

Yearbook 2015

EDITORS: SIRKKU KOTILAINEN & REIJO KUPIAINEN

REFLECTIONS ON MEDIA EDUCATION FUTURES

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CONFERENCE
MEDIA EDUCATION FUTURES
IN TAMPERE, FINLAND 2014

The International Clearinghouse on
CHILDREN, YOUTH & MEDIA
at NORDICOM, University of Gothenburg

The International Clearinghouse on CHILDREN, YOUTH & MEDIA

A UNESCO INITIATIVE 1997

In 1997, the Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research (Nordicom), University of Gothenburg, Sweden, began establishment of the International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media. The overall point of departure for the Clearinghouse's efforts with respect to children, youth and media is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The aim of the Clearinghouse is to increase awareness and knowledge about children, youth and media, thereby providing a basis for relevant policy-making, contributing to a constructive public debate, and enhancing children's and young people's media literacy and media competence. Moreover, it is hoped that the Clearinghouse's work will stimulate further research on children, youth and media.

The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media informs various groups of users – researchers, policy-makers, media professionals, voluntary organisations, teachers, students and interested individuals – about

- research on children, young people and media, with special attention to media violence,
- research and practices regarding media education and children's/young people's participation in the media, and
- measures, activities and research concerning children's and young people's media environment.

Fundamental to the work of the Clearinghouse is the creation of a global *network*. The Clearinghouse publishes a *yearbook* and *reports*. Several *bibliographies* and a worldwide *register of organisations* concerned with children and media have been compiled. This and other information is available on the Clearinghouse's *web site*:

www.nordicom.gu.se/clearinghouse

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THE CLEARINGHOUSE IS LOCATED AT NORDICOM

Nordicom is an organ of co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The overriding goal and purpose is to make the media and communication efforts undertaken in the Nordic countries known, both throughout and far beyond our part of the world.

Nordicom uses a variety of channels – newsletters, journals, books, databases – to reach researchers, students, decisionmakers, media practitioners, journalists, teachers and interested members of the general public.

Nordicom works to establish and strengthen links between the Nordic research community and colleagues in all parts of the world, both by means of unilateral flows and by linking individual researchers, research groups and institutions.

Nordicom also documents media trends in the Nordic countries. The joint Nordic information addresses users in Europe and further afield. The production of comparative media statistics forms the core of this service.

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Reflections on Media Education Futures

*Contributions to the Conference Media Education Futures
in Tampere, Finland 2014*

Editors: Sirkku Kotilainen & Reijo Kupiainen

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Foreword and Introduction

Media Education Futures

Social networking sites such as YouTube and Facebook, along with Wikipedia and blogs, allow users to become engaged in the creation of public and social knowledge – both at the national level and in international digital media cultures – mainly through mobile devices and as a part of everyday life. For example, today there are tablet holders for baby cribs and even for potties, as well as baby bouncers with mobile plug-in systems, for establishing a relationship between babies and media. With technology companies continuously launching new devices, media consumption is constantly changing and new relationships with media and practices raise new questions. At the same time, new generations adopt new roles as users of the media and start expressing their opinion and voice in networked public spaces. So, what should we think about media education and its futures?¹

The rapid changes in technologies, including developments in the content and marketing of media, are challenging from the perspective of children and youths. What about young adults, the generation who have grown up in the digital era, and their professions? In addition to reflections on children, youth and media, this publication highlights the question of young adults through articles focusing on media education in the academic field of media studies and journalism.

The need for media education has been experienced on every continent of the world, and several international efforts have recently been established by actors such as governments, the EU and UNESCO to promote attention to the relationships within youth and media as well as media literacies and education. Moreover, several universities have included teaching of and research on this subject in their programmes. Inevitably, there is a need to study media education from multiple perspectives – not only regarding children, youth and media but also media literacies and education.

This publication, reflecting the research in this field from different continents and giving the floor to discussions from both academic and practical perspectives, has its origins in the International Conference “Media Education Futures” 2014 in Finland. This event gathered international researchers in the field, as well as national and international organizations and actors in European and global fields of media education, altogether 140 participants from 26 countries around the world. The conference was held at the University of Tampere², which since the 1970s has offered courses and programmes in media education, especially for teacher students. In 2012 the university started a Master’s Degree Programme in Media Education, which turns international in 2015. The English curriculum highlights, for example, mediated learning environments, practice-based research and transcultural perspectives in developing media education. New research in media education covering competencies and multiple literacies is generated through doctoral students as well, including research led by a professor in media studies and a university lecturer in educational sciences.

The conference “Media Education Futures” highlighted participation, well-being and citizenship as current Nordic perspectives in media education, and discussed media and information literacies contributing to intercultural dialogue. The goal was to display and promote research in the field along with the practices of media education.

Research results presented at the conference indicated that the civic skills needed in information societies include critical awareness, which is the basis for understanding media societies. Critical thinking is also the basis for creativity and should be included in the teaching of coding, which has been done in several countries in new school curricula at the basic level. Moreover, broader cooperation among researchers with different cultural backgrounds, rather than traditional Europe-centred collaboration was echoed.

This publication reflects topics including critical awareness, technological citizenry, methodologies in studying young people in urban cities, and youth well-being in relations to media and information literacies. The publication covers articles from different parts of the world including, for example, China and India in Asia and Brazil in Latin America, as well as several European countries. It is divided into two sections – 1) Academic Articles and 2) Practical Papers and Case Studies – as reflections on the futures of media education.

The chapters in the first section, *Academic Articles*, are collected from keynote speakers as well as participants in the conference panel and parallel sessions focused on conceptualizing phenomena and research in the field of media education. *Divina Frau-Meigs* calls for new conceptualizations of literacies, and suggests conceptualization as augmented media literacies in information societies. *Johanna Sumiala*, *Leena Suurpää*, *Titus Hjelm* and *Minttu Tikka* look for more dialogic and sensitive, creative ways of implementing an ethnographic study among young people in urban media cities.

Moreover, the *Academic Articles* section addresses digital competencies, media and information literacies, teaching, and evaluation. *Ida Cortoni* and *Veronica Lo Presti* suggests a dialogic framework of digital competencies, and *Minna Saariketo* introduces a software studies approach to thinking about digital competencies in the 21st century. A critical case-based reflection by *Ilona Biernacka-Ligieza* discusses the teaching of media competencies restricted to information technologies. *Camille Tilleul, Pierre Fastrez & Thierry De Smedt* presents an empirical evaluation of the competencies regarding media literacy and media education. *Anne Lehmans* and *Vincent Liguète* present a study at a high school on information practices and the construction of media and information culture among youngsters. *Mathias Karmasin, Sandra Diehl* and *Isabell Koinig* reflect on a curriculum of academic media studies from the perspective of a convergence of media.

The *Academic Articles* section also highlights global and comparative perspectives in the field of media education; for example, descriptions of the history of media education in China by *Zhang Yanqiu* and of projects on media education in the favelas of Rio by *Leonardo Custódio*. Comparative perspectives include reflections on youth well-being and media literacies by Finnish and Indian authors *Sirkku Kotilainen* and *Manisba Patbak-Sbelat*. *Marketa Zezulková* reflects on the teaching of media learning among primary school teachers and their pupils in a comparative setting in the Czech Republic (EU), the United States, Malta (EU) and Colombia.

Lana Ciboci, Igor Kanižaj and *Danijel Labaš* introduce a new approach to the implementation of media education policies in countries accessing the EU, as a public opinion research project on media education. *Matteo Stocchetti* takes a stand reflecting on the futures of media education from a critical pedagogic perspective.

The chapters in the second section, *Practical Papers and Case Studies*, are more focused on empirical reports and practical pedagogy as well as policy-oriented questions of media education. Keynote speaker *Li Xiquang* speaks for renewing journalism education in an information society from the Chinese perspective. His article is a story of a journalistic learning caravan, a method of teaching a slow journalism in the age of social media, which is the everyday media for young adults with its constant and instant messaging.

Generational aspects are offered by *Maria Aparecida Campos Mamede-Neves* and *Stella Maria Peixoto de Azevedo Pedrosa*, who report on a study on the use of online social networking sites by young people from the perspective of inter-generational conflicts, especially between children and parents. *Daniela Cinque* and *Claudia D'Antoni* reflect on teen production on the Internet, looking for the dynamics of sense they produce online. *María José Díaz-Aguado, Laia Falcón, Patricia Núñez* and *Liisa Hanninen* argue for special reception competencies and creation competencies ensuring the contribution of education to media lit-

eracies among the young. *Ana Solano, Tamara Bueno Doral* and *Noelia García Castillo* report on a research methodology that combines electronic art with the creation of corporal imaginaries during the early childhood years. *Klaus Thestrup* discusses a research project that investigates how children and pedagogues can communicate with, for example, kindergartens around the globe.

This section also raises some policy-oriented questions of media education futures, such as *Dag Asbjørnsen*'s look at developing media literacies in the EU regarding consumer protection and audience development. Developments in media education, with highlights of the implications on the economic crisis in Greece, are reflected by *Kostas Voros*. *Agata Walczak-Niewiadomska* describes the developments of media literacy and media education as part of library services in Poland. Finally, *Patrick Verniers* takes a look at the futures, starting from a transversal approach to a stand-alone disciplinary development, to four main scenarios which can be identified to help in thinking about the pathways to achieving effective media education for all citizens.

We are happy to present to you this multiple constellation of articles by experts and scholars in the field, which has been possible thanks to the International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media. Special thanks to Ilana Eleá for guiding us to the end.

We hope this publication can offer you some ideas for further discussions, partnerships and start-ups or developments of educational practices, policies and academic research. Media education is a field of lifelong learning for all of us.

Tampere, April 2015

Sirkku Kotilainen *Reijo Kupiainen*

Notes

1. *Media education* is used here instead of, for example, *media and information literacies*, to emphasize the pedagogic practices and contexts for the promotion of literacy skills and digital competencies needed in information societies.
2. The conference was organized by the School of Communication, Media and Theatre (www.uta.fi/cmt) and the School of Education (www.uta.fi/edu) at the University of Tampere. The collaborative partners were NORDICOM (www.nordicom.gu.se/), the Finnish Youth Research Network (www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/en), the Finnish Society on Media Education (www.mediaeducation.fi/) and the Finnish National Audiovisual Institute KAVI (www.kavi.fi/).

1. Academic Articles

Augmented Media and Information Literacy (MIL)

How Can MIL Harness the Affordances of Digital Information Cultures?

Divina Frau-Meigs

Since the advent of Web 2.0, Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is facing a new mutation, as interactivity and the internet of things create a sense of augmentation of online activities, and as the industrial lobbies pressure governments in favour of computer literacy. This pressure is not problematic *per se*, but implies the necessary transition of MIL to digital information cultures, to take advantage of digital affordances as they affect information under its various definitions (code, data, document, news). In spite of “having it all” (inclusion in the Audio-Visual Media Services Directive, an EU Parliament Declaration requiring national policy reporting), MIL still runs the risk of being marginalized or displaced by other types of literacies that are being discussed in parallel tracks, as many countries and actors seek to identify the 21st-century skills.

The issue of digital augmentation is raised in various circles in connection with Human Enhancement Technologies (HET), and needs to be considered in relation to MIL. The notion of “enhancement” has appeared in recent years in relation to such terms as *posthuman* or *transhuman*. The debate is posited in terms of *hybridity* or *hybridization*, as there is on the one hand an augmented human with digital wearables, and on the other an augmented robot with human-like characteristics. In both cases the purpose is often commercial and industrial, with a view to enhancing performance and efficiency (Claverie, 2014). In both cases the issues are ethical, in the sense that augmentation could soon become an obligation (related to access and capacity of use) and that it could work against diversity in favour of digital homogenization. Both affect essential freedoms, including freedom of speech and freedom of choice, and need to be re-invested with meaning in a humanistic way (Doueïhi, 2008, 2011).

In the context of this debate, MIL needs to analyse critically the dual trend in HET, as the move towards enhancing humans with embarked systems (tablets,

captors, glasses, etc.) is media-driven and as the move towards enhancing machines so that they can substitute for humans (robots for teachers, news aggregators for journalists, etc.) is also media-driven. The ethical issues involved – from access to choice, from risks to safety to autonomy and civic agency – are all issues at the core of MIL and its pedagogies for learning and knowledge-building. Such issues are also at the core of the debates about digital humanities and creative industries, two potential outcomes and outputs of MIL. They pose questions about cultural development, literacies to embrace potential and avert risk, and understanding the situations of use and their constraints. MIL, in combination with HET, contributes to the ecosystem of technological methods, tools and devices that can enable humans to augment their cognitive, communicational, informational abilities, in the context of media and education (Dacos & Mounier, 2010; Gold, 2012).

This augmentation needs to be defined, as it impacts both media and education. For such an assessment, various methodologies are necessary, especially the perspective of information-communication sciences combined with the sociology of action angle (what modes of interaction, what pedagogical patterns and stances?). The professional practices of educators as well as young people's uses also need to be considered, along with cultural and public policies (what kinds of access, for which communities?).¹ Is the pre-digital school form capable of "delivering", and can media help? Doesn't the scope of MIL run the risk of becoming too broad to function and be efficient?

Augmentation

The ambivalent scope of digital augmentation

The digital augmentation considered in the context of sciences of information and communication refers to the capacity to enhance situations in which humans can overcome difficulties and the limits of their bodies, as expressed very early by Engelbart (1962). In other circles, especially in ICTs, the notion tends towards an augmentation by evolution with the machines, whereby humans can be modified (with chemicals as well as with technologies) to reach a transhuman stage.

Technological augmentation is already present in ambient systems, in relation either to humans or to their nearby environment. Humans are equipped with a plethora of electronic devices that act as accessories to augmentation. Some of these accessories function like embarked systems on the body (digital retina, implants, etc.) or on things or objects (augmented reality glasses, watches, haptic joysticks, etc.). Another option entails augmenting the environment rather than the subject, with pervasive communication such as captors and sensors that regulate light or sound, or detect presence and access such as RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) chips, etc. This implies a massive data connection and

internet of things, geo-localization, social networking technologies and AI-driven robots (Claverie, 2014).

Computing has been related to three major domains: algorithms and data processing; man-machine interaction; and networked participation with human and non-human agents (Bruillard, 2010). HET calls for a fourth domain, entailing connected objects and connected humans and the interaction of human and non-human agents in a complex manner. Designers such as John Maeda qualify this form of computing as “a new material for expression” (Maeda, 2004, p. 14; see Vial, 2010; Drot-Delange & Bruillard, 2012) rather than a tool. This vision makes it possible to place computing within transliteracies rather than keeping it as a set of technologies (ICTs) or of algorithms, so as to regard it rather as an enabling environment around augmented objects that are part of pedagogical design in which “computational thinking” (Wing, 2008, pp. 33-35) meets “information cultures” (Serres, 2012, p. 32).

Digital augmentation for media and education

The digital ambient environment enhances these approaches beyond a science of computation or of social interaction, towards a need for a non-expert literacy of the devices at hand. In terms of media environment, it implies incorporating the *shuttle screen situation* into the internet of subjects (i.e. citizens) rather than the instrumental internet of objects.

The *shuttle screen situation* describes the interactive relationship between what happens on the top surface screen of broadcast media sources and on the deeper netroots screen of broadband media with feedback to the top surface screen (via tweets, blogs, wikis, etc.). The two subsystems of the *Information Society* era – TV-based developments (connected TV) and Internet-based developments (Web TV) – are thus producing a multitude of formats such as tablets, smartphones, laptops and other forthcoming e-devices. From the perspective of users, this highly mediated culture produces a seamless experience as both broadband and broadcast media are screen-based rather than script-based (even when they use text), with implications in terms of cultural forms of expression, as these are impacted by mobility, ubiquity and shareability. Broadcast media continue to be major providers of shared news and stories (novels, movies, games, etc.) that are recycled and remixed on the digital networks of broadband media to produce new contents and comments because common narratives, be they online or offline, constitute a central piece of culture as social learning and human interaction. These engaging narratives have great collective value, as they contribute to social interactions and provide a distributed intelligence regarding how to live together in culture as a “cognitive network” (Donald, 1991; Frau-Meigs, 2011).

Augmentation in media is visible in that they are not only spectacles but also services (including for schools). They become aggregators of content (including

scholastic content); they play a part in participatory and self-expressive culture (including in schools); they appear as the condition of future jobs (digital agenda of schools). They also deal with the changing status of original content and formats that foster a culture of mix and remix, with such strategies as windowing, versioning and merchandising that modify the chronology of media and reach all kinds of customers and users (Evans & Schamlensee, 2005).

Augmentation in schools appears pervasive because of new practices that bring the media into the classroom. Among these, aggregation and curation are among the most striking, with tools such as Pearltrees, Pinterest and Zootool that reflect the growing role of users as reputation-builders and (self-)curators thriving on social networks. This new form of curation is not necessarily built on collection, hierarchy and professionalism, and impacts on the traditional curatorial practices of museums and libraries as it places amateurs in this new role, with different criteria for the choice of what is regarded as quality in art as well as what will stay and what will disappear in the future, with attendant heritage issues concerning what to preserve and what to discard (Frau-Meigs, 2013b).

Augmentation in schools is also evident in everyday computing: navigation on platforms as well as uploading and downloading content via applications have become easy. In education, augmentation can take the shape of digital humanities, based on the use of computational methods to enhance classic disciplines: text analysis with Natural Language Processing (corpora, referencing, translation), spatio-temporal analysis with Geographic Information Systems (dynamic maps, graphs, global positioning), interactions with Social Networks Analysis (nodes, ties, relations). With user-friendly graphic tools such as Neatline (for GIS) and Gephi (for SNA), fields of inquiry and learning such as history, geography and literature gain exponential interest and benefit from a more purposeful engagement of the subject as learner, a new figure of the “amateur” in education with capacities for aggregation, curation and creation of content.

What models, values, competences, literacies?

Pre-digital models for MIL

There are four competing discursive models more or less in place in schools and practices, diversely distributed in European countries and beyond. They tend to focus on three major types of learning (the 3Cs): Cultural comprehension, Critical thinking, and Creativity (Bazalgette, 2010).

The transmission model aims at understanding media and using them efficiently to convey information. It is based on a view of education connected with heritage and culture with methods and resources that are relatively restricted and text-based. The teacher is at the centre and learners are to learn by rote, with pre-established exercises and tasks.

The competence model is presented as an alternative to the transmission model. It tends to place learners at the centre of the process, to enable them to be aware of media uses and effects. Activities tend to verify levels of awareness and critical thinking, with a mix of exercises and tasks that produce self-reflexive attitudes and skills.

The citizenship model tends to present media in relation to the public sphere, and focuses on the press as a means of constructing an enlightened opinion. It tries to foster participation and agency among young people, often proposing activities that take place outside the school precinct. Teachers and learners work together with other actors to engage in media events (Week of the Press, Internet Day, etc.).

The creativity model proposes a hands-on approach entailing direct use of the media themselves, and tends to be more image-driven. It posits that producing media generates critical thinking and understanding. The teacher facilitates media practices of various kinds for learners to engage, especially with Web 2.0 tools. It places the project at the centre, be it individual or collective, and tends to build bridges with actors outside the school system (Frau-Meigs & Torrent, 2009.)

Digital models

Digital models hold the potential to revert the order of dominance amongst the pre-digital models. Transmission and competence models are displaced, while creativity and citizenship gain more currency. The latter tend to facilitate creativity and engagement through a hands-on approach, and by blurring the distinction between school and out-of-school activities.

The citizenship model tends to merge with a new discursive trend, the participation model. This model enriches participation with cooperation, and collective tasks such as media and ICT technologies have become easy to implement, with reduced costs and increased functionalities (memory, editing, broadcasting, micro-blogging, etc.). It functions on social networking and on co-design, the co-construction of knowledge, etc.

This reversal is supported by a paradigm shift, due to the transformation of the notion of “information”. This paradigmatic change revisits the territories of information cultures as computation (computer literacy), communication (media literacy) and documentation (information literacy) converge around the layered meanings of the term “transliteracy” (Delamotte, Liquète & Frau-Meigs, 2013).

The digital competences required for transliteracy are operational (compute, process), editorial (curate, evaluate, publish) and organizational (search, navigate). Though they can be mastered by an individual, they are more likely to be “distributed competences”, to take into account the participatory model, whereby people work in groups around projects in which they are in both DIY (Do-It-Yourself) mode and SIWO (Share-It-With-Others) mode.

This process also nurtures e-presence, no longer experienced as a long-distance situation but rather as proximity and intimacy. E-presence is composed of different layers: cognitive presence, defined as “the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse in a critical community of inquiry”; and social presence, defined as “the ability of participants in a community of inquiry to project themselves socially and emotionally, as ‘real’ people (i.e. their full personality), through the medium of communication being used” (Garrison & Anderson, 2006, pp. 28-29). Additionally, “designed” presence is defined as the extent to which learners are aware of the constraints and affordances made available to them by the medium being used (Frau-Meigs, 2012, p. 175).

Transliteracy in augmented MIL enables learners and subjects in general to mobilize their own cognitive scripts (as units of meaning and units of decision-making) and to call on their experiences to adapt and control their own online performance and their interaction with others. In this sense, transliteracy needs to integrate a certain amount of computation and algorithmic knowledge, so that code is not merely an opaque sequence of digits but also integrates the critical thinking of media literacy to evaluate the way commercial or pedagogical platforms manipulate content and digital affordances.

What augmented subject?

To take into account this augmentation and its affordances, and the appropriation of these new competences and means of social construction, there is a need for a new educational domain since the groundbreaking Delors report for UNESCO in 1996, *L'Education: un trésor est caché dedans* (Delors, 1996). The report defines four pillars for education: learning to learn, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. This pre-digital era document does not address digital augmentation, though it asserts that merit is to be focused on human and educational needs and therefore not be techno-centred. However, there is a need to define a projective capacity, for the appropriation of the potential of information cultures in distributed environments, learning to project oneself in lifelong learning, with the competences of transliteracy and digital affordances: learning to project oneself, or “forwardance”².

This forwardance needs to be sustained over time on the basis of engaging projects and innovative pedagogies made available by the inductive, deductive, incidental or serendipitous means of learning facilitated by computers.

This is what leads to an augmented subject, which can rely on four major cognitive needs sustained by digital affordances: self-actualization, life-streamings, playful modelling and civic agency (Frau-Meigs, 2013a). Self-actualization entails using the networks and connected objects to be aware of one’s position in life and ensure that one’s knowledge is up to date. The success of such learning

platforms as Wikipedia, which are massively consulted and augmented by the users themselves, testifies to this urge for self-actualization, not to mention the pressure of designed platforms to be constantly connected with friends and life feeds. Life-streamings relates to the satisfaction of life-longings; that is to say, intense desires that elicit compensatory strategies to cope with blocked goals or an incompleteness of real life. Users, as they evaluate their options and weigh the costs and benefits of engaging in online interactions and pursuing their deep interests, make projections concerning their future, with full evaluation of their present situation. They are also fully aware they are building symbolic capital by building their online presence and grooming their digital identity, in order to show that, according to the context and the situation, they can call upon their casual persona or their pro-am persona rather than their official or professional persona, as evinced in the success of such platforms as Pinterest or Instagram.

As a result, the subject becomes capable of activating all the cognitive stages of learning and socialization in the digital era, thus enhancing their capacity to project themselves in their own life, or forwardance: Engagement (motivation, participation), Anticipation (memory, life-streamings), Interpretation (evaluation, critical thinking), Reflexivity (self-evaluation and self-actualization), Performance (e-presence and civic agency), Co-construction (creativity with others, play), and Revision (feedback, feedforward) (Frau-Meigs & Meigs, 2009).

What implications for curriculum and training?

Such advances in cognition, as well as in technology, need to be integrated in schools and in the training of trainers. Training needs to shift from the dominant transmission model to the participation model, with strong emphasis on e-skills for MIL and socio-constructivist outcomes for learners, whatever their age. Besides the need for a modelling of the learning processes with transliteracy and forwardance, there is also a need for a better understanding of digital mediation and pedagogical mediation.

Digital mediation: the repertoire of e-strategies, or when digital meets cognitive

The affordances provided by the platforms and the software are designed as a fabric that meshes with the cognitive strategies of the mind, which is partly why they feel so intuitive: play and (serious) games are related to problem-solving; simulation can help test dynamic modelling of real-world processes; content aggregation and curation facilitate self-discovery; sampling, pooling and visualization lead to the remixing of and commenting on content for common goals, and foster distributed intelligence; multi-tasking enables interaction with tools and intelligent feedback; transmedia navigation favours control over the

knowledge available in the public domain and beyond (control over learning); social networking facilitates the search and distribution of information as well as collaboration; peer-to-peer coordination generates positive evaluation and fosters distributed competences; and negotiation can take place across communities, for alternative processes and the generation of innovative solutions.³

The convergence of curation, comment and content entailed by transliteracies sheds different light on what is currently called “digital literacy”, which could in fact be defined as augmented MIL, especially in the shape of the digital humanities. The risk is a displacement of the other humanities as pre-digital or “analogical” (some say “heritage”), when in fact such fields of inquiry and knowledge are still relevant. The digital is based on information, exploited and explored in different ways; so different that they affect the perception and understanding of knowledge itself. The three pillars of computational augmentation that are useful for education – Natural Language Processing (text analysis), Social Networks Analysis (interactions), and Geographic Information Systems (time-space positioning) – in fact demystify what the information cultures are about. The term *data* is no longer a synonym for scarcity and mystery but rather of abundance and revelation. Data remain ineffectual if they are not explored dynamically and democratically, that is to say with non-expert knowledge. It is properly a literacy that allows the subject to interact with the augmented environment. This may or may not lead to expertise during one’s full scholastic career and beyond, but needs to be taught and experimented with from an early stage to be appropriated and mastered.

The three pillars of digital humanities can be brought in, with the added performance value of data aggregation, curation and data visualization. By doing so, digital humanities come closer to practices common in the hard sciences, with which they may overlap. The methods of computation are necessary (probability, statistics, data aggregation and visualization), but are applied not *per se* but rather for a new scope and unexpected perspectives on classic fields, which in turn deeply affects such fields. Computational methods have come to be augmented through better integration in software tools that are ubiquitous, light, often open-source (or “free”), with user friendliness that does not require specific training, or that can rely on available ready-to-apply tutorials. MIL adds the important competence of critical thinking to creativity and the appropriation of tools that may not be present when computing is learnt as such, with its own goal-oriented necessities.

The need to motivate creativity and participation in schools can lead to innovative forms of pedagogy, as evinced in the movement of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), with their attendant learning modes and models, that tend to recombine media and social construction. Social construction and socialization can take place if learning models are recombined with an e-repertoire of strategies and with media types, as exemplified by Sonwalkar’s (2013) “learning cube pedagogical model”, for instance, as he applies it to MOOCs.

