CONNECT!ONS Med!aLit moments

Leadership Letter for Global MIL

*"Regional cooperation and global cooperation benefit everybody.
A rising tide lifts all boats."* – Jin Liqun

The benefits of media literacy education have no borders. Regardless of where a person lives in the world, media literacy and the critical thinking skills it fosters promote sound decision making, better navigation of complex and abundant messages, less vulnerability to malicious actors and stronger abilities to communicate. In this issue of "Connections," we hear from experts from Latin America and Eurasia about how media literacy education is developing in their regions, as well as media literacy's role in our new, global, hyper-connected media landscape.

While here in the US, we still have much work to do in terms of incorporating media literacy education as a "norm" in the classroom and in our daily lives, it is unwise to neglect the development of our field in nations across the globe. Nation states throughout the world are confronted every day with new benefits and liabilities due to emerging communications technologies. Innovative media literacy practitioners everywhere are learning and developing creative ways to help students enhance the benefits and minimize the risks that come as consequences of rapidly evolving communications tools. Also, today all messages are global – or at least they have the potential to be heard worldwide. And, it's not always transparent where in the world messages originate. As we navigate this new terrain, we can benefit by sharing best practices, listening to what is working in other parts of the world, and making stronger connections with our peers across the seas.

Working across borders to promote media literacy is not without its challenges. More authoritarian nations have much different information access standards than countries with more democratic governments. Even among democracies, media consumption and production standards and laws vary widely. But, ultimately, Jin Liqun's quote rings true. The benefits of media literacy will reach more people who need it if we cooperate regionally and globally than if we don't. So, it's best to come together to reach our collective goals, with the understanding that each nation will implement and utilize media literacy education in ways that are appropriate for their individual laws, standards and cultures.

At CML we are enthusiastic about future opportunities for international cooperation. We look forward to opportunities for international exchanges for media literacy teachers and practitioners, expansion of global media literacy networks and worldwide advocacy for media literacy education.

Interview with Julio-Cesar Mateus Borea

Dr. Mateus *is an associate professor and researcher at the University of Lima (Peru) and a guest lecturer at universities in Peru, Spain and Ecuador. He received his PhD in Communication from Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona. His research focuses on media education and digital cultures. Dr. Mateus is co-editor of Media Education in Latin America (London/NY, Routledge, 2019) and MayéuTIC@: 28 ideas to hack the school (Lima, Fundación Telefónica, 2019). His works have been published in journals such as Culture & Education, New Approaches in Educational Research, The Journal of Media Literacy and the International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education.*

Center for Media Literacy (CML): Julio-Cesar, in your book Media Education in Latin America you noted that, although the development of media literacy education has gone in different directions in Latin America and the "Northern" European-U.S. practitioners, there is still an intertwining that is central to media literacy practice. For example, Len Masterman's framework and approach to media literacy also incorporates Paulo Friere's Pedagogy of the Oppressed to the point where there is a merging of ideas and approaches. How do you see these shared perspectives? Where do you see similarities? Where do you see differences?

Julio-Cesar Mateus Borea (JCMB): Although there has not been a high level of exchange, there are common ties in ideas and thoughts, such as those you pointed out. It is a pity that authors such as Jesús Martín-Barbero, Teresa Quiroz or Valerio Fuenzalida, who have done fruitful research at the intersections of popular culture and education, have only been vaguely read in the North. But neither do authors like Len Masterman, David Buckingham or Tessa Jolls usually appear in the bibliography of works from most Latin American universities. I would say that, in the last decade, this has begun to change. For instance, it is inevitable that the new generations of Latin American researchers will start publishing in English. But still, the number of exchanges is not ideal.

