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ANALYSIS OF THE STATE OF DEVELOPMENT OF GEOGRAPHY EDUCATION AMONG SCHOOLCHILDREN BASED ON THE FORMATION OF SKILLS IN WORKING WITH AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA

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Annotation: This article examines the current state of geography education for schoolchildren with a particular focus on the development of skills in working with audiovisual media. It analyzes pedagogical approaches, the integration of digital technologies, the effectiveness of audiovisual resources in forming spatial thinking, cartographic literacy, and environmental awareness, and identifies existing gaps in teacher preparation and curriculum implementation. The study draws on theoretical frameworks of media education, constructivist learning, and geographic information systems (GIS) pedagogy. Recommendations are offered for improving the methodological support of geography teachers and for systematic incorporation of audiovisual media into the educational process. The findings underline the necessity of purposeful formation of media competence as a key component of modern geographic literacy.

Keywords: geography education, schoolchildren, audiovisual media, media competence, spatial thinking, digital technologies in education, cartographic literacy, Uzbekistan education system.

Introduction: Geography education occupies a central place in the formation of a holistic worldview among schoolchildren. It develops spatial thinking, understanding of interrelations between natural and socio-economic processes, and readiness for responsible interaction with the environment. In the conditions of rapid digitalization of society, traditional methods of teaching geography based primarily on textbooks and static maps are no longer sufficient. Audiovisual media — educational films, interactive maps, virtual tours, satellite imagery, video lectures, and multimedia presentations — have become powerful tools for visualizing complex geographic phenomena and processes [1, pp. 45–52].

The formation of skills in working with audiovisual media is an integral part of media competence, which UNESCO defines as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media content in various forms [2, pp. 12–18]. In geography lessons these skills enable pupils to interpret visual data, critically assess the reliability of sources, construct mental maps, and present geographic information in multimodal formats.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Concept for the Development of the Public Education System until 2030 and the State Educational Standards emphasize the need to introduce modern pedagogical technologies and digital resources [3, pp. 8–15]. However, the practical state of development of audiovisual media skills in geography education remains uneven. Many teachers still rely predominantly on verbal and textual methods, while the potential of audiovisual means is used episodically rather than systematically.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the current level of development of geography education among schoolchildren through the lens of formation of skills in working with audiovisual media, to identify existing problems, and to propose scientifically grounded recommendations for improvement.

Main Part 1. Theoretical foundations of the use of audiovisual media in geography education Modern geography education is based on the principles of visualization, interactivity, and activity-based learning. According to the theory of dual coding (Paivio), information is better retained when it is processed through both verbal and visual channels simultaneously [4, pp. 67–74]. Audiovisual media realize this principle by combining images, sound, animation, and text.

Spatial thinking, one of the core competencies of geographic education, develops most effectively when pupils work with dynamic visual models: animated maps of climate change, time-lapse videos of urban growth, 3D models of relief, and interactive GIS applications [5, pp. 112–120]. Research conducted in various educational systems shows that regular use of audiovisual resources increases the level of cartographic literacy by 25–35 % and improves the ability to analyze geographic patterns [6, pp. 89–97].

Media education in geography also contributes to the formation of critical thinking. Pupils learn to distinguish between documentary footage and staged material, to evaluate the cartographic projection and scale used in video materials, and to identify possible ideological or commercial bias in geographic media content [7, pp. 34–41].

2. Current state of geography education and audiovisual media skills in secondary schools Analysis of the situation in secondary schools of Uzbekistan and comparative data from international studies reveal several characteristic features.

First, the material and technical base has improved significantly in recent years. Interactive whiteboards, projectors, and access to digital educational platforms are available in a growing number of schools. However, the availability of specialized geographic audiovisual content in the Uzbek language remains limited. Most high-quality educational films and interactive resources are produced in English or Russian, which creates an additional language barrier for a significant part of pupils [8, pp. 56–63].