The cognitive patterns of use and social relevance reflect learners' needs for forwardance (self-actualization, playful modelling, life-streamings and civic agency). They can be developed for digitally sustainable "information cultures", via specific competences and e-strategies, so as to lead to the construction of the learner's e-presence in its cognitive, social and designed dimensions.

Pedagogical mediation and mediatization: scaffolding forwardance

So there is a need for new literacies and a reorganization of knowledge around information and its cultures. Beyond the technology and its augmentation, research also shows the key role of pedagogical mediation that is augmented by the repertoire of e-strategies as they tend to reflect cognitive learning modes.

Pedagogical mediation can be articulated with digital humanities tools such as social network analysis, spatio-temporal positioning, natural language analysis, and data aggregation and visualization. These can bring together a number of cognitive structures, modes of representations and socialized frames of action that were disjointed in the pre-digital era. This articulation impacts the design of interfaces, tools and outputs according to the space and time allocated to communities of practices, experts, pro-ams. This articulation also augments and impacts digital pedagogies, especially if they are project-based and use cognitive scaffolding (Narcy Combes, 2005; Yelland & Masters, 2007).

Pedagogical mediation needs to show a minimum of learning conditions that are mediated by tutors, mentors and teachers whose status and roles are modified by augmentation. It also more visibly incorporates cognitive processes, such as feedback and revision, that make explicit the grammar of uses via the cognitive scaffolding allowed by the e-repertoire of strategies and transliteracies.

The grammar of uses relates to the paths suggested and constantly revised through feedback from others, through one's own self-actualization, through navigation, pooling and mixing, etc. ANR TRANSLIT research confirms that three factors help in the integration of such a complex montage: the actualization of individual and collective strategies, the distributed competences organized around tools and socio-technological devices and schemes, together with the pedagogical mediation organized around cognitive scaffolding.

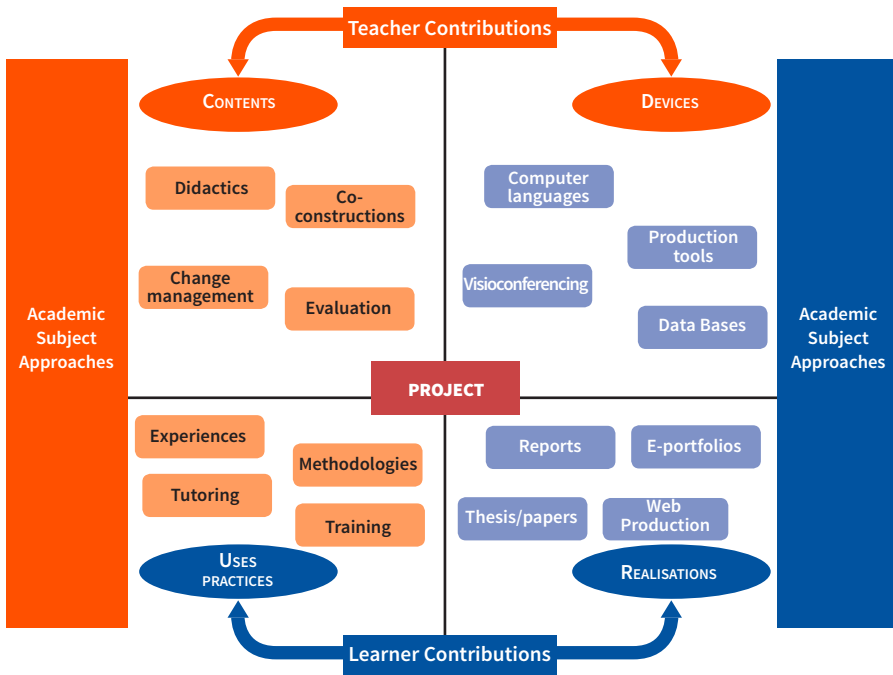
What suggestions for public policy?

Public policies need to evolve on the basis of the evidence provided by research.⁴ They need to support the emergence of transliteracies, as they re-organize knowledge and competences around the cultures of information. They need to encourage the spread of digital humanities, to ensure that creative industries (medias, design, architecture, games, etc.) can be fostered by engaged individuals, ready to participate in creative cities and creative regions.⁵

Principles

- A conceptual framework around transliteracies and forwardance, with operational, editorial and organizational set of distributed competences
- A project-based pedagogy, with cognitive scaffolding, to integrate the four cognitive needs and their attendant digital affordances
- Training around an open curriculum that joins academic subject matters, socio-technological devices and the finalized uses and projects of the learner, without disruption between informatics and information cultures
- Training around open curriculum and project-based pedagogy

Figure 1. Matrix for transliteracy curriculum



The objective of the curriculum should be to produce learners who are active constructors of knowledge (readers, publics, users, content-generators, etc.). They should be able to question the agenda, the motivations of the media spectacles and services they are exposed to, so as to build a real understanding of their functioning and their effects. This process in turn should create autonomous individuals who have the ability to deal with multiple media, multiple perspectives, and therefore be competent in social networking, democratic engineering and human rights monitoring (Frau-Meigs, 2011, p. 217).

The articulation between the transmission of content, attached to traditional academic subjects, and the acquisition of transversal processes of learning, linked to socio-technical devices, needs to be carefully tuned in curriculum development. Currently, this is the missing link for a full-fledged development of MIL, as curricula for training teachers emphasize the silo of disciplines and are at odds with curricula for the basic education of learners, which focus on individual and distributed competences.

These objectives point to two different types of implication: the importance of building an online public domain to disseminate the collective wealth of content and culture; and the need to motivate creativity and participation in pedagogy, through the recognition of such pedagogical innovations as MOOCs and attendant learning frameworks and pedagogical models.

Implementation

For implementing such a shared vision, there is a need to foster public service education for augmented MIL in the digital era with adequate funding, resources, training and assessment. This implies a retooling and rebooting of the school form with third (libraries and learning centres) and fourth (online platforms for learning) spaces, and pedagogical continuity within and outside schools, from the primary grades to university and research.

Building communities of practice via participatory pedagogies can be a means for scaling up such transliteracy. E-learning and Open Educational Resources (OER) via MOOCs and future development in the field of cognition and connectivism are likely forces to count on. Teaching about the media via the ICT-driven media can be part of a long-term strategy for lifelong learning and forwardance.

MIL needs to be accompanied by an ethical reflexion on the internet of subjects and attached to human rights, so as to tame the digital and civilize the Internet. This should promote fundamental values of dignity, diversity, tolerance and equality. It should extend a generally shared understanding of the attitudes and actions that can foster pluralism, democracy and participation, while allowing individuals to make clear choices that are not confused with consent, as expressed in the 2014 “Paris Declaration on Media and information Literacy in the Digital Era”.⁶

Notes

1. This analysis relies on data collected by ANR TRANSLIT (www.translit.fr) and the EU Competitiveness and Innovation Framework ECO (www.ecolearning.eu).
2. In French, “savoir devenir”, the title of the UNESCO chair “Savoir-devenir/forwardance in durable digital development”, held by Divina Frau-Meigs, Sorbonne Nouvelle University. www.frau-meigs.fr
3. Adapted from Jenkins et al., 2009.
4. See ANR TRANSLIT /COST results presented at UNESCO, May 2014; <http://www.translit.fr>

5. As defined by UNESCO; <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/creative-cities-network/about-creative-cities/>
6. Paris Declaration on Media and information Literacy in the Digital Era, drafted by ANR TRANS-LIT-COST team for UNESCO (Divina Frau-Meigs, Christine Trueltzsch-Wijnen, Igor Kanizaj, María del Mar Grandío Pérez, Nora Schleicher, Brian O'Neill, Julian McDougall, Kirsten Drotner, Pieramarco Aroldi, Pascale Thumerelle and Christian Gautellier) http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/In_Focus/paris_mil_declaration_final.pdf

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Studying Youth in the Media City

*Multi-sited Reflections*¹

Johanna Sumiala, Leena Suurpää, Titus Hjelm & Minttu Tikka

Youth, it seems, are everywhere and nowhere

Sunaina Maira & Elisabeth Soep 2005

This article discusses the methodological challenges of studying youth in the contemporary media city. Cities and youth are both fluid phenomena that evade rigid definition: youth, as Maira and Soep (2005) put it, are everywhere and nowhere; and contemporary cityscapes are sites that occupy both physical and digital realms, often simultaneously. Therefore, when analysing young people's lives in urban contexts, a 'multi-sited' methodological starting point seems appropriate, famously defined by Marcus (1995) as the study of social phenomena that cannot be accounted for by focusing on a single ethnographic site (see also Falzon, 2009, p.1).

In our conceptualization, young people's lives in media cities are organized around complex and contested dynamics across physical and digital spatial realms, dynamics that – by definition – call for a multi-sited approach to research. This requires an ethnographic ethos that acknowledges the idea of space as intertwined and in constant interaction with social life: space as always socially built and experienced in the media city, and social as that built in certain spatial and geographical locations of the media city (cf. Massey, 2005). In this article we discuss the diverse implications this type of multisitedness has for the ethnographic study of urban youth. Thus, the concept of multisitedness is addressed in this article as both a methodological challenge and an object of study.

In recent years, the concept of multisitedness has been applied in a range of different disciplines – a condition that has many implications for its use and understanding (see e.g. Amit, 2000; Caputo, 2000). In the discipline of anthropology, much of the literature has called for a need to re-think the relationship

between the place and culture in anthropology, hence challenging certain narrow and static notions of the field made up of distinct places. Scholars such as Amit (2000) and many others approach the field as a dynamic, fluid and interactive context for ethnographic research (e.g. Gupta & Ferguson, 1997). Consequently, the anthropological field is constructed as contingent. It is created in diverse relationships between places, cultures, social relations and material conditions. This spatial reorientation in anthropology, if you will, has also challenged scholars to revise the relationship between the ethnographer and his/her fieldwork in a new type of spatial and temporal continuum. To follow Caputo's (2000) insight, in the contemporary world ethnographers must think about the field site not only as not only a setting for their research but also a research issue itself.

Interestingly enough, the issue of multisitedness has also become increasingly relevant in the sister disciplines, such as sociology and media studies. Sociologists and media scholars have become more and more aware of what we may call a simultaneous 'spatial turn' and 'material turn' (cf. Georgiou, 2013; McQuire, 2006). Also, scholars such as Soja (2010), Massey (1992, 2005), Harvey (2001) and Miller (1998) have greatly inspired this re-thinking about the multi-layered intersections between space, matter, social relationships and communication. Consequently, space and material life are becoming an increasingly relevant – although ambiguous – locus of interest for social scientists interested in grasping the dynamics of contemporary lives of young people in a media city (cf. Hjelm et al., 2014). This, we argue, has important methodological implications relevant for further discussion. On the one hand, it means that the researcher needs to be seen as a more central agent in the construction of the 'field' (Amit 2000, p.14); on the other, multisitedness implies a re-thinking of the interplay between the time and commitment of the researcher: how does the researcher engage in the social practices that do not only happen simultaneously in the here and there, but are also episodic, fragmented and not necessarily continuous?

To tackle these issues we have divided this article into three parts. First, we discuss our understanding of the media city as a spatially and discursively constructed field for the study of young people. Second, we identify two critical aspects of multisitedness in our study: the multiple boundaries of physical spaces; and the media, particularly social media, as a multi-sited digital space. To illustrate our methodological reflection we utilize the fieldwork involving young people in a variety of physical and digital sites: street ethnography in Malmi, Helsinki and Tower Hamlets, London² (2012-2014), and digital ethnography examining mainstream media (mainly print news) and social media such as Facebook, YouTube and blogs. Finally, we illustrate some of the challenges of this type of interdisciplinary orientation towards multi-sited urban/digital ethnography, and discuss potential ways of tackling these challenges.

The media city: A multi-faceted field for the study of urban youth

Scott McQuire (2008) argues that the history of the 'media city' can be traced back to the mid-19th century. Modernization, urbanization and technological developments saw massive advertisement screens, street-corner newspaper peddlers and, later, cinemas showing news and entertainment reels become part of the cityscape. However, rapid changes from the late 20th century onwards have changed this image. Today, when you step onto a bus, instead of people looking out the window, you see them staring at their mobile devices. The same can be seen on the street and in public parks. With mobile smart phones, the city is increasingly experienced through private screens, and then recycled back into the public realm through image sharing.

We aim at grasping the mediated, multi-sited reality of urban youth with the help of the concept of the 'media city'. This refers to an idea that contemporary urban space consists of multiple and simultaneous physical and digital elements (McQuire, 2008; Georgiou, 2011; Massey, 2005; Soja, 2010). Young people are in many ways a symbol of the shifting meanings of the multi-sited media city; they are the focal point for romanticizing and pathologizing images alike. Young people are perceived to have the resources and competences that allow them to progress to the forefront of media and communication technologies, and as such they are seen as representing the increasing hybridity of living in a media-saturated world. In commercialized visions of the media city, the youth represent a utopian future brought about by these 'digital native' prosumers, a neologism combining *producer* and *consumer* (see e.g. Sumiala & Tikka, 2011). In addition, the media city may be perceived as an 'in between' zone, and as an attractive target of public control and enterprise advertising. Hence, young people may be seen as a particular subject of spatial control in the public space, associated with an intensified governance of the media city through the frameworks of risks and fear (cf. Keith, 2005; Valentine, 2004). Media technologies of control, such as CCTV cameras, are harnessed to monitor 'appropriate' uses of public urban space, such as streets, public transport and commercial spaces like shopping centres.

The youth represent a dichotomizing source of anxiety related to young people's creative potential, their vulnerability in the media city, and concerns related to 'out of control' youth (Parkers & Connolly 2014, p.131; Back 2007). The classical concept of 'moral panics' (Cohen 1972/2002) that refers to the social anxiety articulated in the intersection of the media, public discussion and authorities, is easily transferred to the multi-sited media city. Goggin's (2010) term 'mobile panic' captures a range of concerns that adults, in both public and private realms, address to young people's hanging around – not only in physical spaces but particularly in mediatized and digitalized spaces. For young people, cities are first and foremost media cities, as they – unlike their parents – have lived in media-saturated environments all their lives (See also Hjelm et al., 2014; Lim, 2013).

Thus, we understand the media city as a dynamic spatial construction consisting of multiple and simultaneous physical and digital elements (McQuire, 2008; Georgiou, 2011). Moreover, today's media city contests old dichotomies between public, semi-public and private spaces. Even if the media city is constantly on the move, it is not a utopian space devoid of hierarchies and spatial injustices (e.g. Soja, 2010). People of different ages and genders as well as social, cultural and racialized backgrounds have different access to the media city, depending on their resources – cultural, social and economic capital, if you will. Moreover, many competing interests and values shape the boundaries of the media city.

Searching for young people in multi-sited physical spaces

Of all the spaces in the media city, the street is arguably the most visible. It is the obvious avenue of transit in a material sense, but also, discursively speaking, the site of constant media attention. Concepts such as 'street crime', 'hanging around on the street', or 'dangerous streets' are everyday topics in the mainstream media, and are topics of discussion among the young people themselves. The contested interplay between gangs and the supposedly meaningless phenomenon of 'hanging around' is a recurrent feature of discussion in both Helsinki and London, although more visibly in the latter.

The image of dangerous streets is not completely unfounded. During our fieldwork, 16-year-old Ajmol Alom was stabbed to death in Tower Hamlets, causing widespread concern over the safety of young people in particular. In addition, issues of gendered youth violence were of concern in Malmi in the summer of 2013. *Helsingin Sanomat*, the largest daily newspaper in Finland, published an article on youth crime in Malmi, based on the fact that a group of boys had brutalized a 16-year-old girl in the neighbourhood. The discussion soon turned to 'gang fights' in the area. With 'the street' representing such a central concern among adults and youth alike, we – perhaps somewhat romantically – assumed that 'street ethnography' would be a walk in the park, figuratively speaking. After all, one of the candidates for the post of 'Young Mayor' in Tower Hamlets had 'getting young people off the streets' as her campaign theme. If, as it seemed, the youth were ubiquitously present on the streets, the plan was to put on our walking shoes and hang around with them.

But they weren't there.

Logically, one would assume that the same factor that puts the street in the spotlight – crime, or rather, fear of crime – keeps young people off the streets. This is indeed a genuine worry. In Tower Hamlets, most of the young people we met either had personal experience of threat or knew someone who had experienced threat. In London's East End, the so-called 'postcode wars' are alive and well, and impact the everyday lives of boys in particular. However, the threat of youth-on-youth crime is not the only thing that keeps the young people off

the streets. Many of the youngsters – and these were disproportionately boys with racialized markers (Muslim/South Asian) – had been stopped and searched by the police regularly from the age of ten. To them, the street was not ideal because it was *too* public, too controlled. This observation encourages us to seriously re-think the supposed openness of public spaces for all citizens (or citizens?), rather pointing to the idea of an inequality (cf. Johnson, 2013). During the ethnographic fieldwork, it became increasingly apparent that young people's multi-sited use of the city could be also regarded as a reaction to the restricted access to traditional 'public' urban places, the use of which was regulated and controlled, thus making them closed rather than open in the eyes of the young people we met and talked to.

Therefore, the search for the elusive 'street' led us to semi-public spaces like youth clubs, libraries, parks and estate courtyards³. The youth clubs attract only certain young people, of course, which was particularly apparent in Tower Hamlets. Many of the young people there said 'keeping out of trouble' was one of their motivations for spending time at such a club. A controlled environment provides shelter from the pressures of the street, although this required internalizing the rules of the club. In addition, the clubs – unless targeted at particular populations, such as Bangladeshi boys – provided spaces where one could meet youth from different backgrounds and beyond the borough. Libraries, which mostly came alive during exam periods, again provided an adult-controlled environment where nevertheless some social boundaries could be crossed. Hence, it was common to find Muslim boys and girls cuddling on the sofas of public libraries.

Indeed, libraries, in both Tower Hamlets and Malmi, offered an interesting 'space of negotiation', revealing young people's subtle fight for their right to public space. In the media city, libraries provide a semi-public space that extends the spatial boundaries from the physical to an imaginary realm of the media city. Material objects such as books, newspapers, magazines, movies and computers provided a means for young people to make journeys from one space to another; from physical reality into a virtual world of stories, fantasies and dreams. Despite this, from a young person's perspective, libraries may be seen as controlled spaces.

In Malmi, the library is located inside the local cultural centre, Malmitalo, which is a public space controlled by security guards. The library provides a corner for youth literature, comics and public computers, which, based on our observations, was well used by the local youth. While the corner was available to serve the needs of the younger library visitors, the rules were strict: appropriate behaviour and quiet use were expected, such as reading and doing homework, while the use of computers was forbidden. According to our informants, the library personnel were keen to control the behaviour of young people in the library; and to access the library, one had to bypass Malmitalo's security guards and then remain under the watchful eyes and ears of the librarians. Therefore,

despite the apparent openness of the library as a semi-public space, the young people's experience of it was that of a controlled space. Yet, this aspect of control could also provide safety and a sense of security, particularly for young people for whom the street also meant potential violence and open conflict among different groups.

Hanging around with young people in digital spaces

Our ethnographic observations described above encouraged us – even more than originally planned – to search for the youth of the media city outside ‘conventional streets’. We understood that much of what seems to be meaningful for young people's social life takes place not only in semi-public physical spaces but also in digital spaces. In this context, the term ‘digital’ refers to virtual space organized around computerized communication. Digital spaces can be created around mobile communication, different screens and applications. These are spaces restricted not primarily by physical location, but by technological resources. Today, the boundaries between different aspects of digital space are shifting, as are the categories and hierarchies associated with them. Thus, the term ‘digital’ is increasingly used to refer to a hybrid mixture of mass communication and new online communication. These developments, we argue, have consequences for the social lives and related values of young people in a media city (cf. Couldry, 2012, p.2).

As pointed out by Georgiou (2013), digital spaces in the media city are created at the crossroads of the different expectations and practices of the media business and producers who have certain ideas about what people will and should do with media technology, and the actual actions and practices carried out by these people. These digital spaces draw upon social and cultural conventions, explicit and subtle social norms and agreements regarding physical spaces. Yet simultaneously, at least in theory, they may create possibilities for the emergence of new cultures, practices and conventions that extend the limits of physical social experience (cf. Boellstorff et al., 2012; Jenkins, 2006; Deuze, 2012; Postill & Pink, 2012). However, in our fieldwork we found a relatively localized perception of the media city. In Malmi, we met with and talked to young people who mainly shared digital spaces with their friends, hence affirming their local social networks and friendships from school and youth clubs. They posted on Facebook and Instagram, commented on their everyday lives using images and text, and texted friends and family members to organize mundane comings, goings and meetings.

So, unlike the ‘mobile panics’ advocates claim, for our informants hanging around in digitalized spaces seemed to be a normal(ized) part of their daily social practice and communication with their peers in their communities. What's more, these digital spaces have their own conditions for access. Digital spaces

are also spaces of visible and invisible control and repression. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or Instagram provide possibilities for identity work and community building, but also consist of hierarchies and are shaped by complex social, cultural, economic and political interests and control. These explicit and implicit mechanisms of control have particular relevance when discussing young people's ability to extend their spatial territories in the media city (e.g. Kallio & Häkli, 2011; Keith 2005). However, these boundaries concerning the right to 'networked publics' (boyd 2000, p.5) are not simply based on access to technology or adults' control; they are also related to social and racial tensions and inequality among peers. These ambiguous and digitalized boundaries may be invisible if too much focus is placed either on the technological determinism or on simplified global utopias related to the 'diginatives'.

Digitalized boundaries can also be contested. When the young people wished to extend their boundaries, they connected with the larger sphere of the media city, often via leisure-time activities typically associated with different forms of popular and urban vernacular 'Do it Yourself' (DIY) culture (cf. Talvitie-Lamberg, 2014). Some girls in Malmi followed certain teenage fashion bloggers; other young people shared virtual spaces with self-made celebrities such as vloggers. A group of boys we encountered were part of the particularly physical skateboard culture, which involved making and posting skateboard videos on the Vimeo website to share them with friends. Instead of 'only' consuming digital spaces, these young people also actively participated in making them. By doing so, the young people created 'alternative public spheres of the city' (see Gilroy, 1987) by reusing the digital spaces in a novel way, i.e. by coding and decoding them with a youth cultural meaning alongside unconventional performances and soundscapes.

In Malmi, the informants also negotiated the boundaries of digital spaces with adults, such as parents and schoolteachers. For some it was a question of age requirement, as minors are only allowed to use certain applications once they reach a certain age. However, the relevant question was not restricted to biological age, as negotiations related to the more social dimensions of age seemed equally important: whose voice dominates in different digital spaces, and how can these spaces be conceptualized in youth cultural terms? Schools also controlled young people's access by setting rules for the use of online media at school. These everyday rules and mechanisms of control could be interpreted as attempts to manage and organize young people's participation in the media city, but may also include intentions to protect vulnerable youth. As stated above, young people represent both a prospect for and a threat to the media city. Consequently, they need to be looked after, educated, and perhaps even 'tamed' before being allowed full access. Furthermore, our informants had to adapt to the rules and codes of conduct of the peer group sharing the digital space. Everyday ethical decisions were constantly made and remade concerning which pictures to post and how to react to information provided by someone else.

In addition to the semi-public or private digital spaces like social media, traditional mass media, including TV, radio and print news, occupy significant public space in today's media city. The mainstream mass media contribute to the mapping of urban social life by creating and maintaining certain 'social imaginaries' of spaces, territories and people living in the media city. These imaginaries are typically expressed in images, stories and legends circulating in and via the mainstream and social media (cf. Taylor 2004, p.23).

This 'imaginary' existence of young people in the media city poses yet another challenge for an ethnographer studying urban youth. In these imaginaries, young people are easily depicted as society's 'others', as objects for parallel care and control rather than active agents. To give one example, in recent years Tower Hamlets has become the subject of increasing public concern in the English mainstream and mass media as an area of growing 'Islamification', and consequently social and religious unrest. These fears have been projected most strongly onto young Muslim men in the neighbourhood. On the streets of Tower Hamlets, the perception of this social reality was far removed from, and much more nuanced than, the one circulating in the media. While it is not uncommon for subjects to neither recognize nor agree with their public image represented in the mainstream media, it is nevertheless an important task for the ethnographer to acknowledge these imbalances between the public perception and the emic experience of the situation. To use Soja's (2010) lexicon, the media city is not innocent of spatial injustices, and the challenge for a multi-sited ethnographic study of the media city is to recognize how these spatial hierarchies are played out in both digital and physical contexts. On the other hand, non-recognition and invisibility could also be used as a tactic of urban exclusion, a perspective that should not go unacknowledged as we study youth in the media city.

The way forward – ethical considerations

According to our tentative conclusions, the multisitedness of youth lives in the media city occurs not only in multiple physical and territorial locations (on the street, youth club or library), or different digital spaces (mainstream and social media), but also *simultaneously* in physical and digital spaces. This constant boundary negotiation implies a particular methodological sensitivity thus far disregarded in the theoretical discussions of media and youth studies. In to our experience, not only young people themselves but also ethnographers must face *radically contingent physical, social and digital boundaries* when exploring the multisitedness of urban youth life. The account of Doreen Massey (1992) is particularly pertinent with regard to youth, as she sees the dimension of multiplicity – a sort of simultaneous existence – as the fundamental element of space.

To continue this line of thinking, when the media city is conceptualized as the primary research field, the hazardous and unanticipated dimension of multi-sited

ethnographic work becomes even more prominent. This suggests a constitution of 'the field' as something that is under constant construction. Our experience is that the more seemingly 'boundless' the research setting is (as the street is in our case), the more numerous the boundaries that researchers may face during their fieldwork (from the physical street to semi-public places and virtual spaces).

Thus, the methodological quest for multisitedness entails a certain element of improvisation, even in terms of the researcher's relation to the field (Malkki, 2007). Making sense of young people's practices in the media city is not a matter of the gradual accumulation of knowledge into a stable structure of data. Rather, the researcher may generate knowledge in the course of various moments of puzzlement and sudden realization. The ethnographic journey itself may entail a range of short-term researcher engagements in different physical and digitalized fields. This also has ethical implications, at least if we lean on the idea(l) of the creation of trust between researcher and young person, which is considered to be based on a long-term commitment of the researcher as well as her/his durable social relationship with the informant. Thus, we need to re-think scientific and social conditions for meaningful researcher engagements in ethical terms as well.

