



DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING AND MEDIA LITERACY IN STUDENTS

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Abstract: This article analyzes the challenges associated with developing critical thinking and media literacy among students within today's information-driven society. The author proposes a novel methodological framework that integrates critical thinking as a "filter" and creativity as a "productive force." Based on a synthesis of educational reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan and international best practices, the article outlines specific pedagogical methods for implementation.

Keywords: critical thinking, media literacy, creativity, prosumer, numeracy, cognitive filter, pedagogical model.

INTRODUCTION

In an era of rapid globalization and digital transformation, enhancing the information consumption culture of students and fostering cognitive resilience against information attacks is a primary task of modern pedagogy. The "Uzbekistan – 2030" Strategy necessitates a synthesis of literacy and creativity. Critical thinking is not merely the act of receiving information; it is the objective art of identifying its origins, detecting logical fallacies, and applying analytical scrutiny. Media literacy serves as the practical application of this critical filter, elevating the student from a "passive recipient" to an "active analyst."

International models, such as the "multimodal literacy" frameworks used in Finland and the UK, demonstrate that the most effective stage of media literacy is creativity. When students create their own media products (videos, podcasts, infographics), they understand the internal mechanics of how information is "constructed" and how it influences public consciousness. This process aligns with the higher tiers of Bloom's Taxonomy—analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

The "Creative-Critical Filter" (CCF) technique proposed in our methodology enables students not only to identify fake news but to produce creative content that logically refutes it. This fosters "algorithmic skepticism," allowing students to escape the influence of online "echo chambers." Furthermore, the ideological immunity regulated by Resolution No. 825 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan is implemented through such practical exercises. For instance, using the "Lateral Reading" method, students verify information through external credible sources rather than relying solely on the original site. In this process, managing emotional reactions—a key aspect of cognitive neuropsychology—is essential.



THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND METHODOLOGY

Critical thinking and media literacy are intrinsically linked, reaching their peak in creative expression. International experience (specifically the Finnish and US models) shows that when a student acts as a creator, they gain a deeper understanding of media manipulation techniques. Our "Creative-Critical Filter" (CCF) model encompasses three rigorous modules:

1. **Analytical Module:** Developing skills to find primary sources and identify logical errors through "Socratic Seminars" and "Lateral Reading."
2. **Creative Module:** Elevating the student from a consumer to a "prosumer" (producer-consumer) through "Digital Storytelling" and "Anti-fake" content creation.
3. **Ethical Module:** Regulating responsibility and safety norms in information dissemination.

In modern pedagogical anthropology and cognitive psychology, intellectual potential is directly linked to the culture of information processing. Theoretical works by J. Dewey, R. Paul, and D. Halpern define critical thinking as the synthesis of "the art of skepticism" and "mental discipline." Media literacy serves as the practical arena for these skills, allowing individuals to access, analyze, evaluate, and create messages in various formats (textual, visual, digital).

CONCLUSION


At the current stage of human civilization, the globalization of information and the rapid integration of computer technology into social life place new demands on the intellectual assets of youth. Our theoretical analysis shows that in the modern educational paradigm, critical thinking and media literacy are fundamental, dialectically linked competencies that ensure personal "information immunity."

Current analysis reveals a significant gap between the technical proficiency and cognitive analytical skills of modern students. While "digital natives" exhibit high mastery of gadgets, this technical superiority is often not matched by intellectual readiness. The rise of "clip thinking," the "echo chamber" effect, and the dominance of emotional "fast thinking" have diminished the capacity for deep analysis. Students remain vulnerable to manipulation when they rely on institutional authority rather than the strength of an argument.

To bridge this gap, the educational process must integrate problem-based learning, case studies, and media literacy methods. Ultimately, the methodological foundation for developing these skills must be built on the harmony of cognitive analysis and creative production.

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