

Article

The Importance of Disinformation and Misinformation in the Development of Students' Information Culture

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Abstract: This article highlights the importance of misinformation and disinformation in the formation of students' information culture and several ways to develop critical thinking skills through them.

Keywords: information culture, misinformation, disinformation, analysis, Internet, television, fake news, media sites, manipulation, propaganda

Introduction

Information culture is the ability to know how to use information correctly, effectively, and safely, to understand it, to critically evaluate it, to search for it, and to use it properly. This concept represents the culture of people's conscious use of various information sources and is of great importance in today's digital age.

Information culture includes the following main aspects:

1. The ability to access and select information — the ability to quickly find the necessary information and choose the right sources.
2. Critical approach to information — analysis of information, assessment of its correctness or incorrectness, protection from unfounded information.
3. Ensuring information security — protection of personal data, compliance with cyber security rules.
4. Compliance with ethics and legal norms — understanding and compliance with the ethics of copyright and information use.

Information culture is directly related to the development of information technologies, which brings new aspects to people's lives through information flows. Therefore, in the modern world, it is necessary for everyone to have knowledge and skills in information culture.

Formation of information culture among students is of great importance today. As a result of the rapid development of information technologies and Internet resources, information culture requires not only technical skills, but also the ability to search, evaluate, process and correctly interpret information.

Information culture includes the following main aspects:

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1. Ability to search and evaluate information: Students need to be able to find quality and reliable information to be able to evaluate their reliability by analyzing various sources.
2. Information processing and analysis - It is required to analyze the received information, extract the main information, and draw the correct conclusions from them.
3. Digital Culture and Ethics - Attention should be paid to online ethics, privacy and cyber security.
4. Safe and effective sharing of information - It is important that students respect copyright when sharing information, do not use information they do not own without permission, and adhere to consistent ethical standards.
5. Critical thinking ability - It is necessary to have a critical approach to the received information, to analyze it objectively and to protect against wrong information.

In the formation of information culture, the following practices can be widely used in educational institutions:

- Conducting classes on information technology and information culture.
- Referrals to useful online resources and academic articles for independent study.
- Building immunity against lies and misinformation by teaching critical analysis.

Thus, formation of information culture among students is an important tool for their personal and professional development.

Nowadays, it is necessary to take into account the number of factors that distract students' minds and destroy the purity of information. Misinformation and disinformation can be cited as examples of information that violates the transparency of such information.

Disinformation is part of propaganda or propaganda and is defined as false information that is deliberately disseminated to deceive people.[1] According to Russian sources, "Disinformation is the process of deliberately creating and distributing false or distorted information to a competitor or business partner for more effective combat operations, cooperation, investigation of information leakage and its exit route, and identification of potential customers of the black market[2]"classified as.

Misinformation refers to false information that consists of lies or misrepresented facts that are disseminated without the intent to deceive. This may be the result of factual errors, misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

Today, we get more information in one day than people in the 15th century did in a lifetime. For example, just a century ago, a person could read only 50 books in a lifetime.

According to a study conducted by Martin Gilbert, in 1986, one person received information that could be placed in 40 newspapers. In 2007, thanks to the easy access to the Internet and television, their number increased significantly: the information received by one person per day corresponds to 174 newspapers.[4]. Misleading and false information, on the other hand, is dangerous if it is disseminated specifically with the intent to deceive or influence. In such cases, we talk about disinformation. Thus, its main difference from unreliable information is the existence of the target.[5]

Also, disinformation itself is a process of manipulation of information, for example: by presenting incomplete or complete, but already unnecessary information, it is possible to mislead someone, break the context, spoil part of the information.

The goal of such an influence is always the same - to induce the opponent to do what the manipulator wants. The action of the subject to whom disinformation is directed may consist of making a decision necessary for the manipulator or refusing to make a decision that is inconvenient for the manipulator. But in any case, the ultimate goal is to control the actions of the opponent.

Therefore, disinformation is a product of human activity, which tries to create a false impression and, accordingly, induces the desired action or inaction.

Fake news can be spread in different ways. Common social media sites for fake news include: Facebook (42%), TikTok (35%), Twitter (32%), Truth Social (28%), Snapchat (27%),

Parler (26%), Youtube (22%), Instagram (21%). [2] In early 2023, a survey of US citizens found that more than 40 percent had seen false information about COVID-19 within a week. When the same study was conducted in Slovakia, it was found that 45% of them had seen fake news about the war in neighboring Ukraine, the highest among the countries surveyed.

Consumers also saw misinformation, mostly about climate change and politics. We can see that false information is widespread in all countries of the world and it occupies a large part of the messages on the networks.

In the fight against fakes, it is necessary to find solutions to a number of issues, from increasing the media literacy of the population to regulating this issue by law.

In particular, our National legislation does not provide for responsibility for spreading fake news. The Administrative and Criminal Codes do not specify responsibility for presenting false information as true in matters of social importance using modern information and communication technologies.

Due to the low level of information culture and sense of irresponsibility and impunity among some active Internet users, it is observed that false information and fabrications are being actively distributed, which leads to confusion and destabilization of social relations among the population.

This situation, in turn, causes concerns about the formation of an unjustified negative opinion of the public regarding the processes and events in the life of the country. Because most citizens accept these reports as real and correct. Therefore, today the issue of responsibility for these actions is on the agenda.

When approaching this issue, it is necessary not to confuse regulation with censorship, to clearly define standards and criteria, and to remember that the authority to make decisions rests with the courts.

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