The encounters with young people in both London and Helsinki revealed that they did not want to be a silent part of the public story being told about them and their multi-sited realities. Les Back (2007) talks about absolute moral categories attached particularly to those groups of people who seem to require parallel care and control. Such moral categories of urban young people may become an easy source of knowledge production, leaving young people's complex experiences of the media city inaccessible. Moreover, it seems clear that young people's right to use the media city is highly controlled and conditioned. To reflect further upon the paradox stated above, one might state that in a seemingly open media city, there are increasingly fewer places where young people can feel simultaneously safe and independent of public control.

This paradox also implies a particular ethical challenge for ethnographers studying young people in the media city, demanding constant sensitivity with regard to the balance of when it is appropriate to search out dialogue with young people, and when their right to their own space should be respected.

Notes

1. This article draws on the research project entitled 'Youth Street Politics in the Media Age: Helsinki and London Compared', and was funded by the Helsingin Sanomat Foundation. <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/streetpolitics/>
2. Malmi, a regional centre of North Helsinki, is one of the oldest neighbourhoods in the capital area. It is characteristically a crossroads between East and West, with a railway line dividing the area into Upper and Lower Malmi. Historically, Malmi is a relatively poor, white, working-class area with a somewhat 'rough' reputation. However, its current socio-economic and ethnic profile is more diverse, and the cultural life of the local neighbourhood is relatively lively, with its vibrant cultural centre, well-equipped youth club, sports centre and library, to mention a few

- aspects. Malmi has a population of about 30,000, of whom approximately 20 per cent have an immigrant background. In London, we concentrated on the borough of Tower Hamlets. Part of the historic East End of London, Tower Hamlets is a place of contrasts: it borders the City, London's banking centre, at one end and Canary Wharf, a recent business space development project, at the other. Between these centres, the borough's inhabitants include a sizable Muslim minority and one of the worst cases of child poverty in the UK. With its 250,000+ population, it also differs significantly from Malmi in terms of density and diversity.
3. We did observe conversations in semi-public commercial spaces, such as coffee and dress shops, but ignored the larger (but important) 'non-spaces', such as shopping centres. This was both a theoretical (shopping centre as 'street?') and a resource question.

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Digital Capabilities

Ida Cortoni & Veronica Lo Presti¹

Starting from the many definitions of digital competence in recent international scientific literature, the goal of this chapter is to construct a unique (even if complex) theoretical framework of digital competence, in which there can be a dialogue among different interpretations.

This first interpretative framework serves to elaborate an articulated map of digital competence models, within which we have identified dimensions, levels and indicators. All these aspects form the basis of our methodological design, which provides the grounds for the process of operationalization of digital competence. This is the specific objective of this chapter.

In the key competences recommendation, “competence” is defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context (European Parliament and the Council, 2006).

In the European Qualifications Framework recommendation, “competence” is seen as the most advanced element of the framework descriptors, and is defined as the proven ability to use knowledge, skills, and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. Furthermore, in this context, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy (Ala-Mutka, 2011).

Hence, “competence” is the capability to use one’s knowledge and skills with responsibility, autonomy and other appropriate attitudes to the context of work, leisure or learning (Ala-Mutka, 2011).

Following these scientific and political definitions, responsibility and autonomy are the two main key concepts on which we have based our reasoning to measure and evaluate digital competence. In fact, responsibility and autonomy represent the best learning outcomes that are at the base of the expected behaviour of the digital citizen. This is a complex reasoning, structured in levels,

and for each of the levels we have individualized specific knowledge, skills and correlated behaviours.

Certainly, some of this knowledge and these skills are notional/conceptual, which means that they are connected to basic literacy; they come from the external social context and are learnt through an educational path that could be formal or informal and relational. Other competences are “soft” or metacognitive, and come from the internal dimension of the individual.

The latter correspond to individual predispositions, or to the emotional and cognitive potentialities, and are stored in the “proximal zone of development” of each individual (Vygotskij, 1934). From here, we obtain our definition of digital competence, which includes two previously described dimensions:

Digital Competence is the set of knowledge, skills, attitudes (thus including abilities, strategies, values and awareness) that are required when using ICT and digital media to perform tasks; solve problems; communicate; manage information; collaborate; create and share content; and build knowledge effectively, efficiently, appropriately, critically, creatively, autonomously, flexibly, ethically, reflectively for work, leisure, participation, learning, socializing, consuming, and empowerment (European Commission, 2012, p. 4).

Theoretical and conceptual definition of digital competence

The distinction between basic and “soft” skills derives from the Lisbon Strategy, elaborated by the European Parliament and the Council (2006) and based on the Communication of the DG of Education and Culture. In this document, digital competence is included as one of the eight key competences for lifelong learning. It also involves the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology (IST) for work, leisure and communication.

This first definition is general and synthetic, reaching from the highest to the lowest objective. The highest objective is metacognitive and includes the development of logic and critical thought, and the capacity to manage information and to communicate. The lowest objective, on the other hand, is cognitive and is oriented towards multimedia comprehension. This is important for the ability to collect, evaluate, produce, present and exchange information, communicate and participate in network.

According to European law, the highest and ideal expected learning outcome is the autonomous and responsible behaviour of the digital citizen. However, this objective represents the highest behavioural stage in the process of development of digital competences that one can be expected to achieve.

Hence, in order to analyse digital competence from the conceptual and operational perspective, we must take into account the two main dimensions that form the base of its structure: the notional and transversal dimensions.

The notional dimension is comparable to the first area of the DeSeCo (Defi-

inition and Selection of Key Competences – OECD) competence pattern: using tools interactively. This dimension is correlated with the instrumental knowledge and skills for digital tool and media usage (Ala-Mutka, 2011), and also with the basic skills of the multiliteracies. This dimension is connected to the DigEuLit first-level model, which includes the basic skills, competences and approaches that are considered to be the foundation for digital competence.

The second dimension of digital competence is comparable to the second area of the DeSeCo competence pattern, interacting in heterogeneous groups. It is certainly comparable to the soft competences, and is in fact useful in solving problems, communicating, and acting autonomously and with awareness. These competences can be defined as advanced skills, and can be organized in progressive order: the ability to apply digital tools and media to specific tasks; strategic skills for benefiting from digital environments; and the integration of these digital aspects in digital environments for one's own daily life and objectives (Ala-Mutka, 2011). This dimension is comparable to the second level of the DigEuLit model, in which competence is applied within specific professional contexts.

The acquisition of basic and advanced competences allows the individual to exercise his or her right to citizenship, in terms of undertaking civic activism as well as social and cultural participation, with autonomy and responsibility. This last level of competence, comparable to the third area of the DeSeCo model, acting autonomously, refers to the attitudes to strategic skills usage in intercultural, critical, creative, responsible and autonomous ways (Ala-Mutka, 2011). It is also the level that is closest to the true meaning of competence, as it includes the re-contextualization and application of already acquired digital knowledge and skills in new contexts, and the undertaking of new social and cultural behaviours. This dimension refers to the third level of the DigEuLit model, which is oriented towards innovation and creativity and the ability to stimulate significant change within the professional or knowledge domain.

Towards an interpretative model of digital competence

Despite the diversity of definitions, theories and concepts which can be found in the scientific literature and which oscillate between media literacy and digital literacy, Internet literacy and information literacy, in all of the expressions that can be attributed to digital competence it is possible to find certain common characteristics. These are summarized below in terms of abilities and capacities.

According to this first structuring based on levels, digital competence includes different types of knowledge (each attributed to one level):

1. A type related to technological applications (writing systems, electronic sheets, databases, etc.), which we can summarize as “access competence”;

2. A type related to the opportunities for technological use and to the differences between the real world and its representation in the media, which we will call “critical competence”;
3. Opportunities for work related to an understanding of the validity and reliability of available information, and an awareness of the need to respect the ethical principles forming the basis of the interactive use of technologies (“competence of user awareness”);
4. An understanding of the technological potential in terms of innovation and creativity, or “competence of creative production”; and
5. Social inclusion (or “citizenship competence”).

Certain stratified abilities correspond to the complexity of knowledge (structured in 5 levels) contained in digital competence, such as: looking for, collecting and processing information, data and concepts in order to use them in a systematic way (critical ability); using appropriate tools for producing, presenting and understanding complex information (productive ability); accessing and exploring the Internet and using it as an environment for participation (citizenship ability); and using the technologies to support critical thinking, creativity and innovation in different contexts (ability related to awareness).

The development of knowledge and abilities related to the use of technology leads to the formation of behavioural attitudes, such as: using the technologies for work-related reasons in a critically reflective way, so that available information is evaluated; using them in a safe and responsible way in relation to the privacy and cultural differences; and using them to participate in communities and social and professional networks.

This first analytical definition of digital competence was constructed based on the analysis and comparison of different models of analysis of digital competence, mapped by the European Commission in 2011 (Ala-Mutka, 2011) and listed below:

1. 5C by Tornero & Celot (2006);
2. ETS (Educational Testing Service) (2007) within the iSkills project;
3. Ofcom (2008) within the Becta project;
4. UNESCO (2008) within the ICT Competency Framework for Teachers;
5. NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) (2006) within the project NCCA ICT framework: a structured approach to ICT in curriculum and assessment;
6. Certiport Inc., a US private company (2003), within the project IC³ Internet and Computer Core Certification; and
7. University of Glasgow (2005-2006) within the DigEuLit project.

Table 1. Comparison among patterns of digital competence

Dimensions of competence		iSkills ETS	Becta (Ofcom)	UNESCO	NCCA	IC ³	DigEuLit
Access	Technological	Access	Access	Technology literacy (access)	Developing foundational knowledge, skills and concepts	Computing fundamental	Digital competence
	Cognitive						
Critical	Analysis and evaluation	Integrate	Understand & evaluate	Knowledge deepening (evaluation)	Thinking critically and creatively	Key applications	Digital usage
User awareness	Management	Manage	Define		Understanding the social and personal impact of ICT		
Creative production	Production	Create		Create	Knowledge creation (creation)	Creating, communicating and collaborating	Living online
	Planning						
Citizenship	Communication	Communicate	Communicate	Knowledge creation (creation)	Creating, communicating and collaborating	Living online	Digital transformation
	Participation	Evaluate					

The framework used for illustrating the proposed model is by Celot and Pérez Tornero (2009), who introduced five components (or levels) of digital competence.

The first component refers to the competence of access or basic literacy as the first step for developing superior levels. According to UNESCO, it is access (Technology literacy) that refers to the opportunities for using media. We will distinguish between a) physical access to the media and to its content; and b) the ability – both cognitive and practical – to use these media properly. To include both these aspects, we will talk about conditions of access. This level corresponds to the basic competences that are instrumental in using digital media, presented in the report *Mapping Digital Competence: Towards a Conceptual Understanding* (Ala-Mutka, 2011). *Access* corresponds to the so-called conceptual digital competences within digital literacy, referring to the basic capacity to read and write with the use of digital language. In this case, it is also possible to talk about *functional literacy* (UNESCO, 2008). In this way, in relation to *computer literacy* (Shapiro and Hughes, 1996), *access* foresees two sub-levels: tool literacy – competence in using hardware and software tools; and resource literacy – understanding forms of, and access to, information resources, referring to the group of operational and instrumental competences needed to be able to work with a PC – for example, word processing, database, PowerPoint presentations, etc. (Bawden, 2008). In relation to *Internet literacy*, this level corresponds to functional literacy and reflects typical use and common requirements (Selber, 2004).

The second component is related to the development of capacities of knowing, comprehending and critically assessing the complex world of media

(*critical thinking*); the capacity to analyse and reason autonomously about the logic, nature and content of messages, as well as the knowledge to interpret the symbols, codes and cultural conventions used by the media. Developing this critical approach assumes the possession of competences of access and basic literacy related to the technology at hand. With regard to this issue, UNESCO talks about the *analysis and evaluation* level (included in the *Knowledge deepening* area), which refers to: the ability to decode a message with relation to a specific code and a particular communicative situation, to link a meaning to a specific personal context, and to understand the process of classification and categorization of the content of a message in relation to previous scales of value; and the capacity for comprehension and awareness of the conditions and possibilities of the media as tools. ETS uses the concept of *Integrate*, which means "...interpreting and representing information [and] involves summarizing, comparing and contrasting" (Educational Testing Service, 2002). It refers to the application of digital competence within specific professional or domain contexts (the *Digital usage* level of the DigEuLit model) and Key application level for IC³.

The third component refers to two aspects: the level of cultural awareness in the use of media (*awareness* or *define*); and the capacity to contextualize knowledge and acquired abilities in specific contexts by subordinating their use to other sociocultural objectives (*manage*).

This competence is included in the area of DigEuLit's *Digital usage* or IC's *Key applications*, or in that of UNESCO's *Knowledge deepening*. When confronted with the computer literacy discussed by Shapiro and Hughes (1996), the culture corresponds to critical literacy – the ability to evaluate the benefits of new technologies (note that this is not the same as "critical thinking," which is often regarded as a component of information literacy).

The fourth component refers to the development of the capacity to write with media, and thus to produce content and use the media as platforms from which to interact with other users. Both the critical and creative dimensions refer to the strategic competences (attitudes) whose nature is critical, creative, intercultural and related to the awareness and development of autonomy of action within the report *Mapping Digital Competence: Towards a Conceptual Understanding* (Ala-Mutka, 2011). This component could correspond to the publishing literacy discussed by Shapiro and Hughes (1996), or the ability to communicate and publish information. Through this component, one enters into UNESCO's area of *Knowledge creation*, or the *Living online* of IC³, which means "examination covers skills for working in an internet or networked environment and maximizing communication, education, collaboration and social interaction in a safe and ethical way" (Ala-Mutka, 2011, p. 72). DigEuLit speaks of *Digital transformation*, which "stimulates significant change at individual or organisational level" (Ala-Mutka, 2011, p. 59).

Finally, the fifth component is related to the contribution of digital competence to the strengthening of social participation. This last component cannot, however, be experienced by someone without sufficient levels of education and critical awareness. Within this area, *communicative competence* can be inserted, as it allows individuals to create messages from different codes – and to produce and distribute them using the different media that are available. We are referring to the advanced competences for communication and collaboration, for information management, problem-solving and participation, that can be found in the report *Mapping Digital Competence: Towards a Conceptual Understanding* (Ala-Mutka, 2011). These refer to the awareness of opportunities to use the resources of the Internet, of the ways one can use these resources for problem-solving and everyday basic activities. They also refer to an understanding of the system that generates the information online, and a comprehension of how this system is managed and made available. In this case, the reference is not to the conceptual competences, but to those transversal ones or those that intervene in the construction of the profile of a digital citizen. This profile is related to the autonomy and active participation of the digital citizen in sociocultural issues in a way that consciously and responsibly uses the material and non-material resources that are available. ETS speaks about *Communication* and *Evaluation*, which mean making judgements about quality, relevance and usefulness, or in this specific case the efficiency of the information (Educational Testing Service, 2002).

The use of Bloom's taxonomy as an instrument for constructing an evaluation model of digital competences

The current work takes a clear step forward in relation to the necessary construction of a theoretical-conceptual framework of digital competence that is approved by the scientific community. It entails proceeding to the construction of an operational and procedural model for researching and assessing digital competence, starting from a tentative operational definition of dimensions, sub-dimensions and levels of competence. This tentative operational definition aims to identify a set of evaluation indicators that can be empirically observed for every dimension and level defined in the conceptual map.

The provision of an operational definition for constructing an empirical model for evaluating digital competence is considered to be a mandatory step in empirically testing the constructed theoretical framework, as well as for checking, in different areas and targets of analysis, the validity of indicators of basic dimensions and objectives of digital competence.

In order to activate a process of operationalization of digital competence, the starting point is Bloom's taxonomy (1984), already applied in defining Internet literacy. The taxonomy reflects the "complexity hierarchy that orders cognitive

processes from simply remembering to higher order critical and creative thinking” (Noble, 2004, p. 194).

The use of Bloom’s taxonomy as the fundamental reference for proceeding to the operational definition of digital competence results is particularly functional in the main objective to find a standard tool for the evaluation – and not only for research and analysis – of different levels of digital competence. Bloom’s taxonomy is generally used within educational planning as a process for the organization and systematization of didactic objectives in a hierarchic structure based on precise criteria, such as objectiveness and evaluation efficiency, which allows for the articulation of the general objective into more specific objectives, which can be sorted into six different levels:

1. *Knowledge* (remembering and recognizing);
2. *Comprehension* (understanding);
3. *Application* (using a general concept to solve a specific problem);
4. *Analysis* (understanding the components of a larger process or concept);
5. *Synthesis* (combining ideas and information); and
6. *Evaluation* (judging value or quality).

These levels can be associated with those identified for digital competence in the theoretical map proposed in this chapter.

Therefore, within this work on the construction of an analytical and procedural model for evaluating digital competence, Bloom’s taxonomy allows us to identify different levels associated with different dimensions (basic and related to the objectives) of the concept – already defined theoretically – of digital competence. All of this is done with reference to the procedure for making operational definitions that recall the “tree structure” generally used within studies aimed at evaluating the quality of educational programmes, or of projects and services provided by the public administration. The proposal of this work is to use the structure of the “tree” to define the different levels of dimensions of a complex concept such as that of digital competence.

Therefore, the structure of Bloom’s taxonomy is used in this work for:

- articulating and specifying the dimensions of digital competence which were already illustrated in the most analytical levels of the competence;
- making a hypothesis in relation to the hierarchical organization of different levels, which helps to ensure a continuum starting from the basic Level 1 of access to the final Level 5 of citizenship; and
- designing and selecting evaluation indicators of performance for each level to be used in empirical research focused on digital competences developed and those that can be developed by specific target groups of individuals (for example, adolescents, preschool-aged children, etc.)

The challenge is presented in the attempt to construct an empirical model that is applicable to different contexts of research and units of analysis, and that produces valid results in relation to the possibility to evaluate and certify the possession of digital competence.

The system of attributing weights to different identified levels of digital competence allows us to make a hypothesis about some standards or minimum benchmarks in relation to which might be used to assess the types of competences developed by the individuals under analysis. Defining these standards for assessing digital competence is definitely a long-term objective of this work, but it needs to be mentioned as it is fundamental for launching a model that can research, assess, and ultimately also “certify” the digital competences.

Operational definition with the support of a “tree structure”

At this point, we can proceed with the application of the “tree structure” to Bloom’s taxonomy in order to identify the sub-dimensions (at the secondary level) of the *awareness* and *comprehension* referred to in the dimension of digital competence related to the first level of *access*.

As one can see in the next table (Table 2), the *What does it measure?* column provides the basis for designing the indicators that can measure the performance of individuals for Level II of awareness. The addition of this “tree branch” allows us to specify what we can measure concretely, or: knowledge of and ability to access technology, knowledge of languages and basic communication characteristics for using these languages for participating, expressing oneself, communicating, taking action, etc. In the same way, for Level II of access, we can try to measure the understanding of the role of media and information in a democracy, of media content and its uses. The way to measure this empirically is to construct valid tools/indicators capable of appropriately researching what we have specified, thanks to the tree structure.

Table 2. The tree of digital competences: the access example

Macro-dimension of competence	Level I, or dimension		Level II, or sub-dimension	What does it measure?
Notional	1	Access	Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge and skills of technological access - Knowledge of languages and basic communicative features to use them for participating, expressing, communicating, acting (codes, etc.)
			Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding the Role of Media and Information in Democracy (UNESCO) - Understanding media content and its uses (UNESCO)

This further step, illustrated in Table 2, offers a valid basis for designing indicators for measuring and assessing performance. The example of *access*, and the measurement of the levels of knowledge and understanding illustrated above, suggests a semantic affinity with the elements generally used for analysing any communication process and the models already considered within UNESCO's ICT Competency Standards for Teachers.

Types of knowledge and comprehension for designing indicators

The procedure illustrated so far allows us to proceed with the design of indicators for measuring different levels of digital competence. As is known, there are different methodologies available for selecting the indicators to be used in a research project.

In the case considered here, the selection was to involve a working group consisting of several undergraduate students of the Sociology of Communication (Sapienza University of Rome) in an "evaluation brainstorming" (Bezzi, 2006) in order to explore the semantic area of the concept of digital competence with regard to the theoretical-conceptual map illustrated here and in relation to the relevant international literature. The brainstorming allowed the working group, with support from researchers and professors, to identify all the possible indicators that could potentially be associated with the levels of the tree of competences, shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Indicators of the kinds of knowledge and comprehension

Value	Kind of knowledge	Kind of comprehension
1	Notional-conceptual	Translation/transposition
2	Knowledge of roles	Interpretation
3	Knowledge of ethical principles	Re-organization
4	Contextual knowledge	Extrapolation
5	Contextual and probabilistic knowledge	Prevision

Due to the limitations presented in this chapter, and in line with the objective of defining a methodological structure at the basis of the construction of a process of operationalization of digital competence in different educational contexts and units of analysis, we will not present the set of indicators identified for every dimension, which are still being defined by the working group. Instead, we will return to Bloom's taxonomy to illustrate how to move further along the scale of abstraction related to the concept of digital competence. We will consider how to connote the sub-dimensions (at L II) in relation to knowledge and comprehension in order to articulate them into types of knowledge and types of comprehension. This operation seems quite important as it allows us,

as anticipated, to attribute a numerical value and, thus, to initiate a pondering of the levels of knowledge and comprehension included in the *access* dimension. The aim is to use them to measure and, thus, to assess the levels of digital competences of the individuals under study.

However, it is important to mention that the construction of the procedural model for evaluating digital competences will be completed only when we have associated the considered levels of dimensions of competence to the appropriate empirical indicators capable of measuring each level.

As illustrated in Table 3, it is possible to specify knowledge and comprehension by identifying different types of these aspects. For example, one type of knowledge, rather simplified, can be *conceptual* and we can attribute to it a value of basis – the value of 1 in our hypothetical continuum. The identification of indicators of this type, focused on the minimal signs and codes, allows us to apply the indicator to different types of messages, also referred to social networks and digital media, which belong to the area of study that is largely popular in this era of web 2.0.

The attribution of levels follows a continuum from 1 to 5, which alludes to the increase in complexity of the knowledge and types of comprehension illustrated in Table 3. Thus, the type of knowledge related to the rules of the message, to the syntax at the basis of the narration structure, will have a higher value than that related to the more basic knowledge of basic signs and so on, until we arrive at the most complex level of 5, entailing *contextual and probabilistic* knowledge.

The same procedure can be applied to the *types of comprehension* listed in Table 3, which are collocated along an increasing continuum starting with the minimum value of 1 (*translation/transposition*) and ending with the maximum of 5, linked to the type of comprehension that includes the capacity to “foresee”, which needs to be measured with indicators related to the effects.

This structure of operational definition is also replicated for other dimensions such as creative, critics, culture and citizenship, and for each of these, indicators and variables of measurement and evaluation will be identified *ad hoc*.

The construction of this methodological structure of basis may seem complex, but it constitutes the premises for ensuring that the process of providing an operational definition of digital competence followed in this work is public and transparent, and can be repeated by any other researcher. It also allows for a justification of the validity of the selected indicators, which will be translated into variables of measurement of the performance of subjects/units of analysis of the different levels of competence identified.

The application of the tree structure to every dimension of digital competence allows us to bring back the set of designed indicators and the variables/questions used in questionnaires and evaluation tests for assessing digital competences within the standard and systematized theoretical-conceptual framework of digital competence.

Note

1. The introduction, the sections “Theoretical and Conceptual Definition of Digital Competence” and “Towards an Interpretative Model of Digital Competence” were written by Ida Cortoni. The sections “The Use of Bloom’s Taxonomy as an Instrument for Constructing an Evaluation Model of Digital Competences”, “Operational Definition with the Support of a “Tree Structure”, and “Types of Knowledge and Comprehension for Designing Indicators” were written by Veronica Lo Presti.

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Reflections on the Question of Technology in Media Literacy Education

Minna Saariketo

Once, we learned how to act in digital environments. But young people were born into this [digital] world. They do not ask whether it is part of our everyday life or not. Therefore, schools should take digitality seriously.¹

Finnish Minister of Education and Science Krista Kiuru
in *Helsingin Sanomat* (Nieminen, 2014)

The discourse about digital society and reflections on the skills needed to survive, to perform efficiently, and to participate in such a society have spread widely through different fields, from administration to education and media. The question no longer seems to be whether teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) in education, but rather when, how, and why they can and should use it (Helleve, Grov Almås & Bjorkelo, 2013). The quote above, from Finnish Minister of Education and Science Krista Kiuru, demonstrates both how the ideas of digital natives and a digital generation have become dominant in the public discourse, and how the interests in developing the educational system are linked with what are believed to be the skills needed in the 21st century.

In this chapter, I will not dig more deeply into what kind of media use and attitudes towards media technology characterize this generation, or whether it is relevant in the first place to use the word digital as an attribute to describe a generation. Instead, I will take a closer look at how the changes in our increasingly technologically mediated environment have been integrated with the understanding of educational needs. I will start this chapter with a look at the discourse on digital competence as a 21st-century skill. Then, I will continue with reflections on what media literacy education could learn from software studies; and last, I will introduce the notion of critical technology education as a way to consider in a reflective way technology's role in societies and people's everyday lives².

Problems in the discourse on digital competence

Discussions of the post-industrial society, the information society, and the network society have all been attempts to comprehend how social change is inseparable from technological development (Thacker, 2004). The discourse of digital futures has spread widely, the idea of technological revolution has become normative (Hoechsmann & Poyntz, 2012), and the rhetoric of information and communication technologies as empowering people has been a feature of political discourse for several decades (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011). The efforts to explain, define, and control the impact of technological change on the possibilities for agency make it relevant to ask how the question of technology has been and could be met within the field of media education.

Media literacy education has been in constant flux, complying with technological development and changes in society. The field is known for an openness and engagement with evolving environments (Hoechsmann & Poyntz, 2012). To meet the demands of the changing technological surroundings, the field of media literacy education has been widened in the past decades with the introduction of several new literacies, such as digital, ICT/computer, information, technological, network, and game literacy. Nevertheless, Erstad (2010) has identified several problems with many of the terms that link technology and literacy. First, he claims that there is a lack of insight into the conceptual field of media literacy education, which already includes all technologies and media forms, both analogue and digital. Second, he observes a danger of becoming too oriented towards present-day technologies instead of broader aspects that hold their relevancy throughout the years. Finally, according to Erstad, these new literacies are too focused on skills and information handling instead of broader aspects of living in a media-saturated society (Erstad, 2010).

