included in the educational program of 48 states. And since 2007, the National Standards of Educational Technologies for Students

have been in effect in the USA. According to these standards, every student should be able to use any information and communication technologies to search, analyse and evaluate information. Today, more than 600 education workers are members of the National Association for Media Literacy Education, whose activities are aimed at providing assistance to people of any age in acquiring knowledge and developing media literacy skills for successful communication in the modern world. Media literacy education is aimed at forming and developing the skills of critical analysis of digital awareness, as well as the construction of media messages that convey a certain point of view, values and judgments (Khazretali et al., 2018).

In addition to the above-mentioned association, there are currently many more media education centres operating in the USA. For example, the Center for Media Literacy (Los Angeles), the Educational Video Center (New York), the Center for Media Education (Washington) and the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (San Francisco). Also, courses aimed at media awareness are included in the programs of most universities as a compulsory subject. In particular, this applies to the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Journalism, Cultural Studies, Sociology, and Communication. According to the plans of the USA Department of Education, the latest technologies, such as modern media technologies, should be included in the educational process in the maximum extent possible. The skills of creating multimedia content, searching and analysing information through digital sources, using social networks for collaboration and learning should be part of the initial experience so that education has time to cover the needs dictated by rapid changes in the modern world (Ivanov et al., 2012; Miethlich et al., 2022). The obtained data of the comparative analysis of the indicators of communicative media competence of the acting and the opera teachers of the Ukrainian and USA universities allows claiming that Ukrainian educational programs should focus on American standards and introduce media education into the training of future specialists and the plans of advanced training courses.

The inclusion of information and communication technologies (such as demonstration and simulation programs, virtual libraries, electronic publications, the use of e-mail, online surveys, computer simulators, interactive whiteboards, multimedia courses) in the teaching methodology of future teachers contributes to the formation of media competence and allows improving professional qualities (Tatenov et al., 2016). Information and communication technologies in education affect the improvement of the level of knowledge, abilities and skills of working with media, help to achieve the main goals of the educational process in the subject area and additional tasks of education. The latter should include the ability to learn in the conditions of online education, awareness of the effectiveness of educational information technologies, and the formation of a positive attitude toward any new technologies and the opportunities they provide in the field of education. Free mastery of media allows expanding the information field and increasing the rate of information acquisition, individualizing education; increases interest in the subject (including interest in computer technologies); increases the quality of education, as it opens up opportunities for wider access to information; educates the personality of the information society – a person endowed with the skills of working with information and communication skills. Also, information and communication technologies contribute to increasing the level of communicative competence of teachers, which helps to form effective communication skills and professional qualities in general (Sinenko, 2018). In other words, the obtained results of the comparative analysis and scientific research of communicative media competence of teachers make it possible to formulate recommendations for the implementation of the program of formation and development of teachers' competencies.

Information and communication systems should be involved in the methodical support of all training courses for future teachers. It can be an educational presentation, analysis of video and photo materials demonstrating the topic of the lesson, computer modeling, online tests, etc. It is also worth involving students in independent search for information using media. It is necessary to increase the number of professional development courses for practicing teachers, which aim to improve communicative media competence as the main objective of the course. Teachers need to practice remote learning not only when there is an urgent need, but also as an addition to face-to-face and online classes. To increase the effectiveness of remote teaching, it would be useful to attend trainings on the development of public speaking skills, emotional intelligence and photography (to get rid of fear of the camera) courses. Communication between the teacher and students outside of class should be carried out using messengers (Viber, Telegram, WhatsApp, etc.) and social networks, which will help to establish contact, expand interaction and build trusting relationships. It is also possible to periodically attend conferences and professional events online. After all, the modern digital society confidently transfers all spheres of life into the information space, including artistic events, professional communication, scientific developments, empirical research, etc.

A modern teacher needs to master applications that will allow them to productively carry out professional activities, develop media competence and communication skills in the information space. Such applications include social networking applications, applications for processing photos and creating videos, mailing services and chatbots. And, of course, it is worth mastering all the possibilities of video conferencing services (Google Meet, Zoom, Skype). Therefore, a modern teacher of artistic disciplines needs to conduct their professional activity in the information space, using the entire range of media for effective communication and for productive training of future specialists. Since the formation

of competences is best carried out at the beginning of professional formation or during the acquisition of higher education, it is worth promoting the acquisition of communicative media competence at the level of university educational programs. However, digital technologies do not stand still and are constantly developing, so every teacher who wants to effectively carry out their activities is required to regularly expand their knowledge and skills, in particular in the media space.

5. Conclusions

As a result of the scientific research, the understanding of the concept of communicative media competence of the teacher was outlined and expanded. It was determined that the studied category is characterized by the following indicators: the level of communicative competence, the presence of organizational skills, psychological readiness and digital knowledge. These indicators were used to analyze and establish the level of communicative media competence. A special questionnaire was used to obtain indicators of the studied characteristics of the acting and opera teachers in Ukraine and the USA, which aimed at determining the readiness of teachers to teach artistic disciplines in the conditions of remote learning, their motivation to develop media literacy as a component of professional qualities and skills.

The obtained indicators indicate that only 9% of American and 27% of Ukrainian teachers have a low level of communicative media competence; the studied indicators are at the average level for 57% of USA teachers and 53% of Ukrainians; communicative media competence of 34% and 20% of teachers in the USA and Ukraine, respectively, is at a high level. It can be saw the difference in the level of competence, which is inclined to the preferences of teachers of higher education institutions in the USA. The research substantiates the possible reasons for the difference in indicators. National documents, programs and plans for the development of media literacy of citizens, as well as the inclusion of a wide range of information and communication technologies in the education system of specialists in artistic disciplines, have a significant impact on the communicative media competence of teachers in the USA.

The materials of the presented research can be useful for practicing teachers to choose the direction of further development and improvement of professional qualities, to understand the need to include computer technologies as methodological support in the learning process; and for specialists in the field of development of educational programs to realize the importance of media education as part of the complete training of specialists in the pedagogical direction and many others. The prospect of further research is related to the expediency of conducting a similar comparative analysis of indicators of communicative media competence of teachers in Ukraine and other countries with better education system, as well as the study of the influence of various factors in the formation and development of communicative media competence of teachers.

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