As for the epistemological and theoretical approaches, the academic interest in relations between communication and education in Latin America – which Paulo Freire and his liberating pedagogy had a foundational voice– have been undertaken with "deep misunderstandings." As Martín Barbero wrote, there is a discourse hegemonized by instrumental conceptions of the media and by illustrated ideas of education. In practice, this translates into the fact that many countries in this part of the world continue to take into account the margin of educational systems and practices of the media. The work of

many authors in this region has marked the sociological or anthropological exploration of the material and affective bonds that young people create with technological devices. This is something we share on both sides.

CML: Going forward, do you see more sharing, communication and commonalities in how media literacy education is pursued in Latin America and the North?

JCMB: There are definitely commonalities, although not always well contextualized. For example, in many countries in this region, Marc Prensky's article about digital natives became a "mantra" among teachers. However, it was interpreted with an incomplete approach – almost deterministic. Even nowadays, many use this article to justify there is no need for training in media. Teachers ask: What can we teach the students if they are born with innate digital abilities? There is, at this point, a two-faced problem. First, they seem to ignore the deep gaps in access to technologies. It is not the same to be born in a country that produces technology with an intense penetration of devices and the Internet, rather than in countries like ours, where some cities do not even have drinking water or electricity.

    Second, there seems to be more interest in considering educational technology as a panacea. The use of technological devices for the teaching task, whether to transmit, review or better manage teaching is important, but media education is different. It develops a more critical voice. This voice may sometimes be overshadowed by a technological discourse criticized, for example, by authors such as Morozov or Nicholas Carr. We have plenty of events sponsored by companies that sell technology, but I think that we are neglecting the discussion about media pedagogy, which should be the most pressing matter. Let's look at the impact of fake news on electoral processes on both sides, and ask ourselves if the underlying problem is the media itself, or the uncritical way that we interact with them.

CML: How can we encourage more collaboration? What efforts do you see that seem promising?

JCMB: I believe that we have the basics to develop projects of various types. For example, comparative studies between models and experiences that have been applied on both sides. For the United States or Europe, I think it could be revealing to know the tradition of education in various Latin American countries, as it relates to popular communication and the development of media skills through informal and non-formal education. It may also be interesting to explore the results of massive technology investments and their outcomes. As we have found, Latin America is among the most dynamic regions in terms of technology purchase, and its efforts to overcome access gaps are relevant. However, these actions are almost never supported from the media education approach.

CML: In your research on media literacy practice in Latin America, what stood out for you in terms of "the state of the field?"

JCMB: In general, media education in Latin America has had an asymmetrical presence in national policies. Thus, the main approach regarding ICT (Information and Communications Technologies) has not responded to the citizens rights approach. In the last 30 years, Latin American governments have made efforts to connect schools to media, but from the perspective of media as an assistant to teaching. Even when teacher education and training programs on technology use have been undertaken, the balance is not there, because most of the time, technological action has taken priority over pedagogical action.

Regarding infrastructure, the number of classrooms with computers and internet has grown significantly, especially in urban areas. However, the relationship between the use of computers and internet and education quality are missing, as well as effective strategies to incorporate ICT in initial teacher training. Even when media education programs insert technology under the rhetoric of digital inclusion as the path to guaranteeing citizenship and learning of children and youth, it lacks a critical view that promotes the development of communicative abilities.

Finally, Latin American researchers disseminate their work at a reduced scale, which prevents higher visibility and dialogue with the rest of the world. This barrier was one of the motivations for producing this book.

CML: What do you believe is needed to advance the field in Latin America? What could make the most difference, when thinking about scaling media literacy?

JCMB: In the first place, it is urgent to put media literacy on the political agenda. As I mentioned before, governments should think less of technology as devices to buy and focus on its cultural dimensions. We should educate on media because we interact with it every day. We use it to make decisions, to inform and to express. But each Latin American country is a world of its own, always subject to the vagaries of politics. In most countries, education is still seen as an instrument, not as a sustained public policy. Thus, media education moves back and forth depending on the governments' desires. This hinders the continuity that is necessary for progress. Without a political push we cannot put media education in schools, which is something that global organizations like UNESCO have been pursuing for decades. The main reason should be the formation of critical citizens and, of course, this is of little interest to many in political power. We also need to diagnose how people interact with media in and out of school, what skills are being developed through theses interactions, and how it's used to create and fulfill needs. Ultimately, basic research can play a very important role.

