

The Necessity of Media Knowledge Education to Students to Promote their Media Literacy Competency

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Abstract: *The paper designs an indigenous module to upgrade the media literacy among high school students utilizing the “multimedia education”, “the cultural studies”, the theory of “New London Group” and “the political media literacy” by Ferguson. The method used is in two categories, documentary and survey. The population comprises of the tenth and eleventh graders in the 2nd region of the ministry of education classification upon the Cochran formula for which 384 students were selected. The cluster sampling, piecemeal analysis were used as the observation unit was the students. We have two series of variables for which the media literacy is the dependent and the students’ knowledge of media, the ways of media productions and the critical thoughts are the independents. Knowledge of media encompasses four sub-categories as the economics, politics, culture and the religious components. The hypothesis used is of the causative and the formal statistical test is of the simple regression and multi-variables. The regression results proves that independent variables have the meaning effect on the dependent variable for which the ways of media productions, critical thoughts and having the knowledge and cognizance of media dedicate the maximum effect on the dependent variable respectively but their effectiveness are not strong. The findings in this research prove that among the three indexes of the economic, political and cultural cognizance, it is only the economic knowledge which has a weak meaningful effect on the media literacy.*

Keywords: *media literacy, media messages, critical thoughts, media messages analyzing, critical media literacy.*

Introduction

The importance of a comprehensive generation who is engaged in the information society envisages and necessitates the media literacy education in the 21st century since the children and young adults are being bred who should undoubtedly be named as the “WEB-GENERATION”. This generation is on the way of information and communication expressway that intensifies the media literacy education more than ever and we are exposing with the new and some unseen challenges which has not been experienced yet. On the other hand, it can be said that the media have got a pivotal role in identification procedure in the information society as the media education can be assumed as the main component in defining the people’s citizenship condition. It is visible that the citizenship education needs and seeks a place to prove its actual and legitimate culture and social literacy among communities so, it takes the education role to the children as creative which leads them to participate in their media culture community actively. Hence, it is believed that citizenship education to our children does not necessarily mean our children should analyze what they watch and listen to the media critically, but it means media education should seek a way to persuade the children’s critical participation so that they create their own cultural productions. As a matter of fact, it is the ministry of education who should best select its policy to equip

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teachers and the students as well to choose a social paradigm in dealing with the diverse media messages and content. Generally speaking, the connection between media and education is seen to have been established in 1930's with the popularization of the means of communications like, newspaper, telephone, radio and television. The idea of benefitting from these means which can reach the messages formulated from a certain center to masses, as an education material, has densely been articulated in USA and Europe especially in 1920's and 1930's (İnal, 2009:13). Therefore, the ideas or applications about proper usage of media are seen to have emerged initially in 1930's in Europe and USA even if the concept of media literacy wasn't used. Media education which started in the USA in 1932, had repercussions in Europe especially in England and Scandinavian countries in 1970's and came into question of European Union at the beginning of 2000's. (İnal, 2009:13)

Media literacy goal does not direct the teachers to guide the students' thoughts as it believes teachers are to help make the competency of media content assessment (Media literacy consortium, 2011). Media literacy explores the theoretical underpinnings of critical media literacy and analyzes four different approaches to teaching it. Combining cultural studies with critical pedagogy, Douglas Kellner and Jeff Share argue that critical media literacy aims to expand the notion of literacy to include different forms of media culture, information and communication technologies and new media, as well as deepen the potential of literacy education to critically analyze relationships between media and audiences, information and power. A multiperspectival approach addressing issues of gender, race, class and power is used to explore the interconnections of media literacy, sexist and critical pedagogy. In the interest of a vibrant participatory democracy, educators need to move the discourse beyond the stage of debating whether or not critical media literacy should be taught, and instead focus energy and resources on exploring the best ways for implementing it (Kellner & Share, 2007:1).

The thought of citizen's protection against negative effects of media, which globalized especially after 1980's, has been clarified. The importance of education of media literacy has started to have been discussed in various projects by international institutions; it has been alleged that there is a need to the new and rich communication skills so as to live as an active citizen in a world equipped with messages consisted by press and visual media (Türkoğlu, 2007: 95 transmitted by İnal, 2009: 37). UNESCO, which tries to keep on the agenda the media literacy from 1960's till now, has held a meeting of which experts of nineteen countries have attended in Federal Germany on 22 January 1982. And in the declaration at the end of this meeting, among the users of media texts, the responsibilities of families, formal-informal institutions of education, teachers, media workers, and decision makers to develop the criticism, have been emphasized (Buckingham, 2014). As seen, when we consider the development process of media literacy from 1970's till now, gaining a technical ability about media or consisting its own media can be said to have transformed into a form of enlightenment or awareness that will provide protection against negative effects of media instead of the skill of distributing the messages.

Nowadays, it can be seen that there are plenty of countries which have noticed the importance of media literacy and have arranged their education policies in this way. The course of media literacy is being taught in different names or ways initially in developed countries such as, the USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, England, Austria, Belgium and Switzerland and in some countries of Africa and Asia and in Australia. But in Turkey, the ideas which correlate the relation of education with mass media are seen to have occurred from the beginning of 1930's till the end of it (See. İnal, 2009: 148). However, whether these ideas will be evaluated or not within the scope of media literacy, which expresses being informed and conscious against media texts, is an issue that is moot. These ideas are in fact focused on usage of education as an instrument of mass media. So, it will not be wrong to state that the education of media literacy is new in today's Turkey. To be included in the curriculum of secondary education, the course of media literacy, which was formerly seen in faculties of communication, were carried out in 2007-2008 academic year. The lesson which was taught compulsorily in a lot of faculties of communication is being taught as an elective course in secondary education.

