Media-and Information Literacy: Peculiarities of Definition

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Abstract

Nowadays media- and information literacy (MIL) is not only important competence, that promotes critical thinking, evaluation, analysis, effective use of information and interaction with different types of media, but also a catalyst for the development of tolerant, democratic and humanistic societies of knowledge. For this reason it's very important to describe approaches that exist in science to the definition of the concept and compare it to such terms as information and media literacy. This article provides an overview of definitions of concepts which are interested to us, as well as the author's comparison table in which the main concepts, their target audience, main competencies are extracted and compared. Due to the method of comparison, we can conclude that media information literacy is the "umbrella term" that does not include the notions that existed before, but is partly adjacent to them. It is a qualitatively new competence directed to work with information, interaction with the media, including critical thinking skills, understanding, interpreting information in different areas of professional, educational and social activities; including ethical and legal knowledge about information activity. Media- and information literacy gives citizens the opportunities and potential for self-expression and is directed to building a tolerant, pluralistic, civil society of knowledge.

Keywords: media education, information literacy, media literacy, media and information literacy.

1. Introduction

Over the past 50 years representation of the world scientific community passed a way from understanding media literacy and media education as a competence analysis of information and critical thinking, studying of which should be integrated into the school curriculum, to recognize media information literacy as a necessary condition for sustainable development of open societies of knowledge, and for building civil society, which should be provided by the state, implemented at all levels and in all spheres of society and continued throughout life. Today's century of digital technologies and convergence of communication technologies demands a combination of media literacy and information literacy to achieve sustainable development, to build civil society, and promote world peace, freedom and democracy. It is possible to be reached through the development of media and information literacy.

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2. Materials and methods

The main sources for writing this article became the materials of conferences, declarations, scientific articles and monographs. The methods of theoretical research: comparison, theoretical analysis and synthesis, classification, induction and deduction, abstraction and concretization. Methods of empirical research: collecting information related to the research subjects.

3. Discussion

Beginning of the 21st century is determined as the time of formation of a new social order – information society and knowledge society. The new order means changes in all spheres of life: in economy, policy, education, methods and organization of work, recreation, personal relationships and communication. The changes caused by development of information communication technologies (ICT), occur very quickly and dynamically, so it is necessary to develop a new information skills for those, who want to avoid being outside the new reality and to exist in the new world harmonic.

Previously, scientists agreed that in order to work with the information it is necessary to have information literacy and media literacy skills. However, today it isn't enough to have only these skills to receive progress fully and effectively. For this reason scientists began talking about a new type of literacy, which the modern person has to possess. So, for example, at the same time there are several versions of names for new literacy, among them are such as "transliteracy", "multiliteracy", "media ecology", "media prosumerism" ect.

S. Andrettau unites in the concept of "transliteracy" a wide range of abilities, knowledge and skills necessary for the person living in the 21st century: "the ability to read, write and use actively possibilities of media, including the press, television, radio, movies, and also digital social networks" (Andretta, 2009). Another researchers determine "transliteracy" as "the ability to read, write and communicate using a variety of means – from the symbolical letter and oral speech, hand-written and printing texts to television, radio, movies and digital networks" (Thomas, 2011: 93) that almost duplicates previous definition. Although developers of term suggest understanding media literacy as a transliteracy component, in our opinion, it is not precisely, transliteracy is an equivalent of functional literacy, and it can't be broader concept than media literacy.

Researchers suggest understanding the concept "multiliteracy" as communication skills necessary in view of language variety, and also growth of quantity and quality of media forms of language expression and submission of information. The term "multimodality" was entered in response to two essential changes in the globalized conditions: distribution of various ways of communication with the help of new communication technologies (such as Internet, multimedia and digital mass media), and also existence of the growing availability of linguistic and cultural diversity in connection with growth of transnational migration (Cope, 2009: 170). Considering the specified definition, we can say that multiliteracy is also an equivalent to the basic term literacy, which was revised, given the challenges and needs of todays, and which is more focused on the form of communication, regardless of its content, skills and analysis assessment.