CML: Your own research and work at the University of Lima is exciting and innovative. How do you see your work fitting in with the strategic needs of the field in Latin America? What are your priorities?

JCMB: My work reflects and continues the tradition of other researchers from this university who opened an important course in this field. Rosa María Alfaro's work based on citizen communication and specifically the use of radio in popular sectors as an element to enhance citizen participation. Also, Fernando Ruiz, who developed projects

for schoolchildren and teachers to train audiovisual literacy, especially using movies as an excuse for debating social problems and personal values. Or Teresa Quiroz, who authored seminal works in the country about video games, soap operas or the children's use of internet and its implications for learning. Following that route, we have a research group in Education and Communication that is currently working on topics such as the use of smartphones or social networks (YouTube and Instagram) or computational thinking... the results of these works should be used to contextualize the new student. We need to know who we are talking to. From these inputs, we expect to work together with authorities and school teachers to design projects and experiences in media education. I believe that our needs should be binding, from communication and media studies, to teacher training centers – pre-service and in-service – for the production of educational material based on their own interests and needs. Deepening the link with schools is essential.

CML: What do you see as "next steps" now that you have established a bench line for media literacy practice in Latin America? What would you like to see happen?

JCMB: It is necessary to develop instruments to explore levels of media competence in different social groups (children, mothers, elderly people, etc.). One of the challenges is to produce instruments that overcome self-perception. That is, instruments that not only rely on what people report as abilities and skills that they think they possess, but their actual capacities, as well. These instruments should also be able to respond to each local context, because the use of media is related to the resources, uses and customs available at each place. An ongoing investigation with students is confirming the technical skills that children develop on their own to produce videos. These capacities are wasted by formal education. In this regard, Dr. Carlos Scolari from Spain led a project in eight countries – two of them in Latin America – to understand how young children are learning skills outside of school. According to the study, once the informal learning strategies and practices applied by young people outside formal institutions are identified, the team will "translate" them into a series of activities and proposals that will be implemented within school settings.

   On the other hand, many educational levels are successful in explicitly making the need to develop media literacy skills – although they almost always reduce them to the digital, which creates some confusion and excludes certain media that is still important in people's cultural lives. This is an opportunity to re-signify these competences from the perspective of media education.

   Finally, we can promote competitive funds for research and exchange networks between researchers from different regions. I hope that the book Media Education in Latin America can be a starting point for this.

Interview with Firudin Gurbanov

Mr. Firudin Gurbanov *was appointed deputy minister of education of the Republic of Azerbaijan by decree of the nation's president in 2014. Prior to that, he served as the chief of staff of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan. His professional history also includes heading the Science and Education Department of the Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan; department head at the State Directorate of Inspection of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and working as an assistant professor and dean at the Baku branch of Moscow Cooperative Institute. Mr. Gurbanov began his career in 1975 as an economist and research fellow the Research Institute of Economics. He holds a PhD in Economics and has authored one monograph and more than 60 scholarly articles. Among his many honors, he received the title of "Honorary Culture Worker" from Azerbaijan's Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 2014.*

Center for Media Literacy (CML): At the Eastern Partnership/European Commission meeting in Tbilisi in June 2019, you shared a story of how new employees at a banking institution were being "trained" to understand the values and overall mission of the bank, rather than the specifics of operations. Would you please share that story with our readers, and tell us why it was significant for you? How does it relate to your philosophy of education?

