THE ROLE AND DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA LITERACY IN EVERYDAY CULTURE

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Abstract - In today's world, the necessity and the importance of transformation of traditional education and an education which is in cohesion with the needs of the new society. This was prompted by intense changes in the society, which is increasingly evolving towards a knowledge society. Since in today's social reality media cannot be avoided, or ignored, there is a necessity for media education as an indispensable area of institutional education on all levels. Education is the line between an individual and culture, and that is what is created, and exactly what is credited for facilitating and increased liability in achieving their own life choices. In order for education to be necessary, effective and adequate for the moment, it has to stand up in defence of the idea of general culture. Concerning the extensiveness and availability in broadcasting and spreading, mass media also represent the possibility of obtaining educational activities, by allowing student s to interact in the most modern, innovative by consuming the contents marked as educational. Media literacy most resiliently has been viewed as a bounded set of enabling skills that can be applied to distinct texts and technologies. In this paper we look at what the critical tradition in education has to offer to the phenomenon of social media.

Keywords - Traditional Education, Knowledge Society, Mass Media, Media Literacy, Skills.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st Century the 'network society' has been discussed widely and is coming to be seen as a 'social' network society. Media use encompasses both political and personal agendas. These agendas include, but are not confined to, the pursuit of formal and informal education, information seeking, self-promotion, entertainment, gaming, socialising, CV-building, job seeking, archiving, networking, cyber activism, and civic and political campaigning. Those with relatively unhampered access to the internet increasingly reside in a hyperlinked arena. Personal and collective profiles can be created (individually or jointly), shared, maintained, linked to and updated on a series of platforms, both static and mobile. Since in today's social reality media cannot be avoided, or ignored, there is a necessity for media education as an indispensable area of institutional education on all levels. Education is the line between an individual and culture, and that is what is created, and exactly what is credited for facilitating and increased liability in achieving their own life choices. In order for education to be effective and adequate for the moment, it has to stand up in defence of the idea of general culture (Jerković, 2012). Concerning the extensiveness and availability in broadcasting and spreading, mass media also represent the possibility of obtaining educational activities, by allowing student s to interact in the most modern, innovative but not so formal way in their education, by consuming the contents marked as educational.

Media is considered as a constituent of everyday culture which involves spreading of communicational technologies, starting from a book, newspaper, radio, television, all to computer and Internet. This has always caused great interest, discussion and opposing views in all cultures. Aware of the necessity of informing, young people resort to contents of mass media and are slowly becoming aware of their dependence on media informing and believing in its accuracy. Communication strengthens their identity and gives it variability and mobility (Džouns, 2001). Media informs, but not just as a part of society in which it operates, but there are important factors influencing that society (Buckingham, 2007; Kelner, 2004; Milivojević, 2008; Zgrabljić Rotar, 2005). Although media provides a more dynamic and flexible relation between a person and society, we must not lose sight that those mass communicators are largely a self-satisfied system, which is spreading limitless and, unfettered information. Desire for knowledge of what media placed contents really mean, where their source is and why a certain message had been constructed, is crucial for quality understanding and recognition of media mediated messages and their meaning. Adequate answers to all these questions can only be acquired by media literacy. Acquiring media literacy can be truly successful only if we consider that relationship between specificity of media and the way those specificities are understood by those getting education. On one hand, there are great hopes and expectations of modern day technologies. It is believed that they will enrich children's lives, prod imagination and creativity, expand knowledge, and encourage multicultural tolerance and development of democracy. On the other hand, there is a fear it might dull children's emotions and develop indifference towards another man's suffering; that it may encourage destructive behaviour and lead to a decline in the state of moral values. There is a belief that introduction of modern technologies will repress local cultures and lead to social estrangement. Development of media mass communication has had

an impact on major changes in the culture and it has facilitated procreation of a different reality. Changes brought by globalization condition a child to be more and more separated from nature and to turn to a world of technology. Buckingham (2007) considered that globalization leads to construction of homogeneous global children's culture, in which cultural differences are suppressed from the social value system where parent's attempts to maintain, and carry forward cultural value, is unsuccessful. Media directs and controls human desire, conviction and attitude, offering content suitable for that purpose. Nowadays, social networks have changed the concept of true friends. Some have more online friends than real ones. Many teenagers have become victims of online pressure groups. Many reports have appeared in the media of how vulnerable people who played the online game 'Blue whale' ended their lives. As an increasing number of young people are spending a lot of time on social media, it affects their behaviour and has an adverse impact on them.