Literature Review

Literacy involves gaining the skills and knowledge to read, interpret, produce texts and artifacts, and to gain the intellectual tools and capacities to fully participate in one's culture and society. Both traditionalists and reformists would probably agree that education and literacy are intimately connected. "Literacy," in our conception, comprises gaining competencies involved in effectively learning and using socially constructed forms of communication and representation. Because literacies are socially constructed in various institutional discourses and practices within educational and cultural sites, cultivating literacies involves attaining competencies in practices in contexts that are governed by rules and conventions. Literacies evolve and shift in response to social and cultural change and the interests of elites who control hegemonic institutions, as well as to the emergence of new technologies. The world we live in today is very different than the world that most of us remember from our childhood. The twenty-first century is a media saturated, technologically dependent, and globally connected world. However, most education in the United States has not kept up with advances in technology or educational research. In our global information society, it is insufficient to teach students to read and write only with letters and numbers. We live in a multimedia age where the majority of information people receive comes less often from print sources and more typically from highly constructed visual images, complex sound arrangements, and multiple media formats. The influential role that broadcasting and emergent information and computer media play in organizing, shaping, and disseminating information, ideas, and values is creating a powerful public pedagogy (Giroux, 1999; Luke, 1997). These changes in technology, media, and society require the development of critical media literacy to empower students and citizens to adequately read media messages and produce media themselves in order to be active participants in a democratic society (Kellner, 1995; Kellner & Share, 2005).

Combining cultural studies with critical pedagogy, Douglas Kellner and Jeff Share argue that critical media literacy aims to expand the notion of literacy to include different forms of media culture, information and communication technologies and new media, as well as deepen the potential of literacy education to critically analyze relationships between media and audiences, information and power. A multiperspectival approach addressing issues of gender, race, class and power is used to explore the interconnections of media literacy, sexist and critical pedagogy. In the interest of a vibrant participatory democracy, educators need to move the discourse beyond the stage of debating whether or not critical media literacy should be taught, and instead focus energy and resources on exploring the best ways for implementing it. Even so, despite the ubiquity of media culture in contemporary society and everyday life, and despite criticism of the distorted values, ideals, and representations of the world in popular culture, media education in K-12 schooling in the United States has never really been established and developed. The current technological revolution, however, brings to the fore, more than ever, the role of media like television, popular music, film, and advertising, as the Internet rapidly absorbs these cultural forms and creates ever-evolving cyberspaces and emergent forms of culture and pedagogy.

It is highly irresponsible in the face of saturation by the Internet and media culture to ignore these forms of socialization and education. Consequently, a critical reconstruction of education should produce pedagogies that provide media literacy and enable students, teachers, and citizens to discern the nature and effects of media culture. From this perspective, media culture is a form of pedagogy that teaches proper and improper behavior, gender roles, values, and knowledge of the world. Individuals are often not aware that they are being educated and positioned by media culture, as its pedagogy is frequently invisible and is absorbed unconsciously. This situation calls for critical approaches that make us aware of how media construct meanings, influence and educate audiences, and impose their messages and values. Dr. Jeff Share intensifies that the media literacy should be indigenized in any country and each educational model should take advantage of indigenous cultural and educational aspects to get effectiveness. The most important part of media education is to start teaching a unique media content syllabus from five year old kids to college students and the educators must provoke students by asking key questions in different fields in order to make them think profoundly (Skype talk, Sep. 15, 2016).

Culture is a paradoxical idea in education. On the one hand, schools are full of it. Parkside, like many schools, abounds in music, from madrigal groups to rock bands; it holds art shows in local pubs, dance

and drama shows, school plays and talent shows, which showcase the widest variety of creative forms imaginable, from rap to piano compositions based on the computer game Final Fantasy 10. In addition, it promotes the media arts, through animation, filmmaking, computer game authoring and a variety of multimedia work. On the other hand, the idea of culture is curiously absent in the documents of the UK's National Curriculum. In the provision for the 14–16 age group, for example, culture in Art and English seems to mean, effectively, what has in the past been called multiculturalism: attention to 'different cultures and traditions' (QCA, National Curriculum program of study for EN2, Reading). There is no sense of the pervasiveness of popular culture in the lives of young people, and no sense of all art, language and literature as cultural. (Burn & Durran, 2007: 20-27)

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Building upon Marx, from the 1930s through the 1960s, researchers at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research (The Frankfurt School, i.e. Adorno, Benjamin, Habermas, Horkheimer, and Marcuse) saw the rise of popular culture through media as a process involving ideological message transmission vis-à-vis the culture industries, whereby film, radio, newspapers, and other organs of communication and culture transmit the dominant ideas of their society. They used critical social theory to analyze how popular culture and the new tools of communication technology perpetuated ideology and social control. The Frankfurt group immigrated to New York in 1934 as refugees from fascism in Germany, where they experienced how the Nazis used film, radio, and other media to transmit their totalitarian ideology (Kellner, 1989; 1995). Additionally, the German theorists studied Soviet Communism, examining how the Soviet state used the media to transmit dominant communist ideologies. While in the United States, they concluded that U.S. popular culture and media transmitted dominant American and capitalist ideologies.

Frankfurt school theorists assumed that the audience is passive in its reception of media messages - a view that was challenged by a group of scholars in Birmingham, England, who advanced a more complex understanding of the active role audiences play in negotiating meanings. This group at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham (The Birmingham School created in 1964, i.e. Williams, Hoggart, and Hall), began to emphasize the role of the audience as active, rather than passive, in media reception (or consumption). Moreover, as women and scholars of color, including McRobbie and Gilroy, joined the group in the 1980s, they urged that the concept of ideology be expanded to include representations of gender, race, and sexuality because media representations included sexist, racist and heterosexist (homophobic) images and narratives that reproduce ideologies of patriarchal, racist, and heterosexist domination (Kellner 1995; 2010). What we have called social functions, which we want to see as central to our model, echoes the '3-Cs' model of media literacy we have referred to above, and which is gaining popularity as we write. For instance, a Charter for Media Literacy produced by a Media Literacy Task Force in the UK (representing broadcasters and relevant agencies, including the BFI and the UK Film Council) presents an outline of media literacy which

emphasises cultural, critical and creative functions. A version of this charter is currently being distributed by a Europe-wide campaign. In the field of academic literacy studies, there is a long tradition in Australia of similar models, such as Green (1988), which argues for a three-part model: operational, cultural and critical. Media literacy, then, has a cultural function: it is about the cultural practices in which we engage. These are too various to rehearse here: the academic tradition of Cultural Studies has focused on media cultures such as those we look at in this book, but also on cultural practices as diverse as clothing, body-piercing and skateboarding. Media cultures, in this sense, are only a part of a much wider cultural landscape.