Besides academics and media literacy educators, the political and administrative field has participated in defining the competences of digital society. For example, in its report on key competences for lifelong learning, the European Commission (2006) has identified eight domains of key competences, citing digital competence as one of them. According to the report, this competence is related to logical and critical thinking, high-level information management skills, and well-developed communication skills. Interestingly, the European Union seems to be eager to use the rhetoric of critical thinking when discussing media and digital literacy skills. The emptiness of this rhetoric becomes evident when looking at another European Commission policy document, published four years later. The aim of *A Digital Agenda for Europe* is to “chart a course to maximise the social and economic potential of ICT” (European Commission, 2010, p. 3) and “to make Europe a powerhouse of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth on the global stage” (ibid., p. 34). Even though digital literacy is recognized as one of the key competences in our society in this policy document, its content

is reduced to the professional skills needed in the ICT sector, and to the willingness and skills needed to participate in online markets as a consumer (Saariketo, 2013). The approach of this strategic plan is an example of how learning ICT skills is constructed as an obligation for citizens, not only because a digital literacy deficit is excluding people from the digital society and economy, but eminently because it is “holding back the large multiplier effect of ICT take-up to productivity growth” (European Commission, 2010, p. 6).

It is pertinent to deliberate over what kind of media literacy education, with regard to ICTs, is needed in the future. I suggest that media literacy education in the digital age needs to be supplemented with an understanding of how the digital society functions, whose interests steer it, and what role technology could and should play in it. Particularly, if the role of ICT in the future is as incremental and conspicuous as the strategic plan for Europe’s digital future suggests, the ability to understand the technological nature of the society becomes fundamental. In response, I will introduce software studies as an approach to living in technological societies that I perceive as lacking in the dominant discourse on the skills of a digital society.

What could media education learn from software studies?

Scholars in the field of software studies share the idea that we live in a software society; that is, in a society where software is deeply woven into everyday practices, social interactions, cultural experiences, economic transactions, and political decision-making (Williamson, 2014). It is thus contended that software structures and makes possible much of the contemporary world by codifying it into rules, routines, algorithms and databases (Fuller, 2008; Kitchin & Dodge, 2011). It has been stated that software is now so widespread that we can no longer be sure of its exact extent (Thrift & French, 2002). New media theorist Lev Manovich (2013, p. 5) has called the process through which software has obtained its current ubiquity “softwarization”. To describe our computer-mediated times, in her book, *Programmed Visions. Software and Memory*, Wendy Chun (2011) asserts that computers (machines of software and hardware) are media of power in our time – not only because they potentially create empowered users, but especially because they embody a way to navigate our increasingly complex world.

What is software; and more importantly, why does it have importance for media literacy education? Software is something constituted by code, written in specific programming languages, and structured and operationalized through algorithms (Williamson, 2014). In essence, it is the behaviour of the machines when running and what converts their architecture into action (Chun, 2011). The significance of code as the substrate of software is based on its governing power in making things happen by virtue of its executability (Mackenzie and Vurdubakis, 2011). The power of software as a socio-technical product lies in

its ability to model ways of thinking, seeing, and doing, and in how it sinks into collective discourse, thought, action, and subjectivity (Williamson, 2014). The fundamental aim of programming can be formulated as augmenting, mediating, and regulating people's lives (Williamson, 2014). Code has also been viewed as a broader contemporary phenomenon; not only in terms of software but also in terms of cultural, moral, ethical, and legal codes of conduct, because code-ability renders so many situations tractable and manageable (and also in-tractable and un-manageable) (Mackenzie & Vurdubakis, 2011).

Software studies as an interdisciplinary field has gathered together social theorists and humanists, media critics, engineers, hackers, designers, and artists to study the social politics of software, with an aim to deepen and expand the understanding of software and computational culture in general. Even though software has been the focus of research for quite some time, the interest has been in its technical aspects. Hence, the objective of software studies has been, as Manovich (2013, p. 10) formulated it, "to investigate the role of software in contemporary culture, and cultural and social forces that are shaping the development of software itself". It is alleged within software studies that the questions dealing with software are rather unavoidable, because software is a crucial but unacknowledged element of everyday life (Fuller, 2011).

Even though software plays a central role in contemporary society, it very often goes unnoticed, and its complex outcomes are not easily accounted for by people's everyday experience (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011). In fact, it seems that it is precisely because software has come to intervene in nearly all aspects of life that it has begun to be taken for granted and fade into the background (Thrift & French, 2002). The difficulty noticing software is due partly to the fact that it is designed to run silently in the background, and its conventions appear to us as rational, logical and commonsensical (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011). Geographers Nigel Thrift and Shaun French (2002) have introduced the idea of software as a dimension of the technological unconscious. They define it as a means of sustaining presence that is not accessible, but still has obvious effects, and that is often noticed only when it performs incorrectly. This is where I believe media literacy education could step in.

As new media objects allegedly rely on – or in the strongest cases, can be reduced to – software (Chun, 2011), and new media is already widely discussed within media literacy education through its contents and uses, the link between media literacy education and software studies is apparent. Despite the intangible, generally invisible, and complex nature of software, the effects it produces are both very visible and tangible (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011) – certainly a most intriguing challenge for educators. The intervention of educators is also needed to tackle what Thrift and French (2002, p. 311) call the "absent presence" of software in society: their observation of people being schooled in ignoring software, in the same way we are schooled in ignoring standards and classifications (Bowker &

Star, 1999), emphasizes the need to develop approaches for re-schooling people to pay attention to software's role and values.

The reflections of Kitchin and Dodge (2011) on the reasons why resistance to digital technologies has been rather mute, give media literacy educators further food for thought. First, Kitchin and Dodge draw attention to how most of people have been persuaded about software's utility through their user experiences and the dominant political and economic discourses, which make it appear rational and natural. Thus, the employment of software is seen as largely benign and routine. Second, Kitchin and Dodge state that people see the changes that are occurring in their technological environment as simply an extension of previously existing systems they are already accustomed to. The incremental employment of software is regarded as an inherent aspect of how things are now done, and therefore unchallengeable. Third, systems are seen as necessarily built in a certain way, with certain parameters and defaults. This is in contrast to seeing systems and architectures as relational and contingent in formulation, design and implementation. Last, it is mentioned that people are worried about the consequences of protesting and thus refrain from doing so; and even when willing to protest, they lack knowledge in how to challenge uncomfortable software-mediated phenomena such as algorithmic profiling. Addressing these themes in education dealing with software-enabled devices could support reflections on and reconsiderations of the role of software as a normalized part of everyday life.

Networks, databases, and algorithms as social and cultural constructs have rarely been discussed within media literacy education. Media education has been occupied with questions about agency and empowerment, but it seems that the conditions of agency in the digital age cannot be understood without taking into account the code-based structural affordances. The digital environments and devices are contingent, relational, and situated in nature; their code is a product brought into the world by the labour and skills of programmers (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011), and their engineering is guided by particular interests, values, and ideologies (Srinivasan, 2013). When the discussion of digital culture is limited to, e.g. the notions of social media, participatory culture, and peer production, it is no longer possible to grasp what is behind the new representational and communication media.

I use social network sites (SNSs) as an example because of the vast interest they have attracted among media educators in the recent years. They serve as an illustrative example of the economic and socio-cultural power relations on the Internet, and exemplify how a material structure affords the forms of agency that are possible in a specific network environment (compare McLuhan, 1964). A recent Norwegian study (Helleve, Grov Almås & Bjorkelo, 2013) shows that the use of SNSs as a support for learning has been adopted in governmental policy-making. It has been argued that SNSs can contribute to young individu-

als' critical reflection, development of basic competencies, and social capability. Moreover, it is believed that they build a bridge to young individuals' lives. Ingrid Helleve, Aslaug Grov Almås, and Brita Bjorkelo (ibid.) point out that the relationship between SNSs, ethics, and legislation is not addressed in the policy documents. I would like to add that, even more importantly, there is no discussion on how the software-enabled web architecture sets conditions for how people communicate, interact and act, and what the role of the Internet itself is as an agent in mediating action. While new media technology may enable users to create and share their stories, lead to their enhanced involvement, offer them opportunities to be creative and innovative, and allow them to gain information and to mobilize, it does not erase the substantial role that a site's interface plays in manoeuvring individual users and communities (van Dijck, 2009). Equally relevant are the ways SNSs collect and exploit data from and about the user. Many of the platforms enabling participatory culture and active citizenship are automated, commercial systems that aim to transform the activities they host into commodities. To make apparent how social network sites function in terms of shaping user agency, critical Internet scholar José van Dijck (2013) suggests that the term *social media* be replaced with the term *connective media*. According to van Dijck (2013), the latter notion exposes the profit-driven automated logic of the SNSs, and helps elucidate how these on-line platforms have become central forces in the construction, and not merely hosting, of human sociality.

One possible way to illustrate this constructed nature of social network sites and their algorithmic power for manoeuvring what the user sees and is seduced to do could be to compare within a group of people (in a school class, for example) what their Facebook newsfeeds look like. How many per cent of the content is third-party advertisement, and how many times is there input from pages the user has liked and groups s/he belongs to? How many new status updates are there from friends, and how many times does Facebook show that a friend has liked or commented on someone's post? What is the ratio of shared photos in the newsfeed? What is the difference if "most recent" instead of "top stories" is chosen for the newsfeed content? Because Facebook incites users to use certain features by promoting (showing) them in the newsfeed, one aim of this little exercise could be to identify these promotional features that seem important to Facebook at the time. Another aspect of the exercise could be to take a look at the constructedness of the site in order to identify how it uses different features to gather data (the "like" thumb, profile information, requests to fill in missing details, etc.). By paying attention to these features and making comparisons with other people, it is possible to conceive at least something of the logic of Facebook and its secret algorithms.

Critical technology education: upgrading Media Literacy Education?

I suggest that media literacy education should be updated with an approach that can be called *critical technology education*, in order to make the software and the mundane role of (media) technologies the focus, rather than just the representations mediated by these technologies. It is influenced by critical technology studies, science and technology studies, software studies, code literacy, and critical pedagogy.

I agree with the critical remark by Erstad (2010) that expanding the subfields of media education is somewhat unnecessary. Media education already includes all technologies and media forms, and the new subfields concentrate on a limited area instead of handling the broader aspects of living in a media-saturated society. My motivation, however, is to broaden the key field of media literacy education by strengthening its potential in discussing conditions of agency in contemporary society, and for understanding the discourses of how technology affects and alters society. This perspective also enables the scrutiny of media literacy education's own commitments and beliefs regarding technology; that is, the self-reflexive probing of its knowledge interests (Habermas, 1968/1987). For example, is the ideal future really one in which the new tools are enmeshed in daily routines (see for example Hockly, Dudeney & Pegrum, 2013) so that they are barely noticeable, normal and unconscious practices? Does using technology as widely as possible really support digital competence in the best way? And is increased access to technology sufficient for creating the kind of agency we want to foster? The basis for critical technology education is the need to better understand the often inconspicuous ways in which technology shapes and conditions societies, as well as how it plays a crucial material role in people's everyday lives. Contrary to the approaches of mainstream media literacy education, media and technology are perceived as active shapers and organizers of our perceptions and thinking, instead of taking them as given external matters, devices that are simply used or channels that convey information. Here, along the lines of Marshall McLuhan (1964), the focus is on the role of media as technologies, and how they shape culture.

The often-heard assertion of the radical alteration in our technological environment is nothing new in the course of history. In effect, technology has played a central role in defining what it means to be human at any particular time, from the Stone and Iron Ages to the Industrial Age. Technology is seen as the causal agent, end product, and *raison d'être* of each of these ages (Slack & Wise, 2005). In other words, technology is important in defining who we are and in shaping our culture. At the same time, its role is so emphasized because it is positioned at centre stage in our culture (Slack & Wise, 2005). Critical technology education attempts to raise these topics for discussion in order to better understand their complex interplay.

Although technology is present in people's everyday lives, there is little agreement about what the term means, and therefore the ways technology is connected to different aspects of life are also debated. Critical technology scholars Jennifer Slack and J. Macgregor Wise (2005) pay attention to the way technology is often understood in popular discourse as a "thing" with a practical application (e.g., a computer or a pacemaker). Arrangements without solid mass, such as the Internet, are typically also regarded as things. Understanding technology this way, as bounded artefacts, deflects the vision away from the interdependent relations, activities, interpenetrations, and investments among the living and nonliving and from the role of these things beyond their usefulness (Slack & Wise, 2005).

Following ideas from Slack and Wise (2005), reflections on technology within critical technology education could involve questions such as: How do technologies bend space and alter their surroundings? What tasks are handed over to technologies? How do technologies prescribe behaviours, attitudes, and values? How do our interactions with technologies contribute to the shaping of everyday life? And how do technologies reinforce or give shape to rules and values?

Technology education has been part of various curricula for quite some time. The aim of technology education, as it is known and practiced in different countries, has been to make familiar the processes and knowledge related to technology. It has mostly been preoccupied with making people conform indirectly to the demands of new technologies (cf. Petrina, 2000). This is well illustrated in statements about technology education, for example in the call for "an ability to create a healthy attitude to the practical uses of technological know-how" (Kuforiji, 1998, p. 23). Also, the range of technologies discussed is broader in technology education, whereas critical technology education within media education logically deals (mostly) with media and communication technologies. Nevertheless, due to computerization, drawing a line between technologies is not simple these days. While industrial technology and genetic engineering seem fairly off the framework of media literacy education, the modern car, for example, could actually be quite an interesting case for it.

Another distinction I would like to make concerns code literacy. Code literacy has recently gained some attention in the Finnish media due to initiatives such as Rails Girls coding events (Grönholm, 2014), and due to plans to include programming in the 2016 Finnish school curriculum (Lehtinen, 2014). Code literacy concerns the ability to code or program, and is said to offer a means to understanding Internet infrastructures and interfaces, as well as to offer opportunities for creativity.

While learning to code is an important element of what people should know and learn today, it is insufficient in the sense that it does not necessarily lead to a more enlightened view of the technological environment. Learning to understand code can be seen as a necessary part of critical technology education, and its possibilities through learning-by-doing cannot be denied. Still, special

attention needs to be directed at understanding how code works in enabling and constraining agency and shaping societies.

Furthermore, to understand the power relations in the digital society, it is not enough to consider simply how technology works, but also for whom it works (Thacker, 2004), and which powerful and consistent discourses promote and support the deployment of software-enabled technologies across different domains (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011). For many people, technology connotes progress, and the idea of new technologies making life better is widely shared (Slack & Wise, 2005). Technology's transformation of society is often carried out by naturalized means, which lessens our ability to understand the changes (Fuller, 2008). Critical education is needed to evaluate such discourses and to relate them with one another in a broader framework.

Dilemmas and ways forward

I believe that the tradition of critical pedagogy with its roots in the Frankfurt School and exemplified by theorists such as Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren, supports the critical theories that provide the building blocks for my outline of critical technology education. Critical pedagogy strongly emphasizes the social dimensions of education, takes on the role of a challenger and counter-educator, and questions dominant beliefs, power relations, and truisms (Herkman, 2007). Such an approach seems to provide a good basis for reflecting on the social impacts of technology.

However, there is an apparent paradox when talking about critical education in a school context (Herkman, 2007): for example, in Finland, schools are state institutions, advancing objectives chosen to guarantee the smooth continuity of the societal status quo, and to ensure the competitiveness of private enterprises in world markets. Does a critical questioning of, for example, the role of technology in society suit the school's task as educator, or does it rather serve to diminish doubts about its techno-utopian promises? For this reason, but also to stress the wider relevance of critical technology education to different age groups, it is important to underline that critical reflection on technology concerns all ages, not just children and youngsters.

Another dilemma concerns the relevance of critical technology education in the context of critical education. Is it not somewhat redundant to suggest that critical education should have a specific target, such as technology, given that critical education itself already provides the competence to relate critically to different topics, including technology? I am confident that questions concerning technology are being tackled within critical education in many valuable ways. But critical technology education is not about the content of critical education; it is about the lack of critical reflection on technology in other contexts, such as media literacy education, as I have suggested in this chapter.

The central (and optimistic) idea of critical technology education is that a better understanding of the technological nature of our society, and the ways software constitutes and shapes it, allows for the imagining of alternatives. Without this understanding, one can only accept the ready-made devices and software applications with the limitations and value agendas built into them (Rushkoff, 2012), and comply with the existing power relations that have so far remained unaltered, despite the technological developments (Andrejevic, 2009). Hence, critical technology education should be regarded as “counter education” to challenge the dominant political and economic discourses on technology, and to create distance in order to rethink the routines and normalized status of software-enabled devices and environments.

To summarize, critical technology education has a much broader scope than simply the skills needed to use devices, program or write code. Its aim is not to deny technology’s potential, but to provide a chance to reflect upon, challenge, and resist the kind of oblivion that can blind us to that it might be possible to change the way things are. Criticality should be understood as the practice of seeing the world in a new way. As culture is a work of selection, it is always open to new selections, challenges and arrangements. Critical technology education is based on the notion that technology is and will most likely remain polysemic, and hence a site of significant cultural struggle (Slack & Wise, 2005). The definitions and articulations of technology matter, because the world changes partly with definitions. Thus, the aim is to foster an imagining of how things could be different, and to constitute a ground on which dreams of alternatives might be born.

Notes

1. Translation by author.
2. Here I develop ideas I have previously discussed in conference presentations and in the book chapter *Imagining alternative agency in techno-society: Outlining the basis of critical technology education* in L. Kramp, N. Carpentier, A. Hepp, I. Tomani Trivundža, H. Nieminen, R. Kunelius, T. Olsson, E. Sundin, R. Kilborn (Eds.) (2014). *Media Practice and Everyday Agency in Europe*. Bremen: Edition Lumière.

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Journalists' Role in Media Education in Poland in a Time of Globalization

Ilona Biernacka-Ligieza

Twenty-five years after the collapse of the communist system, the media landscape in Poland has radically changed. Citizens can now choose from a wide variety of newspapers, glossy magazines, specialized journals and regional titles, many owned by the foreign publishing houses that rushed into Poland after 1989. Most printed media are owned by Western media corporations, and foreign capital is visible in both the national and local/regional market, where a comfortable relationship exists between publishers and foreign investors. The media in Poland remain in an expansionist model, taking on a global dimension with the introduction of digitalization, specialization, concentration of media ownership, and development of local media. The rapid growth of Polish media may also have some detrimental consequences. The media companies now existing in Poland must be willing to work diligently to develop new strategies in order to hold their place in the market. The concentration of media ownership, as big media conglomerates buy weaker publishers and stations, may become problematic. Locally, newcomers to the profession may not be as experienced or well trained. Finally, the growing demand for sensationalism may lead to inferior coverage of newsworthy events.

The contemporary shape of media in Poland has been greatly influenced by systemic changes, together with the abolition of censorship and a freeing of the media. An analysis of the structure of the Polish media market shows that contemporary journalists play a significant role in shaping the public sphere in Poland. The journalists representing today's market of Polish media – printed, broadcast and spread across the net – play an important role in shaping the proper structures of civil society. A contemporary journalist, through being an active participant in the public debate, enhances community inhabitants' sense of identity and of belonging in a particular culture and society. This is why the

historical function of service in the journalist occupation seems to still be crucial. There is no doubt, however, that in this era of global communication networks, transforming from a professional, specialized journalist into a broad-minded, universal “media worker” is an inevitable process. Undoubtedly, today’s media are undergoing constant changes, especially technological ones, which must be meaningful in shaping a contemporary profile of journalism. General newspaper circulation drops, and various communication platforms merge and consequently form more or less integrated media houses. Younger readers are more likely to use net resources than traditional newspapers (GUS 2010).

This is why young journalists face more and more new challenges concerning numerous aspects of their activity. Developmental tendencies currently dominating on the contemporary media market are: firstly, ubiquitous multi-platform tools (fading differences referring to the shape of material produced by a journalist); secondly, growing competition for traditional media when confronted with other forms of communication (i.e. social media); and thirdly, the creation of new media practices by recipients. Other crucial challenges that students of journalism should respond to are: creating one’s own image based on ethical norms defining this profession; caring for professionalism and reliability; being a critical and uncompromising observer of society; resistance to editors’ pressure etc. These problems have always occurred in the media, regardless of the medium or platform type.

Journalism and media education – sudden and common development

There is a virtual growth of media institutions across the country. Many more universities are introducing journalism courses, with journalism and mass communication being taught at a large number of public universities. Additionally, several private universities and institutions offer a variety of media courses. Media education is seen as a profitable business venture. In such circumstances, most media universities and private institutions have devised their own modules and course content, which to some extent has an unintentional bias towards foreign models.

Many textbooks are of foreign origin, with quite limited relevance to the social, cultural, economic and political realities in Poland. The main challenge in media education today is not to multiply the existing training and education facilities, but rather to strengthen them through collective efforts by students, teachers, media academics, professionals, the media industry, universities, professional media bodies, and of course public, national institutions.

This calls for a platform from which all these groups could address the challenges and concerns, and work towards articulating a common framework of media education. It would also help in exploring the possibilities of engaging all the media educational institutions in some kind of voluntary, professional,

self-dependent and self-regulatory mechanism. The quality and shape of media education is a serious subject, and should be handled carefully and with due consideration. There might be some reservations in certain quarters on this issue, as universities may not appreciate encroachment upon their autonomy. There is no doubt as to the need for at least some minimum benchmark of standards in the curriculum regarding professional courses, which will definitely lead to a positive response from all stakeholders. The minimum benchmark in media education will evolve through the collective wisdom of all stakeholders, and nothing will be imposed on anyone. This must proceed step by step, with the aim of improving the level of media literacy and preparing conscious media producers and recipients.

Media education in Poland – theoretical assumption

In Poland, the end of the 20th century was a time of major economic and social change, understandably affecting the area of culture and of course communication processes. During this first decade of free-market economy and socio-political change towards democracy, the need for media education was increasingly recognized. It was then understood as media pedagogy, education through media, but mostly education for media (Drzewiecki, 2010). Wacław Strykowski distinguishes the following main goals of media education in Poland: 1) use of media for intellectual and professional ends; 2) developing a critical understanding of media messages as means of value transmission and attitude formation; and 3) appropriate use of media for entertainment (Strykowski, 1998).

Wojciech Walat (2004) underlines that the basic aim of media education is to educate in the area of media, so that students can understand their nature and influence, and use them reasonably in didactic and educational situations. Media education has become an indispensable area of general education, because the media has become a reality in everyone's life. The lack of media education can pose a threat in the form of serious social consequences, as regards both the selection of the media to be used as well as its use (Walat, 2004).

According to Janusz Gajda, Stanisław Juszczuk, Bronisław Siemieniecki and Kazimierz Wenta (2004), the media determines the shape and character of popular culture, intensifies globalization processes, and also favours a process to the contrary – a customization of the “production” of programmes and their reception. Media people popularize culture to an incredible extent; meet and create needs, interests and likes; and influence the stimulation and re-evaluation of creative attitudes (Gajda, Juszczuk, Siemieniecki, & Wenta, 2004).

Moreover, media plays a dominant role in education – institutional, social and constant, education without age, social and cultural, or national limits. It is the only “window to the world” and omnipotent source of information for numerous illiterates. The media orientates onto the global problems of the world, broadens

horizons, and compensates for a lack of contact with schooling. In the case of highly educated people the media can be negatively perceived, but can also have positive functions, including the generation of new information as well as influencing ways of thinking (Walat, 2004).

The incredible development of the media and their hard-to-grasp rich programme, diversified in both content and form, drives new educational steps – to teach the effective use of the media, beginning with the stage of being able to selectively choose programmes to enriching their reception. Contrary to popular belief, this task is not easy. Apart from discrimination in the wide-range offer, it aims at taking into account the psycho-social and cultural predispositions of recipients learning the peculiar language of the media, and in the case of multimedia, the mastering of the principles of using the information and communication technologies or people's capability to communicate with computers and interpret a large set of incoherent and partial information. The expected result of such selective choice and reception is to obtain and assimilate information, develop interests, and shape desired social attitudes. The use of such didactic measures – which, by integrating various media, would introduce “cognitive order” in the information noise surrounding people – could prepare them for creative existence in the contemporary and ever-changing reality (Gajda, Juszczyk, Siemieniecki, & Wenta, 2004).

Stanisław Juszczyk, analysing the first phase of the media education process in Poland, notes that the media education of teachers and students has mainly concerned the ability to use didactic means and the mass media to aid the educational process, improvements aimed to increase the efficiency of didactic work. However, he notes, threats were omitted, such as the content and form of media news, which could cause noticeable social dangers by shaping negative attitudes in recipients' consciousness. The media can significantly influence the form, content, and speed of the indirect communication process, and reduce direct communication (Juszczyk, 2000).

According to Waław Strykowski (1998), the main role of media education is not only to prepare the recipient for learning the latest educational technologies, for the reception of the content transferred by the media selectively, actively, and thoroughly; it also takes into account learning practical principles of media use by the recipient as tools aiding individuals' intellectual actions, their development, and co-creating and creating educational curricula and their popularization by the media on a micro and macro scale. In general, media education has three basic tasks to fulfil. Firstly, its role is to present media as a helpful tool for transferring information and shaping a system of values and attitudes. Secondly, it is perceived as the process of preparation for using the media as a tool for intellectual development (self-development) and professional work (giving selected actions to the media); and, thirdly, it is to prepare people for a rational use of media as instruments of play and entertainment (Strykowski, 1998).

The main curricular assumptions of media education in this era of globalization and the information society include a few crucial directions of activity. As Walat underlines, media education as a whole prepares people to understand the communication media operating in their own country and the ways they operate; it also teaches them to use the media for mutual communication. When we look more deeply into media education activities, we must note such cases of building media awareness as: 1) analysing, critically assessing and creating media texts; 2) identifying sources of media texts and their political, social and cultural context; 3) interpreting news and values offered by the media; and 4) matching suitable media to their own news and relations aimed at specific recipients (Walat, 2004).

Piotr Drzewiecki (2010) adds that the new path for media education, provides society with access to the media concerning both their reception and creation, and in the process includes printed media, graphics and sound, as well as motion and motionless pictures provided by each type of technology (Drzewiecki, 2011).

Media education in Poland at the turn of the century – institutional and social initiatives

Media researchers who have analysed media literacy among Poles have confirmed the relevance of media education for society in general. The first media education programme was introduced at the beginning of the 21st century, but was highly criticized, and the problem was soon taken up by the Polish media regulatory authority (Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji). Because of this, the programme was ultimately abandoned. The coordinating efforts of the Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji were to be gradually given up in the years to come (Dąbrowska, 2011).

The rapid development of global communication systems brought into Poland's media education some interesting initiatives, which were more social movement than government policy. Numerous programmes grew out of European-based programmes (e.g. Media Programme; Safer Internet; Dyżurnet.pl; Media Desk), and websites devoted to education for the media were created (e.g. EdukacjaMedialna.pl; Edunews.pl). There was no coordination of these initiatives at the national level, and neither was media education extensively promoted (Dąbrowska, 2011).

