

IMPLEMENTATION OF MEDIA LITERACY IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSES - A NEW MODEL OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The modern way of life, rapid changes and modern lifestyles impose the need to implement changes in education as well. The changes start first with the youngest students (primary grades) through a change in their awareness and way of thinking. We cannot ignore the fact that every student has free access to all information through their smart devices, but the art of teachers, as well as challenge of today's living, is how to make students literate in the area of media literacy and use all that technology in the direction of the progress of the teaching process. Contents, forms, methods and strategies of work are needed that will increase students' motivation for learning and acquiring permanent knowledge, which are the basis for raising the level of critical thinking. The meaning of media literacy is theoretically explained in this paper and supported by empirical data obtained through a survey of a target group - primary school teachers from I-V grade. This paper deals with the issue of the implementation of media literacy and its impact on developing critical thinking among students. Through empirical research of the opinion of primary school teachers in the Macedonia. This data is the basis for creating a proposed model of education for media literacy that encourages positive changes in teaching and society in general.

Keywords: media literacy, primary school education, critical thinking, change, teaching process

1) INTRODUCTION

Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media. It involves understanding the ways in which media can influence people and being able to critically evaluate the messages being presented. This includes being able to identify the source of the media, its purpose, and any biases it may contain. It also involves understanding the techniques used to create media, such as framing, camera angles, and sound effects, and being able to analyze effects. Media literacy is important because media plays a significant role in shaping people's view and understanding of the world. It is also important because media is increasingly being used to manipulate people and spread misinformation. By being media literate, individuals can become more informed and better equipped to make informed decisions and resist manipulation.

When we talk about teaching media literacy in primary school, we need to have an appropriate approach because it is needed to prepare students for the future and develop their critical thinking. Teaching media literacy in primary education is important because it helps children to develop critical thinking skills and become more informed and discerning media consumers. It can also help them to become more media literate adults, who are better equipped to navigate the increasingly complex media landscape.

There are a number of ways to teach media literacy in primary education, including: Discussing media with students: Teachers can facilitate discussion about media and encourage students to ask questions and express their thoughts and experiences, analyzing media together or leading students in analyzing media, including identifying the source, purpose, and any biases present in media, teaching about media techniques- teachers can help students to understand the techniques used in media production, such as framing, camera angles and sound effects, and

how they can influence the way a message is conveyed. The important point is also encouraging media creation i.e. giving students the opportunity to create their own media, whether it be through writing, photography, or video, can help them to better understand the process and techniques involved in media production. Also, it should be mentioned providing a diverse range of media: Exposing students to a diverse range of media, including different types of media (e.g. print, audio, video) and sources, can help them to develop a more nuanced understanding of the media landscape.

Also, we need to educate teachers as well and help them to understand media literacy as an important point of view in the new era.

2) LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to cover the essence of media literacy and its importance in primary education, it is necessary to highlight definitions and different points of view of experts who work in the field of media literacy. Media literacy skills are defined as the abilities to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication (National Association for Media Literacy Education, 2010). Traditionally, the teaching of these skills was relegated to the K-12 classroom, but more recently, some scholars have noted that parental involvement in their children's media consumption can greatly contribute to their developing media literacy skills (Duerager & Livingstone, 2012). As such, Mendoza (2009) reviewed the parental mediation literature as based in the television literature to determine how it might map onto the media literacy framework. She reported that coveiwng was the most common form of parental mediation but did not find that watching content

with a child promoted media literacy, which may reflect that the majority of parents who co-view do not discuss the content with their children. Thus, the opportunity to learn critical thinking skills through analyzing content is minimized. Indeed, a parent's coviewing of a show may act as a "silent" endorsement of the content, even if it is inappropriate for a child. Mendoza further reported that active mediation would be the most effective way for parents to get involved in teaching their children media literacy. However, more research is needed to determine whether the forms in which parents traditionally actively mediate, through sharing values about the content versus inquiry based discussion, which is the kind of pedagogy recommended by scholars of media literacy, can effectively teach critical thinking skills. Media Literacy is a 21st century approach to education. It provides a framework to access, evaluate, and create messages in a variety of forms- from print to video to the Internet. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of the media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self expression necessary for citizens of a democracy (Center for Media Literacy, USA, 2022). Media Literacy teaches readers how to navigate through the overwhelming flood of information found in today's media-saturated world. Drawing from thousands of media research studies, author W. James Potter explores the key components to understanding the fascinating world of mass media. Potter presents numerous examples and facts to help readers understand how the media operate, how they attract attention, and how they influence the public. (W. James Potter, Media Literacy, 9th Edition, 2019).

3) RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Media literacy is an area that is quite current and challenging at this time, and this is due to the rapid progress in technology, which has forced more frequent use of technology in everyday life. This, in turn, imposed the need for the implementation of the concept of media literacy in elementary schools as well, from where all that guidance, education and acquisition of experiences by students begins. For the need of the topic whose research object is media literacy in primary schools, a survey was conducted of teachers who teach in grade school. The sample was random and representative, covering 13 municipalities in Macedonia.

The survey was electronic and it provided interesting data regarding media literacy. The survey consisted of 10 questions related to the education, information and necessary preparations of the teachers for the implementation of the middle school literacy classes. The respondents answered by scaling the questions with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest. The results that were obtained are quite interesting and the model for media literacy in primary schools in Macedonia emerges from them. The survey was answered by 120 teachers.

4) FINDINGS/ RESULTS

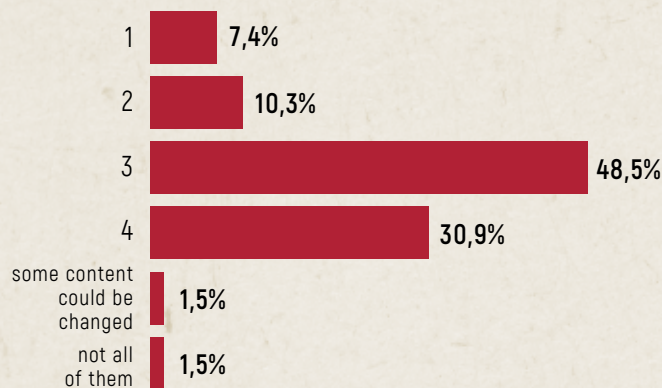
The survey that was conducted was through an electronic survey and the questions in it were of closed and open type. For the purposes of this pa-

per, 5 questions were taken into account, which are crucial for deriving the conclusions and recommendations regarding the implementation of media literacy in elementary schools.

The primary schools that were part of the survey are: OOU „Gjorgi Sugarev“- Bitola, OOU „Sv. Kliment Ohridski“- Bitola, OOU „Aleksandar Turundzev“ s. Kukure~ani, Bitola, OOU „Goce Delcev“ - Bitola, OOU „Kole Kaninski“ -Bitola, OOU „Krstev Petkov Misirkov“- Bistrica, OOU „Goce Delcev“- Konce, Mogila, OOU „Naum Ohridski“- s. Bulacani, OOU „Joakim Krcoski“- Volkovo, OOU „Kiro Gligorov“- Skopje, OOU „26 Juli“- Skopje, OOU „Stiv Naumov“- Skopje, OOU „Draga Stojanovska“- Skopje, OOU „Krum Tosev“- Skopje, OOU „Ko~o Racin“- Blatec, OOU „25 MAJ“- Cento, OOU „Sv.Kliril i Metodij“- s. Ku~eviste, OOU „Jasar Bej“- Skopje, OOU „Brakja Miladinovci“- Aerodrom, OOU „Mite Bogoevski“- Resen, OOU „Goce Del~ev“- Resen, OOU „Koco Racin“- Ohrid, OOU „Sv. Kliment Ohridski“- Ohrid, OOU „Hristo Uzunov“- Drugovo, OOU „Nikola Karev“- Kocani, OOU „Brakja Miladinovci“- Probistip, OOU „Ilinden“- Kriva Palanka, OOU „7 Marsi“- Celopek, OOU „Toso Velkov- Pepeto“- Kavadarci, OOU „Marsal Tito“- Strumica, OOU „Aleksandar Zdravkovski“- Jegunovce, OOU „Bratstvo -Miseni“- Tetovo, OOU „Mehmet Derla“- Vrapciste.

Media literacy in elementary schools is implemented through the teaching contents in the Macedonian language. With the new concept and the new Curricula, middle school literacy has been implemented with a greater number of lessons in the curriculum for all grades, with which the first, second, fourth and fifth grades are already implementing the new curricula, while from the next school year the third graders will the work according to the new program. Regarding the implementation of media literacy content, the question of whether the content is appropriate and well thought out for the age of the students is also raised.

