

# The role of children's cinema in supporting educational and cultural ideologies in the 1920s and 1930s in Russia

## O papel do cinema infantil no apoio a ideologias educacionais e culturais nas décadas de 1920 e 1930 na Rússia

LOBANOVA, Olga B. 1; PLEKHANOVA, Elena M. 2; KOLOKOLNIKOVA, Zulfia U. 3 & YAMSKIKH, Tatiana N. 4

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#### ABSTRACT:

The research is devoted to studying a phenomenon of children's cinema in the 1920s-1930s. In different countries children's cinema developed in various social, economic, cultural, historical and political conditions. The authors describe children's cinema as an important tool of social education used in Russia within the specified period. Pedagogical periodical press of the 1920s-1930s, works of American, European and Russian researchers in the field of children's cinema were used as sources for this paper.

**Keywords:** children's cinema, cultural and educational work, Soviet state, Russia the 1920s and 1930s

#### RESUMO:

A pesquisa é dedicada a estudar um fenômeno do cinema infantil nos anos 1920-1930. Em diferentes países o cinema infantil desenvolveu-se em várias condições sociais, econômicas, culturais, históricas e políticas. Os autores descrevem o cinema infantil como uma importante ferramenta de educação social usada na Rússia dentro do período especificado. Imprensa periódica pedagógica da década de 1920-1930, trabalhos de pesquisadores americanos, europeus e russos no campo do cinema infantil foram utilizados como fontes para este trabalho.

**Palavras-Chave:** cinema infantil, trabalho cultural e educativo, estado soviético, Rússia nas décadas de 1920 e 1930

## 1. Introduction

It is difficult to deny the multifunctional role of cinema in the modern world. On the one hand, it has to provide the spectacularity of films, solving the problem of increasing film attendance, and on the other – to satisfy the needs of society for younger generation holding certain values and political attitudes.

Herbert Marshall McLuhan, the father of communications and media studies and prophet of the information age, considered cinema not only as an art form, but first of all as a communication medium. He believed that cinema possesses unlimited communication opportunities. At the same time the intrinsic communicative nature inherent in cinema is the basis for the further improvement of the film media. The growing number of modern films takes advantages of special effects, 3D, IMAX 3D larger formats and other achievements of scientific and technical progress. It is certainly magnificent as it allows the audience to *plunge* into the surreal world of the film director, but at the same time it has some potential drawbacks. For example, visual and sound effects became an indicator of the film *quality*. If a film with great storyline and great actors claims to be a film masterpiece, then it cannot do without computer graphics now (Nikolaev & Mayorova, 2017).

It would be unfair to claim that modern films do not deserve our attention. There are many films with good plots and concepts. Perhaps, not all of them are perfect from scientific and technical point of view, but they have the main thing that will never go out of style — meaning. The fans of *simpler* films should not worry — probably, there will always be directors denying intellectuality and saturation of the story and thinking only about the spectacularity of the scenes (Nikolaev & Mayorova, 2017).

Unlike adults, school pupils prefer superhero films that often push them to think about such values as belief, friendship, kindness, goodness, love. As they grow up their interests change from action heroes to shows. Fundamental issues of the value of life, reason for existence, attitudes and values, patterns of behavior in varying situations appear to be more essential at early age. Thus, the problem of defining the role of cinema in morale building activities with young people in different historical periods seems to be important.

The most interesting in this regard is the period, encompassing the 1920s and 1930s, the time of the heightened attention to the cinema as an educational tool and leisure.

Different aspects of cinema during that period were studied by Bartosz Staszczyszyn, Marcia Landy, Daniel Miller, Ted Magder, Peter Morris, etc.

Analysing the history of the world cinema, it is possible to note that in the period of the 1920s and 1930s cinema is characterised by unique features across national boundaries.

So, the American cinema experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity and growth in the 1920s-30s. By the mid-1920s, films were big business, with a capital investment totaling over \$2 billion. By the end of the decade, there were 20 Hollywood studios, and the demand for films was greater than ever. Most people are unaware that the greatest output of feature films in the US occurred in the 1920s and 1930s (averaging about 800 film releases in a year) – nowadays, it is remarkable when production exceeds 500 films in a year (Dirks, n.d.a). *Ben-Hur* (1925) was the most legendary spectacular of its kind, budgeted at a record \$3.9 million – the most expensive silent film ever (it made \$9 million at the box-office) and the most expensive film made in the 1920s. At the same time Hollywood experimented with an early form of Technicolor for some color sequences in *The Ten Commandments* (1923).