The need for incorporating media literacy in school curricula has been felt globally, and media literacy has been introduced in schools in the USA, Canada and Australia and some countries in Europe. Stating that "the role media plays in a functioning democracy should be critically assessed as part of the national curricula, integrated with civics or social studies," the Council of European Union's High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism recommended that "media literacy should be taught in schools starting at high-school level."Media Smarts in Canada that has the vision of enabling young people to have "the critical thinking skills to engage with media" develops digital and media literacy programmes for Canadian schools.

These changes range from low to extremely significant, by giving information about events all over the glove, introducing knowledge about new scopes, but also open roads of new forms of entertainment (Lazić, 2007). Buckingham (2007) also draws attention to scholarly discussions about the relationships between print literacy, power and education through the ages. Although being literate in its narrowest sense may involve the acquisition of a set of skills relating to written language – the shaping of characters into words and sentences in writing, the ability to understand and read different types of texts written for different audiences and purposes, the ability to use language for particular effects, it has been shown that there is a broader political context that is invoked when literacy is considered. The concept of literacy has been associated with issues of social status, pedagogy, democratisation and social change. As the educational ethnographer Shirley Bryce-Heath suggests, a "sense of being literate derives from the ability to exhibit literate behaviours" (1996, 3). These behaviours can be understood to have a host of connotations linked to civility, modernity, empowerment and democracy and Bryce-Heath terms those who exhibit these behaviours as literates.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING MEDIA LITERACY IN CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

Past decades have brought major changes, primarily in the way we understand development in all aspects. By the development of contemporary informational - communicational technologies, development of all other human activities has been determined. Because of that, throughout media history there is a constantly recurring question of media availability and openness, regardless of the fact that with every new technology it is formulated in a different way. In regards to traditional mass media, new communicational technologies are minimizing technological restrictions in their use and confirm that control over media depends on the type of media and the social context they operate in (Milivojević, 2008). It is about a process, which has fundamentally changed all aspects of life and thus influenced modern education. New technologies also occurred in schools. Learning, based on adapted technology is permanent and it has utterly changed national and cultural standards. A growing robotization of work demanded a quicker and more massive transformation of professional knowledge and skills for work. These processes have caused a radical transformation in the educational system as a whole. In the beginning the role of media in educational processes was to refresh and broaden knowledge. Media was treated as school material and education about them was not a priority. It was expected for them to operate educationally and fill the gaps in classical school education. Today, we can quite reasonably talk about the media as an integral part of the process of upbringing and education. There are many television programs and computer courses for children of earliest age so media literacy starts in preschool even. The media represents one of the most important factors of upbringing and socialization, teaching children and young people and giving them information, while promoting norms and values, and introducing them to ways the world functions (Stanisavljević Petrović, 2011). Family, school and immediate environment can control media influence on children, depending on time they dedicate do children and according to norms the live by, values they promote and respect and enabling children to develop a critical attitude towards the content which is being offered to them (Zindović-Vukadinović, 2000). The role of media in education is of great importance because with ageing the possibility of using everyday media grows, which enables the development of media literacy and effect of media culture. Development of media literacy with young people is one of the most important tasks the school and the educational system have. (Stanisavljević Petrović, Radović, & Ivanović, 2012).