Firudin Gurbanov (FG): In a globalizing world, the solution to global problems depends on the people who have formed the society. The speedy development of technology in the 21st century has influenced different spheres of life considerably, including formal education. Today, there is a disparity between the achievements in the sphere of education and their practical application. Industry finds it hard to consume this disparity. The application of knowledge and skills in the frames of formal education becomes limited after the lapse of time. Obtained knowledge becomes obsolete. From this point of view, competences acquired within a short time span, particularly professional education and training, become more attractive. People begin to give preference to less expensive intensive courses, since they are less time consuming. In this context, education in the 21st century must be flexible, and application of acquired knowledge and skills is a must.

At the same time, the role of many factors in the formation of a responsible consciousness in the person is very important. These factors include the level of development of individual consciousness and morals in social life. In reality, this is a global tendency. At the Istanbul Conference, in which I took part, a professor from

Hong Kong gave a really impressive example. One day, his daughter surprised him by telling him she was employed in the banking sector, even though she did not have any education in finance. He phoned the bank and asked the management about the rationale behind their decision to employ his daughter. The administration of the bank noted that they were in search of candidates who possessed general competences – high moral values, critical thinking, etc. Afterwards being hired, the recruited candidates received special training on the operations of the bank, so they would eventually become trained specialists.

Today, institutions and organizations should give preference to one's moral values, humaneness, mercifulness, belief, love, kindness and other positive qualities when hiring. I think that people with such qualities contribute to the development of the institutions they are affiliated with and, in general, they ensure the future development of their countries and civilization.

It is clear that the current generation needs purposeful education. The content of education must ensure the development of high humanistic, technological and ecological culture. We need comprehensive education that develops holistic mindsets in students. One of the important goals of education is to provide learners with the underlying knowledge necessary for them to develop and form relationships within their natural environments. Education should help individuals to comprehend society, understand the phenomenon of culture and the conditions of student's own personal lives, as well as the conditions of mankind.

It is not accidental that the education policy of Azerbaijan places focus on tolerance and respect for human and cultural heritage. National and universal values, human rights and liberties, and tolerance have been determined as priorities for state policy in the sphere of education. When curricula, textbooks and teaching guides are developed, key elements of multiculturalism are incorporated. The education system aims to form qualities such as tolerance towards other nations and cultures. People from different nations and cultures live and prosper in peace and security in Azerbaijan. "Introduction to Multiculturalism" is taught at the undergraduate level, and "Azerbaijani Multiculturalism" is instructed at the graduate level. There is a real chance to create a highly-cultured generation – one that could change the future for the better.

Personally, I express the meaning of life through a simple formula: $ML=BHV+LM+LF+GD$. ML stands for "meaning of life," BHV is "belief in highest values," LM is for "love for motherland and country of habitation," LF is for "love for one's family," and GD is "good deeds." There is opportunity for everyone to do good deeds throughout his or her life. During the years of education, one should acquire sound knowledge and help those who are in need, support people who experience moral tension, inspire others with empathy, demonstrate high culture, give preference to the interests of the universe, country and the collective over one's personal interests, display a positive attitude toward others, and share in life's joy and grief. Life is like a boomerang. What you do returns to you.

CML: In media literacy education, our goal is to help citizens/students learn to think critically as they consume and produce media so that wise choices are possible. With the global media culture so pervasive and influential today, how do you view the importance of media literacy education?

FG: Today, mass communication and the education system function as two of the most influential mechanisms in the formation of personality. The constant demand for mass media in society is based on people's increasing need for information. Recent research attaches greater importance to the formation of student's skills. Intercultural communication, media literacy, digital skills, critical thinking, innovation and adaptation are seen. We know that the present stage of development of society is characterized by an abundance of information and an increase in the influence of information. This is a result of the speedy development of information-communication technologies and processes of globalization.

In the new global information society, the success of new projects depend upon the degree to which they can attract citizens to their information space. Thus, there is pressure on people to possess those abilities. Under such conditions, new problems emerge, which are connected with the need for people to gain new competences and/or adapt to new activities.