Researcher S. Cordes suggests using the generalizing concept "multimodal literacy" under which should be defined the combination of four literacy types: information, visual, media literacy and multicultural literacy. (Cordes, 2009). The specified term also only increases uncertainty of the categorical device.

One more tangent concept to the interested us phenomena is the term "media ecology". It is considered that the term was first formally introduced in 1968 in a N. Postman's speech, he noted that "media ecology is the doctrine of the media as the environment" (Strate, 2014: 24) and in works of the Canadian media futurologist M. McLuhan (Potiatynyk, 2004: 187). In his works, N. Postman the 1970-80 indicates that the media ecology examines how communication affects on human perception, understanding, feelings and values; and how the interaction with the media promotes or determines our chances of survival. The researcher says that the word "ecology" provides studying of the environment: its structures, contents and influence on people. Media ecology is directed to finding out what roles media forced us to play, how media force us to feel and work, and how it is possible to counteract (Postman, 1970: 162).

Also concerning to interested us concepts is a phenomenon "media prosumerism". In foreign science the concept "mediaprosumer" is actively used for more than ten years, it is investigated by B. Köhler, S. Davy, I. Blumtritt, D. Grobel, Sk. Mokhaimen, T. Zaitova, A. Rybalkina and others.

In the most general interpretation "media prosumer" is at the same time the consumer and the producer of media content.

In Ukraine the specified phenomenon was thoroughly investigated by T. Kraynikova (in particular in the monograph "Culture of Media Consumption in Ukraine: from Consumerism to Prosumerism"). According to author's generalizations, "mediaprosumerism is a type of competent media consumption, which is found in the ability to analytically select, evaluate and decode any media, to master information technology and independently produce messages, to maintain a dialogue with media editorial and to influence on their concepts, etc.,". That is to be legible, creative, semi-professional consumer of information products (Krainikova, 2015).

In our opinion, all concepts stated above are interpretation of such term as "media and information literacy", which more fully and clearly reflects the knowledge, skills and values that should have a modern man to harmoniously live and work under the new conditions of the information society.

In July, 2011 in Morocco it was held the First international forum on media of information literacy with representatives of 40 countries, during which UNESCO Fez Declaration on media and information literacy was formed. This date is the beginning of a new stage of media education development. Progressive scientific community suggested paying attention to the convergence of media and information literacy and merging them into a single concept – media- and information literacy. This concept is based on general human rights and is considered as the basic conditions for individuals, communities and entire nations to enjoy the right of freedom of expression and the right of access to information.

In order to understand an essence of the specified concept more thoroughly, it is necessary to pay attention to interpretation of its components: "information literacy" and "media literacy", as well as to different approaches of various scientists to interpretation of the concept MIL.

4. Results

Let us determine the definition of "information literacy" (IL). For the first time this term was introduced in 1977 in the US national program for higher education reform. The American Library Association (ALA) had a great influence on the concept's definition. Information literacy should be understood as "a set of abilities to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use it effectively" (ACRL…, 1992). According to ALA's thoughts and its "Standards of information literacy", information literate person is able to determine the amount of required information, to find access to it, to estimate information, to treat critically to its sources, to include the obtained information in the corresponding own knowledge base (to systematize), to use it effectively for achievement of a specific goal and to understand the economic, legal and social problems connected with using information from ethical and legal point of view.

According to the UNESCO definition in 2013, information literacy is focused on process of information consumption by the person and its entry into the condition of awareness. It means "the ability of the user to identify and formulate own information requirements, to find access to information and treat it ethically, have skills of critical evaluation of information, use information and communication technologies (ICT) for its processing" (Grizzle et al., 2013: 47). "The existing models and systems of information literacy deal, mainly, with documents. Careful consideration of the definitions of information literacy reveals the conceptual core: search, assessment, usage and information transfer" (Shpyraniec, 2013: 119).