The 1930s were marked as the decade of all-talking feature films. At this time different film genres continued their development: gangster films, musicals, newspaper films, historical biographies, socialist realism, screwball comedies, westerns and horrors. By 1933, the economic effects of the Depression were strongly felt in the decreased cinema attendance (Dirks, n.d.b).

A study of British cinema and its relationship to British society through an examination of feature films produced between 1930 and 1960 was presented in the book *British Genres: Cinema and Society* by Marcia Landy (1991). The author made an effort to correct the distortions and silences surrounding British cinema history. She focuses on the genre film, a product of British mass culture. In England such cinema subtly dramatised unresolved cultural conflicts and was extremely popular among the audience. The discussion covered hundreds of works – including historical films, films of empire, war films, melodrama, comedy, science-fiction, horror, and social problem films – and revealed their relation to changing attitudes toward class, race, national identity, sexuality, and gender. Marcia Landy created a dynamic sense of genre and of how the genres shape, not merely reflect, cultural

conflicts (Landy, 1991).

The film *Children Must Laugh* directed by Aleksander Ford which was released in Poland (1936) involves some form of political propaganda. Conceived as political propaganda, the film turned out to be a moving call for solidarity between different social classes. In general, in the 1920s-30s in Poland they created tearful melodramas, mystical ghost stories and musicals (Staszczyszyn, 2014).

The forms of promotional films are traced in the Canadian cinema. Since the end of the 19th century the Canadian cinema tried to develop its identity, making short-length films and documentaries about Canada and its history. Promotional films were characteristic of the most Canadian production through 1912 – financed by Canadians but made by non-Canadians to sell Canada or Canadian products abroad. It should be noted that by 1920 there were several film directors (Henry Winter in Newfoundland and James Scott in Toronto) who initiated their own productions and made not only newsreels but also travelogues. The events of the World War I promoted a brief flurry in Canadian production and other aspects of the film industry. In the 1920s Canadian cinema was presented mainly by the scenes for the American newsreels, sponsored short films and documentaries. The greatest part of films produced in Canada was devoted to migration processes. By the 1930s the Canadian film industry had become virtually a branch plant of Hollywood (Magder et al., 2012).

As for the concept *children's cinema* it should be noted that in the Russian language, as well as in science and practice of film production we face a synonymic number of combinations designating the same phenomenon. In the English-speaking world and even beyond its borders we find the terms children's cinema, films for kids, films for children, children films, films for children and other variations which are interchangeable and equally used.

In the world film industry of the study period there can be defined two types of films for children: children's film and family film. They can be referred to a film genre that contains children or relates to them in the context of home and family. Children's films were initially created for children and were not necessarily aimed at the general audience, while family films were intended for a wider appeal with a general audience in mind (The Walt Disney Company, 2017b). According to Bazalgette and Staples, the term *family movie* is essentially an American expression while *children's film* is considered to be a European expression (Miller, 2016).

However, the difference between the two terms can be seen in casting methods adopted by American and European films respectively. In American family films, the search for a child protagonist involves casting children that meet a specific criterion or standard for physical appearance. In contrast, European children's films look to cast children who appear *ordinary* (Pederson, 2004, vol. 63).

In the world film industry there is a prevalence of several genres: realism, fantasy, adventure, animation, war, musicals and literary adaptations.

A significant contribution to the history of children's cinema was made by the Walt Disney Company which was founded on October 16, 1923. In 1928 the Company created the first animated cartoon best-seller *Mickey Mouse* which became a symbol and a mascot not only for Disney, but also for the world cinema (The Walt Disney Company, 2017a).

In the United States and Europe the idea to create films for children started to be actively implemented in the 1930s. Cinema productions are mainly based on children's literature for families and kids: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Gulliver's Travel*, *Pinocchio*, etc. (The Walt Disney Studios, n.d.).

Analysing the works of foreign authors who investigated different aspects of the cinema in the USA and Western Europe, we can note that there are almost no films created with the purpose of educational and cultural ideologies. In the 1920s-30s in the USA and the western European countries the resource of the cinema was not considered as a tool for educational and cultural ideologies. Meanwhile, in the Soviet Union practically all art forms had to support the development of new ideology.