The cultural practices of media literacy also have a wide range of purposes and we will explore these in subsequent chapters as they apply to students and teachers working together. Here, we will emphasize one, because it is so pervasive and so important in the contexts of young people and learning: the development of identity. Buckingham and Sefton-Green relate the interpretation and making of texts to cultural contexts in which the tastes, pleasures and critical opinions of young people are developed, and along with them, their sense of self, which Buckingham and Sefton-Green theories in characteristically poststructuralist terms as multiple and shifting, diverse and contradictory (1994: 30). In the same kind of way, we will see engagement with the media as part of wider cultural complexes of taste, pleasure and critical engagement, in which social identities are built and negotiated. A conception of selfhood useful in relation to media literacy is the one proposed by Jerome Bruner. Bruner's position, from the perspective of what he describes as 'cultural psychology', is that we need to pay attention to two central aspects of selfhood. First, 'the meanings in terms of which self is defined both by the individual and by the culture in which he or she participates'. Second, 'the practices in which "the meanings of self" are achieved and put to use' (Bruner, 1990: 116). This allows for a conception and study of identities which are negotiated (between the individual and the culture) and distributed (throughout the individual's cultural world and its other inhabitants). An apt metaphor for media educators might be the UK television gameshow *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* Success here depends not on knowledge as a hermetically sealed repository inside the skull of the individual contestant. Rather, memory, guesswork and informed hunches are integrated with dialogue with others in the show's 'lifelines': 'Ask the Audience', and 'Phone a Friend' (Burn & Durran, 2007:11).

Critical literacy is usually seen as opposing and supplanting the critical practice of literary studies in the first half of the twentieth century, and in particular the work of Leavis, which is seen to emphasise a select canon of culturally valued works, refined processes of cultural distinction and approaches to texts which largely ignored their social and political circumstances. By contrast, notions of critical literacy arising from philosophical and sociolinguistic approaches to language, discourse and power (Foucault, 1976; Fairclough, 1989) have rejected the focus on aesthetic qualities, substituting the need for critical questioning of 'who constructs the texts whose representations are dominant in a particular culture at a particular time; how readers come to be complicit with the persuasive ideologies of texts; whose interests would be served by such representations and such readings ...' (Morgan, 1997). On the other hand, the emphasis in literary studies on aesthetic form and effect can be seen as deriving from Aristotle's *Poetics*. It proposes notions of genre, form, performance and audience engagement which can still be discerned in recent debates on these topics. Most importantly, however, it proposes the category of the aesthetic – though very differently to the modern understanding. For Aristotle, aesthesis meant the sensory perception of a work of art – almost the opposite of the rarefied, refined, chilly kind of appreciation we more usually associate with 'high art'. This curious reversal is well represented by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, whose *Critique of Judgment* saw aesthetic distinction as a refined faculty in which one could be educated. This form of judgment has been roundly critiqued by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984), who accuses Kant of disguising the exclusive cultural tastes of his own (bourgeois) social class as a universal form of aesthetic judgment. Bourdieu opposes this aesthetic of the 'pure gaze' to the visceral vitality of popular cultural tastes, legitimizing the latter in terms which have been highly influential in the study of popular culture and its audiences. Needless to say, in rejecting the universality of cultural judgment proposed by Kant, Bourdieu emphasizes how cultural taste is determined by specific social and historical conditions, such as our family, education and, above all, our social class (Burn & Durran, 2007:15).

These kinds of critical practice see texts and those who produce and receive them as rhetorical systems, a stance which can be traced back to the Greek philosopher Aristotle. Aristotle's Rhetoric lays the foundations of many of the practices which critical literacy proposes today. It suggests that rhetoric has ethos (how believable its speaker is), pathos (how moved the audience feels) and logos (the structures and meanings of the words themselves). This tripartite structure is remarkably similar to modern notions of media literacy and critical literacy such as the one described by Morgan; and indeed, modern notions of institutional context and the importance of audience can be found in current models of rhetorical studies (Bigum et al., 1998; Andrews and Haythornthwaite, 2007).

Writers and programmers have the power to prepare information and entertainment knowing they will affect audiences, and they are careful to code their ideas using strategies and technologies designed to deliver an intended message. Based on their perceptions of the authority of a given media source, audiences decide what to accept as valid. But media producers are masters of constructing messages using communication technologies. In order to think critically about communication and media, the logical nature of communication processes must be understood. Not only is it essential to be able to recognize and distinguish speculations, opinions, and beliefs from facts, but one must also know the differences between nature and socially constructed beliefs about the world. In so doing, audience members must accept some limits to what can be learned from a given media source. Semiotics is the study of signs that represent and convey the significance of things. The concept of a sign indicates something such as a word, sound, or image that stands for or represents some meaning. Understanding semiotics clarifies the processes that express the meanings of the world around us by which we assess the conditions of our lives. The study of semiotics encourages a systematic awareness of how meanings are expressed and interpreted from the vast amount of available data to which we are regularly exposed. While there are many approaches to media literacy, semiotics provides a clear foundation for the analysis of mass communication and the production of meaning. More than understanding the intended meanings available to the intelligent interpreter, semiotics provides a systematic method for understanding how signs work to produce meanings. (Gaines, 2010:7).

Regarding to the semiotics and media literacy, it's worthy to pay attention to a part of Harry Potter for which two 13 years old kids represent their own idea about the personages as follows:

IONA: If he killed spiders in the movie everybody wouldn't like him because he'd be a coldblooded killer. You have to keep Harry Potter as nice as possible.