In the last few years, state governments have been encouraged by the European Commission to coordinate and regulate the activities of all parties involved in media literacy development. Also, a further European initiative has urged the relevant member state institutions to make media education an important and relatively independent component of education.

Despite this European institutional support, Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji, various non-governmental organizations, and the Ministry of National

Education decided against the extensive presence of media education as an integral part of school programmes. The new core curriculum, issued in 2009, drastically limited media education by severely restricting it. Significantly, the integrity of the initial media education programme was effectively eliminated, with only some aspects remaining in selected school subjects (Dąbrowska, 2011).

As Boroń notes, the teaching of media competences in Poland is mainly restricted to IT skills and the reception of ICT messages; in other words, passive skills rather than an active and creative use of media. Although there seems to be a strong conviction on the part of educators that all modern teaching requires the use of ICT, school curricula and teaching practice do not give enough credit to education for media. Most experts consider this policy insufficient and lacking in integrity (Boroń, 2010).

Overall, media education should cover all the component literacies (information, computer, media, digital). Initially – that is, in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s – the focus was on “traditional” media, and media education concerned particularly the ability to interpret media content, to understand the mechanisms of media impact, and to use media for educational purposes (Boroń, 2010).

Understandably, with the high impact of computer technology, media education shifted its focus to digital literacy to enhance audiences’ participation skills. Since the beginning of the 21st century, digital technologies have practically taken over mass media markets and much attention has been devoted to digital literacy; still, the main concern of media education is much the same.

Journalists’ activity in the media education process

The place for implementing media education is not only school, but rather covers the whole of society. The basic aim of media education in schools and throughout continuous education is to develop key information competences to allow people to live creatively and with dignity in the constantly developing information society.

Journalists, publishers and media researchers are becoming increasingly concerned about the new illiteracy that is threatening contemporary media. After all, this is a business that creates and produces written information, either carried by print or published on the web.

There is a potential risk that, in the future, fewer and fewer people will be able to properly use newspapers’ publications, either on paper or in digital format. All this underlines the importance of the contemporary media literacy, which could be improved through a significant and widespread. Today, in the global communication reality, it is of utmost importance that newspapers and news media be considered in any discussion or policy aimed at improving media literacy skills in Poland.

Many contemporary media promote reading proficiency by helping in the development of essential literacy skills. At the same time, the range of authoritative information provided by news media is indispensable to citizens wishing to inform themselves about the major challenges facing society.

Today's global media contribute to lifelong education, constantly keeping people informed about the latest developments long after they have left full-time education. This is now more important than ever, at a time when smart and sustainable growth in the global economy depends on citizens having a high educational level.

The sudden increase in and even deluge of information, the doubling of scientific knowledge in a relatively short period of time, and frequent changes in work and the necessity to retrain, as well as the necessity to systematically train oneself as part of the whole working population, has given education the main task of becoming familiar with methods of rapid and effective learning, including the ability to use available information. This is a wide range of diversified tasks for all levels and types of education.

A study of media productions, however penetrating, is inadequate if it only examines the product. Comprehensive critical analysis requires a recognition of the entire process of information processing, and accordingly demands direct contact between young people and the organization concerned.

Support for productions by young people can be offered either in schools or within the enterprise concerned. It can consist of, for example, technical support from professionals in the production of TV/radio programmes or newspapers produced by young people; or of acceptance by a public network of material produced by young people; or of the availability of space in a daily newspaper devoted to articles written by students. The Opole daily newspaper *Nova Trybuna Opolska* has assigned teachers the role of organizing the pages of the newspaper given over to journalism students' writing and to news items that concern them. Teachers emphasize the fact that, through their work, they have convinced a number of the publication's journalists of the importance of these activities.

For the reasons mentioned above, a number of Polish media representatives have decided to take an active role in the media education process. Some crucial didactic projects, followed by media concerns together with schools and public institutions, are influencing both social integration and media education.¹

One of the first projects, a long-term one, was the initiative of journalists and editors associated with the *Angora* weekly (Lipszyc, 2011). According to the main idea of the project, some seaside resorts have been the venue for the youth camp *Power of the Press* (<http://www.angorka.com.pl/potega-prasy/>), organized under the medial patronage of the *Angora*. Camp participants were school newspaper editors from all over the country, who met in three successive groups to combine recreation with an upgrading of their journalistic qualifications and to delve more deeply into this profession.

Their task was to publish a few issues of the newspaper, whose target audience is tourists spending their vacations at the seaside. Then, the young people from primary and secondary schools had to sell around 600 copies of the printed paper by their own means (Dąbrowska, 2011). Besides articles and interviews, the weekly also contained advertisements collected by the young publishers themselves. Prominent media personalities regularly met and talked with the students participating in the project. Many graduates of the *Power of the Press* their media education path, choosing journalism studies to become professional journalists.

The next interesting initiative was the project created by the Polskapresse group (Lipszyc, 2011). The programme, called *Junior Media* (<http://www.junior-media.pl/news/>), is aimed at media education and inspiring readership among young people, encouraging them to read the press and providing schools with the tools necessary for making publications.

The project is based on the “juniormedia” platform, allowing users to create school publications on professional templates, featuring logotypes of Polskapresse regional dailies. Since the beginning of the project approximately 1,800 primary, junior high and high schools have participated, publishing to date around 4,000 e-magazines on the platform (Dąbrowska, 2011).

In 2011, the project won the “Media Innovation” award in the Media Trendy competition organized by the SAR Marketing Communication Association. *Junior Media* received honourable mention in the “Making the News” category in the international World Young Reader Prize competition organized by WAN-IFRA, the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (Żarek, 2011).

The media education process in Poland has also been supported by journalists and managers from the first independent – and most important – daily, *Gazeta Wyborcza*. For the editor of the largest quality newspaper in Poland, the fact that Polish people barely read was painful. But on the other hand, this was a challenge: to change people’s minds and habits and show them that when they don’t read, they lose something important. This is why *Gazeta Wyborcza* decided to conduct the multimedia campaign “We read in Poland”, beginning in June 2011. *We read in Poland* had a goal: to convince everyone that reading is in our common, social, economic and existential best interests.

Another project guided by *Gazeta Wyborcza* concentrated on the challenges and effective use of ICT. The project, called “School with Class 2.0” (<http://blogiceo.nq.pl/szkola2zero/>), raised the issue of how to use modern information and communication technologies (ICT) in education. This initiative reflected on how ICT could be used in teaching and communication, and how technology could help develop creativity, good judgement and team spirit. Since the beginning of the campaign, around 800 schools from all educational levels have accessed this programme. Students have created over 3,000 blogs sharing ideas and experiences, teachers have published over 5,000 examples of good practices, and each school has developed *Statute 2.0* – an instruction manual for how to

use ICT in daily school life. The “School with Class 2.0” programme is run by *Gazeta Wyborcza* and the Center of Citizenship Education, with the honorary patronage of the Polish Minister of Education (Dąbrowska, 2011).

It is also worth mentioning the idea of the two most influential media groups in Poland, Media Regionalne and Polskapresse. The programme “School without Violence”, run since spring 2006 by the regional newspapers of these two publishing groups together with the Orange Foundation (*ibid.*), has the main objective of helping prevent violence in Polish schools through increasing awareness of the problem, changing attitudes towards violence, and providing constructive support and tools to schools to efficiently and systematically combat the phenomenon. The programme is focused on delivering know-how and the best practical information to teachers/schools, improving teachers’ skills, and encouraging the communities around the schools to deal with the problem.

Comprehensive critical analysis requires a recognition of the entire programme of information processing and, accordingly, demands direct contact between young people and the organization concerned. As we can see from the cases presented above, the support for productions by young people is very often provided by journalists working for professional media concerns.

As we can see from the above presentation, the media education process in Poland is highly influenced by the media business, and journalists are very often the most influential teachers of media literacy among students. Quite often, the journalist’s task is not only to create the proper information and build opinion, but also to participate in the media didactic process.

Journalists and their role in building a media-conscious society

Opinions on the role and shape of the journalist profession will always vary, and will be representative of one’s place in society and function one performs. Even the journalistic environment itself very often creates versatile visions of its own craft. Contemporary journalism is facing more and more new challenges, and decisions regarding its future are often contingent upon external factors, especially the rapid development of modern communication technologies, media convergence and globalization that accompany this process. According to Nygren (2008), journalism is undergoing a “de-professionalization”, as increasing economic expectations regarding the media and the great speed of technological development are threatening what used to be the journalistic domain: quality, independence and reliability.

The social role of the journalist profession is undisputed, but three main aspects of this role should be remembered: perceptions and expectations. Perceiving this role is defined by sociologists as receiving it ourselves, often through the prism of ideals or authorities. Expectations refer to a journalist’s response to the needs of the receivers and the environment. These may be of formal (e.g. acts,

rules) or informal (e.g. requests, wishes) character (Raaum, 1999). In his analysis, Raaum (1999) notes that journalists often take advantage of ethical issues to set the boundaries of their profession. Journalism should be a free and independent profession. The right to freely choose an information source is regarded as one of the most significant qualities of journalism. Journalists working for Polish contemporary media admit that they are trying to assess their own activity through a prism of commonly accepted rules that shape journalistic professionalism. In their opinion, many of these guidelines form universal norms, which can be used at every level of journalistic and editorial activity. Nevertheless, they also admit that very often the expectations regarding how a journalist should work are not flexible enough to be combined with classic journalistic ideals. One of the factors considerably influencing the process of forming today's journalism is the pressure to generate the greatest possible profits in many media companies; the owners see the newspaper through the prism of its profitability. The financial crisis, also detectable in the media industry, has led to reduced income from advertisements in many editorial offices, which results in cost-cutting and job losses. All structural changes also influence the journalistic working space, and restricting this space may significantly affect the role a journalist plays in society.

Conclusions

The main aim of the chapter was to discuss the active role of media concerns and journalists in the media education process in Poland. As we can see from even the few examples discussed here, the influence of media representatives on improving media literacy and activity among young Poles is unquestionable. All workshops and media events involving young people, teachers or other educational staff help to build up the conscious media society. Some media concerns have organized teams of professionals, available on demand to contribute their services. This form of input benefits from being linked to current educational activities, so as to avoid the risk of leading (or reinforcing) a form of mystique, an increasing deference to the media and to journalists. Moreover, media concerns often support grassroots initiatives. This support can be offered either in schools or within the enterprise concerned. It may even cover the production by young people of TV/radio programmes, newspapers or portals; or the acceptance by a public network of material produced by young people.

Keeping in mind the future of journalism and media education, we should look at the following aspects: mission, quality, ethics, independence, freedom, and new communication technologies. An expansion of the journalist practice and media education will require a close study of the ways globalization and new technologies go through a process of "resignification" in the local arena (Kraidy, 2003). Globalization has been responsible for major transformations in the structure of news in the world, as privatization and deregulation have enabled

cross-border flows of capital and technology. These changes have created new ways for media businesses to expand into international markets using output deals, virtual integration, joint ventures, programming sales, and production arrangements. Globalization has unsettled past linkages between state and capital, geography and business, the local and the global. Conflicts no longer fit into the "national versus foreign" mould. International and domestic media corporations have realized that they need each other, and are deciding to partner in different ways. While the trend is indeed towards a commercialized, profit-driven model, the results of such changes present a multilayer complexity posed by the sheer speed and scope of the changes (Hegde, 2005).

Media concentration, as well as convergence and cross-border ownership, is simply rooted down in today's media reality. Horizontal concentration may pose dangers to media pluralism and diversity, while vertical concentration may result in entry barriers for new competitors. Guiding principles must be developed for the editorial independence of editors and journalists from pressure from both publishers and the political and/or industrial arena. Such principles should be developed in close cooperation with publishers and professional editorial staff and should, once introduced on a voluntary basis, be binding and therefore legally enforceable.

Note

1. Brief description of selected projects based on the information presented in the report on the state of media education in Poland (Lipszyc, 2011).

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Evaluating Media Literacy and Media Education Competences of Future Media Educators

Camille Tilleul, Pierre Fastrez & Thierry De Smedt

The definition of media literacy in terms of a set of coherent competences, associated with assessment tools to measure them has attracted a growing interest in the research community studying media literacy. However, whereas a variety of conceptual frameworks have been proposed, empirically-validated assessment tools for media literacy are still rare, and so are empirical evaluations of media literacy competences (notable examples include Hobbs & Frost, 2003; Quin & McMahon, 1993; Arke & Primack, 2009). In this chapter, we present an empirical evaluation of the media literacy and media education competences of future media educators. The evaluation is part of the scientific tutoring of a new Master's program in Media Literacy Education opened in September 2013 in a French-speaking Belgian college, which aims to train professional media educators.

The overall evaluation of the Master's program includes the diachronic assessment of the first cohort of students' media literacy and media education competences, in order to measure their improvement. The assessment involves three steps, as students will be tested three times in total: once at the outset of their Master's program, once at the end of their first year of training, and once at the end of their Master's program (i.e. at the end of the second year of training). In this chapter, we present the assessment's theoretical framework and method, as well as the results of the first tests. First, we define the central concepts of the evaluation's theoretical framework and the methodology that was used to undertake the evaluation. Second, we present the results of the first phase of the evaluation. Finally, we discuss the limitations of the tests and how we plan to adapt them in the near future.

Theoretical framework

Competence

The concept of competence was defined by many authors in multiple fields of research. Here, we will focus on a few of the essential traits of its definition in the field of pedagogy. First, *competence* must be defined with reference to intentional action: a competence becomes manifest in contexts where an individual acts towards a goal. One may speak of competence when an individual *puts* their knowledge and skills *to relevant use* in a variety of situations (Scallon, 2004). Second, being competent implies the efficient articulation of *different internal and external resources* within a family of situations (Tardif, 2006). A common distinction among internal resources differentiate between knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Bourg et al., 1989). Finally, the concept of competence implies the ability to face *novelty*. As Rey et al. (2012, p. 13) put it “competence refers to unique combinations of skills manifesting an original and non-stereotypical adaptation to novel situations”.

Based on this definition, competence can be opposed to the capacity. Capacities are acquired through simple and repetitive exercises that allow an individual to learn to reproduce some behavior in a constant, invariable way (e.g. the ability to multiply numbers).

In the context of the evaluation presented in this chapter, we sought to assess the students' levels of competence (i.e. how they put a variety of relevant internal and external to good use when faced with novel problems) in two domains. On the one hand, as future media educators, students needed to be evaluated with respect to their media education competences, i.e. their ability to plan and design media education activities. On the other hand, as the ability to educate others to media depends on one's own media literacy (Brouwers, 2010), we also evaluated their media literacy competences.

Media literacy as competences

Media literacy has traditionally been defined either as a set of themes or transversal key concepts (such as languages, representations, audiences, and productions) that can be applied across a wide range of media, to be mastered by individuals (Masterman, 1985; Wangermée, 1995; Buckingham, 2003; Kellner & Share, 2005), or as a set of competences to be developed by them. In this second approach, common definitions include the ability to access, analyze and evaluate, and either communicate (Aufderheide, 1993) or create (Livingstone, 2003; Buckingham, 2005) media messages in a variety of contexts.

In an attempt to extend and further specify these definitions, we defined (Fastrez, 2010; Fastrez & De Smedt, 2012) media literacy as the competences required to perform different tasks (reading, writing, navigating, and organizing) on a variety of media considered as informational, technical and social objects.

Media as informational, technical and social objects

Media (messages and devices) can be, in turn, regarded as informational, technical, and social objects. They are informational objects, designed to represent things, real or fictitious, different from themselves, through the use of different sign systems. As representational systems attaching a signifier to a signified, they possess both formal properties, referential objects, and specific modes of signification. Users of a given media can turn their attention to these three classes of properties alternatively. On the one hand, all media have formal properties. A movie has a duration, a drawing has colors, a theater stage has a size, a photograph has a grain, a software window has an aspect ratio. On the other hand, any media refers to something other than itself. A documentary recounts historical events, a video game immerses its players into a magical world, a poem expresses a feeling. The form of media (its signifier) points to its referent (its signified) in a certain way. The whole conceptual apparatus of semiotics can be used here to characterize these modes of signification, which depend both on the types of signs they use (e.g. text, still or animated images, sound) and the types and genres of media that combine and arrange them in many different culturally entrenched configurations. Adopting a similar standpoint, Lebrun-Brossard and Lacelle (2011) define multimodal media literacy as including a general semiotic competence, specific textual competences for each semiotic system (text, image, sound, hypertext, ...), and a multimodal competence (for the joint use of different semiotic systems).

Media also result from technical processes (e.g. a newspaper, a movie, a website are all produced using different technical apparatus and infrastructure), or are themselves designed to produce or disseminate other media objects (e.g. a blu-ray player, a search engine, a cell phone are all objects requiring technical interaction to make them function).

Finally, media are social objects. They point to the individual and institutional agents who produce and diffuse them, thereby transforming “the spatial and temporal organization of social life” (Thompson, 1995, p. 4). They can also be examined with respect to their pragmatics: the intentions of these agents, the positions they attribute to them and to their recipients, the effects they produce on these recipients (Meunier & Peraya, 2004). They also carry, support, oppose or modify cultural models (Holland & Quinn, 1987; Carey, 1989). Finally, media users develop uses and practices through which they domesticate them (Silverstone & Hirsch, 1994; Brotcorne et al. 2010). (This list of social aspects of media is of course open, and by no means exhaustive.)

Four types of media tasks

Among the tasks related to the exercise of media literacy, we distinguish between those of reading and writing (centered respectively on the reception and

production of a single media object), and those of navigation and organization (centered respectively on the reception and the generation of a collection of related media objects).

In a mediated environment, the competent reader is able to decode, understand and evaluate a variety of media objects: a novel, a fiction film, an editorial, a blog, but also the interface of a search engine, or the instruction guide of a drug. Potential ways of reading and interpreting can be focused on what these media represent, the semiotic systems they use, or their format (informational reading), on the technical process underlying their production (technical reading), on the institutional context of their production, the intentions of their authors, the cultural stereotypes they reinforce (social reading), etc.

As far as navigation is concerned, we distinguish between searching and exploring collections of media objects. The former involves searching for and finding media meeting specific search criteria. The latter involves identifying and locating the formats, genres, technologies, actors, etc. specific to a given media environment. As for reading, the search criteria and the milestones of exploration can either be informational, technical or social.

Media writing competences are those required for the creation and distribution of media productions, whether individual or collective. They involve the appropriation of languages and genres that these productions make use of (informational writing), the mastery of the technical operations they call for (technical writing), and the activation of various interpersonal and institutional relationships (social writing).

As for organization competences, they include both the ability to conceptually categorize a set of media with *ad hoc* taxonomies (depending, for example, on the genre(s) they belong to, the audience(s) they target, or the technical standard(s) they meet), and the ability to implement tools that reify these forms of organization into personal spaces of information (Jones, 2008): a personal video library, internet favorites, file or email folder hierarchies, etc. The organization of media as informational objects implies, for example, the competence to keep, organize, annotate, and archive documents (e.g. emails, photos, movies, music tracks) found, produced, or shared throughout one's media practices. The organization of media as technical objects (e.g. equipment, software, network services) includes the ability to situate alternatives in terms of available media technologies, and to categorize them according to their potential interoperability. The organization of media as social objects corresponds to the ability to organize mediated relationships, both as a receiver (e.g. to position oneself with respect to different ways of reading a given media) and as an interactant (e.g. to organize contacts and interactions that one creates and maintains through digital media, such as social networking sites).

The articulation of the four types of media tasks with the three dimensions of media objects generates a twelve-cell matrix defining media literacy as the

set of competences required to read, write, navigate and organize media as informational, technical and social objects (cf. Figure 1).

Figure 1. A matrix of media literacy competences

	Informational	Technical	Social
Reading			
Writing			
Navigating			
Organizing			

This model of the competences that compose media literacy and how they relate to one another was used as a conceptual framework for the empirical evaluation presented in the next section of this chapter

Media education competences

Media education competences are distinct from media literacy competences in the same way as media education is distinct from media literacy. If one considers media education to encompass any educational initiative designed to develop the media literacy of its beneficiaries, then media education competences consist in the ability to design and implement efficient media education initiatives. Specifically, the media education competences that were assessed as part of the empirical evaluation presented in this chapter included the ability to:

- make a diagnosis to determine the scope and nature of the media education activity, i.e. report on the activity's context, partners and intended audience;
- based on this diagnosis, define educational objectives;
- select and implement a pedagogical approach adapted to the context of the activity and the educational objectives;
- choose adequate media material to support the activity;

- design and implement assessment tools for the activity;
- plan the different stages of the activity and produce specifications for each.

Method

Participants

All thirteen students enrolled in the first year of the new Master's program in media literacy education participated in the evaluation. Seven of them have a background in communication sciences (five hold Bachelor's degree in communication, two hold a Master's degree in journalism), and six of them have a background in education (two hold a Bachelor's degree in early childhood education, and four hold a Bachelor's degree in secondary education). The cohort includes eight women and five men. Students were not compensated for their participation in the assessment presented in this chapter, which was independent from the exams they had to pass as part of their curriculum.

Test tasks and procedure

The assessment of the students' media education and media literacy competences was based on a series of five test tasks that presented them with a novel situation. The first test task focused on their media education competences, and the four other focused their media literacy competences related to reading, writing, navigating and organizing.

Students completed the five test tasks as part of an interview directed by the first author of this chapter. For each test task, students were asked to read the task instructions and take time to prepare their answer. They were provided with paper and pens. The full interview had an approximate duration of two hours. It was recorded on a laptop computer using Techsmith Morae®, which captures the computer's screen activity as well as the subject's face and speech. As they used the computer, students were required to comment on their actions.

The instructions for the five test tasks, as they were submitted to students, are presented below.

Test task #1 : media education competence

The following instructions were provided to the students: "As a Social Sciences teacher, you are asked to carry out a pedagogical activity in your third-grade general education classroom (fourteen-year-old students). The lesson's topic is *avatar education, or how to design one's image on social networks*. Please define and justify :

1. the diagnosis regarding your students' needs and the scope of the intervention
2. your diagnosis technique (i.e. the process that led you to make this diagnosis)

3. the objectives of the intervention
4. the intervention's assessment tools
5. the pedagogies you intend to use
6. the technical means you intend to use
7. the human resources you intend to involve in your project
8. the timing / schedule of the intervention
9. the financial and technical implications of the project."

Test task #2: navigating competence

Students were asked to use a documentary database containing an array of pre-selected media resources related to the lesson topic. Their task was to browse the database and select the (five to ten) documents that seemed most relevant to be used as part of their activity. Students were invited to describe how they proceeded to select the documents and why they chose them.

Test task #3 : reading competence

The following instructions were provided to the students: "In order to plan your educational activity, you selected some documents that you are going to read carefully and compare with each other. We ask you to read and compare the serious game "2025 Ex Machina" that you see on your screen with the paper by Serge Tisseron (summary and introduction) that is provided to you. Please explain the various possible comparisons you can make between these two media."

Test task #4: organizing competence

The following instructions were provided to the students: "You have read several documents from a media database to prepare your presentation. We ask you to organize these documents. You will find the database you used for task #2 on your computer screen. You now have to organize it by using different criteria. Can you choose the criteria you will use to organize the database so it is usable by a colleague?"

Test task #5: writing competence

The following instructions were provided to the students: "Based on the documents that you read and selected, you are now asked to produce an original educational medium on the topic 'avatar education or how to design their profile picture on social networks.' for another class. You have noticed that the students in your twelfth-grade class (seventeen-year-olds) are all connected to one another online, and only use nicknames or avatars known only to themselves. By now, they should be able to present themselves to other

people (parents, teachers, officials, etc.) in other ways (as leader of a youth movement, as a member of a sports club or an association, as a customer, as a future higher education student, etc.). Design a media that will allow them to integrate a wider and more heterogeneous network than their circle of close friends into their online life.”

For practical reasons, we could not ask the students to design and produce a new medium from scratch as part of the assessment. Instead, we asked them to imagine the medium, describe it, and justify their design choices. Students could use the computer to sketch their design.

Assessing levels of competence

The students’ media education and media literacy competences were assessed using a three-level scale of competence. The five test tasks were designed as complex problems that students could tackle from a variety of perspectives. The way students adopted these different perspectives was used as an indicator of the different dimensions of their competences. Hence, each dimension was rated in three levels.

In the first task (media education competence), the task instructions specified the dimensions explicitly: diagnosis, objectives, assessment tools, pedagogy, technical means, human resources, scheduling, financial and logistical means. For each of these dimensions, a rating between 0 (lowest competence level) and 2 (highest competence level) was assigned to each student’s answer, based on its completeness, its accuracy, and its consistency with the other dimensions.

In the four test tasks dedicated to media literacy, students could consider the media to be navigated/read/organized/written as information objects (theme, languages and representations, form), as technical objects (technical production processes and technical qualities) or as social objects (authors, intentions, audiences, and effects).

Table 1. The eight dimensions evaluated in tasks #2 to #5

Informational Dimension	Technical dimension	Social dimension
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • topic of the document • languages and representations • form of the document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • techniques used to produce the document and technical qualities of the document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • author(s) of the document • intentions of the author(s) • intended audience(s) of the document • potential effect(s) of the document

In their answers, students spontaneously integrated some or all of these eight different dimensions. When they didn’t, they were explicitly prompted to do so. For each of these dimensions, a rating between 0 (lowest competence level)

and 2 (highest competence level) was assigned to each student’s answer, based on the criteria detailed in Table 1.

Table 2. Rationale for the assignment of ratings to the students’ answers to test tasks #2 to 5

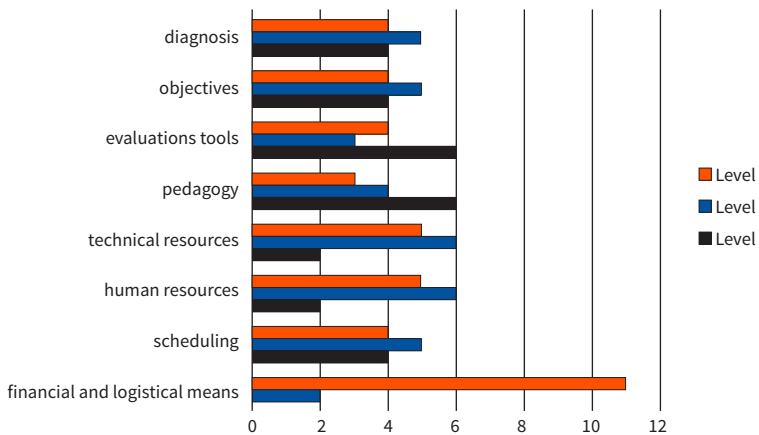
Rating	Rationale
2	The student’s spontaneous answer includes the dimension, and treats it thoroughly, accurately, and consistently with the other dimensions
1	The student’s spontaneous answer includes the dimension, but treats it only partially or is inconsistent with respect to the other dimensions; or the student considers the dimension only after being prompted by the interviewer.
0	The student is unable to consider the dimension even after being asked to do so.