A number of conducted researches and works in different fields of sciences are devoted to

the development of cinema in the USSR in the 1920s-30s: Philosophy (S.N. Elanskaya, etc.), History (A.A. Ivanov, A.V. Fedyuk, etc.), Cultural Science (N.Yu. Sputnitskaya, I.V. Shestakova, etc.), and Sociology (A.V. Serebrennikov, etc.). Therefore the aim of the present paper consists in studying pedagogical experience of developing cultural and educational ideologies with films. The main objective of the research is to investigate the phenomenon of children's cinema in the early years of the Soviet state (Fedyuk, 2009).

In the 1920s-30s cinema in the USSR experienced rapid growth. The State Commission on Education which had a film department was established in January, 1918 in Petrograd. It had to control development, production and distribution of films and gradual nationalisation of the film industry. In the Soviet Russia the transition to state administration of film industry started with the Decree of The Council of People's Commissars *About Transition of Photographic and Cinema Trade and Industry to the Provision of The State Commission on Education* signed by Vladimir Lenin on August 27, 1919. However, fast transition of the film industry to the sphere of state policy was burdened with a difficult situation in the country (civil war, hunger, ruin, etc.) (Fedorov, 2014).

From the first years of the soviet rule cinema became a resource playing an important role in education. For this purpose film studios were created:

- Mezhrabpom-Russia (*Aelita, The Three Million Trial, St. Jorgen's Day, Without Dowry* directed by Ya. Protazanov); *Mother* directed by V. Pudovkin, etc.);
- Odessa Film Studio (the Pan-Ukrainian Committee of Cinema and Photography (VUFKU)) (*Arsenal* directed by A. Dovzhenko, *The Parisian Cobbler* directed by F. Ermler, etc.);
- Sovkino First Factory (*Anya* directed by O. Preobrazhenskaya, etc.);
- Goskino (Moscow) (*The Wind* directed by Ch. Sabinsky, *Kashtanka* by O. Preobrazhenskaya, *Traitor* by A. Room, etc.);
- Gosvoyenkino (*In a Red Ring* directed by E. Guryev, etc.);
- Lenfilm (Leningradkino) (*Decembrists* directed by A. Ivanovsky, *Children of the Storm* by F. Ermler, *Katerina Izmaylova* by Ch. Sabinsky, etc.);
- Sovkino (Leningrad) (*Katka's Reinette Apples* by F. Ermler and E. Ioganson, etc.).

In the 1920s-1930s cinema became an effective tool of educational work due to persuasiveness of screen characters, great agitation and propaganda effects. In the official documents of Agitation and propaganda department of the Central Committee (1925), in decisions of the All-Union party meeting on cinema (1928), and in periodicals of the study period (*National Education, On the Ways to New School, Education of Siberia, Pedagogical Theatre*, etc.) the importance of the newsreel medium for the mass-agitation work was emphasised. It was noted that cinema represents the phenomenon of great cultural and historical value (Lieberman, 1929, p. 6). Cinema had to be used for socialist construction as the mass tool of propaganda and promotion of tasks defined by the party and the government (Kolodin, 1930). Cultural and educational ideologies were considered very important in the attempt to bring up the *new person*. The power of film could be more useful for this purpose than any other art form in the 1920s.

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## 2. Methodology

In this paper we will show the role of children's cinema in supporting educational and cultural ideologies in the 1920s and 1930s in Russia. The choice of territorial and chronological frameworks of the research is caused by the fact that this period in Russia was connected with global cultural, historical, social and economic changes which defined the direction of the country development. In the 1920s-30s there was a lack of theoretical basis and personnel potential of film crews. Besides, film production demanded serious investment. During this period children's cinema found its identity and became one of the most important tools of social education. Such conclusion can be drawn from the work done by the Soviet state – these are the issues of professional training and staff development, financing, increase in the number of films produced, etc.

A set of historical and pedagogical strategies were used to solve the tasks defined: the

comparative-historical analysis of historical and pedagogical sources, chronological, historical, retrospective, constructive-genetic, comparative (synthesis, analysis, analogy, etc.), and synthesis of historical and pedagogical data obtained from primary sources.

Periodical press of the 1920s-30s, standard and legal documents of the studied period, dissertation researches; related literature and studies were used as sources for this paper.