OGEDEI: Yeah but Harry Potter's like sad, he's just like such a little, um, um, he's like a teacher's pet, he's just running around doing this stuff. ... I'd like it if he could get better spells –

IONA: Like Avadakedavra, the killing spell?

OGEDEI: No, like flame, like a flamethrower [laughs]

These two 13-year-olds are talking about Harry Potter in a research session which invited ten children to participate on the basis that they were familiar with the book (Rowling, 1998), film (Columbus, 2002) and computer game (Electronic Arts, 2002) of Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. The conversation raises a number of issues about literacy generally, and media literacy specifically. Literacy is cultural: these children are all involved, in different ways, with the cultural phenomenon of Harry Potter. They are intimately acquainted with the popular myth of Harry Potter, have invested time and energy in it, owe it various kinds of allegiance, see it as representative of values and ideas they find important (Burn & Durran, 2007:17). The approach represented in our model is derived from the tradition of social semiotics (Hodge and Kress, 1988; van Leeuwen, 2005). This tradition emerges partly from earlier semiotics, especially that of Barthes; but also from traditions of sociolinguistics, which have been particularly influential in the study of literacy, especially in Australia, New Zealand and the UK (Halliday, 1985). Social semiotics proposes a functional view of all acts of signification. All texts are seen to fulfil three social functions: representational, interactive, and organizational (there are various versions of this triad; this is our own 'remix'). These overarching functions mean, in the case of our concern with media that all media texts will: represent the world in some way; communicate with audiences; and be organized in systematic ways as coherent and cohesive messages. The function of the

last is primarily to serve the other two (Burn & Durran, 2007:17). As we refer to Harry Potter movie above, the function of cohesive messages are clearly visible, as we should try to educate our young audiences with the critical media literacy. While we agree with the need to begin with these ideas of expanding our understanding of how we communicate with more than just printed words, this is not enough to bring about a democratic reconstruction of education and society. Robert Ferguson (1998) uses the metaphor of an iceberg to explain the need for critical media analysis. Many educators working under an apolitical media literacy framework guide their students to only analyze the obvious and overt tip of the iceberg they see sticking out of the water. Ferguson asserts that this is a problem because “The vast bulk which is not immediately visible is the intellectual, historical and analytical base without which media analysis runs the risk of becoming superficial, mechanical or glib” (p. 2). The critical component of media literacy must transform literacy education into an exploration of the role of language and communication media in order to define relationships of power and domination because below the surface of that iceberg lie deeply embedded ideological notions of white supremacy, capitalist patriarchy, classism, homophobia, and other oppressive forces (Kellner & Share, 2007:1).

Research Background

The term media literacy is in many ways unsatisfactory. As both Kress (2003) and Buckingham (2003) have pointed out, it is irrevocably related to language, it becomes something more metaphorical when applied to other media and it doesn't make sense in languages where the term used is even more literally print-related, as in the French term *alphabétisme*. Indeed, it simply does not translate into some other languages, so that educators outside the Anglophone world who wish to employ the concept sometimes use the phrase ‘media literacy’ in English. However, we believe that the term is useful for three reasons. First, it is not easy to think of another term which would serve a similar purpose and be somehow more accurate. Such expressions as ‘communicative competence’ (Germany and Austria also have the term *Medienkompetenz*, for instance) emphasize functional skills at the expense of cultural factors. ‘Literacy’ implies cultural competence. It is something we use to claim membership of particular social groups, whether these be players of the online roleplaying game *World of Warcraft*, aficionados of the films of Ken Loach or the Harry Potter fan club. These kinds of affiliations may be rooted in claims of cultural value or in common experiences of pleasure, but they are all connected to social identities, and part of our efforts to be a particular kind of person moving in a particular kind of social world.

Secondly, media literacy is not simply (or not only) a metaphor, but draws attention to important connections between print literacy and the way people engage with the media. These connections are present at all points of the three-part conceptual structure media education is often seen to operate: institution, text, audience. Institutions imply the study of how media texts are produced, the political and economic contexts from which they emerge, the messages their producers intend them to convey. Texts suggest the ‘languages’ of the media: how they represent the world, how they use particular structures or grammars to form these representations, how they are composed. Audiences are, of course, the counterparts of producers, traditionally seen as consumers of media texts, and can be studied in terms of their social uses of the media, their tastes and pleasures and their interpretive strategies. This is a simple explanation of this three-part structure; needless to say, life is more complicated than this, and we will return to these ideas later. Institutions and audiences are typically not attended to by traditional literary studies in schools, but there is every reason to argue that they should be. Literature is produced by commercial publishing houses as well as authors, after all, and marketed in similar ways to films or computer games – indeed, as the Harry Potter example shows, such marketing may extend across a corporate franchise. Similarly, of course, literature addresses audiences, who make particular social uses of their reading, develop allegiances, even fan cultures, and build what reader-response theory calls ‘interpretive communities’. In respect of the ‘text’ part of this structure, there are also important, literal, connections between print and other media. The conversation about Harry Potter, for instance, included a discussion of the system of ‘person’ in book, game and film. The point here is not to flatten out the different modes in question, but to explore how they all deal with the choices texts have between looking at a character in the fictional world, or looking at this world through that character's eyes. This involves seeing the common features here: books, games and films all have some equivalent of ‘first-person’ and ‘third-person’. But it also involves seeing what is specific to each medium: a ‘third-person’ game, for

instance, still involves being close to, and controlling, the protagonist, and so it has some ‘first-person’ characteristics. To be literate, then, involves understanding the grammar of a text, at least implicitly. It is interesting here that the Slovakian term for media literacy is *mediálna gramotnosť*, a term in which ‘grammar’ combines the idea of language structures with a broader concept of ‘educatedness’.

