

INFORMATION LITERACY AND CULTURAL VALUES - LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

In recent years, information literacy has emerged as a concept and is embedded in many international projects, educational programs and initiatives, with the main task not only to promote this concept but also to promote it as one of the possible solutions to overcome the "digital divide". Probably this is due to the fact that information literacy is one of the key competencies that underlies and builds the fundamental knowledge of modern society.

We are witnessing that after the mass introduction of innovative information and communication technologies in people's lives, various studies related to the impact of the Internet on the psyche and cognitive abilities of man, were conducted which have a significant impact on successful learning of young people in the university information environment. For this reason, this paper examines the various manifestations of culture, and in particular the influence of individual elements and features of culture in the process of information literacy training in the universities. Based on the fact that the culture of different nations and ethnic groups has a positive or negative effect on the perception and understanding of new knowledge and leads to a change in values and abilities to build social connections, contacts, etc., it is necessary to study the relationship between culture and information literacy. A natural liaison between these two concepts is the university information environment, which is the focus of all processes accompanying on the one hand education and on the other education and the formation of values in young people.

In this regard, this paper presents specific educational approaches to the formation of information literacy in young people as a set of skills that contribute to the recognition and evaluation of information and its effective application and use according to the goals of the individual or of the group of people. In particular, the economic, law and social aspects related to access to information and the mechanisms for knowledge transfer that are influencing the formation of values in society, are considered.

Keywords: Information, literacy, cultural values, education, experience, university, development, knowledge.

1 INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technologies, in accordance with the latest advances in science, has led to their mass penetration and use in all areas of social practice. Even the private life of the individual turned out to be highly dependent on the top achievements of technological development. The use of information and communication technologies is usually associated with unrestricted access to information and, therefore, with increasing the knowledge and skills of people to handle them [1]. As a result of this symbiosis between people and technologies, the information asymmetry between the users of global information resources and the specific knowledge related to them is overcome. This necessitated the definition of a set of skills that would allow the end user of information and knowledge to use them as effectively as possible according to their needs. "Information literacy" is a term that defines this set of skills necessary for each user in his quest to acquire in-depth knowledge, experience and good practices not only for the use of information, but also for ways to search, find, acquire and analyse it [2].

As a result of the above-mentioned factors, the information overflow received from the various information channels put the users in the objective impossibility to make sense of the received information as well as to extract the necessary knowledge from it. [3]

1.1 Learning Experience - Information and Knowledge

At this point we should note the essential difference between information management and knowledge management. If information management is related to the use of information and communication technologies, then knowledge management is related to the ability of subjects to create, acquire, store

and disseminate knowledge. In this regard, there is a wealth of literature on the definition of the term "knowledge management". In fact, it is a set of activities that aim to support the processes in a given environment, through the preservation of organizational knowledge and their rational use. The provision of knowledge, aimed at making the right decisions and achieving the desired (expected) results occupies a key position in this process [4]. The pyramid of knowledge, introduced by the American scientist Russell Acoff can be used for the essence of knowledge. It determines the hierarchy and the specific dependence of a group of components - data, information, knowledge, wisdom, where:

- the data: raw, unprocessed facts.
- information: all signals that enter a system from outside, are processed and used by it;
- knowledge: generally represents the accumulated information;
- and wisdom: as a combination of past experience and knowledge, reason and intuition, allows reasonable assumptions to be made about events that have not yet occurred, often answering the questions why, what, how, where, when. [5], [6], [7].

1.2 Culture and Cultural Values

Naturally, there is also a strong determining factor, on which the ability to absorb knowledge and its perception and understanding is based, called 'culture'. It can be said that culture is part of wisdom and is formed on the basis of a successfully conducted information process. Based on this process, new knowledge is generated, whose dissemination further enriches the information space. [8]

The various manifestations of culture have a symbolic, communicative or informational character. Modern American anthropology is spreading the concept of the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz, who views culture as a system of symbols and intertwined meanings. Geertz believes that man is stopped by a network of meanings that he himself has woven [4], and this "network of meanings" is precisely culture, as a complex system of knowledge that allows people to orient themselves in the processes and events in the surrounding world. In this context, it is necessary to clarify the link between the concepts of "culture" and "information literacy".

The concept of "culture" is as important to human knowledge as the concepts of "gravity", "matter", "evolution", "society", "personality", etc. Originating in ancient Rome, the term "culture" means "farming" or cultivating primarily the soil, the land. It was not until the seventeenth century that the term acquired a spiritual connotation. It is used in the sense of "improving human qualities". A cultured person is educated, well-read, sophisticated in his behaviour. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the word "culture" is associated mainly with fine literature, good upbringing, the possession of specific knowledge and skills. Thus, the term culture gradually began to develop more actively in the 1960s and is separated as an independent category and central idea of anthropology. This challenges culturologists and philosophers to begin to pay more attention to various aspects related to the concept of "culture" and its connection with other concepts such as "civilization", "spiritual activity", "creativity", etc.