The theoretical framework of this research is guided by the concepts of modern philosophy and methodology of historical science. Special importance is given to gnoseological principles: logical and historical in their dialectical unity, interrelation of theory and practice in the process of scientific cognition, the principle of systemacity which requires to consider the interrelated characteristics of the studied historical and pedagogical facts; the principle of determinism which explores a cause-effect (causal) relationship between objects; principles of scientific and pedagogical research: historical studying of particular social and pedagogical phenomena in the variety of their connections, dependences and mediation; dialectic unity of universal and particular in historical phenomena.

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### 3. Results

From the very beginning of its appearance cinema became a symbol of technical progress, absolutely new phenomenon and therefore it has gained huge popularity among people. Cinema became not only a new art and a popular show, but also a powerful tool of information and event recording. These functions were used for the purposes of social education in the 1920s-30s. In the young Soviet state it was used as a technique of agitation, propaganda, culture and education. During the study period cinema became the instrument to influence and mobilise public opinion. Its importance was undoubted. There is good reason why Vladimir Lenin made his oft-quoted statement of all the arts the most important for us is the cinema (Ovchinnikov, 2011). It is interesting that today everything we see on the screen is perceived as a play, whereas in the 1920s the audience, especially children, perceived screen illusion as reality, and nearly everything shown on the screen – as the documentary film. That time the public authorities responsible for film business stated the following problems: to find distinctive features of the Soviet cinema; to establish exact qualification of films; to use all available resources and opportunities inherent in mechanical representation; to use cinema as one of the most income producing assets of the state (Lieberman, 1929, p. 6).

In the 1920s it was noted that cinema had great potential to influence younger generation. It is not managed well and its implementation is provided as fate would have it. This required the development of a new technique of working with children (Kalashnikova, 1928, vol. 2, p. 542).

The importance to develop new organisational forms, contents and methods when working with children was indicated in pedagogical papers of that period. It was pointed out how useful it was to monitor children when they watch films for kids and adults. Here the child's behavior, the early stages of the organised forms of work developed by life can instruct the teacher how to start this work and how to plan it (Kalashnikova, 1928, vol. 2, p. 542).

The following trends concerning ideological and educational work with younger generation in the 1920s-1930s can be traced among general directions in developing the cinema role:

- need to widen the range of films for children;
- development of pedagogically valuable guidelines for preparing a child for watching a film and visiting cinema;
- introduction of new pedagogical functionality - the film teacher;
- introduction of the concept *educational cinema* and development of requirements to educational cinema.

From the very beginning of the Soviet state formation it was noted that there are almost no theatrical films for children and we have to select the most suitable from the films for adults (Children, attend a film festival, 1936, p. 9). However since the 1920s, there appeared film repertoire defined for children: *Signal* (1918), *Little Red Devils* (1923), *How Petyunka Went*

to Ilyich, Vanka the Young Pioneer, The Island of Young Pioneers, Mishka Zvonov, The Youngest Pioneer (1925), Vasya the Reformer (1926), Anya (1927), Vanka and the Avenger, Joy and Druzhok, Small and Big, Tanka the Innkeeper (1928), Adventures of Arishka (1929), The Boy from a Camp (1930), Road to Life, Freight Train 717 (1931), The Master of the World, Miner's kids (1932), The New Gulliver, The Space Voyage, Dzhulbars (1935), The Children of Captain Grant (1936), etc. (Children, attend a film festival, 1936, p. 9).

The problem of films for children and teenagers in the 1920s-30s was much more disputable during the formation of the Soviet state, than it was in Russia before the revolution. Cinema was recognised as one of the most powerful media that influence children. Therefore special attention was given to the process of organizing cinema shows for children (Table 1).

