

ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫ ҒЫЛЫМ ЖӘНЕ ЖОҒАРЫ БІЛІМ МИНИСТРЛІГІ

«Л.Н. ГУМИЛЕВ АТЫНДАҒЫ ЕУРАЗИЯ ҰЛТТЫҚ УНИВЕРСИТЕТІ» КЕАҚ

**Студенттер мен жас ғалымдардың
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2023»
XVIII Халықаралық ғылыми конференциясының
БАЯНДАМАЛАР ЖИНАҒЫ**

**СБОРНИК МАТЕРИАЛОВ
XVIII Международной научной конференции
студентов и молодых ученых
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2023»**

**PROCEEDINGS
of the XVIII International Scientific Conference
for students and young scholars
«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM - 2023»**

**2023
Астана**

УДК 001+37
ББК 72+74
G99

«GYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2023» студенттер мен жас ғалымдардың XVIII Халықаралық ғылыми конференциясы = XVIII Международная научная конференция студентов и молодых ученых «GYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2023» = The XVIII International Scientific Conference for students and young scholars «GYLYM JÁNE BILIM – 2023». – Астана: – 6865 б. - қазақша, орысша, ағылшынша.

ISBN 978-601-337-871-8

Жинаққа студенттердің, магистранттардың, докторанттардың және жас ғалымдардың жаратылыстану-техникалық және гуманитарлық ғылымдардың өзекті мәселелері бойынша баяндамалары енгізілген.

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УДК 001+37
ББК 72+74

ISBN 978-601-337-871-8

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ұлттық университеті, 2023**

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UDC 372.8

MEDIA LITERACY CHALLENGES IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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Introduction.

On average, each person spends 1,500 hours a year watching TV [1]. Approximately 17 million children and adolescents have access to the Internet at home, which is used daily for a variety of purposes, from researching school projects to playing online games, browsing social networks or communicating with friends via messengers [1]. Many preschoolers know how to use gadgets and turn on videos. Headphones, smartphones, tablets have become such an integral part of the so-called 'uniform' of middle and high school students that backpacks are now designed to accommodate them.

It should be noted that despite the fact that teenagers often interact with the media, students spend very little time critically evaluating the perceived information they "consume" every day, i.e. perception goes automatically and unconsciously.

For example, in 2019, the business portal Forbes Kazakhstan published statistics stating that Kazakhstanis spent 255 minutes per day browsing the media online [2]. This indicator of increased human consumption of online information on a global scale requires an increase in media literacy as a means of managing/exploiting and selecting material intelligently.

Media literacy in the educational process is first and foremost an approach to optimising education as a whole, which implies:

Providing the foundations for accessing, analysing, evaluating, creating different forms of messages; developing an understanding of the role of the media in society, as well as the basic research and self-expression skills needed by citizens of a democratic state [3].

The main issues of media literacy are [3]:

1. Who created the message?
2. What creative techniques are used to get my attention?

3. How can different people understand this message in different ways?
4. What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?
5. Why is this or that message being sent?

Media literacy develops skills such as: asking relevant questions, developing skills to analyse different points of view, and identifying relevant logical connections. In other words, media literacy provides an understanding of where information comes from, whose interests may be affected, and how to find alternative viewpoints.

The **aim** of this study is to identify the current state of media literacy in the educational process, particularly in English classes.

This study is part of a research paper on media-discursive competence, which aims to develop recommendations much needed by educators and learners alike.

In this article `K4R`, we present the results of our dissertation research to date [5-7].

The initial stage of the study was to determine the level of digital competence in a number of general education schools in the Republic of Kazakhstan, identifying shortcomings in the issue of media competence of the teaching staff, namely, subject teachers. Hence, the task of developing recommendations for overcoming the identified shortcomings arose [5].

The second stage of the study is aimed at analyzing the features of media literacy formation among students of pedagogical specialties in the process of studying core disciplines, as well as the reasons for the lack of disciplines for professional training of media-competent teachers. Inclusion of the following subjects in the curriculum: "Fundamentals of Media Competence in the Educational Space/Process" 3 credits - 5 ECTS already in the second semester of the first year.

The third stage of the study is the formation of skills and abilities to identify fake content in the media space. The aim of which is to optimize the educational process at both secondary and tertiary levels.