Finally, ‘media literacy’ is a useful general shorthand for a complex set of phenomena which would otherwise be very difficult to talk about in the policy arena, which we must constantly keep in mind. Media literacy means something in the UK in the contexts of the National Curriculum, the BBC and OFCOM, the media super-regulator. Of course, it means something slightly different in all these cases, and something different again to media teachers; but the debate about what it means for children to learn about books, films, comics and computer games can at least take place under the general umbrella of media literacy. Beyond the UK, there is a long history of campaigning in Europe for recognition of the importance of media literacy by the member states of the European Union, while in the Anglophone world media literacy is a banner for campaigns for media education in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and (though rather differently inflected) the United States (Burn & Durran, 2007: 14). Technology’s exponential growth, as well as the convergence of media corporations and new media platforms, are changing society and students to be more mediated and networked than ever (Jenkins, 2006; McChesney, 2000; Prensky, 2010). Facebook, created in 2004, already reports one fifth of the world’s population as active users, 829 million of whom use it daily (Facebook, 2014). Millions of American youth walk into their classrooms with pocket-sized devices that provide immediate access to information and entertainment as well as the potential to create and disseminate multimedia messages that can travel the world in seconds. In 2011, Pew researchers reported that 77% of U.S. teens had a cellular device (Lenhart, Madden, Smith, Purcell, Zickhur, & Rainie, 2011). A Northwestern study conducted the same year found that 8-18 year-olds in the U.S. spent well over ten hours a day exposed to various forms of media, such as music, computers, video games, television, film, and print (Rideout, Lauricella, & Wartella, 2011). In 2015, another Pew research study found that 92% of American 13-17 year olds go online daily, “including 24% who say they go online ‘almost constantly’” (Lenhart, 2015). Clearly, these data reflect the need for educators to address the changing relationship between youth and digital media (Funk et al, 2016:2).

Traditional Literacy and its components VS Media Literacy

Literacy involves gaining the skills and knowledge to read, interpret, produce texts and arti-facts, and to gain the intellectual tools and capacities to fully participate in one’s culture and society. Both traditionalists and reformists would probably agree that education and literacy are intimately connected. “Literacy,” in our conception, comprises gaining competencies involved in effectively learning and using socially constructed forms of communication and representation. Because literacies are socially constructed in various institutional discourses and practices within educational and cultural sites, cultivating literacies involves attaining competencies in practices in contexts that are governed by rules and conventions. Literacies evolve and shift in response to social and cultural change and the interests of elites who control hegemonic institutions, as well as to the emergence of new technologies (Kellner & Share, 2007: 5) The traditional ideas of literacy that focus on a standard national language and phonetic decoding are no longer sufficient in an age of proliferating communication systems and increasing linguistic and cultural diversity (The New London Group, 1996). The psychological model of reading and writing as individual cognitive skills needs to advance to a deeper understanding of literacy as a social practice “tied up in the politics and power relations of everyday life in literate cultures” (Luke & Freebody, 1997: 185). Today, novel forms of media and techno culture are proliferating and evolving as technology develops and spreads. These changes in technology and society have led to a call for a broader approach to literacy by many, including The New London Group (1996) whose members propose a pedagogy of “multiliteracies” to address multiple cultural and linguistic differences, as well as the multitude of communication media; advocates of “silicon literacies” to engage new computers, information, communication, and entertainment technologies (see, for example, Snyder, 2002); or advocacy of “multiple literacies” to take account of the full range of proliferating and emergent technologies (Kellner, 1998, 2004).

The scholars suggest that media literacy is one of the many literacies that students need in the twenty-first century to participate more effectively in the democratic process. We agree with these perspectives and in the following analysis suggest how critical media literacy can reconstruct education for the contemporary era, expand the concept of literacy, and contribute to the radical democratization of education and society. While there is growing interest in the need for media literacy, there is also much debate about why and how to teach it (Hobbs, 1998). Four major approaches to media education have appeared, which we will discuss, and then sketch out our own conception of critical media literacy. Just as we suggest that new literacies studies should build on and not leave behind traditional print media, so too do we argue that development of new multiple literacies should build upon and not abandon contributions within the field of media education that have emerged to counter the growing impact of broadcasting media (Kellner & Share, 2007: 7)

To the domains of reading, writing, and traditional print literacies, one could argue that in an era of technological revolution educators must develop robust forms of media literacy, computer literacy, and multimedia literacies, thus cultivating “multiple literacies” in the restructuring of education.¹ Computer and multimedia technologies demand novel skills and competencies, and if education is to be relevant to the problems and challenges of contemporary life, engaged teachers must expand the concept of literacy and develop new curricula and pedagogies. We would resist, however, extreme claims that the era of the book and print literacy are over. Although there are new media and literacies in the current constellation, books, reading, and print literacy continue to be of utmost significance. Indeed, in the current information-communication technology environment, traditional print literacy takes on increasing importance in the computer-mediated cyber world as people need to critically scrutinize and scroll tremendous amounts of information, putting new emphasis on developing reading and writing abilities. For instance, Internet discussion groups, chat rooms, e-mail, text-messaging, blogs, wikis, and various Internet forums require writing skills in which a new emphasis on the importance of clarity and precision is emerging.² In this context of information saturation, it becomes an ethical imperative not to contribute to cultural and information overload and to concisely communicate thoughts and feelings (Kellner & Share, 2007: 5).

