Mil as a Main Component of Lifelong Learning in Mediatized Society (A Model for Uzbekistan)

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the development of MIL and MIL education in Uzbekistan, one of the developing countries in Central Asia. As a practical study, observations were made on the results of MIL training conducted with schoolchildren based on foreign aid projects. On this basis, proposals and recommendations on the current situation and ways to develop MIL, reflecting the level of MIL of the population at different ages, will be put forward. The sphere of MIL began to gain popularity Uzbekistan with projects of foreign organizations. So far, trainings for journalists, school and higher education teachers, and journalists have been organized, and the necessary textbooks, manuals have been published. In general, the country has the necessary conditions for the organization of education in the field of MIL. Now, their implementation and implementation of MIL education at all levels of the education system will help the population to increase the level of MIL and find their place in the current mediated world, in the modern labour market, and in social life. On this basis, the article MIL was shown as a main component of lifelong learning.

Introduction

Recently, a number of projects in the field of MIL are being implemented in Uzbekistan in cooperation with a number of foreign organizations and local organizations, experts. In writing this article, we present one of such projects - the analysis of survey results obtained during the first trainings on MIL with secondary school students and, on this basis, we planned to discuss about the need for and importance of MIL development in the secondary education system in Uzbekistan. we planned to think about. However, in essence, we have expanded the scope of the article and the scope of the analysis, with a deep sense that MIL is important for people of all ages in today's media world, and that the development of MIL should be considered equally in all education system stages in Uzbekistan.

As the field of MIL contains the skills necessary for the personal, professional, and social life of people of all ages, in this study we try to answer the following questions, which promotes the basic idea that it is necessary at all stages of the education system and throughout life after education we did.

What is the level of knowledge and practical skills of today's youth in the field of MIL?

What methods and tools can be used to introduce educational processes at different stages of MIL education?

What is the foreign experience in introducing MIL into the educational process? What methods and tools are used to teach MIL and to increase the level of MIL in learners in different countries? What can be applied to the MIL education in Uzbekistan?

How much attention is paid to the field of MIL in Uzbekistan at different stages of education? What recommendations can be made to increase the MIL level of learners and individuals?

The conceptualizing media literacy would show the importance of MIL for young people. If critical thinking skills in MIL are learned at an early age, it will be very helpful for children in their future life. For reaching this goal we need some research on developing schools' MIL curriculum projects which " ... develop children's ability to protect themselves from – or, more positively, to understand and to deal effectively with –the broader media environment" (Buckingham, 2000, p. 205).

Literature review

MIL education has been studied by various researchers in the United States and several European countries. To date, many scientific literatures, manuals, and articles have been published on the introduction of MIL education in school education and higher education.

Sonja Gust von Loh, M. Henkel described a methodological approach towards studying information literacy of kindergarten children (age three - six years). As information literacy gains more and more importance, its representation in young children becomes a particularly interesting aspect. Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is a subject in the educational context in early childhood. To find out what children aged from three to six years are able to do with new media and information, this paper shows a method to perform an analysis with children, their parents and their nursery nurses. This analysis is to take place across different nurseries in Dusseldorf and later in Hong Kong (Loh and Henkel, 2014).

The Australian researchers Spink, Danby, Mallan and Butler examined the way five- and six-year-old preschool children search using Google. (Spink et al, 2010, P.3)

There are many resources in secondary and higher education systems to teach MIL as a separate subject or within a specific subject area, and to increase the MIL level of young people using a variety of teaching methods.

(Nitsche, L. (2020); Prensky, M. (2011); Rogow, F. (2022) and etc.)

In Central Asian countries, particularly in Uzbekistan, MIL education projects began to be developed after 2015, mainly with foreign assistance. To date, a number of manuals and scientific articles have been published to raise the level of MIL in the population, highlighting the importance of MIL in society.

The problems of media literacy education development in Uzbekistan are being studied by many researchers. In recent decades, with UNESCO's support, several major media literacy education projects have been implemented in Central Asian countries. Their results are reflected in textbooks, dissertations, and scientific articles. For example, if we talk about media literacy education in Uzbekistan, one of the key ones is the textbook "Uzbekistan on the Way of Media Education Development" (Mamatova, Sulaimanova, 2015), where media and information literacy is viewed as a tool of democracy, including all media resources (media, libraries, archives, etc.).

The works of these researchers consider the process of development of an integrated media education approach in the study of several academic disciplines that were born in the wake of the creation of educational films and have been further developed at the present stage, proving the effectiveness of integration of media literacy education not only in achieving the learning objectives of the material, but also in the development of information and communication competence.

S.S.Beknazarova wrote about the introduction of media education elements into the educational process (Beknazarova, 2011).

Among the main challenges facing media literacy education Central Asian countries, E.E. Ablazov singles out the problems associated with the expansion of the media field of modern society, increasing the level of media security of the younger generation (Ablazov, 2013).

Researcher Irina Chelysheva analyses the development and current state of media literacy education in three Central Asian countries (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan). The author analysed the goals

and objectives, key concepts, structure, content, main stages of development, models of mass media education in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan, scientific works, and practical experience in the field of media literacy education in the countries of Central Asia in the post-soviet period. According to the researcher, it is no coincidence that one of the trends in the development of media education in the CIS countries is the actualization of the development of mass forms and methods of media education activities of the population of different age and social groups (Chelysheva, 2018).

