THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL THINKING AND MEDIA LITERACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract: *Explores the importance of critical thinking and media literacy in the digital age. With the development of digital technologies, the flow of information increases, and the ability of people to evaluate and analyze data remains essential. With the help of critical thinking, individuals are able to analyze information sources and determine their reliability. Media literacy teaches users to correctly understand and evaluate information coming from various media sources. These skills contribute to a deeper understanding of social issues, ensuring personal safety and active participation in democratic processes. The article also highlights the personal and societal need to develop critical thinking and media literacy.*

Key words: *critical thinking, information analysis, reliability, logical conclusion, information flow, evaluation of opinions, information security, social responsibility, manipulation, democratic processes.*

In the process of educational reforms in which digital didactics is developing, the use of digital educational tools is gaining importance, along with introducing students to the activities of national heroes through various narratives, wisdom, historical information, and innovative methods. Today, digital technologies are widely used in all fields. In addition, digital technologies are widely used in educational processes, and the impact on the effectiveness of learning is felt. The development of digital didactics has further developed as a result of the establishment of Wi-Fi internet networks and IT parks. It is emphasized that the use of digital technologies is effective in improving the quality of education and forming the outlook, position, and critical thinking of socially active young people. Implementation of education with the help of digital technologies ensures the quality and speed of education, as well as a high level of acceptance and assimilation of the provided information. Digital didactics makes educational processes somewhat easier. Digital technologies that are widely used in education include multimedia tools, laptops, smart TVs connected to the Internet, smart boards, projectors, educational resources made in 3D technology, and cloud technologies. It is considered convenient for teaching pedagogues and learners to organize the educational process through such digital didactic tools. The concept of critical thinking helps a person to form and express his opinion about certain events and events, to find the necessary conclusions and solutions, to express and evaluate his attitude. Carrying out the above thought processes is the most common form of critical thinking. Critical thinking is, in a word, "the ability to communicate". In order for a person to react correctly to a certain process, it is important that he has knowledge first. He can formulate questions, attitudes, and comments about the current situation on the basis of his

knowledge and understanding. Therefore, critical thinking determines the level of knowledge and experience of a person. Critical thinking is characterized not only by a person's knowledge and experience, but also by his beliefs and level of self-awareness. Critical thinking is a type of thinking aimed at expressing one's own point of view, based on a deep analysis of the issue or event under consideration, gathering more information, and reacting based on accurate knowledge. If the word criticism means to analyze something or a situation in order to evaluate it, mainly expressing a negative opinion, pointing out its shortcomings, critical thinking is broader, such as a deeper analysis, conclusion, evaluation, reaction, coming to a solution, an example or example. covers the content. In some cases, the concepts of critical thinking and criticism are interpreted in the same sense. Actually, these two concepts represent different content. Criticism is recognized as exaggerating even small flaws, using the opportunity to think independently, creating tension, expressing one's opinion mainly from a negative point of view. Criticism shows a negative attitude towards the activity of a person, group, team, a specific event and the nature of the event. "Reporting" under the concept of critical thinking, as above, is the analysis of the activity of a person, group, team, the nature of a specific event or event, deeper study, gathering more information and information, and based on one's own knowledge and experience. It is distinguished by the presence of reliance, a positive approach, that is, a desire for correct interpretation and evaluation.

Media literacy is a set of skills that enable people to analyze, evaluate, and create different media forms and messages. Media literacy allows consumers to analyze what forces media to engage in propaganda, censorship, or bias in information and public programs, as well as to understand structural elements such as media owners and their funding model. In other words, media literacy is the ability to apply critical thinking skills to the messages and symbols transmitted through the media. The media is a powerful force in the lives of young people. Music, television, video games, magazines, and other media have a powerful influence on how we see the world, often beginning in childhood. In order for consumers to be able to critically analyze media, media literacy skills and habits need to be developed from childhood. These skills include accessing media at a basic level, analyzing it critically based on specific concepts, evaluating it based on that analysis, and finally producing the media itself. This process of learning media literacy skills is called media education. The promotion of media education in the 21st century was recognized by UNESCO as a priority direction of cultural and educational development, and it was emphasized that media literacy can be increased in this way. UNESCO supports media and media literacy to improve people's critical thinking and decision-making. In Asian countries, which have their own values and traditions, the process of media literacy and its introduction into education is slightly different from that of Western countries. Since the 90s of the last century, there has been a shift towards media literacy in East Asia. Media literacy has been on the rise in Asia in recent years, and several media literacy programs are being implemented in the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, starting from the 2021-2022 school year in Uzbekistan, the "Media literacy" section was included in the

"Education" textbook of 10-11th graders. Media literacy classes have been held in journalism faculties and departments of universities of the republic, such as UzJOKU, TDShU, UzMU, UzDJTU, QSU, SamDChTI.

Media literacy is important in understanding today's news environment. So, why is media literacy necessary? First of all:

- To understand the essence of the reforms implemented as a full-fledged, active citizen of our legal democratic society;
- To form the skills of sorting the daily information transmitted and received through the mass media;
- Avoid controlling the human mind through information and any
- making the right decision in the situation;
- To be able to analyze positive or negative changes of a person under the influence of visual images and to be able to "read" invisible information given under visual messages;
- Analyzing the nature of textual communications given through mass media;
- It is necessary to find answers to the questions of where, by whom and for what purposes the information is being transmitted, whose interests it reflects.

In our opinion, media literacy, along with the above, is a critical view of all information transmitted through the media, an unbiased approach to them, and a conscious approach to sorting each transmitted information. The goal of media literacy is to understand the priorities and shortcomings of each media, to be able to sort out the information distributed by them and to form the skills to accept what is necessary. It is also to help people understand the role of media and citizen journalism.Media literacy (media literacy) is the study of media, based on the following results of media education and includes:

– understanding the impact of media on individuals and society;
– understanding of mass communication process;
– ability to understand and analyze media texts;
– understanding the media context;
– creation of media texts and their analysis; – sets the tasks of evaluating media texts and sorting them.

In the digital age, critical thinking and media literacy are important not only for personal development, but also for the stability and development of society. They allow people to correctly evaluate information, express their opinions and actively react to social issues. Thus, the development of critical thinking and media literacy should become a necessity for everyone, as these skills are important for successful living in the digital age.

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