Results

Media education competences

The majority of students demonstrated an intermediate level of media education competences (Figure 2). While students appeared to have the least difficulties in choosing a relevant type of pedagogy and appropriate evaluation tools for their educational activity (with half of the students reaching the maximum level on our scale), the determination of educational objectives based on a preliminary diagnosis, as well as the scheduling of the activity, seemed to cause a little more trouble. Students especially seemed to struggle with the definition the technical and human resources required by their activity, and even more with that of its financial and logistical terms.

Figure 2. Distribution of students in competence levels, for each media education competence dimension



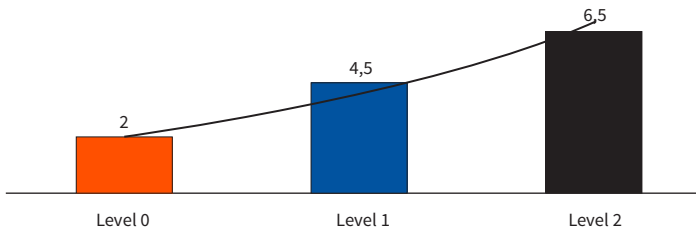
Media literacy competences

Students demonstrated variable levels of media literacy competence, depending both on the test tasks and on their dimensions.

In terms of media dimensions (i.e. informational, technical and social), a general trend emerges across all tasks. Figures 3, 4 and 5 visualize these trends by averaging the distribution of students in terms of competence levels for each of these dimensions, across the sub-dimensions (e.g. theme, languages and representations, and form for the informational dimension) of all four test tasks.

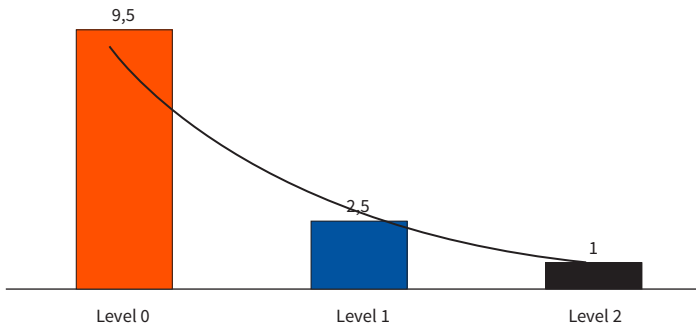
Overall, the informational dimension of media appeared to be the one students grasped most easily.

Figure 3. Average number of students by competence level for the informational dimension, all tasks



Students had the most difficulties in navigating, reading, organizing or writing media following the technical dimension. Two thirds of students were rated at the lowest competence level on this dimension.

Figure 4. Average number of students by competence level for the technical dimension, all tasks



With respect to the social dimension of media, students showed moderate levels of competence. Only one fifth of students (on average) are at the highest level of our scale. However, the social sub-dimensions yielded different results. Specifically, students had trouble considering the producers and the potential effects

of media in all four tasks. They were able to navigate and read media in terms of their intended audiences, but had a hard time doing so when organizing or writing media. Their ability to identify the intentions underlying the production of media varied from task to task.

Figure 5. Average number of students by competence level for the social dimension, all tasks

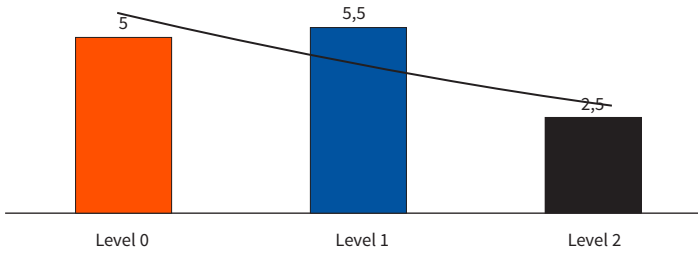


Table 3 shows the average number of students for each level of competence across each dimension of each task.

Table 3. Average number of students in each level of competence across tasks and dimensions

	Competence levels		
	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2
Task #2: navigation competences			
informational dimension	1,67	6,00	5,33
technical dimension	5,00	6,00	2,00
social dimension	2,25	7,00	3,75
Task #3: reading competences			
informational dimension	1,33	5,00	6,67
technical dimension	11,00	1,00	1,00
social dimension	3,00	5,00	5,00
Task #4: organizing competences			
informational dimension	5,33	3,00	4,67
technical dimension	11,00	1,00	1,00
social dimension	9,33	2,67	1,00
Task #5: writing competences			
informational dimension	0,33	3,67	9,00
technical dimension	11,00	2,00	0,00
social dimension	5,00	4,67	3,33

Table 3 reveals differences in the way competence levels are distributed among students. Some competences are either mastered by the majority of students, or by almost none of them. Competences related to the informational dimension of the activity of writing media are in the first category: on average, nine out of thirteen students reached level 2 in the corresponding subdimensions. Abilities related to reading, organizing or writing media from a technical standpoint, as well as to organizing media from a social perspective, lie in the second category: overall, three quarters of the students show no competence in the corresponding subdimensions. Other competences vary widely in the way they are mastered by the students of our sample. This is the case for the information organization of media, as well as for the social dimension of media reading and writing.

Two student profiles, but no differences

As we mentioned earlier, the students enrolled in the Master's program have different backgrounds: before enrolling, some studied communication sciences, others studied education. However, when we sought to compare the results of these two groups of students, we found no significant difference. Students, wherever they come from, share the same ability to consider media in their informational dimensions, and the same difficulty in grasping their technical dimensions as well as some of their social implications. This is quite a surprising result considering the fact the evaluation occurred at the beginning of their training, before their engagement in the curriculum could possibly equalize their potential differences.

In the article defining the matrix of media literacy competences that was used as a framework for the evaluation presented in this chapter, Fastrez (2010) supported the idea that traditional school education developed skills primarily related to the informational dimension of media, with less focus on technical and social competences. In the same article, Fastrez posed the hypothesis that the traditional school education system also favored competences in reading and writing, rather than navigation and organization. The analysis of the performances developed by the thirteen students who participated in the tests provides partial evidence confirming these two hypotheses. Obviously, an investigation on a much larger scale remains indispensable to fully validate them.

Discussion and future work

Limitations of the current evaluation method

As much as it is an empirical evaluation of media literacy and media education competences, the study presented in this chapter is also an exploration of the methods of media literacy and media education assessment. The method we described is, in many respects, still work in progress.

On the one hand, as the interview typically lasts about two hours, it creates a risk of seeing the interviewees lose their concentration over its course. Moreover, the fixed order of the test tasks in the current protocol concentrates this risk on the two last tasks, which may generate biased results. Hence, reducing the duration of the interview (while making sure to keep the same indicators), and redesigning the protocol so that the task order can be randomized, appear to be necessary.

On the other hand, we identified a number of shortcomings in the test tasks. First, the instructions for the first test task (focused on media education) should be revised. The fact that it specifies each of the different dimensions of a media education activity prevents us from observing what dimensions students think of spontaneously when they plan one. A revision of these instructions would allow us to apply the same rating rationale (see Table 2) for all test tasks.

Second, in the navigation task, students only navigated a database of pre-selected documents. A future version of the same task should allow students to actually perform an open search for relevant media, and include competence indicators that make inter-subject comparisons possible regardless of the fact that their search results are different.

Finally, the writing test task, in which students were asked to create a medium, was often confused with the first task for which they were asked to plan an educational activity. In the future, to avoid this confusion, the writing task could either be anchored in a totally different context than that of a media education activity (e.g. draft a blog post, or the storyboard of a YouTube video), or become a part of the media education task, in which students would be asked to create a media message in addition to those they selected in their navigation task.

Future work

At the stage of research we have just described, we can already draw some interesting unexpected conclusions about the educational profile and media literacy of the first thirteen, students of this new two-year Master's program in Media Education. As we communicate this information to the faculty involved in the program, we can now help them better adapt their teaching activities to their current students.

This first step of our research, however, will become fully meaningful when we compare the levels measured at the beginning of training, with those that we will measure one year later, in June 2014, and again one last time, when the students come to the end of the second year of their training, in June 2015.

The full evaluation, including all three phases of assessment, will serve to measure the students' competences progression and the effectiveness of the program, but also, hopefully, to refine our assessment tools by trying to make it both easier to implement and free of still unidentified ambiguous elements which may distort its accuracy and therefore limit its pedagogical utility.

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Conditions for a Sustainable Information Transculture

Anne Lehmans & Vincent Liquète

A research project on French high school pupils' *information transliteracy* is being conducted in France in order to study the information practices and construction of media and information culture among young people. The concept of transliteracy refers to the ability to use and produce a large variety of multimedia layout, with a large variety of skills – reading, writing, counting and computing – and the capacity to adapt information processing to its knowledge and social context. Part of the project aims to identify skills, meta-skills and practices to characterize elements of transliteracy, through situated activities as well as individual and social representations. Researchers are observing, recording and interviewing numerous pupils, in groups and individually, during information collecting and project-based activities at various general and vocational high-schools. Some of the researchers are examining non-academic, leisure situations. A large quantitative survey is also being conducted in order to identify practices and representations on a large scale.

At school, how do students behave when faced with task-solving or problem-questioning in a digital and media-convergence environment? What practices are employed? What bridges do students build between digital culture, formal and/or informal skills, and schoolwork through the digital readout? Is it possible to identify dynamics of appropriation and learning elements? These elements require the integration of information, linking cognitive functions and practices with reading and writing formats as well as action strategies of knowledge organization. We are trying to look at transliteracy from an ecological perspective and define conditions for the culture of information to be sustainable. The proposed approach entails research on three dimensions: structural (information, document, media and communication); strategic and action-oriented (procedures for operating content); and semio-cultural (individual and social perceptions) (Liquète & Delamotte, 2012).

It operates in school by joining the academic and scientific content, individual practices, and school forms. Transliteracy is thus the articulation of three main areas – information literacy, media literacy, and computer/digital literacy – which make up complex ecosystems. The underlying question is to understand the extent to which the multiplicity of digital and information practices may build a cultural relation to knowledge. This culture may be regarded together with the symbolic goals of major social institutions, while aiming for not a hegemonic universal culture but consideration for the diversity of cultures, languages, practices and collective representations in contemporary societies. Moreover, questions of training being supplemented by human and technical mediation, critical analysis of information through education, and cultural diversity are major concerns.

Transliteracy as a cultural question

The project Translit (Information Transliteracy) is being led by several research teams. Our team is working on the observation of 16-year-old students in various school situations of information searching and project-based learning with digital production. The aims of this research are to examine literacy-transfer situations, the bridges between information, digital and media literacies, taking into account the social and cultural dimensions of learning, and to highlight possible new forms of grammatization of information.

Objectives

We are examining the process of searching and reading different types of information, and identifying specific skills, the role of the group, and the process of implicit rule-building. Therefore, our protocol is intended to uncover moments of split as well as moments of hybridization – cohabitation between literacies – through four main goals:

- Detect situations of transfer from one type of literacy to another;
- Analyze the process of finding and using information, considering the way the environment (material resources, digital tools and services, spaces, social relations, etc.) is used. Our focus is on the mixing of mass media information (news and events), computer skills (operating and technical/computing literacy), and information approach (research, selection, analysis and comparison of sources, rewriting);
- Take into account social interactions. How does a student articulate different literacies in relation to other students he or she is working with? We are observing distributions and organizations in relation to teachers and educators;

- Optionally, highlight new forms of grammar of information (Chervel, 1981) allowing for the integration of socially fragmented (scattered, disparate, non-conscientized) and academically restored knowledge.

Our research helps highlight what Certeau (1980) has called *the art of doing* for individuals; that is, the ability to tinker, arranging devices in order to create their own information environment, or develop what Perriault called the *logic of practice* (2008). Through our observations, we can describe a number of trends that seem decisive in the relationship between global information practices in a school situation and the construction of knowledge.

Investigation methodology: analysis of practices, cultures, techniques, representations

Information literacy is often focused mainly on the technological and methodological skills, and less on the attitudes and personal approaches, that form part of lifelong culture of media and information based on the capacity to use, criticize and create information. To consider students' information practices, we have adopted a qualitative ecological approach from ethnomethodology to observe pupils' transliterate practices on the one hand, and the training practices of teachers and educators on the other. Our willingness to take into account the "social thickness of the practice building" (Davallon et al., 2003, p. 32) of mainstream contexts requires a protocol combining several methods of data collection. Thus, we have used several techniques for qualitative surveys in our investigation.

During brief and regular visits, we have sat with groups of three to four pupils and made direct observations, recorded their exchanges with a digital voice recorder, taken notes and memos using an observation grid, and held unstructured interviews with the pupils. When we have noticed changes, or important or intriguing elements in the pupils' actions, we have asked them to explain the reason for and interpretation of what they have done: when a pupil leaves the group, when there is a change in activity, when a new negotiation among pupils starts, when a teacher comes, or when they discuss their methods, practices, tools, etc. The pupils have been very cooperative, soon forgetting our long-term presence and growing used to seeing us settle among them with our recorders and notes. We have tried to be as discreet as possible so as not to interrupt their working process and exchanges. Finally, we have examined their production regarding the criteria for the quality, scientific content, and communication of primary information.

Transliteracy as a cognitive process

During our research, we have been able to evaluate the pupils' ability to organize their information environment and coordinate the work among the group

members. There is a direct correlation between this ability and the success of the projects. Despite what is commonly said about youngsters' information practices, they possess an elaborate "art of practice" and a strong consciousness of their use and management of their personal information system. They tend to invent ways of doing things that are unorthodox according to what they have been taught, but are nonetheless efficient and explicable thoughtful devices. Four levels of processes have to be considered in this context: social, technical, documentary and cultural.

Social processes and networks: the situation of the individual in the group

In the situation we observed, students were placed in working groups. The organization of the groups was relatively efficient, even without the interference of teachers, and the division of tasks was organized based on the abilities of each student. Unlike traditional work situations in France, this organization highlights talents rather than disabilities. The skills were highly heterogeneous: we observed a wide variety of attitudes, ranging from total rejection to an almost professional use of tools that allowed some students to be helpful to the teachers.

The reading styles were also heterogeneous: many students preferred paper and tended to look for books and buy or photocopy articles, while others, less frequently, read more easily from the screen using images and links. Digital reading focuses on the link between text and readers. Hypertext reading allows navigation between fragments of texts, to construct meaning through the links, which Saemmer (2011) tells us work in a knowledge framework which has to be deconstructed and explained. A collective reading is helpful for sharing the work between people and constructing meaning through social ties.

Technical process: the use of devices

A sociological study of the behavior of students at a university library (Roselli & Perrenoud, 2011) has shown very clearly that for young generations, technology has totally overtaken the practices of librarians, with the Internet being the only medium of information for the vast majority of students, which however does not prevent the librarians from encouraging students to read on paper. For the sociologists conducting the investigation, the conclusion is clear: librarians often ignore the practices of young people who attend their libraries, and in the absence of empathic listening, conflict is inevitable between these two conceptions of legitimate knowledge and culture.

If we consider the spaces, brackets, machines, and devices that help us find and process information, we can say that students use a wide range of tools that

allow them to vary their access to information. The choice of tools depends on what is available within one's family and greater social environment.

Regarding "machines" in our study, social constraints weigh less heavily as all or at least most students are equipped with a mobile phone and home computer, and often a smartphone. They prefer Facebook to e-mail for sharing information, and use the USB key they carry as an enriched, personalized workbook: the key is often full of music files students can listen to while working, as well as images they can show to each other. They often create a closed Facebook page for their project, while some create a blog or website. They absolutely abandon the institutional tools that usually do not work well or are too restrictive, and allow teachers to monitor their work. Their use of a logbook is systematic when this is requested by the teacher. When it is not mandatory, very few students adopt it as a tool for storing and organizing work; but when it is used, it is organized efficiently with a system of color codes, and is often used to store references to documents and key ideas to be used in their writing. As we will see later, the logbook sometimes becomes, at the initiative of the teacher-librarian, a true cognitive and didactic training tool.

The use of the tools remains classical: a paper file from a text file, and more seldom a slideshow presentation, blog or website video. Some groups have used a video or the website when a member is an expert in the use of dedicated tools. The fear of using unconventional tools is expressed by students who have a closed stereotyped representation of what is legitimate in the academic sphere.

Information process: documentarization

According to Manuel Zacklad, documentarization can be defined as a "work consisting in providing permanent attributes to a device that facilitates its movement in space, time and interpretive communities" (Zacklad, 2007, p. 35). This work is particularly relevant in documents that are shared, collectively annotated text files, e-mail messages, annotated images, and papers. They are "perennial, fragmented and evolving media, facilitating the development of creative transactions despite the distribution of situations of activities within a transaction flow" (ibid., p. 45).

We propose the idea that within a working group, annotation allows information to flow through voluntary exchange systems that require the establishment of both norms of behavior and relationships based on trust, supported by non-hierarchical communication architecture (Cohendet & Diani, 2003). In the context we have observed, the reading is more or less enriched with a number of annotations: attentional annotations; associative annotations indicating links to other documents or performing clusters; and contributory annotations creating new documents from the original document, such as abstract rewriting. These operations can be grouped according to the functions they perform for the group's work:

- Evaluation functions to select documents: the records are arranged in groups according to their degree of reliability, a careful shared reading being postponed when doubts exist.
- Analytical functions of description and indexing to process documents: translation, writing reviews, summaries, tagging, quotes, links to other documents, illustration. Text markup allows sharing, reading and orientation within the document.
- Classification functions with prioritization and storage, to find the documents in the context of collective management, through markup techniques and guidance: adding semantic markup (tags), using color codes, highlighting passages, establishing folders and subfolders.
- Sharing functions. This final operation concerns the collective, and calls for the use of social networks to achieve the rewriting of notes and finally the writing of a new document. Collective writing using tools, like wikis or Google Drive, were rarely observed.

Cultural processes: conflicts of legitimacy and diversity of knowledge formats

The project offers an opportunity to point out conflicting systems of legitimacy, and in this sense, we can speak of transliteracy and grammatization by awareness and building rules from the meeting of informal practices with formal requests and legitimate cultural constructions. Thus, students share the idea that information on paper is reliable *a priori* while information on digital media is unreliable *a priori*. Among the paper media, the book is glorified, often read in its entirety while short, quick practices of diagonal reading are very rare in high school. The press is also valued as a source of reliable information, but the question of the status of discourse rarely refers to the status or political affiliation of the author (journalist, expert, etc.). When using a database, students see this as the source, not paying attention to the journal title, author or date. This shows that the competency to evaluate information is still incomplete in high school. Paradoxically, teachers play a delaying role in the building of this competency, with the teacher's recommendation often replacing any independent research and questioning of the value of the information.

Similarly, while students often find information based on images (via, e.g., Google Image or YouTube), they do not consider these legitimate sources of information: a fictional movie becomes a source of information only if the teacher insists on its legitimacy, and students involved in research using an audiovisual document unanimously express difficulties. Moreover, if the students have realized the importance of authorship in high school, as well as the need to cite

sources, they do so only for the written sources. For images, questioning the author seems to disappear behind an informational, blurred status of image: images belong to the personal world of leisure and privacy, text to the world of school and knowledge. There is a gap between actual cognitive processes and the representation of legitimate knowledge. This shift is reinforced by the sense of a generational gap between the “old, born with the passive website, and Generation Y, born in the digital world, rocked by the web and collaborative tools” (say two students). The authors of this quote are very comfortable with digital tools, manipulating software to produce high-quality graphics renderings, but do not cite any sources, and their research on the issue of “free on the web” does not point out the difference between Wikipedia and Daily Motion or Firefox. A certain innocence structures the representation of the informational web universe, moving and blurring compared to school formats of communication. Young people remain acutely aware of this dichotomy, and rarely dare to make a net bridge between formats and legitimacies: the use of printing is extremely widespread, with constraints that limit the links between sources of information. Bibliographies are often lists of URLs, of no use to the reader.

Looking back on the four factors listed earlier, transliteracy is facilitated by the working group and the proliferation of tools and information processing, but hampered by cultural constraints and representations of what is legitimate, expressed in choices of traditional knowledge formats. At this level of cultural construction, representations, and construction of meaning, the teacher’s role is essential.

Transliteracy as a sustainable process: transculture

We use the term *grammatization of information* to characterize the process of creative learning, construction of knowledge, and competencies in information which leads to information culture or *transliteracy*. This *grammatization* process occurs when pupils are encouraged to think about their own practices and criticize them according to their social, academic and individual needs, constructing formal from informal knowledge about information, media and computers. This relies on three conditions:

- The existence of intuitive but nonetheless efficient information practices, commonly acquired in social situations;
- The mediation of an educator, in France usually the teacher-librarian, who nurtures awareness and control of the practices; and
- The use of adequate knowledge formats.

When one of these conditions is lacking, the process cannot be completed. This was the case in some of the situations we observed: when pupils had no or poor

social experience of using media information, and when the teacher-librarian had little opportunity to interact with them, a strong difference was observed among pupils, which created inequality. In this case, transliteracy will mainly depend on social conditions and not on education. In other cases, when pupils' social conditions are not favorable to transfers between personal and school information practices or between different media, the role of the teacher-librarian is important in compensating for the lack or poverty of informal knowledge.

A policy of proactive, global and critical training

We have examined the info-documentary layout as a process generated by the school to build a form of autonomy in information retrieval and use. Meanwhile, we have analyzed how the actors support this layout, especially teacher-librarians, who use the project as a significant learning device. A work schedule is distributed to students to help them plan tasks and verbalize the progress of their work. Similarly, at one of the schools, to support the informational activity, students receive instructions for bibliographic referencing related to their research. Furthermore, we have observed teachers becoming cognitive mediators for the young researchers: "Reflexivity in the research process is quite important for us", as a teacher-librarian says. The project is a challenge for the teacher-librarians, who strongly support the organizational backrest. One of them is also the coordinator of the projects. As observed at this school, the teacher-librarians require that all students make a midterm record of their project. On the occasion of the project installation, training sessions are held, usually on an individual basis, using information concepts and documentation techniques: introduction to the library catalog and databases (group training, followed by individual training), and notions of source, bibliography, validity/reliability of a website, organizing a plan, etc. At another school, the teacher-librarians take a less prominent role and let the teachers of the various disciplines improvise the organization, simply providing the teachers and students with the facilities to access the information. No forced reflection on "work in progress" is required. In this case, knowledge and skills regarding the information acquired during the project are very short-lived. At vocational schools, the organization of work is done in pairs between teachers and teacher-librarian, with very tight control on the students and specific instructions for the final work restitution. The work situations and positions of the teacher-librarians vary. They are generally careful, regardless of the environment, to take advantage of the institutional arrangement of the project to implement a policy for training students, even if it is very flexible and generally involves coaching the students. For instance, a teacher-librarian in our study started a long discussion with students about the use of social networks for carrying out an information project. They dealt not only with issues related to data protection, but also to their exchanges and communicative rules adjusted to these

tools (*netiquette*). Projects are an opportunity for students to work on concepts that are not necessarily addressed in their daily work, for example reflecting on the sources of information and the need to vary them, the complementarity of information materials, and the validation process.

Another teacher-librarian in our study explained to students that the variety of exploited materials (music, video, voice, movement in space, staging, and dialogue) is interesting and valuable. This discourse encourages students to expand their regular practice and implement an effective information-communication approach. This discourse promotes non-formal practices and, combined with the teachings of info-documentary knowledge, leads students to share a sentiment of discovering new and important things while “having fun” with their schoolwork. The students’ remarks, combined with the observation of their final products, reflect the impact of education on information in contextualized areas identified not only by the teacher-librarian but also by the students themselves (in their logbooks, the students explain that they have worked on the concept of source, or the notion of publishing, including the use of databases and open archives). Students who, having the appropriate info-documentary concepts embedded in a reasoned and conscious communication approach, are then able to demonstrate a genuine informational creativity, freeing themselves from their technical chains and purely reproductive methodologies.

The fundamental role of the teacher-librarian guarantees the emancipation of the individual through an awareness and knowledge of products, allowing the use of essential educational contributions like an information professional (Cordier & Lehmans, 2012). This emancipatory function made it appear all the more essential that the cultural and cognitive “legacy” of students is unequal, depending on the geographical location and social composition of the school. The students at the vocational school have much greater difficulty than others constructing knowledge from information and from personal and informal practices. In this situation, digital tools make the social and cognitive gap wider, and education is essential. It seems to us that mediation is indispensable in ensuring everyone the development of information potential; that is, the ability of individuals to increase their skills, quantitatively or qualitatively, on a lifelong basis (Yoon, 2008). It is even more fundamental to build a culture of information that rests on a proactive vision of learning, determining the ability of the individual to adapt to future information and digital environments (Cordier, 2012).

The production of interactive knowledge formats

Knowledge is not confined solely to informational problems, but also includes strong communication aspects, questioning one’s own relationships with others, interaction strategies through the “machines of vision” (Baltz, 1998) in the social world, the constitution and use of memory, and digital identities. Therefore,

it is no exaggeration to consider regard information transcultures as human-extending situations.

To include communication, the teacher-librarian relies heavily on distributed and situated cognition tools, such as the logbook, discussed as a tool for supporting the reflective process, reinforcing the vision of a “person-plus” (Perkins, 1995): “It’s important to have a discussion about what we do, to try to understand why there is such a thing, how we do it, not operate haphazardly; it’s a tool for structuring thought, really, and the research process for it” says one teacher. The logbook demonstrates the ability of the student to mobilize resources, tools and situations in order to deal with obstacles, allowing for a mutual enrichment of the student’s practices. Logbooks show quite a hybridization of practices, between monitoring academic prescription (standardized references as prescribed by the teacher-librarian) and communicative creativity and support in common research and communication practices. At the vocational school this process is complicated, either because non-formal information practices are poorly developed, mainly for entertainment, or because the school format is not mastered by the students: the passage from spontaneous information and communication practices to academic knowledge requires significant support from the teacher-librarian. Some mechanisms may still be unlocked later; for example, the students seek information from images, or Wikipedia, which then encourages them to link this information with their personal observations in the professional field, or with a collective reflection involved in the group through the teachers.