Media literacy represents an educational process which tends to enable members of the community to creatively and critically study (on the level of production, distribution and monitoring) with usage of technological and traditional media of development and liberation of an individual and the socierty, for democratization of communication (Zgrabljić Rotar, 2005). For high school students and students at college the media are a place of informational learning. This population uses the media to orientate in the development of their own personality as a source of information and knowledge and to develop media competence. Tolić (2009) considers that children of preschool age can acquire media literacy so that they can differ between good and bad media content. Media literacy is an important 21st-century skill. Unfortunately, media education has been the concern of only some NGOs and not educational institutions. In the past few decades, media education training programmes were conducted only by some social action groups that were involved in creating awareness among the general public about media.

One such organisation that was actively involved in educating people about media was Culture & Communication (C&C) that had its office on the Chennai Loyola College campus. About a quarter century ago, C&C conducted over 40 media education workshops in schools and colleges in the southern states of India. The objectives of the workshops were to help participants become aware of how media content is constructed, the impact it makes on viewers, readers and listeners, and how consumers of media content respond to it. As many educators felt the need for media literacy education, C&C discussed the importance of media education in different forums and tried to meet with officials involved in the curriculum planning and include it in the school curriculum but they did not taste success in their efforts.

Only secondary school pupils can understand the social background of media manipulations and those who create them. Potter foregrounds not only the development of certain skills but also structuring knowledge about the media industry, media form content and effects of the media. He demands inclusion of cognitive, aesthetic and moral area into contents of education concerning media (Poter, 2011). Marina Ivanović / Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 149 (2014) 438 – 442 441 Particular importance of digital media in upbringing and in educational processes in all stages of life can be explained by special media functionality. In education, the media have different application: from school curriculums and exercises, data bases and tools, study games and stimulation over to complex communicational and cooperational surroundings (Nadrljanski M., Nadrljanski Đ., & Bilić, 2007). By applying modern technology, a completely succesful acquiring of knowledge outside the classroom has been enabled, which opens up new posibilities. Through media, children quickly come to a realization that every action has a consequence, they understand the rules of interactive and programmed curriculum. In that case, media is considered to be a tool, or more accurately a help in learning and upbringing, and on the other hand, as a constitutive element of everyday life situations and experiences. Students must be taught to treat media content critically. The following eight key concepts for media literacy, as drawn up by the Ontario Association for Media Literacy provide a base for all media literacy programmes. 1) All media are constructions. 2) Media construct reality. 3) Audiences negotiate meaning in media. 4) Media have commercial implications. 5) Media contain ideological and value messages. 6) Media have social and political implications. 7) Form and content are closely related in the media. 8) Each medium has a unique aesthetic form.

Media literacy is already being carried out in practise in most countries, but the means of realization considerably differ. Although media literacy has been present for over fifty years, it is still dependant on individual initiative. There is no unique name of the subject, discipline or course intended for students. The reason not only lies in mutual differences of educational systems in the countries, but in change of purpose and objectives about media education. In Germany, children are being properly educated about the media through adequate television program, while media education teaches them ethic norms, to differentiate between good and bad. Unlike in Germany, children in Switzerland within media literacy gain knowledge and skills in the use of modern technology (Tolić, 2009). In Asian countries the interest in development of media literacy occurred because of the sudden increase in the number of new technologies and the so-called”cyber cafe “phenomenon. Certain countries have begun forming media motion, for example Action for Children Television in the USA, Great Britain and Japan (Lin, Li, Deng, & Lee, 2013). Media education has been in use in most countries but the manner of realization is quite different. Although media literacy has been present for over fifty years, it is still dependent on individual initiative. There isn’t a unique name for the subject, discipline or course intended for students. The reason not only lies in mutual differences of educational systems of different countries, but also in change in purpose and objectives of education about the media. In most countries media education is still a secondary activity that teachers or media educators deal with in schools or in youth work. It has been in the curriculum of many different countries but its practical use still remains an issue. The biggest problem is insufficient eligibility of teachers and provision of study materials. In addition to the above, there is a problem about the position of media education in the curriculum and school’s focus on