The MIL manuals created in Uzbekistan have focused on the importance of MIL and the need to teach it in schools and higher education. But in practice, they are still on their organizational level. In this study, we use the views and opinions of the above scientific and practical resources to consider the practical importance of formal or informal MIL education at all levels of education in Uzbekistan.

Materials and methods

This research includes the study of scientific resources in English, Russian and Uzbek, monitoring the activities of organizations engaged in teaching and promoting media literacy in Central Asia, the analysis of relevant news on their websites. increased. The monitoring identified and analysed several projects designed for schoolchildren and organized with the help of foreign donors.

To study the problem from a practical point of view, media literacy trainings were held in schools of Uzbekistan. Questionnaires were collected and analysed. Offline trainings were held with schoolchildren in grades 9-10, and each of them lasted for 3 hours. The coverage of the project was six secondary schools. The number of participants is 120 (20 participants from each school).

The questions in the questionnaire were structured according to the age of the students and were used to check the media literacy of the students. For example: *Do you have a cell phone? How do you use the Internet? In which social media do you have any accounts? How many hours per day do you think you spend on social media and the web? Through which media do you get the most out of the daily news? What are the rules in your house for technology?* etc.

During this research the results of the questionnaire were summarized, and on this basis an attempt has been made to determine the media use skills of today's school-age children.

Based on the results of the survey, it can be concluded that the development of the MIL sector in Uzbekistan is at an early stage. MIL students 'knowledge skills in MIL are built on the knowledge they have acquired in kindergarten and primary education. Therefore, we have continued our "model" of developing MIL training at all ages with the aim of systematically increasing the MIL level of the population.

Separate research and practical work has been done in different countries around the world to develop MIL education for different age groups. We reviewed such research, studied Internet resources, and tried to reflect on the methods and practices we considered best.

Scientific articles and books written so far have been studied, Proposals for the development of media literacy in Uzbekistan have been developed.

The classification of MIL education is based on the stages of the education system in Uzbekistan and the period of postgraduate work and retirement. The current situation at each stage of education was analysed, and recommendations were developed to increase the level of MIL in each age group.

However, we believe that with the development of the industry in the country, in the future will be created significant research in the development of each age group and stage of education. We hope that this study will be a small impetus for their initiation.

Case study

For identifying the real situation about MIL level of school children, we made an analysis of the experience of conducting media literacy trainings for schoolchildren in Uzbekistan as a case study.

It should be noted that, this EU-funded MIL projects was one of the first trainings for school

children in the country. The authors of the project, Muhayyo Saidova, a media trainer, and Sharifa Madrahimova, a journalist from Fergana, the participant of the Eduton-2021 contest, organized the training for schoolchildren at Secondary Schools No. 314, 276, 262 in the Shaykhantakhur district of Tashkent and Uchkuprik and Buvaida districts of Fergana region.

The project was called "Lessons in media literacy for teenage schoolchildren".

Format: offline trainings, for schoolchildren in grades 9-10, 3 hours.

Coverage: 6 secondary schools (3 + 3 - Tashkent, Fergana).

The number of participants: 120 (20 participants from each school).

This project is experimental, since there are no media literacy subjects for students at the school level in Uzbekistan. After the period of the pandemic, the rational use of the Internet has become an urgent problem for the entire population of the country.

Activities and events

In May 2021, training on media literacy was held at schools No. 314, 276, 262 in Tashkent city and at schools No. 56, 29 in Uchkuprik district and in school No. 13 in Buvaida district of Fergana region. There were a lot of people willing to participate in the training, so the school administration boards selected 20 listeners according to the criteria of academic performance.

Training program:

The purpose of this training is to increase the media literacy of schoolchildren, the effective and efficient use of modern techniques and technologies of the information age, the types of information platforms, and the skills to protect themselves from the negative effects of Information and mass media. During the three-hour sessions, students were taught very interested topics connected MIL, such as "What is Media?", "SPAM and Its Risks" "Methods of taking quality photos on a mobile device" "Communication skills in social networks". They did some practical interactive exercise called "Who Am I in this "Tree?".

Findings
1. Impact
Analysing pre-post-tests cleared that schoolchildren do not know have enough knowledge about media education sphere or MIL. The access to media and mobile technologies, access to the Internet and Social networks of the youth are not in a satisfactory level:

✓   10% of the total number of trainees of the trainings held do not have access to the Internet.

✓   Only 20% of the total number of listeners in the city of Tashkent and 30% from Fergana have "Android" version mobile phones.

✓   50% have push-button mobile phones.

✓   70% of the total number of trainees from Tashkent do not have the opportunity to work on a PC.

✓   The main information resource for children is Television. All the participants (100%) learn daily news and information from TV channels. Only 15% of children listens to the radio (no home radio, they listen to the radio in a car or by phone). 5% of the trainees read information from print media (in this case, mostly private editions).

✓   90% of the trainees from the total (Tashkent) couldn't define the term of "mass media" properly. 10% know partially and perceive mass media as only the Internet.

✓   10% of the total number of students (Tashkent) are keen on reading books.

✓   60% of schoolchildren (boys) are fond of cyber games, and only 25% go in for sports (mainly football, chess).

