

Report of Gagauzian Youth Leadership Program (GYLP)

Workshop: Critical Thinking

May 16 - 21, 2019

One of the goals of the second session devoted to the development of critical thinking among the participants of the GYLP was to renew in the memory of the participants the knowledge gained at the last session, namely, how the human thinking and logical errors work, the SEEXI persuasion technique, as well as homework testing, where participants should share their experience of logical fallacies in everyday life. Another goal of this session was to work together with the participants to identify attitudes that block critical thinking, to learn manipulation techniques, and to practice coping with manipulation, through games and practical exercises. The third goal was to educate participants on critical thinking skills on the Internet, namely on social networks.

The training had a fairly diverse structure, where participants could practice their knowledge through the simulation of the situation, participated in discussions, and also received new information through lecture material.

For the most part, the training objectives were achieved. However, me and my colleague from Slovakia at the end of the training came to the conclusion that in order to work more efficiently, you need to apply more practical tasks aimed at training critical thinking, rather than just hearing about how it works. This will allow participants already at the training to start developing critical thinking and this will be moderated and directed by the experts, as well as by the participants themselves.

Serghey Yakimenko

During the training which take place in Comrat from 16th to 17th me and my Moldovan associate Serghei Yakimenko decided to focus our workshops and lectures on development of critical thinking about information they receive from other people and from media.

Before covering topics of manipulation and fake news we have walked participants through last trainings lesson on argumentation and logical conclusions and fallacies. It was necessary to provide participants with basics and which they can build on. We have utilized

multiple of practical exercises, namely debate, for participants to get deeper understanding of the basic critical thinking tools.

Next, we have focused on topics of manipulation, what are the types and tools of manipulation used, how to spot it and counter it. Participants were led to grasp and define it themselves through analysis of different model situations.

After workshops on manipulation techniques we continued with lecture on modern media environment and how it changed what types of information and news are we receiving.

We have also gone through several methods how to distinguish between reliable news sources, unedited news sites and fake news. Participants had a chance to try and utilize the methods on uncovering unreliable news stories in practical workshop where they were presented with six news articles from different sources (established media, tabloids, news website without editors, blog and fake news websites). They tried to identify which stories were true, which were unobjectively covered and which were fake stories.

Ondrej Schutz