One such competency is the media literacy. Media literacy can be defined as an ability to build effective interrelations with information sources and flows, as well as the ability to create media texts on the basis of different mass information and communication means. The importance of media literacy education is connected with the moments touched upon by us. On the other hand, media literacy begins to play a much more important role in the formation of personality throughout time. According to UNESCO, media literacy plays an important role in support of human rights, and the formation of the young generation in the spirit of peace, justice, freedom, mutual respect and understanding.

Global media culture has grown, and it has an overwhelming influence. Media culture covers informational and cultural aspects. Thus, the information culture is more than the accumulation of applied knowledge, which allows access to libraries, media and computer networks. It characterizes certain criteria for the development of a person – his/her comprehension, dialogue, variations and knowledge. In media literacy in the 21st century, we also include the formation of a culture of critical thinking, development of communication skills, analysis of media texts and their evaluation, as well as skills for using media equipment.

Development of critical thinking skills through curricula using real-life examples increases media literacy among students and prevents them from digesting information without analysis. From this point of view, the importance of education is undeniable. Also, mass media, very often disseminates false information and confuses users. To prevent this, individuals should increase their awareness of media literacy, and institutions should advocate for media literacy education.

CML: Media literacy is now considered a strategic defense priority by the EU and by NATO, as well as a priority for U.S. embassies abroad. Do you see media literacy as a strategic defense priority for your country?

FG: Media education and media literacy have been acquiring topicality in the period of the fourth industrial revolution. Information and technologies cross borders, and it's a priority to prevent detrimental impacts while enhancing important benefits.

In discussing the strategic priorities of media literacy, it should be noted that a level of media literacy in a society is important for ensuring information security. There is a healthy, objective and deliberate approach to the philosophy of media education and media literacy.

We are living in the era of information, internet and other information technologies. Political pluralism is reigning in Azerbaijan. Free media, internet and information agencies are functioning, and a great part of the population makes use of internet. Therefore, media education must take into account the growing impact of digital technologies. Sometimes subjective information that is not based on reliable sources may create confusion in any sphere of society.

Unfortunately, in recent years, global media is propagating and agitating separatist regimes. Such an approach contradicts the norms and principles of international law and is a serious obstacle for international security. It is not an accident that there is advocacy to legalize the activities of separatist regimes and educational institutions, which were illegally founded and functioning in territories not recognized internationally. In some cases, such illegal cooperation is favored by educational institutions in some countries where democracy prevails. The global community may be unaware of it, but mass media disseminates such cases, and from the point of view of media literacy, the basic mission of the global community is to reprimand such practices. I am disappointed to see the dissemination of information through media outlets about the international activities of educational institutions running in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan under the umbrella of the illegally established regime.

Media literacy and critical thinking in the 21st century are cardinal competences and of great importance. Media education is a preventive measure against the risks of media and information. It is aimed and the formation of modern media skills, cultivation of patriotism, culture and spiritual values, which raise the level of media literacy. In the modern information age, the underlying mission of media education is to prepare the new generation for future life. We think that this is its greatest importance.

CML: What are the opportunities within your education system for spreading media literacy and increasing capacity for it amongst the people? What are some barriers? What would you like to see?

FG: We analyze the changes taking place and the processes in global education, and apply positive components to our national education system. In this sense, media literacy acquires great importance in the sphere of education. It is also dictated by the values of the present period, by the important socio-political, economic, technological and cultural values of the present period, and by the period of industrial revolution. There is transparency, citizenship satisfaction, accessibility and triumph of universal values in the education system of Azerbaijan. The importance of the media literacy in conveying these values to the members of society is undeniable. Media literacy's dissemination includes each family and each member of the society. Azerbaijan is a country that has created the model of modus vivendi. This is evident in relations with the media. Media education conveys positive changes taking place in the system of education, with no impediment to equal participation for each person.