Second, teacher readiness constitutes a critical factor. Surveys of geography teachers indicate that while the majority recognize the didactic value of audiovisual media, only about 40 % systematically plan lessons that include purposeful formation of media skills (selection of relevant video fragments, analysis of visual information, creation of pupils' own multimedia products) [9, pp. 22–29]. Many teachers use video materials merely as illustrative support rather than as objects of analytical work.

Third, the curriculum and textbooks still place primary emphasis on factual knowledge and descriptive characteristics of territories. Tasks requiring pupils to interpret satellite images, compare historical and modern video footage of landscapes, or create short video reports on local geographic objects appear only sporadically [10, pp. 101–108].

Fourth, assessment practices rarely include evaluation of media competence. Traditional tests and oral answers dominate, while the ability to work with audiovisual sources is almost never measured.

3. Pedagogical conditions for effective formation of audiovisual media skills Successful development of these skills requires the creation of specific pedagogical conditions:

- Integration of media education objectives into the geography curriculum at every stage (grades 5–11).
- Provision of methodical recommendations and ready-to-use lesson scenarios that demonstrate how to analyze a video fragment, extract geographic information, and verify its accuracy.

• Organization of project activities in which pupils create their own audiovisual products (short films about the geography of their region, interactive presentations of natural complexes, virtual tours).

• Continuous professional development of teachers focused on digital media literacy and geographic visualization techniques.

• Establishment of school media libraries and digital repositories of geographic audiovisual materials adapted to the national curriculum.

Empirical observations show that when these conditions are met, pupils demonstrate higher motivation, deeper understanding of spatial relationships, and more confident use of modern sources of geographic information [11, pp. 145–153].

Discussion: The analysis confirms that the development of geography education cannot be separated from the purposeful formation of skills in working with audiovisual media. These skills are not an optional "modern addition" but an essential component of geographic literacy in the 21st century.

At the same time, the current state of practice reveals a noticeable gap between the declared goals of digital transformation of education and the real pedagogical reality. The main contradictions are:

• between the growing availability of technical means and the insufficient methodological readiness of teachers;

• between the richness of global audiovisual geographic resources and the scarcity of high-quality materials in the native language;

• between the need for activity-based and project-based approaches and the continued dominance of reproductive methods.

Uzbek scholars emphasize that the national education system must combine the best international experience with local cultural and geographic content [12, pp. 78–85]. In this context, the creation of a national bank of audiovisual materials on the geography of Uzbekistan (nature reserves, historical cities, economic regions, environmental problems) acquires special importance.

Comparative analysis with educational systems of countries that have advanced media education (Finland, Singapore, South Korea) demonstrates that systematic inclusion of media literacy standards into subject curricula yields significant results in the development of critical and spatial thinking [13, pp. 201–210]. Uzbekistan has every opportunity to move in the same direction provided that coordinated efforts of educational authorities, teacher training institutions, and content developers are organized.

Conclusions and Recommendations: The conducted analysis allows us to draw the following conclusions:

1. The formation of skills in working with audiovisual media is a necessary condition for the qualitative development of geography education among schoolchildren in the digital age.
2. Despite positive changes in the material and technical base, the systematic and purposeful work on these skills remains insufficient in most schools.
3. The key limiting factors are the limited availability of high-quality content in the Uzbek language, incomplete methodological support for teachers, and the absence of media competence indicators in the assessment system.

Recommendations:

• Introduce explicit media-competence objectives into the geography curriculum and textbooks for grades 5–11.

• Develop and disseminate a series of methodological manuals “Audiovisual Media in Geography Lessons” with concrete examples of lesson scenarios, analysis algorithms, and project assignments.

• Organize regular advanced training courses for geography teachers on the use of GIS, educational video, and multimedia creation tools.

• Create a national digital platform containing curated audiovisual resources on the geography of Uzbekistan and the world, accompanied by methodological recommendations.

• Include tasks on interpretation and creation of audiovisual geographic materials into the system of formative and summative assessment.

• Encourage research projects of schoolchildren related to local geography using modern media tools (drone photography, video reporting, interactive mapping).

Implementation of these measures will contribute to the transition from episodic use of audiovisual means to their systematic integration into the educational process and will significantly raise the quality of geography education.

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