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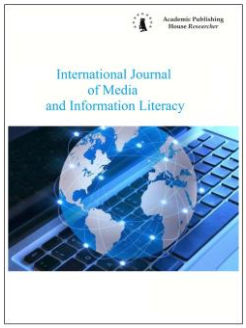

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International Journal of Media and Information Literacy: Five-year Anniversary

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Abstract

In June 2021, the International Journal of Media and Information Literacy celebrated its fifth anniversary and has come a long way from being a completely unknown publication in Europe and the world to becoming a prestigious journal indexed in Scopus (Q3) that publishes authors from dozens of countries around the world. This review article is devoted to the most significant areas of publication activity of this journal, its most characteristic trends and topics.

The Journal's fifth anniversary is a good occasion to remember how it began and how it developed. Already in the first issues of the journal it became apparent that the leading researchers in the field of media education are interested in it. For example, American professor Art Silverblatt, author of several editions of *Media Literacy*, wrote that "Information Literacy applies critical thinking skills to the assessment of Information. Media Literacy is a critical thinking skill that is applied to the source of most of our information – the channels of mass communication" (Silverblatt, 2016: 55). We think that this provision can be called key to the general concept of the *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy*.

Keywords: media and information literacy, journal, media message, media text, media culture, mediation, media literacy education, media studies.

1. Introduction

In June 2021, the *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy* celebrated its fifth anniversary and has come a long way from being a completely unknown publication in Europe and the world to becoming a prestigious journal indexed in Scopus (Q3) that publishes authors from dozens of countries around the world. This review article is devoted to the most significant areas of publication activity of this journal, its most characteristic trends and topics.

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2. Materials and methods

Materials of this article are articles on media and information literacy, published in *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy*. The research is based on the content analysis and comparative approaches, analysis of academic articles, generalization and classification.

3. Discussion and results

In recent years, UNESCO (UNESCO, 2011; 2013; 2015; 2020) has concentrated its organizational and publishing efforts to bring together information literacy and media educators around the world.

In this sense, I think, the *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy* appeared at the right time, exactly when the unifying ideas of UNESCO were in demand all over the world.

For example Art Silverblatt wrote that "media have become so pervasive throughout the globe that the ability to decipher messages conveyed through the media has become a 21st century survival skill. ... International Media Literacy focuses on what members of the media literacy community can learn from one another with regard to media literacy principles, concepts, programs, and strategies. Media literacy scholars apply those strategies that most effectively approach the study of media and media presentations in their cultures. Within this context, it can be useful to identify the media literacy principles, concepts, and approaches that are most effective in particular cultures. Further, it can be useful to consider other media literacy approaches that might offer a fresh perspective into that country's media and media presentations" (Silverblatt, 2018: 30).

We agree with Art Silverblatt: "The ability to develop a critical distance from the messages being conveyed through the channels of mass communication is of vital importance. However, the value of Media Literacy education extends beyond media analysis, furnishing critical thinking skills for people who are in danger of losing the ability to come to independent conclusions based on the systematic assessment of evidence. ... What determines the validity of an analysis is the following: 1) the systematic application media literacy methodologies; and 2) the contentions must be supported with concrete examples (e.g., television episodes, films, and social media threads). Instead, the discipline of Media Literacy furnishes individuals with the skills to develop an independence of thought so necessary to the survival of democracy" (Silverblatt, 2018: 66).

At the same time, W. James Potter and Chan Thai believe that "while there are a many definitions of media literacy, the existing definitions typically cluster around highlighting several components, especially skills and knowledge but also behaviors and affects. To a lesser extent there is a clustering around certain domains of skills and particular domains of knowledge. But at this point the conceptualizations stop providing detail, and this inadequate degree of specificity in the explication of media literacy requires researchers to fill in conceptual gaps in order to design their measures. The gaps have resulted in the design of a great many measures of questionable validity, which sets up a vicious cycle. Researchers who want to design a test of media literacy go to the literature for guidance, however that literature shows them an overwhelming choice of definitions with no single definition being regarded as the most useful one. Even more problematic is that none of the many definitions provides enough detail to guide researchers very far through the process of designing measures of media literacy. Until more fully explicated definitions of media literacy are offered to scholars, researchers will be left with little guidance, which will result in the continuation of inadequate conceptual foundations for their empirical studies and therefore a fuzzy and incomplete foundation to use as a standard for judging the validity of their measures" (Potter, Thai, 2016: 27).

We found the results of studies concerning a study into the skills of using data verification tools as a media information literacy instrument for university students (Lebid et al., 2020: 184-190) and cultivating the skills of systems thinking in the context of fostering the basic and professional competencies associated with media education and media literacy (Lebid, Shevchenko, 2020: 60-68).

Thanks to the international composition of the authors of this scholarly journal, readers can gain insight into how information and media literacy education is evolving in countries such as Algeria (Aboulkacem et al., 2018), Bulgaria (Nedelcheva, 2018; Tsvetkova, 2016), Canada (Rother, 2016), China: Hong Kong (Cheung, 2017; Cheung, Connie, 2017; Cheung, Wu, 2018; Ko-Wai Tang,

2018; Tang, 2018), Georgia (Levitskaya, Seliverstova, 2020), Ghana (Sarfo, Ansah, 2020), Hungary (Szíjártó, 2017), Montenegro (Cortoni, 2017), Morocco (Hattani, 2016), Nicaragua (Camarero, Varona, 2016), Nigeria (Anumudu, Ibrahim, 2020), Oman (Segumpan et al., 2017), Pakistan (Khuhro, Shoukat, 2020; Umrani et al., 2019), Russia (Balina et al., 2020; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2017; 2020; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2017; Gorelova, Khilko, 2020; Kamyshanova et al., 2020; Kazakov, 2017; Khlyzova, 2019; Mikhaleva, 2016; 2019; Tselykh, 2019; Vziatysheva, 2020), Saudi Arabia (Hattani, 2016), Slovakia (Čábyová et al., 2020; Petranova, Vrabec, 2016), Sub-Saharan African countries (Alemayehu, 2020), Thailand (Karuchit, 2016), Ukraine (Kitsa et al., 2020; Slavko et al., 2020), USA (Potter, Thai, 2016; Silverblatt, 2016; 2018), Uzbekistan (Chelysheva, 2019).

The authors of the *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy* attach great importance to the topics of typology and mechanisms of media manipulation (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020: 69-78).

An significant part of the journal's publications is devoted to the problems of media culture – the Internet, cinema, television, etc. (Fedorov, 2016; 2017; Gorbatkova, Levitskaya, 2018; Kayal, Seena, 2019; Naeem et al., 2020; Nedelcheva, 2018; Sabah et al., 2020; Salny, 2019; Srivastav, Rai, 2019; Szíjártó, 2017; Tselykh, 2020; Umrani et al., 2019; Zaidi et al, 2020).

The journal could not be more responsive to current events related to the pandemic and how media education is conducted in the face of the risk of COVID-19 infection (Alemayehu, 2020; Anumudu, Ibrahim, 2020; Cifuentes-Faura, 2020; Sarfo, Ansah, 2020).

4. Conclusion

Our analysis of the article of the *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy* has enabled us to identify the following current trends:

- In almost every country in the world, researchers and educators are concluding that media and information literacy is a necessary and vital component of human competence;
- UNESCO's concept of combining the fields of information literacy and media education is gaining more and more supporters;
- In recent years, the attention of researchers to the problem of media manipulation, fakes, and the development of technologies to counteract negative media influences has increased;
- The pandemic has left its mark on the development of the information and media literacy movement, but even under quarantine and online education, MIL continues to develop.

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