In 2011 the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL), which was the founder of information literacy basic model "The Seven Pillars of IL", indicated that information literacy is resumptive (umbrella) term which includes such things as digital, visual and academic literacy, information processing, information skills, data management, etc. "Information literate person has the knowledge and effective skills on how to collect, use, manage, create and generalize the information and data in accordance with ethical standards" (The SCONUL…, 2011).

Thus, the object of information literacy is precisely the information and any action that may be directed on it by a person (the collection, processing, checking, systematization, distribution, etc.).

One of the most common definitions of concept "media literacy" is "media literacy includes the specific knowledge and skills that promote critical thinking and using media" (Jeong et al., 2012).

A. Fedorov agrees with this opinion and points out that media literacy is "ability to synthesize and analyze spatial-temporal reality, the ability to read media texts" (Fedorov, 2014: 25). In the dictionary of concepts and terms of L. Zemlyanova we can find the definition of media literacy that suggests understanding the phenomenon not only as a stock of stable mass media knowledge but also as "ability to apply knowledge in practice consistently and correctly during choosing and evaluation of information". The main thing for media literacy is not only passive assimilation of all responses, but also taking out a question in all that the modern consumer of mass information sees, hears or reads" (Zemlyanova, 2004: 203). The researcher also notes that in the 1970th media literacy was understood mainly as a critical attitude to broadcast television programs. In the 1990th the range of media so extended that there was a need of training audience to be more exacting in choice of programs on the basis of humanistic ethics which exclude violence, immorality and anti-spirituality. It is clear, that in the 21st century a set of the required knowledge and skills in comparison with initial concepts extended in tens of times.

Thus, most scientists agree that media literacy is result of media education and this term consists in the critical analysis of media texts, their interpretations, creation of own media texts, understanding responsibility for consumption and creation of media texts. Important feature of this phenomenon is that media literacy is directed not to storing of the facts concerning media means or providing opportunities for creation of media products. Its purpose is to "study issues that arise when people are critically related to media content (ask questions that require mental skills – identifying key concepts, establishing links between the numerous ideas, asking questions, identifying errors and developing answers)" (Thoman, Jolls, 2004).

Having summarized the definitions mentioned above, we can make the general conclusion that information literacy (IL) means mostly set of skills of collecting, analysis, transformation, storage, search and distribution of information, frequently of its storing, while media literacy (ML) is understanding, critical evaluation, interaction with mass communication means for self-expression. IL is directed to an essence and contents of the information message, ML – to its shape, transfer method, purpose and impact.

Now we describe how the notions, discussed above, are reflected in the new concept. The author of the term "media and information literacy" is P. Zurkowski. He used it at the first time in 1974 in the text of its proposal addressed to the US National Committee on libraries and information science «The Information Services Environment: Relationship and Priorities» (Zurkowski, 1974).

In Fez Declarations (Fez declaration…, 2011), that laid to the foundation for a new round of doctrines about MIL, definition of the concept isn't marked, however her authors emphasize that MIL has special value for social, economic and cultural development, improves quality of human life, brings up its civic stand. Literacy in the field of media and information plays a key role in involvement of all citizens, especially young people, to participate actively in society; it promotes self-development, creation of tolerant civil society.

The next major event in the development of knowledge about MIL was the creation of the Moscow Declaration of media and information literacy in 2013. Such definition of MIL is given there – "set of knowledge, installations and skills which allows getting access to information and knowledge, analyzing, estimating, using, creating and extending them with the maximum productivity according to legislative and ethical standards and with respect for human rights" (Media and information literacy…, 2013: 379).

Media- information literacy is beyond possession of communication and information technologies and includes skills of critical thinking, understanding, and interpretation of information in different areas of professional, educational and social activities. Media-information literacy requires the ability to work with any source of information (verbal, written, electronic and analog/digital) and also with all types of information resources.