2. Challenges / Lessons Learned
Trainees do not have developed enough oral speech literacy or conversational skills. In most cases 2 or 3 participants took part in the discussions actively. After the end of each session, it was difficult to work with the audience during "Question - answer" part, since the trainees did not ask questions at all (or in most cases they hesitated whether their questions will be "wrong"). The trainees had to ask questions to each participant in order to achieve full comprehension results. Only by the

end of the class did the children realize that it was not a big problem and the was not any barriers to ask questions and learn not fully understood topics, but only useful. In one of the trainings, the school director suddenly entered the class and sat down at the table to listen. From that moment on, the students stopped participating in the discussion. This suggests that in some schools, teaching methods and conduct with pupils must be improved by school administration.

Before organizing the trainings, schoolteachers were really worried about "a 3-hour training would be hard to schoolchildren, especially keeping the boys at their desks". But at each training session, the students sat to the end, listened attentively and even at the end they did not want to leave the class. Discussions lasted for a long time, students asked questions according to the topic and sometimes not related to the topic (on personal questions). Teenagers do not have enough parental attention; it became known during the survey "whose family likes to watch TV at dinner and who has TV in the kitchen at home".

Discussion

Based on experience and analysis, it can be said that MIL in Uzbekistan is gradually developing in theory and practice. It should be noted that the MIL education has entered Uzbekistan mainly through foreign aid projects and grants. Trainings of organizations such as Internews, DW-Academie, various projects of UNESCO, UNICEF and other international organizations have shown a desire to develop various aspects of the MIL sphere. The first trainings of international funds in the field of MIL led to the organization of international, national and university scientific and practical conferences on media education, media literacy in a number of higher education institutions of Uzbekistan. The collections reflecting the results and achievements of the conference, the manuals published within the framework of international trainings and projects on MIL served to create a theoretical and conceptual basis of the MIL in the country. But there is still much to do in practice.

The skills that a person can acquire in the field of MIL have been studied by scientists around the world for many years. MIL develops a lot of knowledge and skills for a person of any age to find their place in today's mediated world, to find the information they need in an endless information flow, the abilities of filtering, critical approach, and not to be victim of misinform, disinformation and screen violence. Such skills are very important in all aspects of daily family, educational, professional and social life.

On this basis, by this survey we promote the idea of "MIL should be taught in Uzbekistan on the basis of lifelong learning program".

A system of lifelong education is becoming popular in a rapidly changing world. The concept of "lifelong learning" in a pedagogical literature is interpreted in different ways of expression: education throughout life, adult education, continuing education, continuing professional education (Gudilina, 2016).

Lifelong learning activities and programs are widespread and varied. One only must read the newspapers or conduct an internet search to become inundated with information. Lifelong learning activities take place at diverse sites including public and private universities, educational institutions including elementary and secondary schools, hospitals, community centres and agencies, libraries, museums, cultural, sports facilities, private facilities, companies, and offices. Some higher education institutions have separate divisions for lifelong learning activities while others have it integrated into the general educational program. And, in recent years, there has been a tremendous growth of offerings online (Weinstein, Lenore, 2004).

Many scholars and experts have put forward their views on the MIL field as an important component of the lifelong learning system. 2014 Year 20-23 On October 20-23 in Dubrovnik, Croatia, the Second European Conference, ECIL (European Conference on Information Literacy) - published the results of 2014 "Information Literacy. Lifelong Learning and Digital Citizenship in the 21st Century" also highlights the role of information literacy in life

based on the experiences of the United States and Europe.

Therefore, using the achievements and experience of foreign countries in the development of the MIL sector, its implementation at all stages of the state education system gives good results.

1. At the preschool level

Current situation. In recent years, Uzbekistan has begun to pay special attention to the pre-school education system as an issue of national importance. On September 30, 2017, the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed a decree on improvement of the management of the preschool education system. According to this document, Ministry of Preschool Education were established (Decree of the President…). Besides, the number of public kindergartens has increased, private kindergartens were established in recent years. There were some innovations and reforms at kindergartens as well. English language classes were implemented in addition to literacy classes. Pictorial exhibitions, music (audio), video, and animation technologies have been introduced in foreign language classes. Although they are mainly used by educators, they can be considered as the first elements of media and information education. But today there is a serious need to introduce MIL in preschool education as a separate subject.

Recommendations for improving the situation. Matthew Johnson, Director of Education for MediaSmarts, Canada's center for digital and media literacy, considers "*Media Literacy Should Start Early – And Last a Lifetime*" and "As for digital literacy, kids take to devices like the proverbial ducks to water, quickly becoming expert at finding the videos and games they want" (Johnson, 2020).

Media literacy isn't just for "big kids". The world is our classroom and by starting at a young age to wonder, question, discuss and understand all the media texts we are continually exposed to, this will help our littlest learners to become critical thinkers as well as literate media consumers and producers. Plus, it's in the kindergarten curriculum! (Attwell et al, www.aml.ca)

At first glance, shaping the knowledge and outlook of young children in the field of MIL in Kindergarten curricula may seem a bit complicated and impossible. However, if we study Internet resources in this area and the experience of different countries around the world, we can see that significant progress has been made.