For several years, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan has initiated concrete projects -- measures dedicated to the problems of media and transparency in the sphere of education. All media outlets in the country, media services at higher schools and education experts are taking part in this initiative, and this practice is commended as one of the important aspects of the spread of media literacy. Also, the Ministry of

Education initiated a project called "Education in Social Media." Its purpose is to disclose the essence of reforms aimed at advocating measures vis-a-vis the realization of strategic targets in the development of education in Azerbaijan, to raise the efficiency work conducted in that sphere, as well as to ensure wide public support for this process.

Different monthly competitions on numerous subjects are held in general education institutions in our country, including financial literacy, avoiding detrimental habits, living a healthy lifestyle, monthly regular security missions, discussions and "open lessons." They can be appreciated as one of the important aspects of the spread of media literacy. To cultivate media literacy in learners, an interdisciplinary approach is applied. The linguistic knowledge of learners allows them access to the global media space.

We think that one of the main mechanisms for solving problems can be media education. It comprises a system of knowledge and competences, the ability to appreciate the quality and truthfulness of information, and skills to examine mass dissemination of dangerous and unpleasant news.

CML News

Global Alliance forms new International Steering Committee

The Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL), a UNESCO initiative, has elected a new International Steering Committee. The new committee members are:

Co-Chairs:
- **Jesus Lau** (Mexico), Professor, Director of the USBI VER Library, Universidad Veracruzana
- **Alexandre Le Voci Sayad** (Brazil), CEO of ZeitGeist; Director of Advisor Consultancy Board of Educamédia Programme

Co-Vice-Chairs:
- **Sherri Hope Culver** (USA), Associate Professor, Director of the Center for Media and Information Literacy, Temple University,
- **Joanne Plante** (Canada), Head of the Libraries Division, City of Laval

Co-Secretary-Generals:
- **Lisa Jannicke Hinchliffe** (USA), Professor and Coordinator for Information Literacy Services at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- **Irene Andriopoulou** (Greece), Media Literacy Expert, Research, Studies and Educational Programs

Regional Representative for Africa:
- **Wallace Gichunge** (Kenya), Executive Director, Centre for Media and Information Literacy

Regional Representative for Arab States:
- **Ahmad Al-Khasawneh** (Jordan), Professor, Hashemite University; Director of Center Information, Communication and e-Learning Technology

Regional Representative for Asia-Pacific:
- **Jose Reuben Q. Alagaran II** (Philippines), President, Philippine Association for Media and Information Literacy

Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean:
- **Felipe Chibás Ortiz** (Cuba), Associate Professor, University of Sao Paulo

Regional Representative for North America and Europe:
- **Tessa Jolls** (USA), President, Center for Media Literacy; Founder, Consortium for Media Literacy

GAPMIL is UNESCO's groundbreaking effort to promote international cooperation to ensure that all citizens have access to media and information competencies. Thepioneering initiative was launched during the Global Forum for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy, which took place from 26 to 28 June 2013, in Abuja, Nigeria, under the theme "Promoting Media and Information Literacy as a Means to Cultural Diversity".

CML News

LexisNexis Features Tessa Jolls in "Trust Issue" Publication
LexisNexis, a leading provider of legal, government, business and high-tech information sources took on the issue of "trust" in their e-zine, which featured an interview with CML's Tessa Jolls. Trust is valuable currency in the 21st century, as trust in long-standing institutions declines. The article focuses on how organizations can overcome skepticism resulting from the "fake news" phenomenon, why having greater variety and volume of reliable data sources leads to more reliable business insights and what benefits organizations realize by focusing on nurturing trust with proven best practices. https://bis.lexisnexis.com/trust-issue-2020

21st Century skills include the 4 Cs:

Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Creativity and Communication. Media literacy education incorporates all of the 4 Cs in a pedagogy designed to engage and involve students in today's global media culture.

About Us...