**Table 1**  
The forms of cinema shows for children in the 1920s-30s

Form	Time	Pedagogical work
Sunday cinema show	On Sunday morning when cinemas do not usually work there are <i>shows for children</i> and tickets are offered for a much lower price	The permanent cinema staff is responsible for the show. There is no special teacher in the staff. The show is not aimed at pedagogical work either during the performance or beyond its limits. A cinema manager is guided by tastes and preferences of the consumer in general, not children in particular and only partially by the list of recommendations. Sometimes entertainers are invited to create a friendly lobby environment for adults and kids in waiting time before the beginning of the show (puppet show, outdoor games). Educational opportunities of cinema are not used in any way.
Theme-based show	The showtimes are scheduled depending on opportunities of the cinema and school	School makes arrangements with cinema which has this or that film ( <i>Potemkin, The Palace and the Fortress, The Wings of a Serf, Mother, etc.</i> ) on. Films are connected with the themes currently in use of the school curriculum. The school guarantees distribution of tickets. There is no special work with children in the cinema; the educational material presented in the film is studied at school.
The cinema show from the organisation	The showtimes are defined by the organisation and agreed with the teacher	The organisation ( <i>Society of Soviet Cinema Friends, The Association of Workers of Revolutionary Cinematography, etc.</i> ) provides film distribution by renting a cinema and paying employees. They invite an expert – a film teacher to manage the show and work with children in the lobby. Tickets are sold out at schools, orphanages, among the members of the organised groups with the help of children engaged in these organisations and at the same time being a cinema asset.

The analysis of historical and pedagogical papers allowed us to conclude that shows organised by associations and communities were considered the most effective form of cinema shows. It was believed that it turns cinema into a self-estimated type of pedagogical institution, enabling access to its educational opportunities (Kalashnikova, 1928, vol. 2, p. 523).

During the study period there were certain conventional rules on the organisation of cinema shows for children. It was recommended:

- which films and newsreels should be used for children: the program of cinema show had to include a variety of films, i.e. science films, art films and chronicles;
- the time of the cinema show: it is desirable that cinema shows for children are organised

in the day time; intervals between cinema shows have to be long enough to air the cinema hall, film operators should monitor the movement of film for it is not too fast to interfere the viewing and convenient reading of subtitles, the seats in the cinema have to be numbered, and the number of tickets sold should not exceed their total quantity, etc.; (Kalashnikova, 1928, vol. 2, p. 524)

- conditions of organizing cinema shows for children: the interior of the lobby has to correspond to the age peculiarities of children and the film watched (Kalashnikova, 1928, vol. 2, p. 524).

The time period of 1924-1925 can be considered the starting point for children's cinema. In those years films for children became regular and expressed the aspiration of cinematographers and teachers to use motion picture for communist education of younger generation (Lobanova et al., 2017).

The ideas of communist transformation, the ideas of Marxism-Leninism penetrated into the Soviet children's cinema. Formation of public consciousness, moral culture, views, tastes, habits of a new person in socialist society became its main purposes (Fedorov, 2014).

One instance of this ideological material occurs in the adventure film *Little Red Devils* (1923). At the heart of its plot is the adventure of children (little red devils) in the years of civil war. *Little Red Devils* are fighting against enemies; with improbable act of bravery they encourage the audience to develop fully human potentials and basic cultural elements - justice, collectivism, companionship, and belief in invincibility of the Red Army. The emotional impact of the film operates on a number of levels including the script and acting - courageous characters and actions of children who were not afraid to resist the gang of White Guards.

In the ideological and adventure film *Vanka and the Avenger* (1928) the main character - a boy Vanya faces much physical and psychological challenges throughout the film and performs courageous acts with the help of his loyal friend, dog Avenger. This film tells the story of friendship between a boy and his dog. Struggling through life together, these two best friends have formed an unbreakable bond. The film fosters collectivism, friendship, mutual aid, personal involvement, intolerance toward the evil.

The film *Their Street* (1930) tells about daily life of the average city dweller. It had to develop feeling of solidarity, support in difficult situations from close people, promote healthy family relationships, etc.

*With Fathers* (1932) - the ideological film devoted to children's involvement in revolutionary events in the west of Ukraine. This film, as opposed to the previous one, illustrated historically significant events which took place in Russia in the 1930s. The young viewers were attracted by the fact that the film was based on the real events. It illustrates heroism and self-sacrifice of workers' children; demonstrates that children and their parents are ready to risk their lives for the sake of others.

As Polonsky (1930) noted in the article *Attention to Children's Film Work*, in 1929 there were some shifts in the solution of the problem of children's cinema in Soyuzkino due to the requirements of the public and the decisions of the 1st All-Union party meeting on cinematography. Even in Soyuzkino resolutions from October 26-27, 1929 there were taken the decisions to improve the production of films for children and teens, to organise film distribution in accordance with pedagogical requirements, to discuss with trade union councils the problem of organizing film work in theatres, clubs, etc. It is quite clear that Soyuzkino, which followed the Sovkino's policy, had to create special authorities responsible for children's cinema. Thus, they created the department of children's cinema in the sector of film promotion (operational department) together with the resolution of operational department *About Cultural and Educational Work at Cinemas* and the board resolution *About the Use of Cinema in Political and Pedagogical Work* (p. 33).