The contents are appropriate and well thought out for the age of the students

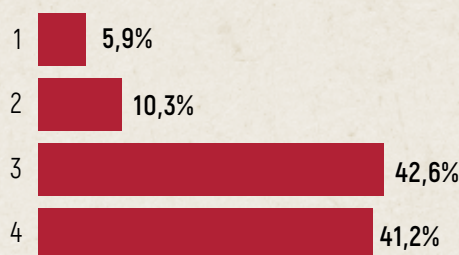


Graphic no.1 Media literacy content

From graphic display no. 1, it can be noted that 48.5% and 30.9% believe that the contents are appropriate for the age of the students and cover what is needed, while only a small part, 1.5% of the respondents think that the contents should be supplemented or modified.

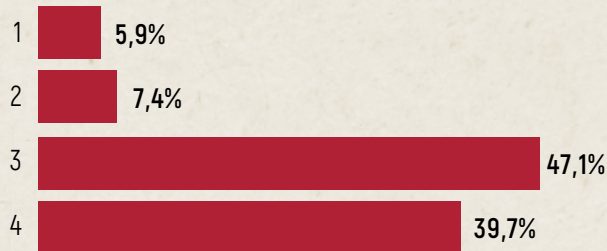
The Graphic no. 2 gives us a clear picture that the greater number of classes for media literacy students leads to raising the level of media literacy as well as the students' awareness of this literacy as well as its advantages and disadvantages. This is confirmed by the high percentage of respondents who answered 3 (42.6%) and 4 (41.2%) to this question. Also, through the third graph, the teachers confirm that through these contents the students master the necessary skills and knowledge.

The implementation of media literacy classes leads to the raising of the media literacy among students



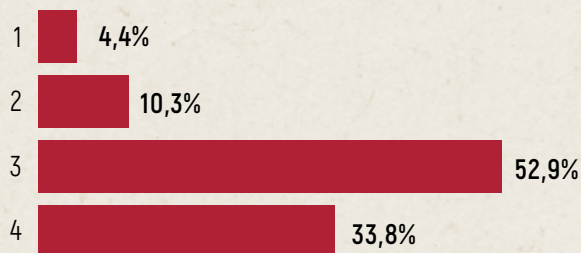
Graphic no.2 Media literacy implementation

Through the content, students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills of media literacy



Graphic no.3 Media literacy content and acquiring knowledge of media literacy

The contents of the media literature contribute to the development of critical thinking among students



Graphic no.4 Media literacy and development of critical thinking at students

The next question, which is quite significant for the research, shows how much media literacy affects students' critical thinking. According to the opinion of the respondents, the adoption of the content of media literacy greatly affects the development of critical opinion among students (52.9% and 33.8%).

The last two questions were open-ended and related to the examination of teachers' opinions and attitudes regarding their education and the materials they need for the implementation of media literacy classes. Categories were made from their statements, and they are given below.

What kind of education is needed for teachers in the area of media literacy?

- ▶ trainings and practical workshops by relevant factors
- ▶ educational videos and appropriate materials in the Macedonian language
- ▶ trainings for integration with other teaching subjects
- ▶ appropriate materials, manuals, and worksheets for students
- ▶ education about modern media, computer literacy, digital tools
- ▶ special training for creating media content by teachers
- ▶ all primary school teachers should be covered and it should be full training with practical workshops, not theory, without counselors from the number where lessons will be practically simulated and the training will not be just two days but several times, which will give us the opportunity and we, as teachers, should realize and provide examples, from which a practicum would emerge
- ▶ cooperation with TV houses and journalists
- ▶ suitable material through which we will realize the contents of the program and they will be correlated, more practical examples with videos and presentations by teachers and students who will be a suitable example for the students
- ▶ training not so much as finding the most suitable contents and activities
- ▶ analysis of news of interest to children, bullying on social networks, but properly prepared and previously reviewed

What resources, materials do you need to implement teaching in the area of media literacy?

- ▶ videos, platforms, manuals
- ▶ we have resources, we lack guidance
- ▶ texts that will correspond to the age of the students
- ▶ ready educational material for media literacy
- ▶ no resources are needed, there are e.g., phone, TV, you just need a detailed analysis of the given content, who or what messages are being sent and the formation, the picture, the text... so that the students see all the information that conveys a message. but first the teachers should have a developed critical opinion about the contents of the media....
- ▶ we have the conditions for teaching
- ▶ to know how to get the information we need
- ▶ children's magazines, children's shows
- ▶ internet, video advertisements, printed materials in color.
- ▶ internet, IT technology
- ▶ manuals, video materials, cooperation with media houses...