The Australian study by Spink, Danby, Mallan and Butler examined the way five- and six-year-old preschool children search using Google. The difficulty for these children is that some of them do not have any writing and reading skills yet (Spink et al, 2010, P.3). But today, many parents in Uzbekistan say that kindergarten-aged children can easily access the Internet by phone and find games, cartoons and/or other videos they need on U-Tube channel.

Reading Chelsea Attwell and Diana Maliszewski's "40 Ideas for Media Literacy in Kindergarten" in Canada to The Association for Media Literacy's 40th anniversary, we realize that MIL can be a great support in preparing children for life even in early childhood. "Media is made by people, for people. You can see it. You can hear it. You can feel it. You can wear it. You can experience it. All media has a message" or "Does your class have a Canadian flag in it? That's a concrete example of media. Talk about the colours and shapes that are on the flag. Can you notice other items that try to link to Canada by using the same colours and shapes?" (Attwell et al, www.aml.ca)
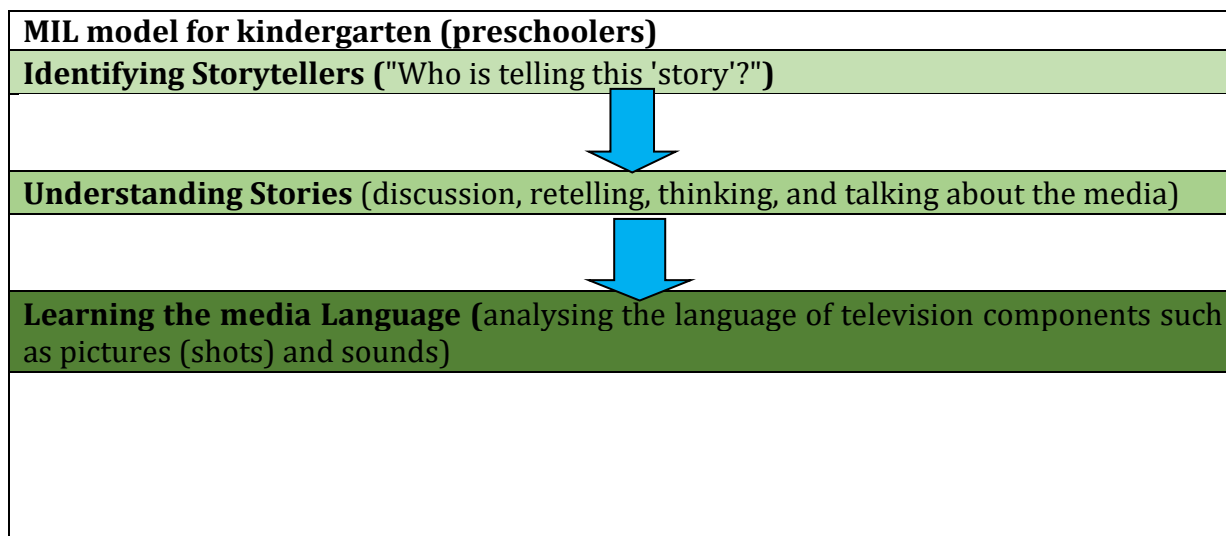
Such methods help children understand what media and information are.

 If you are cooking with your students, why not create a cooking show ?!" or "Take a walk around a few different classrooms in the school and examine how the environment is constructed. What do students notice about a kindergarten classroom vs a grade five classroom? How is the hallway different from the office? "Methods teach children creativity, observation, comparison of events, understanding the cause of everything, logical thinking, what is happening around them and what is available. (Ibid.)

Faith Rogow, Ph.D., founding national president of the Alliance for a Media Literate America,

advocated the formation of MIL through direct media products in kindergarten children, such as watching TV movies or cartoons applying

the concept in practice will be effective (Rogow, 2022). We decided to present this concept in the form of the following scheme:

MIL model for kindergarten (preschoolers)
Identifying Storytellers ("Who is telling this 'story'?"**)**
Understanding Stories (discussion, retelling, thinking, and talking about the media)
Learning the media Language (analysing the language of television components such as pictures (shots) and sounds)

Scheme 1. MIL model for preschoolers *(created by the author according to the concept of F.Rogow)*

According to Faith Rogow, one of the most traditional ways to analyze or reflect on stories is simply to talk about them. Re-telling stories also places children in the role of storyteller, giving them a taste of making, not just consuming, media. By asking children questions about what they see and genuinely listening to their answers we encourage the habit of thinking and talking about media (Rogow, 2022).

The most important aspect of this model is,
▢ It corresponds to the age and mental level of pre-schoolers.
▢ Enhances children's ability to think logically and observe.
▢ Increases children's vocabulary and develops speech.
▢ Most importantly, it develops their initial MIL skills.

In conclusion, it is mutually beneficial to establish media and information education, depending on the age of the children:
1. Kindergarten enriches the content of education.
2. Children's daily activities become more interesting due to new types of activities
3. Children's developing skills in the use of emerging media and media are properly developed;

4. It will be more effective to prepare children for the future requirements of information society.

2. In primary education

Current situation. Primary education is an important stage in a person's life that shapes all types of literacy and creates a solid foundation for children's knowledge and worldview. According to scientists, basic skills are developed at an early age.