Methods and materials.

In our research, questionnaires and content analysis methods were used. The survey questions are based on competence and activity approach, pedagogical and didactic competences.

The respondents of the research were teachers of an urban school in the city of Astana, teachers of a rural school in the East Kazakhstan region, students of the Faculty of Philology. The undergraduate curricula of the Faculty of Philology at L.N. Gumilev Eurasian National University were also analysed.

Results and discussion.

Analysis of the results of digital competence of teachers in rural areas is presented in Figure 1.

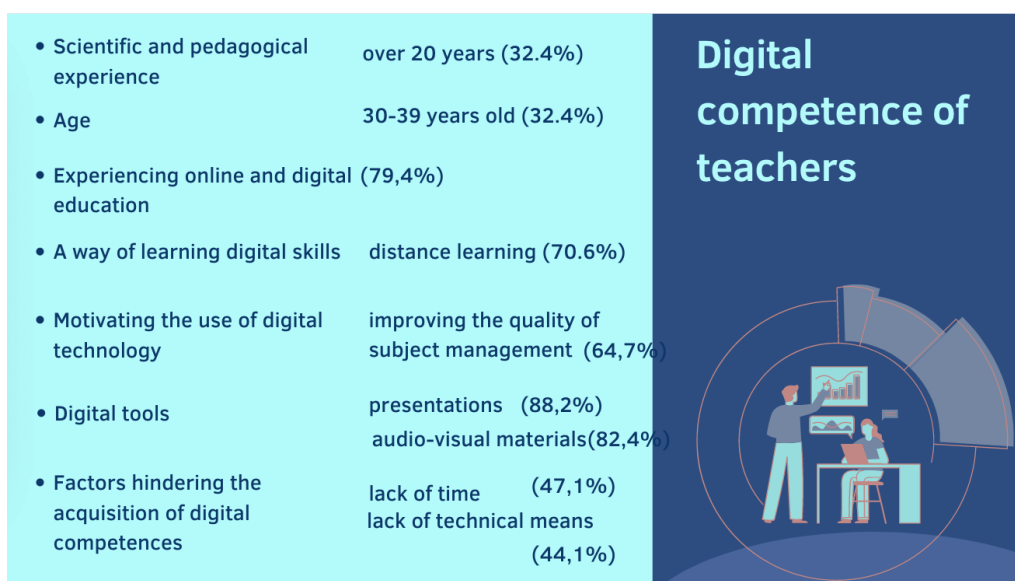


Figure 1. Analysis of the results of digital competence
Source: constructed by the authors based on their own measurements.

The largest number of teachers is with more than 20 years of work experience (32.4%), the least number of young teachers is with up to three years of work experience (14.7%). The number of teachers aged 30-39 years prevails (32.4%). Thirty respondents answered that they had no experience in online and digital education despite distance learning during quarantine. The majority of respondents (79.4%) had experienced online and digital education. The main way to learn digital skills is through distance learning (70.6%) and continuing education courses (50%). The main motivation for using digital technologies is to improve the quality of subjects (64.7%) and self-development (61.8%). Of the digital technology tools used, presentations (88.2%) and audio-video (82.4%) were identified. This suggests that relatively familiar tools are used, rather than blogs, interactive posters. If we look at the impact of digital technologies in the classroom, we see that opinion is evenly split. Teachers' uptake of new forms of digital learning and new teaching tools is hampered by a lack of time (47.1%). At the same time the next most difficult to master is the lack of technical means (44.1%). Not everyone has high-speed Internet access, free space where teachers can teach remotely and prepare for interactive sessions. Teachers who participated in the survey ask for attention to the lack of conditions in the country for the introduction of digital learning, especially in ordinary rural schools. Some teachers and students do not have an Internet connection because they live in villages where connection speeds are very low. The quality of classroom preparation and additional digital learning are directly related. When trying to learn new skills, it is not always possible to prepare the lesson material well or to think about the technical aspects: long download times, lack of internet, inability to use the technology.

The results of the analysis of the academic disciplines of the Faculty of Philology presented in the Figure 2 showed that out of 8 undergraduate majors a number of courses are taught in four specialties, such as [6]:

- "Critical interpretation of new written literature";
- "Editing a publicistic text";
- "Naming in the media";
- "Analytical reading of media texts".