Research background of media literacy in Turkey

In Turkey, two foundations are featured in the studies on media literacy in secondary education: The Ministry of Education (MEB) and The Supreme Board of Radio and Television (RTÜK). It can be said that especially RTÜK may give more importance to media literacy with the projects it held, with applications, with educations it gave and with documents it published. The Media Literacy Course Teacher’s Guide Book, on which this study is carried out, has also been prepared by RTÜK. It has been accepted as educational tool by the 23.07.2008 and 5711 decree of the Ministry of Education Board. And it has begun to be used in media literacy course, which is an elective course in 6th, 7th and 8th grades. When we look into education system in Turkey in general, due to the fact that classroom training effectiveness is practically teacher-based, education in media literacy course may give more effective results by examining it through teacher’s guide book. The first pages of it, like other textbooks taught in secondary education, consist of the National Anthem, Ataturk’s Address to Youth and a picture of Ataturk. General aims of Turkish national education are arranged in the way they are written in National Education Basic Law. The aim of Turkish national education is emphasized as bringing up citizens, as well as the behaviors and skills intended to gain with education, that all the members of Turkish nation are loyal to nationalism of Ataturk; they adopt, protect and enhance the national, moral, spiritual and cultural values of Turkish nation; they love their family, country and nation and try to exalt them every time; they know their duties and responsibilities against Republic of Turkey, which is a democratic, secular and social state that is based on the human rights and the basic principles at the beginning of the Constitution (Kurt, 2014:7).

Media literacy in Turkey is especially defined as “the ability, which must be gained by students, to comprehend and evaluate the messages that are potentially harmful”. It is clearly articulated that the perception of media literacy in Turkey is different than the rest of the world; it mainly focuses on readings of media texts, especially television programs. With an emphasis on the importance of

separating the “fictitious” from “reality”, the purpose of media literacy is identified as “to realize the power of media in manipulating, directing and imposing certain ideas”. In other words, media literacy in Turkey aims to teach individuals to be conscious of the negative influences of media so as to be able to avoid these influences; and media literacy courses are perceived as one way of realizing this purpose (Oguzhan & Haydari, 2011:5).

Research background of media literacy in Russia

The important event in the history of the media education movement in Russia is the registration (by the Educational Methodical Unification of the Ministry of Education of the Russia Federation) of a new university specialization “Media Education” (03.13.30) in June 2002. The initiative came from our research group, supported by the grant of Russian Humanities Scientific Fund (grant N 01-06- 00027a). In practice it means that for the first time in its history, media education in Russia gained an official status. Still, in Russia as well as in foreign countries we can witness sort of the confusion of the terms of “media education” and “media literacy”. There are quite a few differences in theoretical approaches to media education, to distinguishing of the most important aims, objectives, means of introduction into the teaching process, etc. These are the reasons why we addressed to the leading Russian and foreign media educators asking them to answer the special survey aimed at the clearing up of the following questions: which of the well-known definitions of media education and media literacy are supported the most among the experts; what media education aims and theories seem as the most important; how these theories and purposes correspond to the modern socio-cultural context of different countries; what way of the integration of the media education into schools and universities, supplementary educational and recreational institutions is seen as the most preferable; in what countries at the present time the level of the development of media education is the highest?

We are very grateful to all the Russian and foreign experts in the field of media education/literacy, who sent their answers. In the result we’ve collected data from 26 media educators from 10 countries:

Baranov, Oleg, Ph.D., assoc.professor, Tver State Pedagogical Institute, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Chelysheva, Irina. Ph.D., Taganrog State Pedagogical Institute, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Clarembeaux, Michel, Director of Liege Audiovisual Center (Belgium); Cornell, Richard, Ed.D., Professor and Coordinator, College of Education, University of Central Florida, former president of International Council for Educational Media (USA); Gomes, Jose Ignacio, Ph.D., professor, director of Grupo Comunicar, Universidad de Huelva (Spain); Goodman, Steven, Executive Director of Educational Video Center, New York City (USA); Gura, Valery. Ph.D., professor, Taganrog State Pedagogical, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Gutierrez Martin, Alfonso, Ph.D., University of Valladolid (Spain); Korochensky, Alexander, Ph.D., professor of Rostov State University, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Krucsay, Susanne, Head of department Media Pedagogy/Educational Media/Media Service in the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (Austria); Lemish, Dafna, Ph.D., professor, Chair, Department of Communication, Tel Aviv University (Israel); McMahon, Barrie, Curriculum Manager Post-compulsory Education, Department of Education and Training, Western Australia; Monastyrsky, Valery, Ph.D., professor, vice-director of Institute of Social Science, Tambov State Pedagogical University, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Novikova, Anastassia, Ph.D., member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Penzin, Stal, Ph.D., assoc.professor, Voronezh State University, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Pungente, John, president of CAMEO (Canadian Association of Media Education Organisations), director of Jesuit Communication Project, Toronto (Canada); Rother, Irving/Lee, Ph.D, president of Association for Media Education in Quebec (AMEQ); Board member Canadian Association for Media Education Organisations (Canada); Ryzich, Natalia, media educator, Taganrog State Pedagogical Institute, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Shak, Tatiana, Ph.D., assoc. professor, Krasnodar State University of Culture & Arts, Head of the Center of Musical & Information Technologies, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia); Suess, Daniel, Ph.D., professor, University of Zurich and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (Switzerland); Torres, Miguel Reyes, Ph.D., professor, director of CIME – Media Education Investigation Center, coordinator Master Degree in

media education, University Playa Ancha (Chile); Tyner, Kathleen, Lead Researcher, Hi-Beam Consulting (San Francisco), Program Director of the Youth Media Initiative of the National Alliance of Media Arts and Culture (USA); Usenko, Leonid, Ph.D, professor of Rostov State Pedagogical University, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia). Wei, Bu, Ph.D., professor of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (China); Worsnop, Christopher, one of the North American leaders in media education (Canada); Yakushina, Ekaterina, Ph.D., Russian Academy of Education, member of Russian Association for Film & Media Education (Russia).

The questionnaire combined the questions of the open and closed types. The results show that experts answered the open type questions less willingly than those that required choice among variants that just corresponds to the general tendency of sociological surveys. Respondents tend to economize their time and as a rule seldom give long answers (Federov, 2003: 2-5).

Media Education, Media Literacy, Media Studies

So, the first point of our questionnaire offered to the experts three variants of the definitions of media education (published during the past years by the authoritative editions), that they were supposed agree or disagree with. As a result it turned out that the majority of experts (96, 15%) supported the first definition (Chart 1). Evidently, this definition developed by the UNESCO conference seemed to the experts as the most convincing and complete.