From the data from the research that was carried out, it can be determined that in Macedonia there is already an implementation of media literacy in primary schools, and from the opinions and attitudes of the teachers, it can be concluded that the contents that have been implemented are appropriate and they are the basis for the development of critical opinion among students. But what is missing from the teachers and their work is their additional education and appropriate materials that would be useful to them and would help them in the implementation of the lessons. It is of par-

ticular importance to mention that they also need education such as trainings, seminars and educational materials in the Macedonian language that would make the lessons and all additional curricular and extracurricular activities more interesting and appropriate.

4) DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Taking into consideration the research, the analysis and the needs that are required for teachers, a model of media literacy implementation emerges. To have positive changes that will lead to a change in the students' way of thinking, it is necessary to strengthen the capacities, that is, to help the teachers to better and more creatively realize the lessons related to media literacy. In this way, we will help them raise critical thinking among students to an even higher level. The model proposed by the authors refers to strengthening the cooperation of the institutions and support of primary school teachers. When we talk about institutionalization, it is necessary to mention the Ministry of Education and Bureau of Education Development, which are directly involved in the process of support and evaluation of the changes that are already happening in education with us.

The model presented in Figure 1 represents the key actors and components that are essential in the process of implementing media literacy that are key to positive changes in primary education.

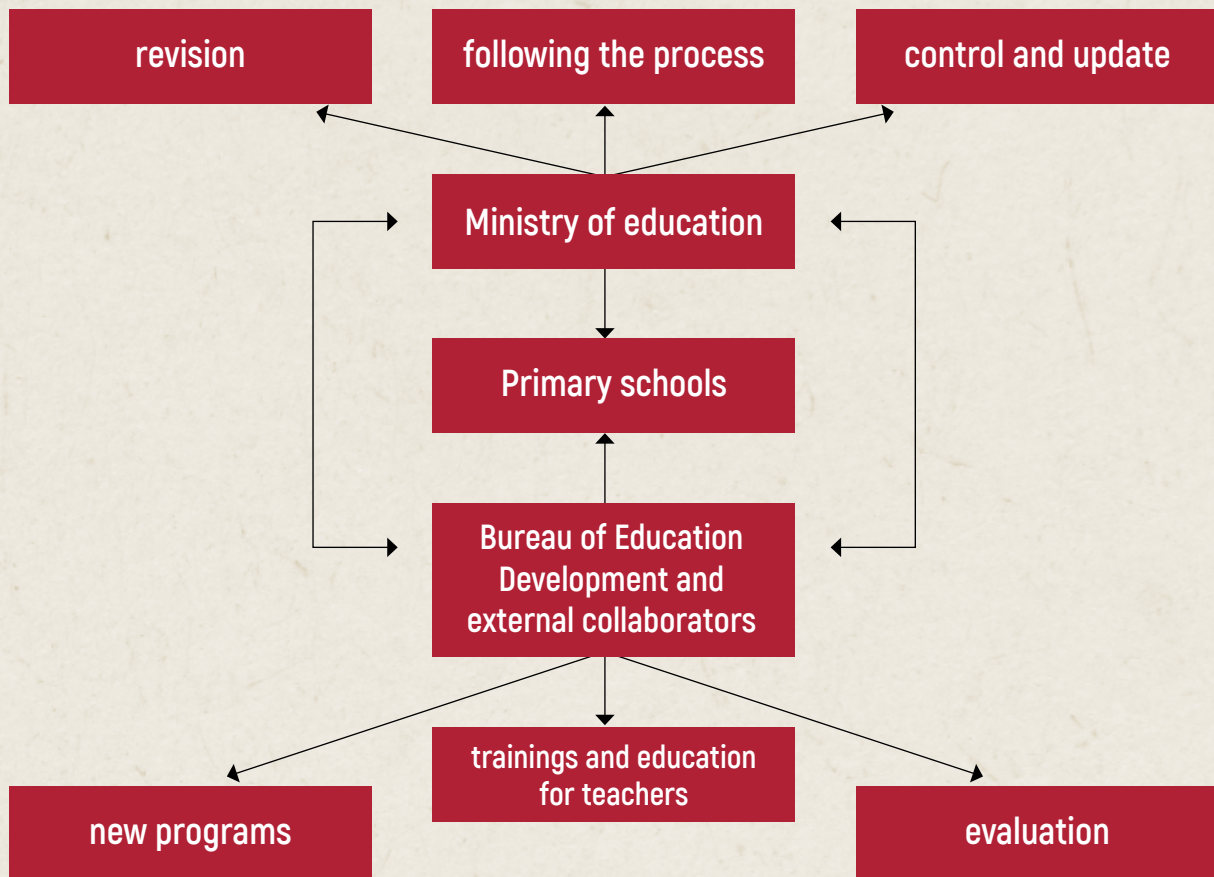


Figure no.1 Model of education for media literacy

As it was pointed out in the previous part of the text, the model presents key actors and components that are crucial in the process of media literacy and its implementation in the process of primary education.

Key actors in this process are the Ministry of Education and the Bureau of Education Development assign again for each of them the components are given. While elementary schools are in the middle and they are the direct beneficiaries, that is, through the implementation of media literacy, they cause the development of students' critical thinking, and thus permanent positive changes among students that are reflected in the improvement of the teaching process and their further development. The Ministry of Education is tasked with monitoring the education process and the implementation of new curricula, further con-

trolling the work in schools and conducting audits, where necessary.

Bureau of Education Development and external collaborators are responsible for the components that refer to the development of new programs in which innovative contents implemented by teachers are implemented. It is also necessary to emphasize the part of further education and training for the teaching staff, which is a key component and to which special attention needs to be paid. This was confirmed by the research itself, that is, the opinion of the teachers. This component refers to the Bureau, but also to external collaborators (institutions, providers, and non-governmental organizations), who are active stakeholders and participants in the process of training and education of primary school teachers. And the last component refers to the evaluation of this entire

process, and this happens through the monitoring of the teachers' work and the implementation of media literacy content in primary schools.