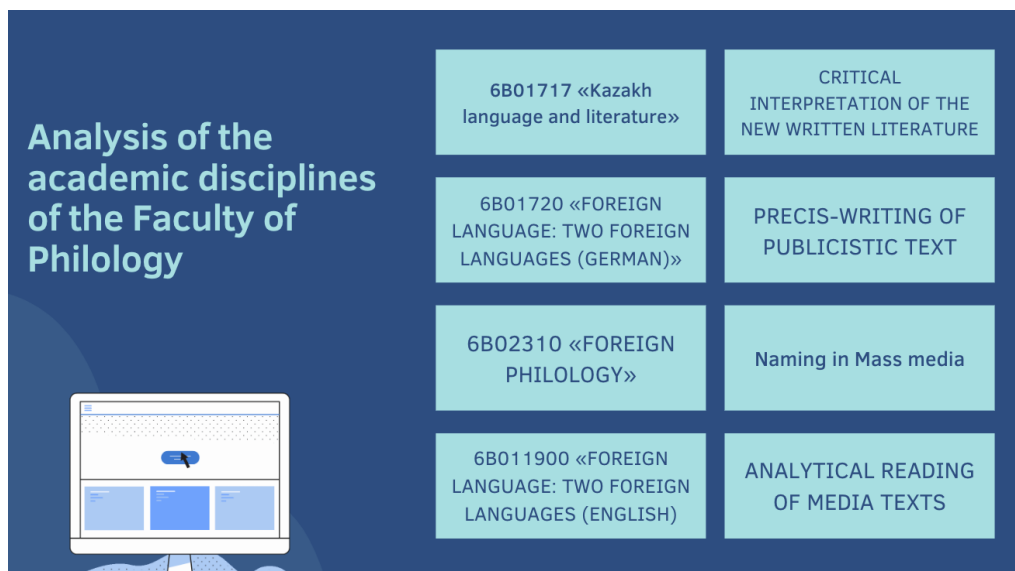


Figure 1. Analysis of the academic disciplines of the Faculty of Philology
Source: constructed by the authors based on their own measurements.

The table gives examples of courses related to media analysis, but there is no single course with a clear title of "media education" or "media literacy".

However, the introduction of media into the educational process can only take place if there is a professionally trained, media-competent teacher who has sufficient knowledge and skills to use

media in professional activities. The application of media education elements in the educational process requires a high level of competence on the part of the teacher to implement the possibilities of innovative technologies in practice and to introduce them into the teaching of various disciplines. Therefore, the training of a specialist teacher who actively uses media education is a complex system that functions in accordance with the goals, objectives and principles of specialist training in this field.

The result of the data analysis on the use of fact-checking applications shows that in general the students have a positive attitude towards the use of web-based fact-checking applications. However, prior to the experiment, this experience was not evident in the respondents.

As mentioned above, the data presented are part of our dissertation research. Some important areas of research are work with parents, detailed surveys of teachers, students and pupils, and project work. There are already studies that have been accepted for publication, but not yet published.

Conclusion.

Both teachers and foreign language teachers are interested in students' use of media resources for language learning [3]. However, designing and developing any kind of learning material, and especially media resources, requires consideration of a wide range of factors, e.g. age, ethnicity, class, gender, ability level or curriculum goals. Learning materials not only contain some educational information but also play a crucial role in conveying social values to learners. Accordingly, the evaluation of foreign language materials is crucial for both teachers and learners.

The results of the study also showed the need to develop media-discursive competence, primarily of teachers, as they are the main facilitators in the learning process. It might be advisable to introduce media-discursive competence among the mandatory competences of a modern teacher.

The research data are of practical relevance. An online survey was used to obtain the data. In addition, at this stage of the research, we actively apply methods such as semi-structured interviews and observations, which provide a more qualitative, namely authentic, picture of the research. It is also possible to assess media-discursive competence by analysing media texts and tests. Foreign language teachers from both general secondary schools and faculty members of higher education institutions participated in the survey. Further research could broaden the scope to include these parameters. Media-discursive competence among teachers and students is another potential area for further research.

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