Preschool education in Uzbekistan has recently been enriched by the subjects of English Language and "Tarbiya" ("education"). Each English lesson is planned to teach with videos, animations and songs. Special rooms are decorated with modern media technologies and visual aids. These are, of course, the basis for the use of media in the classroom and for children who are just starting to learn to observe the possibilities of the media. But it does not systematically develop their existing media skills. Therefore, it is advisable to teach a separate subject on MIL.

In fact, the use of media in the educational process in Uzbekistan was actively used during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to some extent the situation has become clearer. Online education has been introduced and experience in learning through the media has been gained

on some level. All subjects were taught on different TV channels for schoolchildren of all ages. The tasks and assignments given to them were done by the pupils at home and sent to school teachers through various social networks and messengers for checking and marking.

During this period Lack of cell phones, computers, poor internet speed or high prices were main obstacles in the country. But most importantly, there was no serious problem with the use of technology and using media for education among schoolchildren. School children quickly adapted to learning through media technology.

Recommendations for improving the situation. The main difference between primary education and kindergarten education is that by this time the child has become more self-aware. Begins to form their first social relationships by interacting with other children in the community. Experts describe the Cognitive Development of children of primary school age as follows:

> Needs clear, concrete and specific directions (there are still limitations in their thinking and parents need keep that in mind).

> Uses visual cues and objects to help them solve problems.

> Uses reason in logical steps in order to solve problems.

> Has improved memory.

> Understands cause and effect.

> Understands what is real and what is not real (https://www.ounce.org/pdfs/child_developm ent/school_child.pdf).

Apparently, it is very important to teach MIL lessons for children from this age. Because in today's media society, we are building the skills of the generation, which Prensky calls "digital natives" (Prensky, 2011), to prepare for the "big life", to use information and communication technologies correctly, appropriately and in moderation.

Research is under way to investigate the learning potential of existing and emerging communicative technologies for children aged 0-8 years old. For example, the DigiLitEY project specifically rests on the premise that "the early years provide crucial foundations for

lifelong literacy learning; therefore, it is important to ensure early education policy and practice across (all) countries are developed in order to equip our youngest citizens with the skills and knowledge needed in a digitally-mediated era". Initiatives such as DigiLitEY and the Joint Research Commission project on 0-8-year-old children and digital technology should provide interesting conclusions and guidelines on media and information literacy in the near future (https://www.coe.int/en/web/digital-citizenship-education/media-and-information-literacy).

While everybody is exposed to the speed of technological advances, children of our society are more involved in these changes because they develop uncontrolled skills to manage information and use new devices in their daily lives (Escoda A., 2013, P. 46).

It is obvious that the time has come to establish MIL in primary education in Uzbekistan. Students of all ages and grades use technology and Internet resources in daily life, in education, and while doing homework. Their activities in this area will be further coordinated through the establishment of education in the field of MIL. From an early age, students learn to use media technologies and information resources wisely and appropriately, are less prone to screen violence, misinformation, develop critical thinking, event comparison, and scientific thinking. They separate the most useful from the extracurricular educational resources and the daily flow of information. As a result, the sources of knowledge will expand.

The key question is how can MIL be taught in primary school?

1. Introduce the teaching of MIL in grades 1-2 as part of the subject of Education, as a separate subject in grades 3-4.

2. Organize extracurricular activities in MIL clubs, information technology skills.

3. Establish a separate MIL section on the website of the Ministry of Public Education and place useful resources on it. In the neighbouring Kyrgyz Republic, the practice of earning points by placing and mastering MIL booklets, manuals, videos and animations,

games on www.mediasabak.org gives good results.

4. Develop posters, videos, and social videos on MIL to protect primary school students from screen violence and the negative effects of advertising.

When it comes to the content and useful resources of MIL education during this period, it is still possible to access the resources on the websites of many MIL centres and create national educational resources by learning from their experiences. Of course, even in this period, depending on age of the children and the level of literacy, the use of various game programs, cartoons and small videos will be of great help. Although work in Uzbekistan is in its infancy, some work has been done in Kyrgyzstan. Mediasabak.org has a lot of intellectual games, videos and animations for school-age children. The fact that they are also available in Russian and partly in Uzbek means that the site's organizers have been working effectively for many years to develop MIL in Central Asia.

The educational and entertainment platform Qlever is aimed at developing critical thinking, media, and information literacy. (https://kg.qlever.asia/news/740)

3. In general secondary education

Current situation. As mentioned earlier, during the COVID-19 pandemic, education in all schools of the Republic was transferred to the online form. Teachers of each subject taught each class through the central TV channels. In this process, too, shortcomings and successes in the educational process were noted. Efforts were made to make TV lessons based on the latest educational technologies. Parents discussed the shortcomings in these lessons through social media. For schoolteachers who accept students' homework and teach in addition to TV lessons, this period is also a practical "master class" for teaching using the media. These processes demonstrate the importance of media and information literacy to the effectiveness of education today.

Recommendations for improving the situation. School is the one place where it is crucial to train future citizens to understand, to

criticise and to create information. It is in schools that the digital citizen must begin and maintain constant critical thinking to attain meaningful participation in his or her community (https://www.coe.int/en/web/digital-citizenship-education/media-and-information-literacy).

Foreign experience shows that media education is included in the base system of schools with grades from 1 to 12 in Canada, Australia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and other countries *(*Gudilina S., 2016, P.3).