Polonsky (1930) also outlined the duties of this department: studying the needs of various methodical and other institutions responsible for social education with the use of cinema, management of school sectors (Soyuzkino at the local levels, development and publication of various methodical guidelines and materials devoted to children's cinema, organisation

and control over the activities of the Fund of children and educational films, etc.) (p. 33).

In 1930 in the journal *Children's Cinema* there was an article titled *General Department of Social and Polytechnic Education of Children of the People's Commissariat for Education (Glavsotsvos) and Children's Cinema* which criticised the work of the industry, revealed current depressing situation with production of children's feature and educational films in conditions when demand for children's films, especially feature ones, increased all the time (Zhinkin, 1930).

Each year there was observed underproduction of films for children which was systematically transferred from the previous year's plan to the next one (this made an impression of production increase from year to year). Such poor condition of children's cinema in our country could be explained, on the one hand, by commercial approach, and on the another – by political misunderstanding of the problem (Smirnov, 1930, p. 5).

The People's Commissariat for Education considered that for the development of children's cinema it was necessary to take decisive actions which should be supported by the general public. The increase in demand for children's films was considered important and could promote satisfaction of the arising interest by the film production companies.

During the study period a film teacher was given one of the most influential roles in the organisation of educational work among younger generation. Talking to children before or after the cinema show a teacher had to answer the questions asked by children, most of which often revolve around cinematography in general (Kalashnikova, 1928, vol. 2, p. 544). It was assumed that this conversation prepared for the film perception, helped children to analyse it. After watching the film the actions and behaviours of the characters were discussed; children were offered to read the story the film was based on and compare them; the most memorable moments were discussed in detail, etc. Negative impacts of visiting a cinema were listed in the journal *Pedagogical Theatre* that, in turn, emphasised the importance of organizing special films for children (Dikanskaya, 1926). The uncontrolled character of the visits to the cinema was marked out the first among other shortcomings of children's cinema; It was noted that children, cinema-lovers, often use all possible and impossible means to visit cinema every day (Dikanskaya, 1926, p. 37). The visits to the cinema organised for child care institutions were rather rare as there were almost neither special children's cinemas nor films for children. Second, poor organisation of cinema shows. Frequent visits to the cinema can cause significant harm for the health of the developing organism. Children usually sit close to the screen (cheap seats) that can weaken their eye sight; the cinema shows are too long in time, air is stuffy and lighting is bad, children have to return home late, therefore they do not get enough sleep – all these depress their organisms' abilities (Dikanskaya, 1926, p. 37).

Third, special attention should be given to watching age-adequate films. Frequent watching of love adventures, realistic fight scenes exerts the pernicious, destroying impact on children, provokes premature awakening of the sexual instinct in children and sometimes promotes manifestations of sexual perversity (Dikanskaya, 1926, p. 37). In this regard some rules had to be introduced and followed in the territory of the country:

- about control: Sotsvos (the System of Social Education) provides extra protection to young people who are 16 years old, and visits to the cinema by children of these age groups have to be under constant control of Sotsvos (Dikanskaya, 1926, p. 37);
- about the age of the visitors: it would be expedient to prohibit visits to the cinema by children under the age of 8, even accompanied by parents or relatives (Dikanskaya, 1926, p. 37);
- about follow-up: children and teenagers under the age of 16 could be allowed to visit the cinema on the terms of preliminary announcement and controlling the cinema shows suitable for children with indispensable presence of the representative of Sotsvos;
- about the length of the films: the duration of a cinema show should not exceed 2 hours for teenagers and 1 hour – for children of younger age;
- about the number of visits: frequent visits to the cinema (more than 2 times a week) were



recognised as impermissible due to negative effects on health and breaking of school work (Dikanskaya, 1926, p.38).

There existed an urgent necessity to use cinema as an educational tool, in this regard it was important to define the obligatory characteristics of such cinema. For this purpose the common pedagogical requirements to the film were defined proceeding from the basic principles of training; there were made some attempts to systematise educational film materials, definite the requirements to the selection of material, graphic means, structure, sound and visuals of the educational film (Table 2).