According to comments of UNESCO (Grizzle et al., 2013: 13), MIL includes knowledge and skills which allow citizens:

- to understand the role and function of the media and other sources of information in democratic societies and the conditions under which these functions can be performed;
- to recognize need of information;
- to find and get access to the relevant information critically;

- to estimate the information and content of media and other information sources, including the Internet, in terms of credibility, confidence and purpose;

- to choose information and media content ethically and to treat creation of information and knowledge for audiences / readers in the corresponding form and type of media responsibly;

- to be able to apply skills in the sphere of ICT of information processing and development of content, interaction with other mass medias and information sources, including on the Internet, for self-expression, freedom of expression, intercultural dialogue and democratic participation in life of society.

In documents of UNESCO it is offered to combine concepts of media and information literacy in one "media and information literacy", which means "possession of competences (knowledge, abilities and valuable sets) that allow citizens to interact effectively with media and other services, to develop critical thinking and training skills during all life for communication and realization active civic position" (Pedagogical aspects...).

Information literacy and media literacy traditionally were considered in different branches of science and practice. UNESCO's strategy unites these two notions as a combined set of competencies (knowledge, skills) needed for life and work today. MIL deals with all types of media and other information suppliers (such as libraries, archives, museums and the Internet), regardless of what technology they use. It has fundamental value for getting knowledge of critical thinking, democratic citizenship, self-education and appropriate management.

The researchers divided MIL into the following key skills components: Component 1: access/receiving of media and information; Component 2: assessment/understanding of media and information; Component 3: use/creation/transfer of media and information (Moeller et al., 2011). Today the largest amount of research works are carried out on the first two components (accessibility and assessment) and are less concerned to the usage, production and creation of knowledge.

UNESCO considers the value and purpose of MIL in several aspects. For example, since 2013 the organization has published an annual book about the role of MIL in development of various society aspects. In 2013 the book was called "MIL and Intercultural Dialogue", in 2014 – "Global citizenship in the digital world", in 2015 – "MIL for goals of sustainable development", in 2016 – "MIL: strengthening of human rights, fighting against radicalism and extremism".

According to the recommendations of IFLA (The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions), the most important distinguishing features of media information literacy are:

- orientation to all types of information resources: verbal, printing and digital;

- going beyond ICT;

- inclusion of learning, critical thinking and behavioral skills within and outside the professional and educational boundaries;

- connection with training during all life (IFLA Publications).

Russian professor A. Sharikov distinguishes two main causes of the convergence of media and information literacy (Sharikov, 2013: 124). The first is technological: development of computer systems, Internet technologies, and opportunities of mobile communication leads to a new quality of traditional means of transfer information. These processes form a new quality of media sphere in which information is stored and continually generated in multimedia forms that require information search skills, the ability to select, analyze and transform it (media literacy skills). Information exists not only in text form, but also in the form of audio and video files, images, and other non-verbal forms (information literacy).

The second reason is expansion of creative opportunities for people in the modern world. Media education of a sample of the 1970-1980th was more focused on perception, the analysis, and interpretation of media texts. Pupils rarely had an opportunity to create audiovisual materials due to lack of available appropriate equipment. Unlike the previous generations, most of pupils of the 21st century have the mobile devices equipped with photo and video cameras, the microphone and Internet access. Creation of audiovisual materials stopped being a challenge. Constantly the number of photos and video records, audio recordings which are taught in the Internet, sent to friends, extends. For this reason it is necessary to have skills to work with information. This is another factor that determines the need for rapprochement of information and media literacy.

According to words of IFLA's chairman of information literacy section M.-C. Torras Calvo, media and information literacy is a cornerstone of knowledge society, "this term includes development of knowledge, attitudes and practical skills, which depend on the cooperation that transcends geographic borders, sectors of society, institutions and professional groups" (Torras, 2013: 33). In our opinion, it is valuable that "the media and information literacy is not the sum of the components, but rather a new mature competence in which the components of previous disciplines integrated into the new design – more broad and ambitious" (Katts, 2013: 220).