print media, cognitive skills and their reservation towards audio-visual materials (Popović, 2011). Confrontation of school with media influence had initiated the creation of many didactic and methodical innovations, and also innovations in area of school work. No matter how much school, as a traditional institution of knowledge, tends to resist the offer and the influence of media ways of informing and acquiring knowledge it has long offered a compromise with the modern ways of learning. New technology is helping the educational process to be more dynamic, and for teachers as well. Dynamics and flexibility are essential attributes of modern educational system. A more modernized system of education offers students the possibility to have influence in shaping the process of teaching, while the role of teacher has been substituted for the role of moderator (Radović, 2008). The conclusion Digital media can be applied in educational systems on all levels. They are used on education in early childhood, youth work, professional education and improvement of adult education. They are widely used in classes, exercise curriculums, data bases, tools, games. Different applications can be applied in learning programs and in relevant activities. However, as mass technology rapidly develops, the world is quickly connected by means of communication. Curriculums and methods which can nourish critical spirit arouse curiosity and interest for the media have long been in the field of extracurricular content. Media is a part of present and it sure will be the future of human society. For that reason, we must find ways to make these resources useful in preservation of cultural capital, development of freedom, happiness and democracy. In this way values which enable subsistence of society in this turbulent time of globalization will be preserved. By 442 Marina Ivanović / Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 149 (2014) 438 – 442 introducing media literacy to curriculums, the goal of making a civillic society in media culture can be considered, It will help children and young people to become critically autonomous towards media influence (Masterman, 1993). In the future, the process of learning will change and students will become active agents, setting their own pace and way of learning and the amount of knowledge they acquire. Kovačević (2006) points out the advantage of media application in education because they make it possible for students to choose according to their own set of skills, needs and information. In this manner they could introduce themselves to ultimately desired outcome and gain awareness of what they know, which skills and habits they have acquired, so in that respect they will be capable to best appraise themselves through portfolios and student files. When it comes to media education, students develop ability of articulating their problems, competence of understanding, explaining and changing communities for the better. Therefore, "media literacy develops dialog and research-oriented approach towards the student" (Zgrabljić Rotar, 2005: 88). This kind of approach leads towards education for democracy and it requires radical changes in systems, politics, organization, scientific curriculum and educational technology. If we teach students the skills, knowledge and values which will contribute to their participation in democratic life, we will have achieved an ideal curriculum and an ideal pedagogy. To make all of this come to life, contemporary environment needs to be transferred to classrooms; electronic media needs to be implemented in the educational system with the goal of habitation and development of desirable virtues in students, necessary for life in the modern environment.

III. SKILLS, COMPETENCIES OR A CRITICAL ORIENTATION TO KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

In the tradition that views literacy in relation to a teachable set of skills and competences, an early proponent of media literacy, Patricia Aufderheide suggests that media literacy is the ability to access, analyse, evaluate and communicate messages in a wide variety of forms. She(1998) draws a distinction between media literacy – which entails and builds on education about the ideological, economic, social political and psychological construction and impacts of media – and media competency which is focused on gaining production and interpretive skills, although there may be are overlaps. However, a further set of contextual knowledges, predispositions and orientations is evident in young people's literacy in the age of social media. Research on Facebook use seems to suggest that a divide between a skills based approach to media/social media literacy and a critical/political approach is characteristic of this field of research (Selwyn & Grant 2009).

The types of literacy which are taught and learned or encountered informally, acquired, or rejected, or are lacking in formal and informal education systems, textbooks, games and other media, depend on how literacy is defined either as a set of bounded and enabling skills that can be applied to distinct texts and technologies or as a fluid and contested field of knowledge or orientation to knowledge and society. Literacy is thus a deeply political concept the implications of which are being explored by some scholars where there is production of news with specific and usually predictable ideological narratives, frames and biases. Mulvey advocates a critical deconstruction of popular cinema, with an emphasis on estrangement from the apparently gendered gaze of the camera at the subjects on screen. Thus, an ability to understand the connections between media ownership and control and the production of particular beliefs and behaviours on the part of the audience is a central pillar of research in the critical media literacy tradition.