**Table 2**  
Requirements to educational cinema in the 1930s

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Its characteristics</b>
Educational function	general tone of the film, its directive
Comprehensiveness	Each film had to be aligned around the main core given in the title, incorporate in the image a number of such phenomena in the context of which there is not only the description of the phenomenon, but also its interpretation through the establishment of interrelation between these phenomena.
Analyticity	The film has to show the entire phenomenon, not its separate abstract elements.
Dynamic character	The film dynamics in general is systematic arrangement of contents.

Based on the data contained in Table 2 (Dudley, 2009) it is possible to say that *educational function* of the film is a characteristic, penetrating deep into all episodes and shots and therefore it cannot be performed in any part or a case. The educational potential of each shot has to be estimated and criticised. The film *The Heir to Genghis Khan (Storm over Asia)* was considered as an example, where the Genghis Khan's era (a training component) and class struggle (an educational component) were shown very realistic from historical point of view. The film has to possess powerful means to show life in all its complexity: to restore eras of the past and to transfer the viewer to different spaces (Dudley, 2009).

Not only has the film to show the reality, but also provide its interpretation and analysis by selection of episodes and the art of montage (realisation of the principle of comprehensiveness). Analyticity consisted in studying based on mental partition of an object or a phenomenon into smaller components, identification of the elements, and analysis of its properties, ability to reveal cause and affect relationships. However the film will not be pedagogically valid despite thorough analyticity and comprehensiveness if it is not dynamic. The film dynamics consists in choosing the material which is concentrated on influencing the viewer. Only professional film editing can solve this problem. It is well-known that people are likely to perceive and remember information more accurately if it comes through different senses (hearing, sight). Cinema is a visual medium that tells stories and exposes reality. Its influence on people is ascribed to combination of motion pictures and sound. Therefore the educational film originated in the 1930s seems to be clear, interesting and enabling to reach pedagogical goals. It is still used successfully these days.

## 4. Conclusions

Historical and pedagogical studies carried out within the frameworks of this research has allowed the authors to conclude that in the 1920s-30s children's cinema played an important role in supporting educational and cultural ideologies in Russia. It was used as a powerful medium of educational work with population. The feature films and newsreels created during the study period are still able to engage and impress the audience. Besides providing entertainment and amusement, cinema has an educational value. The created system of

educational work was successfully used to support the ideology of the Soviet power and educational work with children was arranged within its context. Moreover, competently and effectively organised work with children audience provided spiritual and moral development and social education. These were achieved with the organised visits to cinemas, watching and discussing art and science films (Kalashnikova, 1928, vol. 2). All of the above are key factors demonstrating that in 1920s-30s there was achieved considerable progress in filmmaking which allowed the Soviet state to use cinema in educational purposes for the development of educational and cultural ideologies among children and youth. The development of cinema in Russia was best characterised by regional nature and utilitarian attitude. Public and state film committees made a lot to improve the production of films which had some regional importance, involvement of youth in educational activity, organisations of cultural and educational events.

Thus, almost a century after its formation in Russia (1920s), cinema continues to be the most powerful tool for influencing the viewer. Due to the use of modern technologies, quality of shooting, a variety of bright film characters, etc. cinema has to be used as an educational tool for younger generation. Cinema shows for teenagers should be properly organised with the joint efforts of schools (school cinema clubs, interaction of teenagers with film teachers) and family (monitoring what children choose to do, their interests).

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1. Department of Pedagogy. Lesosibirsk Pedagogical Institute branch of Siberian Federal University. Associate Professor. Contact e-mail [olga197109@yandex.ru](mailto:olga197109@yandex.ru)

2. Department of Pedagogy and Primary School Psychology. Krasnoyarsk State Pedagogical University named after V.P. Astafyev. Associate Professor. Contact e-mail [plem9@main.ru](mailto:plem9@main.ru)

3. Department of Pedagogy. Lesosibirsk Pedagogical Institute branch of Siberian Federal University. Head of Department. Contact e-mail [kolokolnikova\\_zu@mail.ru](mailto:kolokolnikova_zu@mail.ru)

4. Department of English Language. Institute of Space and Information Technology, Siberian Federal University. Associate Professor. Contact e-mail [ytanya.08@mail.ru](mailto:ytanya.08@mail.ru)

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