It is important that the world community gradually begins to recognize importance of development of media and information literacy. For example, on June 22-28, 2016 the 6th World traditional week of information and media literacy was held. Organizers of the Week were UNESCO, the UN Alliance of civilization, the Global Alliance partnerships in media and information literacy and University network media of information and intercultural dialogue. In 2015 the International award of media and information literacy was for the first time awarded. A main goal of thematic week was "advancement of media and information literacy as way of assistance of social integration, intercultural and interreligious dialogue" (Count down to..., 2015)

So, having considered concept of information literacy, media literacy, media and information literacy, we will try to generalize knowledge in the form of the table, allocating the main concept of the notions, theirs target audience, the main competences and comparing them.

Table 1. Comparison table of basic concepts of media education

Type of literacy, years of emergence	Generalized definition	Main concept	Main competences
		Target audience	
		An area of interest	
Media literacy 1970th	understanding of the role and functions of the mass media and other sources of information in society, critical evaluation of media content, interaction with mass media for self-expression, intercultural dialogue, development of their own content	Mass media, media, media text, audiovisual media (film, television, Internet).	Skills of work with media (to understand a role and functions), perception, the analysis, interpretation of media texts, existence of information purpose, ability to raise a question correct, creations of own projects.
		Children, teenagers	
		Journalists, media experts, art historians, sociologists, psychologists	
Information literacy 1980th	An ability to express information needs, to find and evaluate the quality of information, to store, to disseminate information effectively and ethically use it to apply for the creation and sharing of knowledge	Text, information (text, digital, multimedia), document	Search, check (assessment), analysis, systematization, information transfer, use of computer technologies, solutions of the available educational and professional problems, storing.
		Children, teenagers	
		Teachers, librarians, computer scientists, cybernetics, linguists	
Media and education literacy 2010th	set of knowledge, installations, skills which allows to get access to information and	Knowledge, all types of information resources, an exit out of ICT limits	Critical thinking outside ICT, creation of own media products, formations of civil

	knowledge, to analyze, estimate, use, create and to extend them with the maximum productivity according to legislative and ethical standards and with respect for human rights	Adults (MIL use in personal, social, educational, professional life)	society, self-education during life, the moral and tolerant relation, ability to dialogue.
		Representatives of almost all sciences (interactive media communication through partnership)	

5. Conclusion

Mass media information literacy is the umbrella term, which does not include a concept that existed before, is only partially adjacent to them. It is a qualitatively new competence aimed to work with information, interaction with the media, including critical thinking skills, understanding, interpreting information in different areas of professional, educational and social activities, including ethical and legal knowledge about information activity, giving citizens the opportunities and potential for self-expression. It is aimed at building tolerant, pluralistic, civil society of knowledge. MIL provides the ability to work with any source of information (verbal, written, electronic and analog/digital) as well as with all kinds and types of information resources.

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Медиа и информационная грамотность: особенности определения

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Аннотация. Медиа и информационная грамотность (МИГ) сегодня является не только важной компетенцией, которая способствует развитию критического мышления, оценке, анализу и эффективному использованию информации, взаимодействию с различными видами медиа, но и так же является катализатором развития толерантных,

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демократических и гуманистических обществ знаний. Именно поэтому чрезвычайно важно описать подходы к определению этого понятия, которые существуют в науке, а также сравнить его с терминами информационная и медиаграмотность. В статье дается обзор определений интересных нам понятий, а также авторская сравнительная таблица, в которой выделены главный концепт понятий, целевая аудитория, главные компетенции и т.д. Медиа и информационная грамотность является зонтичным термином, не включает в себя понятие, существовавшие до него, а лишь частично касается к ним, является качественно новой компетенцией. Включает в себя работу с информацией, взаимодействие с медиа, навыки критического мышления, осмысления, интерпретации информации в различных областях профессиональной, образовательной и общественной деятельности, включая этические и юридические знания по информационной деятельности, дает возможности и потенциал для самовыражения, направлена на построение толерантного, плюралистического, гражданского общества знаний. МИГ предполагает умение работать с любыми источниками информации (устными, письменными, аналоговыми и электронными/цифровыми), а также со всеми видами и типами информационных ресурсов.

Ключевые слова: медиаобразование, информационная грамотность, медиаграмотность, медиа и информационная грамотность.