In all Central Asian countries, efforts are being made to introduce MIL mainly into secondary school education. So far, this has been the main achievement of foreign aid. Because general secondary education means almost the whole country. In addition, all future professionals will be trained in this field. In Kazakhstan, as a result of several years of research in the field of MIL, projects and grants from international organizations, a separate MIL subject has been introduced for 9th graders. A special textbook has also been created for them.

The biggest experiences and results in this area can be observed in Kyrgyzstan. These achievements can be seen in the study of the activities of the Foundation "SMI Support Centre", which has been effective in promoting MIL education for several years, with its activities and with the content of the website "www.mediasabak.org". This website is a good example, of how to organize MIL education via Internet. This website is:

-        presenting useful MIL materials in different formats, for each school forms;

-        promoting main MIL items to schoolchildren;

-        providing monthly analysis of "Fake News" distributed in Central Asia on a specific topic to increase people's media literacy.

The website founders also try to motivate schoolchildren and readers in different options. Reader can collect media coins by reading website resources and take multiple choice questions and these methods encourage students to study MIL regularly (https://mediasabak.org/ru/news/).

Initiatives and ideas on the introduction of MIL in school education have recently been frequently voiced by many experts, journalists in Uzbekistan, as well as foreign experts.

It should be noted that in recent years the first practical steps have been taken to develop the MIL sphere in the country. According to Internet sources and the Republican Education Centre, it has been agreed to allocate certain hours to MIL in the 9th-10th grades in the subject of "Education". This will happen when some topics about MIL are included in the next generation of textbooks.

Until now, Deutsche Welle Akademie has also been a donor to a number of MIL projects in Uzbekistan. The experience of MIL projects conducted by the Academy in other countries of the world can be applied in Uzbekistan. For example, in Namibia, through the Media and Information Literacy Learning Initiative (MiLLi*), young people learn how to navigate media responsibly and critically. In summer schools, MiLLi* trains young people from all of Namibia's regions to become facilitators in MIL. The MiLLi* facilitators then reach out to young people in their rural communities and independently run MIL youth projects, with the help of training guides. In this way, a growing and nationwide peer-to-peer network of media literate young people emerges. They have the competencies to create their own content and critically reflect on their own social media usage and media consumption. Or in Moldova, DW Akademie, together with its partners, focuses on working with young children. In playful and interactive school workshops and media camps, children learn how to critically assess media content and produce their own reports. Next to working with school pupils, DW supports the production of a youth TV program that broadcasts nationwide via the public broadcasters. The youth TV program addresses topics of interest to young people that are mostly missing from the nation's TV programming (Nitsche, P.6).

Based on the existing foreign experience, the MIL level of students in general secondary education can be developed in the following ways:

1. Introduce a separate subject on MIL or plan to introduce students to the basic concepts of MIL in certain sections of a number of subject textbooks, including IT, Education.

2. To give concepts and problems related to the field of MIL in exercises and texts from native languages, foreign languages.

3. Conducting optional trainings on MIL.

4. Conducting various competitions to encourage students to be creative in the field of MIL[i].

5. Organize regular summer camps with schoolchildren[ii].

Following table from the report of Anusca Ferrari "DIGCOMP: A framework for developing and understanding digital competence in Europe (Ferrari, 2013, p. 12) can be one of the key criteria for establishing MIL education in schools (Table 1).

Dimension 1 Competence Areas	Dimension 2 Competences
1. INFORMATION	1.1. Browsing, searching and filtering information 1.2. Evaluating information 1.3. Storing and retrieving information
2. COMMUNICATION	2.1. Interacting through technologies 2.2. Sharing information and content 2.3. Engaging in online citizenship 2.4. Collaborating through digital channels 2.5. Netiquette 2.6. Managing digital identity
3. CONTENT CREATION	3.1. Developing content 3.2. Integrating and re-elaborating 3.3. Copyright and licences

	3.4. Programming
4. SAFETY	4.1. Protecting devices 4.2. Protecting personal data 4.3. Protecting health 4.4. Protecting the environment
5. PROBLEM SOLVING	5.1. Solving technical problems 5.2. Identifying needs and technological 5.3. Innovating and creatively using technology 5.4. Identifying digital competence gaps

Table 1. DIGITAL COMPETENCE *(Source: Ferrari, A. (2013). DIGCOMP: A framework for developing and understanding digital competence in Europe. Sevilla: European Commission*)

The competencies listed in this table are the skills that are important for the young generation to live, learn and prepare for future life in today's information world. As A. Ferrari wrote, "Digital competence is one of the eight key competences for lifelong learning and is essential for participation in our increasingly digitalised society. However, international surveys and academic literature warn that many people lack digital capabilities (Ferrari, 2013, P. 4).

4. In higher and secondary special education.

Current situation. In higher education, manuals in MIL and media education first appeared in journalism faculties.

So far, Media education and MIL have held scientific conferences were held in some universities. Including, scientific conference named as "Problems of Media Education in The Process of Globalization" held at the Faculty of International Journalism of Uzbek State University of World Languages on the topic (December 12, 2014), and republican scientific-practical conference on "Current issues of youth media literacy in an informed society" which was organised by Uzbek State University of World Languages and Uzbek State Institute of Arts and Culture (December 18, 2015,) These events, in turn, have led to the popularization of the concept of media education, media literacy among scientists and teachers of the country's higher education system, in particular, journalism and the arts.