The knowledge formats enable the establishment of communicative conditions, and provide a framework to facilitate the emergence of transliterate skills and a grammatization process. A format is a “tangible and intangible knowledge organization model”, linking “logic of knowledge and dynamic of uses” (Morandi, 2013, p.179). This is the case with the logbook, often reduced to a formal and unnecessary requirement. Some teachers have transformed this requirement by describing it as an effective work storage and organization tool. When it is used, the logbook is strictly organized by some students through a system of color codes, and is often used to store and manage references to documents and key ideas for use in writing. Sometimes, at the initiative of the teacher-librarian, it becomes a true cognitive and didactic training tool. The logbook is a tool for storing, sharing and documentarizing information. A prescriptive blog may also be used as a knowledge format, to guide students in their choice of tools and bibliographic description. Finally, a specific communication format allows students to think of alternative ways of rendering a search and reduces the contradictions they perceive between non-formal multimedia arrangements formats and school prescriptions (e.g. written paper, PowerPoint presentation). This is the case with radio and video broadcasting on the blogs of some media classes, or with maps produced by a class using open data. These formats, designing information architecture through the production of content, can also

be frames for reflecting on ways to seek and grammatize uses, through not only procedures but also critical thinking; not just problem-solving but also “issue–discovering”.

Transliteracy, observed in educational and informational space, features a transformation of learning strategies and a porosity between academic skills and “intuitive” competencies, formal and informal. This transformation of the constitutive rules of schoolwork, and this redistribution of cognitive and social roles, skills and knowledge in building transliterate strategies, highlight the need to support formats of knowledge enhancing students’ information activities: they cannot discard their inhibitions toward technologies without support. Three integration factors are associated with transliterate scenarios: individual and collective strategies, instrumental skills using tools and devices, and pedagogical support. Dynamics of technical, social and cognitive mediation remain to be built, possibly using knowledge of intertextuality, architextuality (i.e., awareness of the fundamental semiotic structures of a single text), and hypertextuality (Genette, 1979). The transliteracy approach to information activity in education allows the emergence of an information maturity associated with the construction of knowledge, according to a grammar of usage. Awareness and rule creation from DIY crafts, supported in context by forms of pedagogical mediation, help link spontaneous informal practices with official requests and legitimate cultural constructions. In this process of appropriation, transliterate uses find their effectiveness.

The support and development of non-formal and diverse practices and languages

Finally, we believe that the role of educators facing the ever-changing information environments relies on their ability to draw from the non-formal practices of students a form of reflection which can be called metaliteracy. Our study shows how spontaneous and ordinary info-communication practices are levers for educational action. Moreover, teachers librarians met during our investigations tend to encourage and value these practices, which is rarely the case for teachers from traditional disciplines that tend to reproduce a closed discourse centered on prohibitions and restrictions.

By promoting students’ “art of doing” (Certeau, 2004) while seeking educational purposes, teacher-librarians encourage an overlap between the personal, social and academic spheres of practice and diverse cultures. Digital tools intimately mix the searching, reading and writing of information, which refer to a large cultural and linguistic scale including technology. Social networks create shared and increased reading spaces, which can be used in a school context (mainly in projects) for the development and arrangement of a public and common space

for reading and expression, the rules and structures of which must be mastered by future citizens.

Conclusion

The initial results of our research underline the importance of the development of a structured information culture in school, on an epistemological, temporal, socio-technical and didactic basis. Our research shows that it is now necessary to think education on information in all its forms, based on the convergence of literacies, so that people can communicate information not only critically but also creatively and in a committed way, on a lifelong and sustainable basis.

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The Relevance of Convergence to Media and Communication Studies

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Media occupy a powerful role in present-day society. Besides transporting messages, they shape current opinions and allow for user participation, empowering numerous parties, such as producers, consumers etc. Empowerment is especially brought about on grounds of the increasing number of vehicles – digital and traditional, which is conditioned by trends of convergence (Perez Tornero et al., 2008). Hence, over the past years, convergence has risen and continued to affect the domains of both people’s personal and professional lives. In a narrow sense, convergence refers to “complex, multi-layered interactions between ‘traditional’ (or ‘old’) communication cultures and emerging (‘new’) online, mobile media” (Allan, 2010, p. xiivf.). In a broader sense, blurring boundaries are characteristic of present-day interactions and environments, thus, changing technological devices, workplace settings, industrial co-operations as well as communicative encounters and exchanges. Convergence, therefore, needs to be perceived as “a phenomenon resulting from the overlapping and merging of different media forms and functions that once operated separately” (Diehl et al., 2013, p. 354). The elimination of formerly distinct industrial sectors, job profiles and competencies, as well as the merging of private and occupational matters pose new challenges to educational institutions that need to be tackled in time to ensure companies’ survival and lasting success in a globalized and connected world. Following recent claims, which are also supported by Nordicom in their publications, new media competencies and forms of literacy need to be addressed and emphasized in media education programs order to provide future staff with appropriate competencies to manage present and future challenges, familiarizing them with the tools and skills that might become of uttermost importance to corporate success (Arnolds-Granlund & Kotilainen, 2010).

By use of an extensive content analysis, the chapter sets out to analyze whether universities in selected European countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Slovenia & Ireland) as well as the United States have already started to respond to new business and organizational requirements by offering adequate educational (Bachelor, Master, Diploma, or PhD) programs which provide the kind of media education needed for present and future organizational success. It will put its major focus on offerings in the field of media and communication studies, journalism and public relations, but will not miss to also investigate related fields, such as economics and management together with technical sciences. This multi-disciplinary strategy is essential as convergence is not limited to a particular field of expertise but presupposes a more transgressive, inter- or even trans-disciplinary approach to be fully captured. Hence, the article's main goal is to determine to which extent programs from different scientific disciplines respond to new requirements of the economic sector; this is meant to be achieved through an investigation of how universities' educational programs are suited to equip (prospective) workforce and staff with converging or converged competencies that are central to 21st century business relations and company management.

Defining convergence

Despite the fact that convergence has been postulated as a relatively new concept, it has been applied to the field of media and business studies for approximately 30 years (Micó et al., 2009). Definitions are mostly rather narrow in their focus (see Pavlik, 1996 or Lawson-Borders, 2003), with some exceptions, such as Flew (2008), who postulates that convergence involves “the interlinking of computing and IT, communication networks, and media content that has occurred with the development and polarization of the Internet, and the convergent products, services and activities that have emerged in the digital media space” (p. 17). We perceive convergence as a phenomenon resulting from the merging and overlapping of different media functions and forms which once operated separately and independently (Diehl et al., 2013). It can take numerous forms and primarily concerns media, businesses/industries, technologies and content. (1) *Convergence of media* recognizes the merging of previously independent devices and technologies, leading to the emergence of new services such as mobile TV, mobile Internet, Internet TV, Internet radio or “connected TV”. (2) *Convergence of businesses* suggests that firms and industries formerly operating in different economic areas choose to co-operate and collaborate by (partially) leaving their original fields of expertise. Thereby, cross-functional operations are characterized by varying degrees of duration, intensity, and objectives. (3) *Convergence of technologies*, with its prime examples being Unified Messaging (UM) as well as Unified Communications (UC), collects and incorporates different communication

forms (e.g., e-mails, text or fax messages) into one common (“unified”) form that can be accessed as well as processed by a variety of devices (e.g. smartphones or e-mail clients) independent of their actual location. (4) *Convergence of content* postulates media content being not only used in different media channels and at multiple times, but also its adaptation to different media environments and their requirements respectively (Diehl et al., 2013); this is the case with news is being published on different platforms, such as the Internet or on TV and the radio (Karmasin & Winter, 2000). Thereby, convergence is conditioned by the “three C’s of convergent media, [namely] computing and information technology (IT), communications networks and digitized content” (Flew, 2008, p. 2).

Yet, limiting convergence to the media realm is by far too simplistic since it has implications for other (related) domains as well and as such, convergence “is a word that manages to describe technological, industrial, cultural, and social changes depending on who [is] speaking and what they think they are talking about” (Jenkins, 2008, p. 3). Hence, this new phenomenon is responsible for lasting changes along the value chain, having implications for both strategic and operational media management (Lawson-Borders, 2003).

Convergence’s increasing relevance

Without doubt, convergence holds the potential of being “a force of change” (Pool, 1983, p. 23), which is brought about by recent trends, such as market deregulation tendencies, globalization, technical as well as technological innovation and altered customer expectations (Rhodes et al., 2006, p. 2). For Dennis (2003), convergence does not cover changes in technical/technological services and platforms, business models and/or legal regulations alone; he claims that it is, first and foremost, a process “blurring the lines between media“ (Pool, 1983, p. 24). Hence, the trend’s implications for the area of media studies will be discussed first.

Convergence and the media

One example quote that quite nicely describes the on-going process, while also pointing out the changes that have occurred as a result of converging trends in media industry, can be traced back to Pool (1983):

A process called the ‘convergence of modes’ is blurring the lines between media, even between point-to-point communications, such as the post, telephone and telegraph, and mass communications, such as the press, radio and television. A single physical means – be it wires, cables or airwaves – may carry services that in the past were provided in separate ways. Conversely, a service that in the past was provided by one medium – be it broadcasting, the press, or telephony – can now be provided in several different physical ways.

So the one-to-one relationship that used to exist between a medium and its use is eroding (p. 23).

The changes listed above are expressive of the fact that the media industry has been hit by convergence to the largest extent and in a two-fold manner: on the one hand, the sector has experienced an over-expositional increase in communication channels, conditioned by the rapid rise of the Internet and Internet-related technologies; on the other hand, convergence has managed to gain ground by eliminating previously established sectorial boundaries (Tambini, 2001). As a result, the media sector has to face new challenges quite similar to those of the IT industry (Doyle, 2002; Noam, 2009), with the Internet being mostly responsible for these new developments; indeed, this platform presents, at the same time, the common denominator initiating divergence developments in different (media) sectors (Henton & Tadayoni, 2008).

As such, convergence has had a drastic impact on the media and communication landscape, where it is perceived as an ongoing process in the course of which new technologies are integrated into existing ones; yet, convergence is not limited to technological infrastructures, but also affects industries and cultures and, as such, requires constant adaptation (Dwyer, 2010). Thereby, these changes predominantly concern the sector's major agents (McPhillips & Merlo, 2008), namely media owners as well as consumers, who are given the chance to use multiple services without changing platforms or devices respectively, and can use the same service on a variety of devices (Ofcom, 2008). Due to these implications for the media and communication sector, media education is called to action: It is insufficient to perceive convergence solely as triggered by technology, as it also concerns and affects present-day social and business interactions (European Commission, 1997).

Convergence and the business environment

Facilitating change and substantially altering existing management practices, convergence often demands businesses to rethink their established operations and strategies to fit current standards. Technical innovations and technological advancements lead to new working environments, specifically in the areas of production and distribution, also affecting consumption. At the same time, sectorial convergence is taking place, which is to be understood as “a ‘blurring’ of boundaries between industries, induced by converging value propositions, technologies and markets that lead to the emergence of inter-industry segments” (Bröring et al., 2006, p. 487). Through the convergence of industries new (convergent) products and services emerge; they do, however, not present novel inventions per se but instead presuppose the creation of innovative business models and more flexible organizational structures (Schwarz & Gustafsson, 2013). From this perspective, convergence further alludes to tendencies of companies

becoming more similar as to their structure, technology use and modes of operating. This is the case, for enterprises from different industrial backgrounds share mutual respect and a willingness to learn from one another – the only way they are guaranteed to survive in an ever converging world (Rhodes et al., 2006).

Recent trends in convergence, particularly the growing together of previously distinct industrial branches, professions, devices and skills (Jenkins, 2006), have dramatically transformed the forms and ways people interact with one another in the workplace setting. Convergence devices, such as smartphones or tablets are responsible for newly emerging competencies repeatedly uttered by enterprises, who expect their (prospective) job candidates not only to multi-task, but also to possess knowledge in different areas (Zorn, 2011). Predominantly, these skills concern dealing with more flexible working environments, technological knowledge, short-term team structures as well as intercultural competencies (Diehl et al., 2013). This is the case for companies mandated to use the latest technologies in order to remain competitive and satisfy their diverse stakeholders (employees, consumers, etc.) and their needs respectively. Business owners and managers alike are asked to ensure that work is done properly and in time, albeit staff is dividing their work between their home and their actual office workplace. The divided notion of the workplace has also been fostered through technological advancements (such as Cloud Services and Unified Communication Systems) which do not only support but also facilitate the exchange of data independent of people's locations. The use of these services also requires both new skills and a new form of media literacy to be successfully managed, and must be addressed in education.

Convergence and the customer

In addition to several modifications already introduced above, media consumption has been drastically changed. For reasons of content convergence, media offerings are used multiple times, courting consumers along a variety of platforms. Technological infrastructures, especially communication technologies, experience a rapid growth which is mirrored by rising broad band Internet usage rates and an increasing dissemination in mobile communication devices (International Delphi Study, 2009). This development is crucial in that new media differ significantly from traditional forms, for they are technology-immanent and based on technology (e.g. software; Schelhowe, 2007); as a result, technical background knowledge becomes inevitable for users and (digital) consumers in order to ease their navigation (Zorn, 2011; Roth-Ebner, 2012). On grounds of this characteristic, users are enabled and encouraged to contribute online, transform and edit (digital) media content (Zorn, 2011), whereby the Internet – characterized by a high degree of participation – is the source driving change to unknown dimensions (Roth-Ebner, 2012). Hence, new age-media consumers are migratory and

socially active, and publically connected (Jenkins, 2006) – all because of trends of convergence. Hence, the journalistic profession does not remain unaffected by these trends and has to thematize these changes in educational programs.

Convergence and journalism

Technical and technological convergence have changed the journalistic profession as its core; in addition, news consumption has not remained the same either, for present-day consumers receive and respond (share and contribute) to news differently than only a few years ago (Erdal, 2007). With both readers and advertisers moving to online-platforms, jobs at news agencies are increasingly at stake (Kiehl, 2009). One major trend responsible for this development is the so-called “convergent or convergence journalism” (Erdal, 2007; Quinn, 2004; Quinn, 2006), which describes “[o]ne of the main synergetic strategies for cross-media work: more news published on more media platforms, with the same, or fewer resources” (Erdal, 2007, p. 78).

In the professional domain, convergence journalism describes “some combination of technologies, products, staffs and geography amongst the previously distinct provinces of print, television and online media” (Singer, 2004, p. 3). As a precondition for cross-media work, these trends foster dramatic changes across newsrooms, with agencies following multichannel strategies, multiplatform publishing and cross-media reporting (Kaltenbrunner & Meier, 2013). Today, news coverage has to happen quicker, at a more regular pace and simultaneously across platforms; therefore, management practices in content providing agencies have to be rethought and innovative news formats (e.g. cross-media storytelling, convergent platforms etc.) have originated in response to public pressure for exiting and unique content preparation.

Having said that, people in the journalistic profession have to come to terms with their rewritten job description and require extensive training to handle the challenges of present-day reporting. Together with all professional roles listed before, they turn to media education and related programs for answers and guidance.

Preparing for the workplace:

New-media ‘convergent’ competencies required

Ever changing workplace environments and working conditions require the adaption and extension of skills that have been previously regarded as sufficient for fulfilling present-day workplace tasks. Originally, Katz (1974) identified three major skills that an employee should inhibit in order to fulfill managerial and employee duties. Technical or functional competencies allude to knowledge about management processes, further including methods and their application. In brief, they capture all problem-solving know-how (Brinckmann, 2007). Human or social

competencies refer to the ability to effectively cooperate with people of all kinds and involve exhibiting empathy, accepting compromises and, more essentially, possessing intercultural understanding. These social communication processes take place on various levels and concern coordinated and structured exchanges between colleagues, staff, leaders and varying shareholders (Schreyögg & Koch, 2007; Brinckmann, 2007). Conceptual competencies presuppose the translation of complex problems into comprehensible and simple pieces of information that allow situations to be properly handled (Schreyögg & Koch, 2007; Brinckmann, 2007). In this context, key words concern multiple perspectives, interdependence, structuring abilities, and a general learning ability.

With subject matters becoming more complex and diverse, new professional roles emerge as a result of convergence, too (Diehl et al., 2013). *Technology or technological scouts'* role lies, as the name already suggests, in detecting and stimulating innovation in the technical/technological realm. Thereby, their duties center on identifying a need for adaptation or innovation, stimulating and raising attention for the implementation of new technologies together with facilitating the changes brought about by technological progress (Rohrbeck et al., 2006). The technological and content-related usage of media is up to the *Media Literacy Practitioner (MLP)*, who operates at the edge of both technological scouts and change managers. This professional intermediary is both technologically savvy and well informed with regard to the chances and threats new, convergent media and communication services hold; at the same time, MLPs' duties involve monitoring present and future trends to embrace potentials at an early stage. The tasks *Change Managers* are meant to fulfill are also very complex: they hold a central part in assessing so-called requests for change (RFCs) and are called upon to allocate impact assessors, while also coordinating Impact Assessment Review Meetings and informing Quality Officers. Once completed, those RFCs are assigned to newly-created projects (if necessary), which are then included in the portfolio (Quality Management Department, 2011).

Another core qualification central to present-day (workplace) environments is new-age media competency, which, according to Schachtner (2001), is already increasingly demanded by today's labor market. It is conditioned by 4 (+1) dimensions: 1) An instrumental dimension means the appropriate usage of new technologies while 2) an adoptive dimension presupposes the qualified utilization of different applications; moreover, 3) a reflexive dimension is concerned with the critical reflection upon media as well as media content; 4) a contrastive dimension looks at the integration of media usage into everyday life whereas the 5) last, and separately listed dimension is threefold, capturing communicative, co-operative and trans-cultural facets.

This last dimension is of particular interest to the managerial profession since executives are increasingly called upon to determine how the opportunities brought about by convergence and new (information and communication)

technologies can be best deployed for their own and their employees' work respectively. They need to be aware of how new media channels are deployed for communicating with different shareholder and stakeholder groups, while at the same time keeping in mind which information can (or cannot) be released to individual members. Moreover, individuals are required to be familiar with new regulations in the area of data security and privacy, pointing out threats as well as potentials respectively (Zorn, 2011).

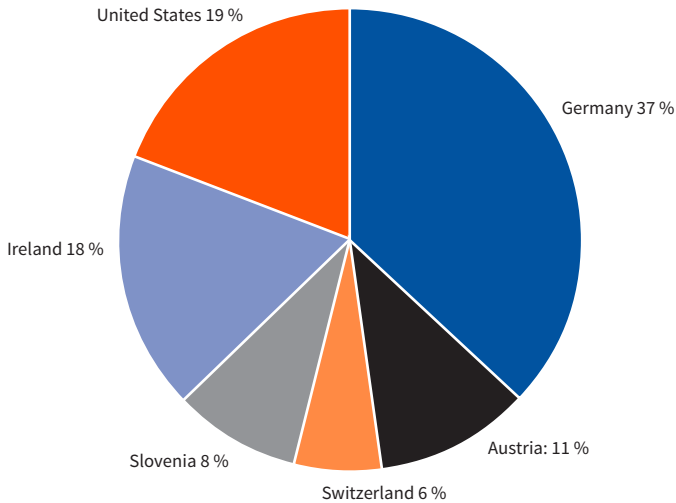
All these trends discussed before – the home and work office, flexible time management, project collaborations – lead to fractured notions of work and, as such, make the work process less predictable and controllable. As a result, it can be said that competencies do not exist by themselves but also converge, possibly bringing to mind the term “convergence of competencies”. And since convergence is a trend playing into a variety of disciplines with diverse effects, these need to be (at least, partially) borne in mind by media education, which is called upon to provide suitable and tailored degree programs in order to educate the workforce of the future.

Convergence in media education

By the use of an extensive content analysis, our study sets out to analyze whether universities in the selected European countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Slovenia and Ireland) and the United States are already responding to the new requirements of convergence by offering degree programs which provide the kind of media education needed today and in the future. The present article takes a closer look at educational offerings (on Bachelor, Master, Diploma and PhD levels) provided by post-secondary educational institutions, scrutinizing whether convergence has already been able to gain an (academic) foothold yet. As convergence concerns numerous areas, such as media communications, journalism as well as economics, management and technical sciences, programs from these diverse backgrounds will be consulted.

General findings

For the present study, 273 different degree programs in various academic fields – ranging from media to business and technical studies – were investigated in an attempt to pay tribute to convergent trends. Hence, also the merging of various (academic) disciplines was assumed, which led the authors to look at university offerings from six counties (Germany: 37 %; Austria: 11 %; Switzerland: 6 %; Slovenia: 8 %; Ireland: 18 %; the United States: 20 %) in detail over a period of two months (July and August 2013: Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and the U.S. and/or February and March 2014: Slovenia and Ireland) for the purpose of revealing the program's overall focus on convergence and related fields. A

Illustration 1. Number of programs by country

detailed Internet analysis was conducted, whereby programs offered at the time of survey (2013/14) were investigated. In order to get a good overview about the programs offered, well-renowned study portals were consulted (www.studieren.at; www.studieren.de; www.studium-schweiz.ch; <http://www.studij.si/>; <http://www.educationinireland.com/en/What-can-I-study-/>) when available, with the exception of the U.S., a well-established and highly skilled educational market, where a plain Google search was conducted.

Most degree programs are offered by universities (both private and public; 49.3 %) followed by universities of applied sciences (27.6 %) as well as colleges and/or academies (24.6 %). In terms of program type, Bachelor (51.1 %) and Master (41.8 %) degrees clearly outnumber other educational trainings (like preparation classes or colleges), which constitute the smallest proportion (7.8 %). Language-wise, a clear trend towards bilingual program offerings can be noted (29.1 %), alluding to how globalization and convergent markets have altered present-day workplace settings by attributing a higher degree of importance to (foreign) language proficiency, raising English to the world's common language. Programs currently offered only in the country's national language take a backseat (with the exception of Slovenia, where programs are exclusively taught in Slovenian); they might be even doomed unsuitable in the long run and, if demand increases, it would be wise to adapt programs accordingly. Yet, even though convergence is said to dismantle fixed working structures and makes them more flexible, this trend is not mirrored in the programs' design, for most programs are still full-time. By contrast, part-time degrees would enable students to get more practical insights by enabling them to pursue a part time job in form of an internship,

which would then allow them to contest the knowledge acquired during their internships right away.

Counting occurrences of the word *convergence* alone would prove to be insufficient; hence, two related concepts – namely *cross media* and *multimedia* – will be additionally used in this article to achieve meaningful results. While convergence has already been defined extensively, *cross media* and *multimedia* still need to be conceptualized briefly in order to justify their selection for analysis. While cross media means all communicative efforts involving more than one media channel (Cambridge Dictionary, 2013a), multimedia refers to “communicating or sharing information in the form of sound, pictures, and video as well as text” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2013b).

Convergence

Table 1. Example of term occurrence (‘convergence’) by place of listing

Use of ‘Convergence’	Category	University
Media and Convergence Management	Study Title	Alpen-Adria-University Klagenfurt, Austria
Convergence Journalism	Study Title	University of Missouri, United States
Convergence Practicum	Module Content	University of North Texas, United States
Integrating Media: Convergence in Practice (4)	Module Content	Penn State University, United States
Cross-media journalism and journalism in convergent media	Module	HMKW – Hochschule für Medien, Kommunikation und Wirtschaft, Berlin, Germany
Media Literacy/Education – audiovisual culture and communication	Module	Otto von Guericke – University of Magdeburg
Culture and Media Education	Module	University of Education Ludwigshafen

Out of 273 degree program offerings, 171 (63 %) mention the term convergence in one way or another. Rare occurrences are found for the usage in the actual program title (7 %), while it is more commonly given as a module title (18 %) or as module content (75 %). In there, it predominantly constitutes a class content (65 %) and in fewer cases an actual course title (35 %). In terms of mentioning, multiple occurrences can be noted (in order of cases): in the program description (94 %), in the course of study (46 %), in the course offerings (24 %) and in the degree program’s curriculum (8 %).

In general, definitions of the term convergence are mostly missing and can be found in only 6 % of all results; hence, determining the degree program’s focus proved to be rather complicated. Therefore, content is scrutinized in more detail, especially with regard to its relation to different fields of study. Results indicate that still a clear trend towards convergence’s original discipline, media and communication studies, can be noted, with most program offerings still centering on those aspects (43 %). Contrary to expectations, little attention is

dedicated towards other scientific fields, namely journalism (13 %), economics and management (6 %) and technical sciences (12 %) respectively. Programs with interdisciplinary focus are starting to gain ground, already accounting for 26 %.

Most classes are still theoretically-loaded (78 %); purely practical classes hardly exist (1 %). Applied classes, in which previously gained knowledge is utilized in a practical setting, are not that common and account for only 10 %; for some (11 %), the format could not be determined. Combined approaches are usually to be found in the area of journalism studies, where a balance between theoretical and practical teaching formats is achieved. As far as convergence's extent in the complete program is concerned, most programs only assign a single class to this particular topic (77 %), while others dedicate a module (two or more classes; 17 %) or even the complete degree program (6 %) towards this newly emerging area.

Crossmedia

Crossmedia, even though more commonly used in the public discourse, is not that often featured in the academic realm (19 %). Marginal occurrences are found for the term's utilization as the actual program title (6 %), while it is more often listed as a module title (21 %) or even as module content (72 %). In more than two thirds of all cases it concerns class content (70 %) and in 30 % it constitutes an actual course title. As to the term's use and mention, several occurrences can be noted (in order of cases): the program description (62 %), the course of study (60 %), the course offerings (17 %) and the degree program's curriculum (11 %).

Generally, definitions of the term crossmedia are completely absent, not providing any indication of the program's actual focus. Upon closer examination, yet, it could be determined that these programs are still strongly associated with the media and communications realm (53 %), while other scientific disciplines received only a moderate degree of attention: journalism (17 %), economics and management (8 %) and technical sciences (4 %) respectively. Programs with interdisciplinary focus already account for 18 %.

Classes in the area of crossmedia are neither purely theoretical nor practical; in most instances, they take a mixed form (~ 75 %) and are especially particulate to the field of journalism, where students are given the opportunity to practice how news (content) is prepared, designed as well as distributed by means of different media channels. Consequently, also applicatory modules and classes account for almost one fifth (18 %). The scope of classes offered in this area is also more balanced when compared to the other two domains: in most cases, either one class (59 %) or one module (39 %) are offered; seldomly, complete degree programs are dedicated towards this specialization (2 %).

Multimedia

The third term scrutinized in this survey was multimedia, which finds mentioning in about half of all cases (52 %). To the largest extent, it is used as module content (61 %), while occurrences as module titles (29 %) are moderate and study title mentions are significantly fewer (10 %). As to distribution of listings in course titles and content, the term is twice as often mentioned in the latter (61 %) when compared to the prior (28 %); the remaining 11 % are dedicated towards full program titles. The term is also mentioned multiple times in the total online content, whereby it is mostly given in the program description (72 %) as well as in the course of study (27 %) and the course offerings (20 %) respectively. It is only minimally referenced in the curriculum (3 %).