The Consortium for Media Literacy addresses the role of global media through the advocacy, research and design of media literacy education for youth, educators and parents. The Consortium focuses on K-12 grade youth and their parents and communities. The research efforts include health education, body image/sexuality, safety and responsibility in media by consumers and creators of products. The Consortium is building a body of research, interventions and communications that demonstrate scientifically that media literacy is an effective intervention strategy in addressing critical issues for democracy: http://www.consortiumformedialiteracy.org

CONSORTIUM for MEDIA LITERACY

Uniting for Development

Media Literacy Resources

Media Education in Latin America https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429244469

MayéuTIC@: 28 ideas to hack the school http://educared.fundaciontelefonica.com.pe/2014/mayeutica/

Len Masterman http://www.medialit.org/sites/default/files/connections/len%20masterman%20and%20the%20big%20ideas%20of%20media%20literacy.pdf

Paulo Friere's Pedagogy of the Oppressed https://commons.princeton.edu/inclusivepedagogy/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2016/07/freire_pedagogy_of_the_oppresed_ch2-3.pdf

Jesús Martín-Barbero https://oxfordre.com/communication/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228613-e-595

Teresa Quiroz https://ulima.academia.edu/MariaTeresaQuirozVelasco

Valerio Fuenzalida http://comunicaciones.uc.cl/personas/valerio-fuenzalida/

Marc Prensky https://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf

Evgeny Morozov https://www.evgenymorozov.com

Nicholas Carr http://www.nicholascarr.com

Rosa Maria Alfaro https://ae-ic.org/rosa-maria-alfaro-socia-de-honor/

Carlos Scolari https://hipermediaciones.com/autor/Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan Republic https://edu.gov.az/en

Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan

http://mct.gov.az/en/

Moscow Cooperative Institute (Russian University of Cooperation) https://eng.ruc.su

Eastern Partnership/ European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/eastern-partnership_en

GAPMIL http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/media-development/media-literacy/global-alliance-for-partnerships-on-media-and-information-literacy/

Med!aLit Moments

Can I Trust the Author?

There was a time when authoring media and information was mostly reserved for professional journalists, writers, entertainment producers and researchers. Today, anyone with a smartphone can create media. That democratization of information allows more underrepresented voices to be heard. But, it also means that media is available from countless sources – not all of whom are trustworthy. This activity is ideal to use when students are learning about using reliable sources for research. It gives students hands-on experience in analyzing whether or not an author is trustworthy.

AHA! Sometimes, authors are truly experts in their fields. Other times, on the topics that they are commenting/writing about. Other times, it is not certain who authored information.

Key Question # 4 Who created this message?

Core Concept # 4 Authorship

Grade Level 6-12

Materials Articles from newspapers and magazines, and/or printed out from online sources. Access to the internet.

ACTIVITY:

1. Pre-select some news stories to distribute to the class. Do your best to find stories that are from a mix of reliable and unreliable sources. Stories can be pulled from traditional or online media, or a mixture of both.

2. In the classroom, review CML's Key Question/Core Concept #1 with students. CML KQ/CC #1

Who created this message?
           All media messages are constructed.
Keyword: *Authorship*
           Construction: Putting media together.
           <u>Someone</u> has to do it!

3. Ask students what techniques they use to determine whether or not information they see is trustworthy. Ask students how they determine whether the information they see is from trustworthy sources. Discuss finding info from recognized experts and institutions; doing Google searches of authors' names and business interests; research other information the author has published; recognizing the risks of unsourced articles, etc.

4. Break the class into groups of two students each, and have each group choose an article to work on.

5. Give the groups 10 minutes to read and summarize the article, and identify all the "sources" in it. That includes the author, "experts" that are interviewed and quoted, photographs, etc.

6. Give the groups 15-20 minutes to research one or two of the sources they find.

7. Have each group present what they found and whether or not they believe the sources are trustworthy.

8. After all groups have presented, ask the class to discuss which of the articles they find trustworthy and why, and suggest other ways that research can be done on the sources discussed.