Chapter 19
Bring the Media Literacy of Turkish Pre–Service Teachers to the Table

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ABSTRACT

In this study "media" which has different meaning from basic media tools of communications industry such as named newspaper, journal, magazine and television broadcast as a printed and electronic media has defined for education. This definition basically has used to express in the field of computer-supported training and web-based distance education tools including today's developments in technology. This research study was conducted Istanbul University Hasan Ali Yucel Faculty of Education students who were pre-service teachers. The research was carried out in three stages. In the first stage; a computer-aided application which was prepared in game format had been selected to be use as training material. In the second phase has been investigated how it is understood by the target audience of these prepared course materials. Finally; to put forth candidate teachers' media literacy ability during their preparing phase of course material as well as preparing the assessment using qualitative and quantitative studies have been conducted. In the conclusion, the deficiencies have been revealed and presented suggestions for solutions.

INTRODUCTION

Media literacy is defined as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a variety of forms (Aufderheide, 1993).

On its official webpage, NAMLE (Nationale Association For Media Literacy Education, 2014a) offers the following basic definition confined to North America, "media literacy is seen to consist of a series of communication competencies, including the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms, including print and non-print messages", while, in a broader sense, it defines media literacy as "The ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms-is interdisciplinary by nature. Media literacy represents a necessary, inevitable, and realistic

response to the complex, ever-changing electronic environment and communication cornucopia that surround us".

Media literacy is being used by a gradually increasing number of academics and educators to refer to the critical analysis process and learning to create one's own messages (printed, audial, visual, multimedia). An emphasis is made to the basic teaching and learning of these skills via mass communication texts in school environments (Alvarado, Gutch & Wollen, 1987; Brown, 1991; Hobbs, 1994; Piette, 1997, Transmitting: Bagli, 2004).

Today, the increase in the variety of communication channels in parallel with the development of mass communication tools brought along the problem of not only providing content to be presented with these tools but also access to accurate information within an abundance of knowledge.

The variety of the channels offered by electronic media with the support of technology creates a center of attraction for all segments from children to adults. Under this intense information, especially children, receive this material directly and unconsciously without the chance of choosing which in turn influence them in the same capacity.

In order to reduce this impact on children and raise awareness, countries have enacted their own programs. With this purpose, a worldwide movement in Media Literacy Education started about thirty five years ago (Kubey, 2003). Media educators from around the world have been meeting and sharing curricula, research, and strategies with increasing frequency.

When the studies in this field conducted in Turkey are analyzed, it is seen that RTUK (Radio Television Authority in Turkey) began a media literacy program in cooperation with the MEB (Ministry of Education) in five pilot cities, namely Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Erzurum and Adana in 2004 (Bek, 2011). Oguzhan and Haydari (2011) states that; "media literacy in Turkey is especially defined as "the ability, which must be gained by students, to comprehend and evaluate

the messages that are potentially harmful". It is clearly articulated that the perception of media literacy in Turkey is different than the rest of the world; it mainly focuses on readings of media texts, especially television programs. With an emphasis on the importance of separating the "fictitious" from "reality", the purpose of media literacy is identified as "to realize the power of media in manipulating, directing and imposing certain ideas". In other words, media literacy in Turkey aims to teach individuals to be conscious of the negative influences of media so as to be able to avoid these influences; and media literacy courses are perceived as one way of realizing this purpose." (Oguzhan & Haydari, 2011) With their aforementioned explanation, they emphasize that a protectionist manner is pursued in dealing with the issue of media literacy in Turkey, unlike all the other countries that attach importance to its development. Forming a commission, Ministry of Education and RTUK prepared a guide book and a curriculum for a Media Literacy Course to be offered at primary education with the expected outcomes of knowledge, skills and values. Later on, this program was rolled out countrywide in the 2007-2008 education semester as an elective course for the 6th, 7th and 8th grades of primary education (Bek, 2011).

According to the guide (MEB & RTUK, 2006) the Media Literacy Course has been designed with an approach that takes into consideration the value of knowledge and individual experiences. In this way, it has become an attempt to put into practice a new approach which is activity-oriented, balancing knowledge and skills, taking into account individual differences as well as enabling students' interaction with their environment. In accordance with this approach, the main aims of the Media Literacy Course are to raise students with;

1.   *The ability to examine media from different perspectives and acquired sensitivity to their environment, knowledge regarding the prob-*

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