A number of issues in pedagogical higher education institutions in Uzbekistan include the basic concepts of media education in a number of disciplines, including creativity, the formation of students' ability to use information technology, the use of information technology in education.

For several years, non-governmental non-profit organization Center for the Development of Modern Journalism of the Republic of Uzbekistan, has been implementing a number of projects in Uzbekistan with foreign partners for the development of MIL, donor organizations such as DW Akademie, UNESCO, Internews. So far, the organization has organized a number of trainings for teachers and students of journalism faculties, university and school teachers, librarians. As a result, they formed a group of MIL trainers in Uzbekistan. After the trainings MIL materials and resources were developed and manuals were published. These resources are now available on the site as an open source and can be used by those interested in the field of MIL. The organization's website (https://mjdc.uz/#projects) has a section "Mediateka MIL", where you can find a lot of useful information about MIL.

Recommendations for improving the situation. The information literate person is capable, in Mackenzie's words, of:

• "Prospecting: The ability to locate relevant information, to sift it, to sort it, and to select it

• Interpreting: The ability to translate the data and information into knowledge, insight, and understanding

• Creating new ideas: Developing new insights" (Lau, 2006, P.8)

At a time when modern information technology has become an integral part of our lives, no industry can develop without these techniques and technologies. Higher and secondary special education provides personnel for all sectors of society. This means, it serves as a major resource for the development of all sectors of society. Regardless of their specialization, today's modern young staff should have sufficient knowledge and skills in MIL.

The first steps in the development of MIL in higher and secondary special education will be the following:

- Introduction of MIL as a separate subject in secondary special education;

- increased use of information technology, Internet, distance learning tools in the teaching of various subjects (including saving paper and other technical means, economic savings for students);

- opening of "MIL" or "Media education" specialties at the master's level, because it is known from foreign experience that in some countries MIL is already taught as a separate subject in kindergartens and schools. In the future, the labour market in Uzbekistan will also need pedagogical staff in this area.

5. MIL education among middle-aged people and seniors.

Current situation. In Uzbekistan, social networks and messengers play an important role in the exchange of information in people's lives and work. In particular, today many people use Telegram messenger in business processes. Managers communicate with all employees quickly, perform daily tasks, and even new demands and responsibilities in the workplace are conveyed to employees through this messenger.

People in their 25s and 60s often should work with media products in their work as well. A furniture maker, an agricultural farmer, and a baker today must look for a clients or work on social media to increase the number of customers. We also see an increase in the need

for employees who advertise various services and products on the Internet in job advertisements. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, delivery services have become commonplace. All these services are done with the help of media. In today's mediated society, people who have the skills to work with the media, who can create media products, who can quickly find the information they need, and who can easily and quickly find the sites, channels, and services they need, can connect with the right people at home. They also make money sitting down.

Today, people over the age of 60 are faced with the problem of "keeping up with the times." It is clear that the use of modern means of communication can help the elderly to solve many problems.

A large part of the population receives breaking news in Uzbekistan and around the world, mainly through TV and social networks. Social networks that the level of literacy of the population in the field of MIL is growing. Today's users see social media not only as a means of obtaining and disseminating information, but also as a powerful tool in solving problems in all areas of public life. People post about their routine problems or their loved ones, various legal, economic, medical and other issues on their Facebook groups or personal profiles. Other people who read them will comment on the solution. Another important aspect of such discussions is to link to the page of the head of a ministry or government organization, officials or information officer directly related to the problem.

People's social thinking is also growing rapidly due to social media. Today's Uzbek social network users are free to discuss not only every issue of national policy, but also international political issues. The longest-running of such discussions is the recent conflict in Kazakhstan and today's Russia-Ukraine conflict. There has been almost no grouping of Uzbek Internet users during the conflict in Kazakhstan. Most of them posted in the interests of the people not the administration of the country, and at the end of

almost all the posts, the idea that peace should be valued was put forward.

The posts on the Russia-Ukraine war were different. Users are now divided into two groups. While the first group condemned Russia's actions in Ukraine through surveillance through various social networks and messengers, the majority of the population (mostly the elderly) who receive basic daily information from Russian TV channels criticized the anti-Russian sentiments. As the war dragged on and video, photo, and text information about the casualties increased, most of the population began to condemn the war and express sympathy for the people of Ukraine.

Of course, there are many examples of such media activity in Uzbekistan today. All this indicates that the population is practically forming and growing MIL. Further development of this level of literacy is equally beneficial for the development of the state and for the improvement of the life and activity of the population in society.

Recommendations for improving the situation. Jesús Lau writes: A competent citizen, whether a student, a professional or a worker is able to recognize her/his information needs, knows how to locate, identify access, retrieve, evaluate, organize, and use information. To be an information literate person, one has to know how to benefit from the worlds of knowledge and incorporate the experience of others into one's background (Lau, 2006, P.8).

In general, to increase the level of MIL in the population of Uzbekistan, trainings and materials have been conducted so far, mainly within the framework of foreign grants and projects. Until now, such trainings have been organized mainly for journalists and bloggers, librarians and school and university teachers. Such sectoral constraints limit the sustainability of training to a certain extent.