A challenge for scholars of media and literacy's is that teaching literacy is no longer the domain of trusted and trained educators, just as learning is no longer an atomised and individual activity. New media texts – for instance Wikipedia entries or YouTube channels - are co-produced and lack single authors with no apparent univocal authorial perspective. Corporations own our personal content and decide which aspects of our identities we can display highlight or exclude. The boundaries between online and offline lives are requiring ever more sophisticated orientations towards danger, risk and opportunity. Some argue that in the rush to label certain aspects of new media use as digital literacy, it is crucial to develop a critical engagement with media content and forms (Hargittai and Walejko 2008). For example, this might mean understanding how to make, tailor and upload content to online spaces, but it should also encompass whether users are able to question the principles on which a social network's photograph tagging system or ownership of content works.

Some scholars suggest that creative and critical research should involve examining ways to change, improve, own, protect the safety and privacy of users, and empower them with the right to protest and understand the ownership of content of Facebook users. Research is needed on how social media users can become informed and knowledgeable about the different rules, regulations and loop-holes in different national contexts. This means that studies of social media literacy would include research on issues of ownership, social media website profitability, governance and social control as well as on the way pleasure, identity, expression and participation

Up to a certain point the views of print literacy and (mass) media literacy put forward by scholars such as Bryce-Heath (1996) help us to understand some of the skills and knowledge necessary for young people to participate in a society heavily dependent on the production of media texts. This work is complemented by Marxist and feminist-inspired calls for critical engagement with texts and institutions as a form of media literacy analysis, notably Herman and Chomsky's (1988) propaganda model of news and the work of film theorist, Laura Mulvey, (1975) on gender representation.

In Herman and Chomsky's view, ownership and control of the means of production of news media in a society ruled by elites allied with financial capital results in the area facilitated by social media. Scholars such as David Buckingham (2007) and Tiziana Terranova (2010) argue that the blurring of boundaries between media production and use complicates critical analysis because it can no longer be assumed that the production of media is by one set of people (media producers, for instance,

The BBC, Times of India Group or Time Warner) and its consumption is by another (the audience). To understand what it means to be literate in a social media arena requires research that engages with both political economy and social psychology traditions. This calls for research that examines the ownership of social media platforms, what the owners' intentions are with respect to their users, which users are vulnerable to particular media texts and the interdependencies among these factors.

There is no doubt that various forms of social media are in the ascendency, and are particularly strong influences in the life worlds of some sectors of the global population. Although it is important to recognise that these media and their uses are by no means universal (see Cosenza, 2010 for an illustration of global distribution), they do play a powerful role in the lives of an increasing number of children and young people. New literacy's are continuing to develop around social media and we have argued that it is therefore important for educators to engage with them. Here we echo the sentiments of Hull & Stornaiuolo, who argue that, "…the rewards could not be greater, or the risk of failure more grave for educating a citizenry able and willing to communicate with digital tools across differences in a radically interconnected yet divided world" (Hull & Stornaiuolo, 2010, p. 85).

We can also argue that the existing paradigms of critical literacy and critical media literacy are limited in their capacity to engage productively with the fluid and densely interwoven spaces of social media and suggest that a practice focused model based on the interplay of diverse purposes, contexts and resources is a more useful analytical tool. Our conception of new media practices includes a view of how individual identities are formed and performed and how these are in turn embedded in social networks. The tri-partite model we propose shows practice, identity and networks as interdependent and mutually constitutive. Students are as avid media consumers like other group but, not wise consumers. Therefore there is a definite need to improve their media literacy so that they become informed citizens who look at things critically, take delight in questioning everything and enjoy seeking answers to questions. Teachers should be first trained to incorporate media literacy into the subjects they teach and lead them to a complex world which throws many challenges. As stated by Tennyson in the last line of his poem Ulysses, media educators should lead their students with the mission, "to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield".

By deploying the concept of advantageous practice we have suggested ways in which some of the ambitions of earlier critical traditions might be reframed to support educators in the important endeavour of responding to youth engagement in social media. However, we have also identified how the so-called ethical challenge requires further work. If the enterprise of education has anything to do with looking at the world and the part one plays in it (developing a position), then working out what one

might do to re-position oneself seems to us to be an important and worthwhile project.

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