For many decades Russian media education enthusiasts were isolated from the world process of media education. Positive change in this direction began just 10-15 years ago. That is why we would like to hope that the results of our small research to some extent will help Russian media education practitioners and researchers think about the problems of the comparative analysis of media educational approaches in different countries (Federov, 2003: 7).

Research Background in Iran

Educating free thinking among students is the characteristics which reveals in the critical thinking. Seyed Mohammad Mahmoudi Kukandeh (2012) in a research entitled “Reviewing the necessity of media literacy education among kids and young adults upon the scholars’ opinion in the ministry of education” finds that the only goal for media literacy education to children is to settle a rational relation between the media reading and the education of how to read them to all people in our country just to let them be active and free audiences not the passive ones and have the competency of selection and comprehension of media messages in the information era. The data he collected proves that the professional designers in the ministry of education are cognizant enough to extend the critical thinking in the curriculum while they cannot end it up in action. One of the main reasons which does not let it achieve the target is that there is no media education model in the minister of education system. The research takes the ministry of education authorities’ mind to programming an effective curriculum in media literacy to students (Kukandeh, 2012:56-60).

Hamid Saveh is another researcher whose dissertation entitled “Recognizing and reviewing the most important and effective components on enhancing the audiences’ concept and their cognizance in receiving media messages” proves that the amount of media usage affects the audience’s media literacy and improves their knowledge. The independent variables such as the education level, economics and the amount of the students’ usages from media improve the variable of media literacy enhancement but he doesn’t represent any clear program how to use media and how to know the media audiences. He concludes in his research that the education, social and economic bases, daily media usage, media education, political inclination may upgrade the audience’s media literacy (Saveh, 2012:69-72). Amir Yazdian, another media literacy researcher (2012), in his M.S dissertation entitled “critical media literacy, a case study of assessing the M.S university students’ media literacy in I.R.I.B faculty” studies the media literacy among university students and reviews critical literacy and media literacy altogether. He gets that the interviewees do not consider the economic and power resources in media producers then, finally he concludes there are no balanced critical competencies and lack of unique education in media literacy in students to cause them getting improved in critical thinking (Yazdian, 2012:58-62). Mahdieh Mousavi (2013) researched the effect of teachers’ media literacy on development of students’ reflexive model of thinking which influences their way of dealing with the media messages.

As a conclusion of all researches done in the field of media literacy, it shows that there is a close relation between the media literacy and critical thinking which is internationally called the Critical Media Literacy (CML) and on the other side, we expose with some factors as power, politics, economy and culture which are the main components of media contents produced in diverse formats and embraces so many targets. In all studies done the role of families have been neglected and the influence of educational system at school as well. As we observe the media literacy education is getting extended in countries like the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Britain, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland and some Asian and African countries. (Procedia, 2014:2).

Research Method

I have used two methods as field and documentary research in my study where in the last one (Library or documentary) I have been using and compiling the data related to my research while in the field method, I used the survey technique to collect the data via scholar-made questionnaire. The analysis unit was micro and the observation unit was individual student as the statistic society selected among the students in 10 and 11 grades located in 2nd region of the ministry of education in Tehran. I preferred the random cluster sampling in which I selected 384 students on the basis of Cochran formula, later I collected all the data out of the samples and analyzed them in the inference and descriptive levels of SPSS level. To analyze the relation between the dependent and independent variables by Pearson's coefficient of correlation and finally the path analysis was used to represent the direct and indirect effects of independent variables on media literacy level.

Reliability

There are some variables in this research in which one can find diverse items. We accomplished our pre-test exam by representing 30 questionnaire and got them assessed upon reliability analysis just in case to evaluate its reliability. The results out of the Cronbach's alpha proved that the reliability is acceptable in all research variables.

Table (1): The results of reliability test of variables (Cronbach's alpha)

Variables	Reliability Level	Number of Items	Frequency	Result
Knowledge and cognizance of media	71%	22	30	Acceptable
The ways of message productions	27%	4	30	Not-acceptable
Critical thoughts	66%	30	30	Acceptable
Media literacy level	75%	30	30	Acceptable

Research Findings

There have been some variables as a dependent one (media literacy level) and three more independent ones as (media knowledge and cognizance, ways of message productions and critical thinking) that is case of the media knowledge and cognizance we considered three sub-divisions as economics, politics and culture. The items in questionnaire were encoded from 1 to 4 for which number 1 got the lowest and number 4 was reminded as the highest value. As it is visible in Table (2) that the highest mean pertains to the variable of media literacy level as 3.28 and the lowest mean goes to the variable of the ways of message production by 2.70 score. So, it is concluded that the students' media literacy level is at the high stratum but their knowledge of media is in the middle and this the same case of other variables as in the critical thinking and ways of message production. On the other hand, we can conclude that the students in the study have a good and reasonable media literacy meanwhile; they show their competency and accessibility to media and media content analysis. They are able to decode complex radio, T.V, magazines, newspapers, books, internet and advertisement billboards and other individual media and they not only consume the media messages but they utilize them wisely. It is worthy to mention that they represent an intermediate knowledge of other aspects of media as in economic and political fields and critical thinking as well. When we discuss their attitude of media knowledge and cognizance, they reflect their economic concepts more remarkable than the culture and politics arena. It shows us that they perceive economics better than what goes in the political and cultural values in our country.