The contemporary aspects of the relationship between "culture" and "information literacy" are expressed in the process accompanying the arrangement, analysis and systematization of the endless flow of information and knowledge about cultural phenomena in the surrounding world. In this way the methodological task is performed in all scientific researches. This process leads to the generation of new knowledge and further enriches the cultural and information collection of mankind [9], [10].

The most significant systemic division of culture is associated with its differentiation as material and spiritual. It is in the conceptual series, arising on the basis of the category of spiritual culture, that a social phenomenon is found, fixed by the concept of "information culture". Information activity refers to the system of spiritual activity and therefore information culture is a subsystem of the system of spiritual culture. Information culture is an integral part of culture. It is an essential aspect of the social nature of man, who is the link between information literacy and culture itself.

As a concept, information culture appeared in the middle of the twentieth century, as a natural continuation of the concepts of "information society" and "information civilization". The philosophical concept of culture is the methodological tool that introduces the concept of "information culture" in the system of categories of the theory of information activity.

To date, this term is subject to an increasing number of discussions in both scientific and in particular in the philosophical literature, which is another indicator of its relevance.

For example, the Estonian culturologist Yuri Lotman believes that culture is characterized as a collection of all non-hereditary types of information, ways of organizing and preserving them, or more precisely "culture is a device that generates information" [5], [11].

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Methodology of Information Literacy and Cultural Anthropology

The rapid development of cultural anthropology in the late nineteenth - early twentieth century allowed a detailed study of the life and the way of living of the so-called primitive peoples. Like "civilized peoples", they also have a system of norms and values, expressed through the respective language, songs, dances, customs, traditions and behavioural rules, which help their life experience to be arranged and organized and their interactions to be regulated. Thus, a broader and more democratic view of the concept of "culture" is gradually adopted in science. Culture is already seen as a complex and multi-component phenomenon, including hundreds of elements, features, forms and varieties. Currently, culture is studied by dozens of sciences and each of them chooses its own aspect, point of view and approach [12].

Human culture as an object of knowledge is multifaceted. Its various elements and components can be described by specific scientific disciplines, such as ethnology, cultural anthropology, philosophy, religious studies, sociology, history, etc.

Culture is a system of values, a world of meanings, a way of activity, a sphere of self-reproduction of an individual, a symbolic activity, a real and spiritual generalization of reality, but it is impossible not to see that both axiological and technological characteristics of culture are explicit definitions of human activity and of people themselves.

There are currently more than 500 definitions of "culture". These definitions are divided into several groups. The first group includes descriptive definitions, which identify culture with all kinds of activities, customs and beliefs. The second group includes those definitions that connect culture with the traditions or the social heritage of a specific society. Culture can be defined as a socially inherited set of practices and beliefs that determine the foundations of human life. The third group includes the definitions that define culture as rules, which help organize human behaviour. In other cases, scientists understand culture as a means of adapting society to the relevant natural environment, emphasizing the fact that culture is a product of human activity. Culture can also be treated as a set of forms of acquired behaviour, specific to a group or society. These forms of behaviour are passed down from generation to generation.

Hence the conclusion that the methodological potential should possess the approach, according to which culture is characterized as a productive existence [13].

3 RESULTS

Social practice dictates the need to increase the level of knowledge, abilities and skills that are directly related to the acquisition, processing, storage and transmission of information and knowledge, as well as their use and application by man in life.

In this regard, the specific educational approaches for the formation of information literacy in young people as a set of abilities, contribute to the recognition and evaluation of information and its application and use according to the goals of the individual or of a group of people [14].

Effective approaches include:

- creating a model for information literacy training that develops the ability to think critically and evaluate the discovered information;
- development, integration and use of programs related to key information literacy skills;
- developing programs for information users of different ages to expand their information culture;
- evaluating the effective use of online information;
- developing the individual and collective ability to properly evaluate information;
- developing the abilities to quickly extract the implicit content in information.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The creation of information culture is a priority task for every social group or organization. An essential condition for modern society is the training of competent, creative professionals skilled to apply new information and communication technologies in various fields of human development.

In this context, the problem of creating information culture arises, which determines the degree of information literacy in young people. The existence of information culture is of vital significance for man and society.

If, in the period preceding the advent of information society people relied on personally acquired information, today the dependence on the information that is acquired and stored in the information environment dominates. And its effective use is impossible without information culture.

The formation of information literacy among students in the process of their education, aimed at developing skills for an independent processing of information, establishing habits for searching, selection and rethinking of information, allows students to achieve their professional development [15].

Last but not least, the final assessment of the formation of information literacy in students is carried out by doing complex assignments, tests and individual tasks, which allows to assess the ability of students to perform complex, multicomponent tasks that may have different optimal solutions, their readiness for professional communication, their ability to find interdisciplinary links as well as the level of their creativity [16], [17].

Summarizing the data from the analysis, we can conclude that information literacy is closely related to the information culture of each and every society. It is formed by human activity and depends on the level of information culture of society.

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