Some of the projects implemented abroad in the framework of the Deutsche Welle Akademie projects in the formation and development of MIL awareness among middle-aged and older adults can be cited. There is no doubt that the organization of trainings with retirees within the framework of the Academy's projects, as well as the placement of posters on MIL on public transport will serve to increase the level of MIL in the population.

In general, there are several ways to improve MIL skills among people aged 25-60:

- Introduction of unofficial special courses on MIL in advanced training courses or teaching MIL skills in the disciplines of Informatics and IT;
- Organization of MIL trainings on the basis of various projects and grants;
- Placement and distribution of MIL posters, social advertisements in public places and transport;
- Development and promotion of online courses, electronic textbooks, electronic games in the field of MIL.

When it comes to people in their 60s and older, in the East, we are accustomed to imagining elderly people as people who take care of their grandchildren in old age or in a family circle. But today, they also use mobile devices. They will also need new knowledge of MIL when using Electron banking services and Internet tools on the phone.

The benefits of engaging people of this age in a variety of useful courses have been proven both theoretically and practically.

Hilary Young, who is a writer dedicated to helping older Americans live healthier, more fulfilling lives, writes: "There are many reasons why seniors would pursue new opportunities in retirement, including second careers, but continuing education has a host of emotional and mental benefits" (Young, www.rightathome.net).

In the article "Lifelong Learning Opportunities for Older Adults and Retirees" the author argues that "Lifelong learning opportunities provide seniors with so much more than what the classroom curriculum provides" and cites three benefits. (Table 2)

#	Benefits	Explanation
1.	Social Connection	Loneliness is a big risk factor that comes along with aging, especially for those who choose to remain in their own homes. By choosing to go back to school, seniors who live alone can combat loneliness through social engagement, especially since they will be surrounded by like-minded peers in class.
2.	Cognitive Improvement	Research has shown that learning new things throughout person's lifetime can help keep Alzheimer's disease at bay.
3.	Skill Enhancement	It can be appealing to learn a new skill or better person's skill at a lifelong hobby when he/she finally has the time in retirement.

Table 2. Benefits of Lifelong learning for seniors *(created by the author according to the survey of Hilary Young)*

In Uzbekistan, people of retirement age visit religious institutions mainly to increase their religious knowledge. For the same purpose, there are many older people who study Arabic script by attending various private courses. There are two ways to develop their MIL skills:

1. Encourage the use of the media in the conduct of various courses in which they voluntarily participate and in monitoring their learning.

2. Organize MIL trainings and informal classes for the elderly in certain areas where possible.

UNESCO, Internews, Deustche Welle Akademie and the European Union are currently announcing annual grant and project competitions or actively organizing trainings for various segments of the population. If Internews Uzbekistan creates MIL and digital Literacy trainings and projects for the elderly in its MediaCAMP projects, it will be of great benefit to the elderly in this area.

Conclusion

Media and Information Literacy is a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow to get access to information and media, to analyse, evaluate, use, create, and distribute them in accordance with legal and ethical standards and in compliance with the human rights.

In this mediatized world, everyone should find their rightful place in life, society, and workplace, and most importantly, use the latest opportunities created by humanity for the convenience of living in their time. For gaining these competencies they must have the necessary skills and knowledge of MIL.

In the course of our three studies on the formation and development of knowledge and skills of the population on MIL for Uzbekistan, which has the largest population in Central Asia, we came to the following conclusions:

1. In Uzbekistan, as in other countries today, children are growing up from an early age in the circumstances of mobile phones, TV and Internet. From the age of 2-3, they quickly learn to find the video or cartoon, which located in the memory of mobile phone or video channels in U-Tube. This is a good starting point for raising the MIL level of the "digital generation".

2. So far, much work has been done a lot to develop the field of MIL and MIL education. With the support and projects of international organizations such as Internews, DW Akademie, UNESCO:

- Organized trainings, published manuals in Uzbek, Russian and Karakalpak languages.
- A group of trainers was formed.
- Created video projects, training materials, games on MIL and MIL education.
- The first steps are being taken to introduce MIL in school education.

3. In school education, MIL can be taught as part of a series of subjects or as a separate subject.

4. It is advisable to teach MIL as a separate subject at the undergraduate level in order to acquire knowledge and prepare for professional life in accordance with the modern and full use of the latest information technologies.

5. In order to develop MIL in Uzbekistan, it is necessary to open a specialization at the master's level.

6. The placement of various social advertisements, social advertising posters in public places and transport is also effective in developing the knowledge of the population on MIL in the post-education period. In addition, it is important to study foreign experience in this area.

In general, MIL today is an important set of knowledge and skills for people of all ages. Our overall conclusion is "MIL is important for people of all ages in this mediatized world".

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Footnotes.

[i] DW Akademie's school competitions in the Republic of Moldova can be a good example in organising such kind of projects. (A special kind of learning: Schools compete for best media education concept // https://www.dw.com/en/a-special-kind-of-learning-schools-compete-for-best-media-education-concept/a-59501139)

[ii] A good example of this is the experience of the summer camp in neighbouring Kyrgyzstan, which has been organized by the Foundation Centre of Support Mass Media since 2018 and has so far involved more than 400 young people. Summer camp with a component of media and information literacy, designed for school-age children. Participants spend ten days developing their critical thinking, learning to develop and implement problem-solving initiatives in their schools and communities. (https://mediasabak.org/kz/projects/current/7/)