Table (2): Distribution of statistics Variable index

Variables		Mean of Averages	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Dependent	Media Literacy Level	3.28	0.49	1	4
Independent	Ways of message production	2.92	0.47	1	4
	Critical thinking	2.74	0.31	1	4
	Media knowledge & cognizance	2.70	0.32	1	4
Aspects of media knowledge & Cognizance	Knowledge of Economy	3.01	0.53	1	4
	Knowledge of Politics	2.59	0.38	1	4
	Knowledge of Culture	2.61	0.55	1	4

Review of effects of independent variables on dependent variables

Hypothesis 1: “The ways of message production affects the media literacy”

As we observe in Table (2), the amount of R is about 0.31 which shows the correlation of variables and a weak correlation between the dependent and independent variables. The amount of balanced coefficient determination (R^2 adj) is 0.098 which proves 9.8 percent of whole media literacy changes is related to the variable of message production methods. On the other hand, the ways of message production encompasses 10 percent of predicted media literacy variance. The standard regression coefficient for the variable of message production ways is as (Beta=0.31) and absolute value of T equals 6.49 that is higher than 2.33 that is the independent variable defines completely the dependent variable with a fault/error level less than 0.05 which shows meaningfully. It can be interpreted that increasing the standard deviation in critical thinking variable, we can get students’ media literacy level increased by 0.24 of the standard deviation, so the research hypothesis could be acceptable.

Table (3): Regression coefficient for effectively critical thinking on media literacy level

Model	Non-standard coefficient		Standard coefficient	T score	Significance level (Sig)	R	Balanced determination coefficient
	B	Standard error	Beta				
Fixed	2.21	0.22	-	9.97	R	0.24	0.057
Critical thinking	0.39	0.08	0.24	4.88	0.000		

Third Hypothesis: “Having knowledge and cognizance of media affects the media literacy level”.

Table (4) shows the coefficient of correlation as (R=0.10) that is a weak correlation between the knowledge and cognizance of media variable and the media literacy. The amount of balanced determination coefficient (R^2 adj) is 0/008 that shows only 0/8 percent of the entire media literacy changes connects to the amount of media knowledge and cognizance. The standard regression coefficient for media knowledge and cognizance is (Beta=0.10) and the absolute value t is (1.99) which is less than 2.33. On other side we find out the error level amount as 0/04 which is smaller than 0.05, so it has a meaningful effect on the media literacy variable which consequently leads us to accept the research hypothesis.

Table (4): Regression coefficient for effective media knowledge and cognizance on media literacy level

Model	Non-standard coefficient		Standard coefficient	T score	Significance level (Sig)	R	Balanced determination coefficient
	B	Standard error	Beta				
Fixed	2.86	0.21	-	13.57	0.000	0.10	0.008
Critical thinking	0.15	0.07	0.10	1.99	0.04		

Forth hypothesis: Having economic, political and cultural Knowledge and Cognizance affects media literacy level

Table (5) shows the coefficient of correlation as ($R=0.29$) that is a weak correlation between triple index (economics, politics and culture) of the media knowledge and cognizance and the media literacy level. The amount of balanced determination coefficient ($R^2 \text{ adj}= 0.008$) shows only 0.7 percent of the entire media literacy changes are determined by the aforesaid triple index. Upon the data in this table of the mentioned triple index, we shall say that it is only the economics which has a meaningful effect on the dependent variable of media literacy level since the fault level of knowledge in politics and culture is more than 5 percent, the amount of t is less than 2.33 while economic knowledge index for which **t absolute value** is more than 2.33 and its error is zero, it is concluded that the economic knowledge and cognizance could affect the media literacy significantly. We can exactly conclude that if there is an increase in the economic knowledge standard deviation, the media literacy level will exceed to 30 percent.

Table (5): Regression coefficient of the triple index of media knowledge and cognizance effective on the media literacy level

Model	Non-standard coefficient		Standard coefficient	T score	Significance level (Sig)	R	Balanced determination coefficient
	B	Standard error	Beta				
Fixed	2.84	0.21	-	13.51	0.000	0.29	0.077
Economic knowledge	0.28	0.04	0.30	5.86	0.000		
Political knowledge	-0.12	0.06	-0.09	-1.8	0.07		
Cultural knowledge	0.39	-0.85	-0.04	0.04	-0.04		

Conclusion

What we grasp out of table (1) and reliability of the variables shows that the students do not the savvy of media content production while they were aware enough about other variables. That's a remarkable point since media productions need the audiences' deep concern how media reflect their content and messages via music, movies, photos, etc. Luke and Free body (1997) when presenting their media literacy model in Australia insisted on students' participation in producing written media content and their critical reading of media messages. They also asserted that the students should be educated in field of analyzing diverse media messages to establish a transformative pedagogy. The data collected from the research and students' responses do not approve their scientific approach and probably we can say that children and young adults have not shown their interest to produce media messages or they don't have any intention to do so; therefore, there is a good occasion to provide the next studies in these aspects.

As mohammad Kukandeh refers to the children and young adults pedagogy, on the basis of the Ministry of Education experts' view, while there is not actually a suitable knowledge to students how media produce messages, so it looks difficult to raise active and critical students. His study conclusions ascertain that there is no media education model for students. Hamid Saveh pointed out in his study that the reason for not getting improved in audiences' media literacy is lack of planning in dealing with the media content. The author in his third hypothesis expressed that the students' media knowledge which contains three more sub-components as politics, economics and culture would affect the students' media literacy and as media literacy education embeds in economic, political, cultural and social constructions in that community, we can assess that the students' knowledge of politics, culture and economics can improve their media literacy level.

When we compare the students' media literacy with their average knowledge of media production ways, it seems an imbalanced condition in their media literacy. Media Literacy is a 21st century approach to education. It provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate with messages in

a variety of forms. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens which lags abnormally among youths and young adults. It promises the lack of a comprehensive media literacy education in Iran for which the ministry of education is in charge and it should necessarily program a prepared unique and media literacy education. Generally, to educate the students with the media literacy necessitates a comprehensive plan design including the aforesaid variables in this research. There should a program which accelerates the concept of critical thinking and the education of media productions ways that mostly relies either on the political or economic powers or both altogether among students, so the ministry of education should provide students with an appropriate curriculum to teach these variables to them. If we don't get our students acquainted with critical attitude or in exposure with the media content, there won't be any transformative movement in the education system. It becomes so serious when we understand that the ministry of education has no intention to achieve these aims nor do it plan to train newly edited books and media educators, too.

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