This process has already started with a high level of cooperation between all the mentioned institutions, but it needs to be deepened and improved. The education of the teachers and the constant support in the implementation process will encourage the desired change that will contribute to the development of the critical opinion among the students and encourage their awareness from the earliest years. That is why media literacy is part of the curriculum from the first grade. We hope that the proposed model will stimulate and open a wider field of research that will contribute to the deepening of this problem, a large number of innovations and works that will be in the direction of positive changes in the educational process, through which we directly and indirectly build the future of our country and strengthen our capacities.

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Violeta Stevanovska graduated from the Faculty of Pedagogy at the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola in 2002. She received her master's degree in 2006 on the subject of "Mentoring and professional development of new employees in the school". From 28.12.2017 - 01.09.2021 she worked as a teacher in OU "St. Kliment Ohridski"- Bitola, and after her election, from 01.09.2021 she works as a teacher-mentor in the same school, for which she also submitted an Annual Program for the work of a teacher-mentor in which all work tasks are explained in detail. It is part of the School's Annual Work Program 2021/2022. She is the creator of the outdoor learning strategy and program, which is implemented in the school's Annual Work Program 2021/2022. She is also an external collaborator of the BRO for the development of Macedonian language programs for grades I-V.



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Gordana Anastasova, since 1996, has been working as a teacher in PPS "Sv. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola. In 2006, she obtained a diploma and the title of primary school teacher at the Faculty of Education in Bitola. Gordana continues with her career development as the director of PPS "Sv. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola, from 2017/2022. In addition to the successes in the field of school management, he continues with his professional development, writing professional and scientific papers and participating in working groups for the improvement of teaching practice. She is an external collaborator of the Bureau for the Development of Education and a participant in the preparation of the mathematics programs from I-V grades and is also an external collaborator of the State Examination Center as part of the team for the preparation of the national test in the Macedonian language.



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Dr. Gabriela Durchevska Georgieva has worked in the Bureau for Development of Education as an advisor in the department for pre-school and grade teaching, Sector for development of the educational system and development of standards and curricula since 2013. She has 24 years of work experience in the field of preschool education. She defended her doctoral dissertation on the topic "The pedagogue and the promotion of the educational work in the kindergarten" in October 2015 at the Institute of Pedagogy at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje and acquired the title of Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences. She participated in the creation of the Comprehensive Strategy for Education 2018-2025 with an action plan in the area of preschool education as well as in the preparation of instructions and guidelines for the realization of educational work. She has been a consultant and collaborator on several national project activities, international and non-governmental organizations World Bank, UNICEF, Save the Children, Search for Common Ground, MCGO.