As in all the other cases, also the term multimedia is not defined anywhere (only 1 %). However, in line with the findings previously introduced, references are established to media and communication sciences (46 %), journalism (10 %), technical sciences (17 %) to a minor degree also to economics and management (3 %). A clear interdisciplinary focus could be reported for about one fourth of all programs (24 %). Purely practical classes are completely absent (0 %); rather, course offerings are either solely theoretical (64 %) or blend theoretical content with practical application (37 %). This is also supported by the fact that applied modules exist to a certain extent, accounting for 23 % of all cases. As far as multimedia's embeddedness in the complete program is concerned, most programs assign a module to this particular topic (55 %), while others merely dedicate a single class to it (25 %). Full degree programs towards this new area do not take a backseat anymore and already constitute approximately 20 %.

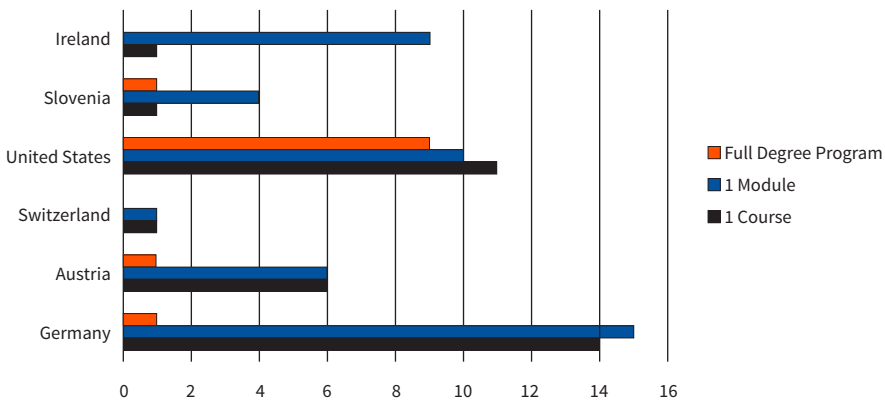
Discussion of results

Present study results clearly indicate that convergence and related concepts have started to increase in relevance in the media education realm throughout Europe and in the United States. Of all the terms scrutinized, convergence is most commonly used (63 %), followed by multimedia (52 %) and crossmedia (19 %). With regard to the terminology deployed within those programs, all terms are used to almost equal parts as module content (~ 70 %), module titles (~ 22 %), with study titles ranking last (~ 8 %). However, some country-specific differences are noteworthy: while in all countries the terms are applied as module content to the largest extent, they are more often used as study titles in the U.S. (16 %) than in other countries, which could indicate the increased importance attributed to this specialization overseas.

In terms of the degree programs' foci, a clear tendency towards programs with roots in the area of communication surfaces (38 %), the second place, however, is already assigned to programs with interdisciplinary focus (~ 30 %), combining media elements with concepts taken from economic and manage-

ment as well as technical sciences. These disciplines are practiced to a smaller degree in their pure forms: 15 % technical sciences, 12 % journalism, as well as 6 % economics and management. The extent to which convergence is taught at universities, seems to be indicative of these results as well: Predominantly, one module (defined as consisting of two or more classes) is dedicated towards this subject area (56 %), whereas single classes can be found in second place (32 %). Full degree programs account for 12 %.

Illustration 2. Extent of subject area featured in different countries (exemplified by 'Convergence')



When looking at the different countries scrutinized, single classes or modules are equally often offered in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. In the U.S., by comparison, almost equal results are achieved for classes, modules and full degree programs, while in Ireland and Slovenia full programs have become quite common, especially with focus on multimedia. Hence, one final recommendation can be drawn from these findings: the German-speaking European countries should turn to the U.S. and other European states as to how to implement convergence and related concepts into their curricula.

Recommendations and future outlook

Amongst practitioners and academics, the term convergence has become used “as a rhetorical toll in order to facilitate reform. The concept communicates a media landscape undergoing significant change. This has been instrumental in convincing politicians, regulators, investors and other market players that their strategies need to [be] adapt[ed]” (Fagerjord & Storsul, 2007, p. 28). However, it is not only up to those parties to extend their approaches to convergence; more importantly, it is universities’ educational duty to provide appropriate means in form of tailored educational trainings. The academic landscape has to

change in order to allow for integrated program solutions. The present study has demonstrated quite plainly that missing definitions of the core terms impede determining the subject area's exact focus. Yet, these should be included for definitions are meant to provide some guidance and/or orientation on what to expect of the actual program. Additionally, the extent and amount of information available on each program differs considerably and hinders an immediate comparison; therefore, information should be presented in a unified way and cohesive structure.

Trends of convergence are meant to change the educational landscape forever. Albeit knowledge in one academic field is still profound, the specifics of one specialization alone are not sufficient anymore; rather disciplinary boundaries need to be crossed, dismantled and eventually overcome to fully grasp the potential (input) each area of expertise can offer to develop an integrated (inter- and/or trans-disciplinary) understanding of convergence. If institutions are unable to satisfy their students' needs with regard to course offerings, they should start to establish networks with partner universities, consider offering joint degree programs or research projects. Moreover, they should consider partnering up with practitioners, who would provide valuable input by giving insights into the program's applied aspect; these co-operations or collaborations would also benefit mutual understanding and learning from one another.

In light of what has been said before, new educational degree programs have to build upon as well as expand current offerings by taking present-day challenges into account (Perez Tornero et al, 2008); they must not only (exclusively) center on media convergence but should also pay tribute to other trends and social developments (e.g., the transformation from an information society to a knowledge society), globalization as well as altered political and legal regulations (Perez Tornero et al, 2008). For humanitarian studies, modifications have implications for both (media) enterprises' strategic and operational management as well as for (media) consumers, who are also taken into consideration in the realm of economic and management studies. Conditioned by convergence and newly-emerging media devices as well as services (e.g., mobile internet, internet TV or telephony) that do not only affect people's private lives but also professional careers (e.g., unified communications), increased technical knowledge becomes inevitable in order to comprehend and manage those developments in a private as well as professional setting, whose boundaries are increasing dissolving (Arnolds-Granlund & Kotilainen, 2010).

Of course, the above elaboration is far from being complete. Limitations clearly exist as technologies and competencies pointed out in this text solely fit current requirements, but since changes are often unpredicted, surprising and faster than ever imagined this article does neither present permanent solutions nor fixed answers; rather, it tried to draw attention to already identified trends, with some developments not having been taken up yet. Nonetheless, agreement is reached

as to convergence's implications: it is not merely a technological process that exerts an impact on one area of life; rather, it is a trend that leaves a footprint on numerous areas of life and thus triggers changes in the social, economic, and cultural domains (Dwyer, 2010). Convergence is, undoubtedly, interdisciplinary and needs to be mirrored in media education in this way as well.

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Media Literacy in China

Research, Practices and Challenges

Zhang Yanqiu

Media literacy has been on the agenda of media, culture and pedagogy research for decades in many countries like Australia, Canada and the UK, which have officially made media education compulsory in their formal education, and it has formed international movements ever since 1980s. Compared with these countries, research and practices with exact title of media literacy in mainland China is still young at the end of the 20th century when media literacy remained as a borrowed term from the English-speaking world. It was right at the end of the last century that scholars in mainland China started to fix their eyes on media literacy and media education. While introducing concepts, approaches and pedagogy of media literacy broadly, Chinese scholars have also discussed the feasibility of media education in China.

However, in the last decade, with the advance of new media in China, people have been showing deep concerns over the impact and engagement of the new media. Thanks to the effort of Chinese media literacy researchers and educators, media literacy, out of sudden, turns out to be a popular term beyond the academia. For example, the promotion of media literacy of government officials becomes a new trend or even a fashion, as social media expose both public servants and governmental organizations into a new communication environment, which has brought great pressure on public administration. Due to the political, cultural, social and educational contexts of mainland China, faced with challenges as discussed in this chapter, the implementation of media education in China is also full of uncertainty and opportunity.

This article aims to provide an historical account of media literacy development in China by examining the two waves of media education from the 1980s till now. While taking a critical view of the significance, contexts and challenges

of media literacy research and practice, the author would suggest key issues to be considered as to media education futures in China.

Concerns of media education in the 1920s and 30s: Journalism education to the public

Though much of the research on ‘media literacy’ in China has a relatively short history, it is possible to trace the earliest initiatives in the field back to the 1920s, when some journalists and journalism educators first began to take media education into consideration. Generally, these concerns were about educating the public about the media, and of course, newspapers, at that time.

In 1924, Shao Piaoping, a well-known Chinese journalist, proposed to establish a journalism course at secondary level education to promote journalistic knowledge as part of common literacy among citizens to help them understand the close connection between journalism and people’s daily life (Shao, 1924). Ge Gongzhen (1929) also suggested that journalism be part of the literacy of citizens. Xie Liu Yi, the first dean of the Journalism Department at Fudan University in Shanghai, also stressed that journalism education should bear both vocational and non-vocational aims (Xie, 1930).

Clearly, all these early concerns raised the significance of media literacy to average citizens. The Chinese approach in the 1920’s and 30’s emphasized the general journalistic knowledge as common knowledge, while Leavis’ approach in UK stressed teaching about the popular culture to encourage students to ‘discriminate and resist’ the commercial manipulation of the media (Buckingham, 2003). Therefore, the early concerns of journalism education in China were less defensive compared with the UK’s, which emphasized protecting traditionally so-called high culture. Like Edgar E. Dale of Ohio State University, with attention on how to read newspapers in the 1940s, Chinese colleagues also had any followers (Dale, 1940; Li, 2005). Considering the unstable domestic social situation at that time when China was involved in years of civil conflicts and anti-Japanese war from the 1920s to the late 1940s, normal education were already under great threat, let alone adding such a new concept of media education into operation.

Media literacy from the 1950s to 70s: Political communication through wallpaper

Since the founding of communist China in 1949, media institutions have become state-owned and centrally-controlled. From the 1950s till early 1980s, the major media, both local and national newspapers and radio served as socialist propaganda machines, and foreign media were forbidden except for the limited

imported films which survived the strict censorship for their political and aesthetic correctness. The Central People's Television Broadcasting Station started to air in 1958 in Beijing, but television was not a mass medium until the 1980s.

From the beginning of Communist rule in 1949, wallpaper functioned as an efficient but unique medium of mass persuasion. By 1957, Chairman Mao Zedong had even endorsed the use of *dazibao* (literally, big character poster) along with *da ming* (speaking out loudly), *da fang* (voicing one's views freely), and *da bianlun* (holding great debates). At that time, intellectuals in particular were urged to speak out and voice their opinions regarding the party's weaknesses. However, when many intellectuals and non-Communists used this public medium to criticize Party's policies and express their dissenting views, most of them were accused of being rightists and tortured in one way or another (Xing, 2004). Obviously, in that period of time, one's participation in the media was risky and media were controlled for political and ideological purposes.

During the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, the wallpaper, as a political poster and a form of propaganda, was continuously and widely used and normally posted in specially designated areas such as schools, institutions, factories or farms around China. It was the most popular means of written communication, mainly for accusations and denunciations. Participation in reading and writing *da zibao* became a national showcase and an integral part of the rhetorical experience to millions (Xing, 2004). Students and people were generally good at creating political posters. Historically, they were media literate to some degree, for they knew how to create content, produce posters and participate in poster communication. However, being publishers and viewers at the same time, the participants had to be carefully critical and politically correct in order to survive the massive ideological riots. That predicament taught them to be more sensitive and more media literate when it came to evaluating and analyzing media messages.

Unfortunately, so far there have been few domestic studies on the 'wallpaper' medium which truly became the people's medium in China during Mao's era, though some foreign researchers did focus their attention on the unique wallpaper medium and its impact on the people (Chen, 1999; Denton, 1999; Xing, 2004). Undoubtedly, the case of media literacy of Chinese people in Mao's era is worth studying. On the one hand, even though it was under a special social and political situation, it still shares some similarity with today's online poster publication in China, especially in terms of media participation and creation; on the other hand, by examining such a cultural memory, it might bring some historical understandings of how Chinese people participate in social movements to exercise their democratic rights by engaging with the medium to at hand, wall posters then and internet posters today.

Film education in the 1980s and 90s: First wave of media education

Since the end of cultural revolution in 1976 and the subsequent reforms from 1978, the overall climate of economic and social changes in mainland China has been reflected in media content. While in theory the Central Government still controlled all television, broadcasters have become a hybrid of state organizations and profit-driven businesses (Lee, 1994). With more households having TV sets in their sitting room, watching TV became the main daily entertainment. Advertising was introduced into media operations to meet the market demand. Interestingly, in the 1980s, domestic film-making became less propaganda-oriented but more a representation of real life, though film studios were state-owned, and foreign films were still censored.

There has been a long and strong tradition of film education in Europe in the 1960s and 70s, which taught children to choose good films against bad entertainment on television (Tufté, 1999). In 1983, the first Chinese 'National High Education Film Teacher Training Program' was held Beijing and subsequently played an important role in promoting film education at high education institutes in mainland China (Chen, 2006). After that, film education in colleges and universities moved ahead largely with support from the Government, and as a result, the number of universities offering film courses increased from 16 to 52 in 1983, and up to 250 in the early 1990s.

Film education at that time in was aimed at the goals of spiritual and moral development, therefore, such an approach to film/media education had little interest in developing students' critical ability, which was regarded as an important aim of media education by Western media educators (Shen, 1990). For instance, in the UK, the popular arts approach of British culture studies was promoted in 1960s and demystification approach in the 1970s and 1980s (Masterman, 1996). The Chinese approach was also different from the American one, such as the Payne Fund studies with focused attention on the effects of cinema on adolescents and young people, especially on delinquency among youth. Thus, film education in China in the 1980s was not motivated by the protection of the youth but cultivation and empowerment of them.

Media education in Canada and as well as in other countries, is mostly regarded as a grassroots movement (Anderson, Duncan & Pungente, 1999). This is also true in mainland China. The idea of teaching film and television could also be found at primary and secondary education in different areas, mainly in the form of after-school activities or experimental courses organized by schools themselves from the 1980s through the 1990s (Yu, 2002). Part of the efforts was grassroots, like what Wei Gengxiang, a Chinese language teacher at secondary schools at the city of Zibo (Shandong province, China), has tried in his after-school teaching.

From the mid 1980s, Wei, like most teachers and parents in China, worried about the negative influence of television on young students (unlike university students who live on campus, most secondary students live at home and would have easy access to TV programs). He taught his students about mass media to arm them with 'main /high' culture value and taste to resist the pop culture's lowbrow attraction. His practice won the support from the local government, and his teaching about film and television has never stopped since. In 1993, funded by the provincial government, Wei and his team carried out a pedagogical research project on teaching film and television in elementary and secondary schools. In 1997, his research was even funded as a key research project under the National Ministry of Education in 1997 (Yu, 2002).

Wei's research project established the '*Guide & Discover*' model as an approach to film and television curriculum consisting of four steps: guiding before film viewing, viewing, classroom teaching and feedback. Film production in the model was valued as well as the cooperation with media organizations and parents. As a comprehensive local curriculum, the focus of the course was aesthetics education, moral education and personal growth. About 80 schools in Shandong, Canton and Henan provinces carried out the experimental teaching by following this project. Teaching materials and references were published, and both national and international conferences on children and media were held to exchange teaching experiences (Zhang, 2012).

Meanwhile, schools in big cities like Shanghai, Tianjin and provinces like Zhejiang and others, have also been carrying out film and television education for years. For instance, schools in the Nankai district of Tianjin, with more than 15 years of teaching film and television, have established their own teaching model: '*Performing, Teaching, Viewing, Analyzing and Evaluating*'. A shared teaching syllabus was followed among other schools in Nankai district.

In the 1980s and 90s, with official support and teachers' effort, media education developed at different educational levels, but all with moral and aesthetic concerns, and it was more political-education-orientated. Though film and television education also stresses student's reflections and evaluations, critical thinking was not the focus. Films selected for teaching were those regarded as high culture products, which represented the mainstream or official culture, while texts of popular culture were neglected in most of the teaching. Therefore, student's everyday media and cultural experiences were left untouched to some degree. In other words, only the educational function of the media was explored, but other functions were not considered (Zhang & Pei, 2010).

At the same time, computer literacy was extensively taught in formal education in China whilst media literacy in a sense of critical thinking and media communication reflection lagged behind. As to the general situation of media education in mainland China, Zhou Xing (2003) points out that film and television education is still scattered unevenly in elementary and middle schools, and the

case of tertiary levels, it is far from meeting the basic demands. Zhou believes that some of the obstacles are the lack of qualified and committed teachers, and he recommends that a multi-level teaching system should be on the film and television teaching agenda.

As a matter of fact, the significance of film and television education to the average student has not been discussed among academics even though such grassroots media literacy movement grows and develops at pre-university level. Wei's and the local government's efforts represented the worry of most Chinese parents and teachers about the popularity and influence of television in 1980s and onwards. Interestingly, similarity could be told between Wei's approach and that of F.R. Leavis (1933), for both share the worries on massive but negative influence of popular media on main social values and traditional cultural taste, though there is a 50-year time gap between them and the fact is China entered 50 years later into mass media era and these changes have naturally led to an unprecedented media concerns in China. The second wave of media education would be surely approaching.

Media literacy from the Late 1990s: second wave of media education

The mass media scenario in China has undergone huge changes over the past three decades, particularly in the last decade. The change could be the consequence of the unprecedented liberalization and fast development of the Chinese economy with rapid social changes following. On the one hand, with a population of 1.3 billion, China went through and is still undergoing unexpected social changes. On the other hand, these shifts are also obvious in the area of media environment.

Firstly, from the 1990s, market-driven/market-oriented journalism is gradually taking the place of Party journalism in mainland China, which led to the hybrid model (propaganda/commercial) of journalism (Zhao, 1996). Concurrently, various ideologies and values behind the media messages come to the surface and are followed by confusion or even conflicts (Li, 2003).

Secondly, with the tide of globalization, Chinese traditional culture value is being challenged by Western cultures. For instance, foreign cartoons play an important role in Chinese children's life. A survey shows that 19 out of 20 of the most popular children's cartoons are foreign, mainly Disney's (Yan, 2006). People are getting more concerned about the decline of traditional Chinese culture (Guo, 2003). From this perspective, traditional Chinese values and lifestyles are also under siege, which naturally lead to worries.

The third is the changing media technology. In the 1980s, Chinese media stepped into the TV era, which made a major impact on the print medium. In

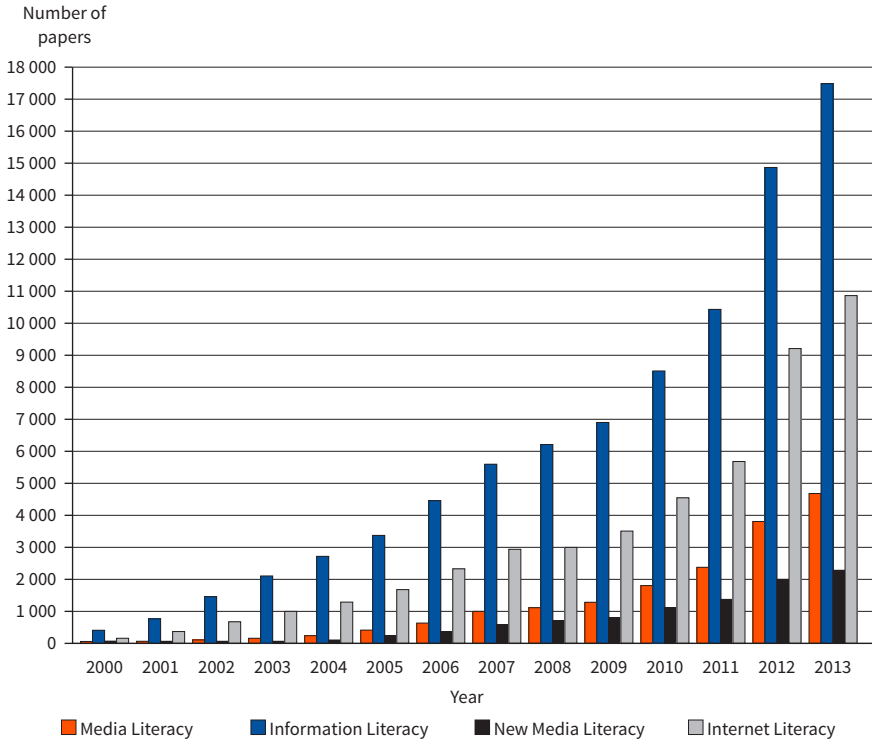
the 1990s, the Internet, mobile phone and other new media have developed rapidly in the market. China now has the world's largest net-using population, 632 million internet users by June 2014. Challenges are overwhelming, such as internet regulation, identity issues, cultural conflicts, moral crisis, online safety, internet democracy, copyright, freedom of speech, and so on. Television and the internet made the screen reading age different from that of the print reading age, which may cause great influence on the social structure (Chen, 2003). In such a social transitional period, conflicts around communication systems, by their nature, are culture conflicts (Chen, 2004). At the same time, China's tight media censorship and commercialization of media has been criticized as well.

Obviously, China's media not only shares common features with the international media but has also been challenged with many related domestic issues. Though there has been no exact concept of media literacy or media education in China by the end of last century, researchers never failed to take social issues related with media into their views, such as the necessity of equipping children with skills and awareness to protect them from being influenced by the negative impact of the media. And other discussions also focused on how to empower people, especially children and young people to live well in a complex, mediated world.

It was in the late 1990s and early 2000 that a few researchers introduced the notion of media literacy into Chinese academia (Bu, 1997; Song 2000a, 2000b), mainly about the meaning, content and approach of media education. Surely, those papers seized the researchers' attention for its novelty and the value of a new research field. In spite of the fact that media literacy studies in China is just over a decade old, a growing number of academic papers and books have been published in the past 15 years.

The survey shows the growth of research interest in the past decade. Broader topics were explored, from an introduction of foreign practice to the implementation in Chinese context. Researchers are mainly from universities, in the discipline of media and communication, pedagogy, and sociology. Interestingly, figure 1 shows different terms related are used by researchers, and information literacy along with Internet literacy are paid more attention than media literacy and new media literacy. Obviously, the functional significance of media literacy gained more priority than that of critical thinking with the advance of Internet, especially social media.

It is also found that media literacy research topics are widely spread but generally with three perspectives: 1) media literacy and new media, such as information literacy, internet literacy, online safety, online ethics; 2) media literacy and media education, like pedagogical strategy, curriculum studies, learning assessment, teacher training, foreign practice, life-long education, and education reforms; 2) media literacy and media culture, related to youth culture, main stream culture, pop culture, cross-culture communication, consumerism, visual literacy, televi-

Figure 1. Journal papers titled with media literacy in mainland China (2000-2013)

Note: Based on the *China Academic Journals Full-text Database* at CNKI (Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure).

sion literacy, and film literacy; etc. Meanwhile, media literacy of adults, farmers, government officials, minor ethnic groups or even media professionals was also discussed and debated.

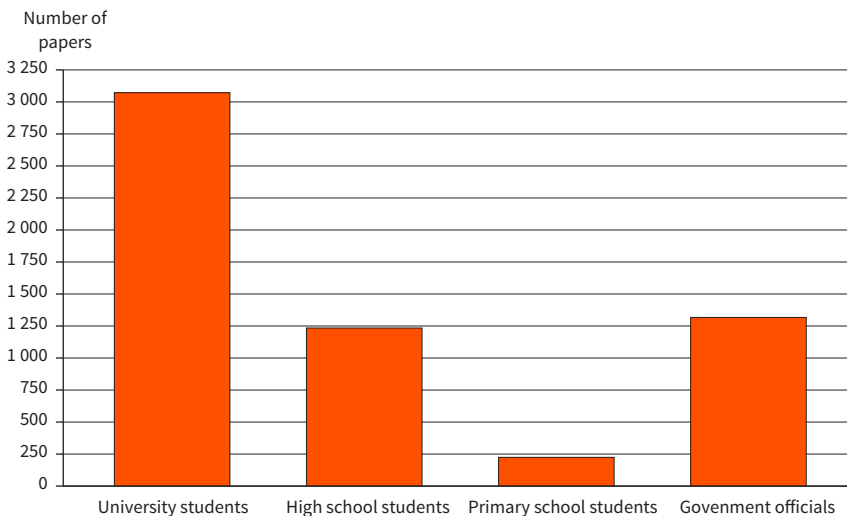
During the past 10 years, more than 100 books have been published on media literacy, which is important as the serve the need for teaching materials and student books. All these publications show the sharp academic response to media literacy studies in China and changes in their academic concerns about the audience, which add new paradigm to media and communication studies in China. All these efforts have greatly encouraged the development of media literacy research in China, which could be witnessed in the annual regional, national and international conferences on media literacy and media education.

Based on Chinese social context, it is argued that media education in elementary and secondary schools is essential but not practical as the exam-oriented education system is concerned, while most agreed that media education at university level is feasible. Courses titled media literacy have also found their post as an optional course for undergraduates at a number of universities, where

media education/literacy research centers were established. Moreover, MA degree programs on media literacy or media education were launched at a few number of universities, such as the Communication University of China, the South China Normal University, and etc.

And it is very interesting to note that media literacy of government officials are highly concerned in the past five years as to the growing pressure from wide-spread online public expressions against corruption and other political and social issues. Therefore, the empowerment of media literacy of government officials is highly concerned by the governments at different levels and training programs are getting popular accordingly (see Figure 2). In this case, media literacy research has received support from the government. However, media literacy has not promoted in primary and secondary schools though there are still some experimental course going on but mainly about internet literacy.

Figure 2. Number of journal papers titled with media literacy concerning students and governments officials in mainland China (2000-2013)



Note: Based on the *China Academic Journals Full-text Database* at CNKI (Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure).

In brief, compared with the first wave of media education in the 1980s and 90s, the second wave is characterized with increasing academic interest in media literacy and high recognition and acceptance from the society. Indeed, it shows the social concerns and reflects on the whole Chinese media environment in the past decade, which has been getting more commercialized while, at the same time, facing the power and pressure of the new media technology. However, media education so far has not been officially added to formal education at primary and secondary level.

Reflection and conclusion

Indeed, the developments and achievements in media literacy research and practice so far are inspiring. The Chinese media literacy movement in the past 30 years shares similarity with foreign practice but also bears its own character, which is influenced significantly by Chinese social context. In the last decade, with development of ICTs and new media, the concept of media literacy is widely accepted among researchers, educators and policy makers in China as a positive and unique approach to look at issues related to youth culture and growth, development communication, media engagement, media regulation, E-governance and etc. While we could still see the uncertainty of media education in China as to the approaches and social groups involved.

Media literacy research is concerned with the interest of people both as social individuals and media users for literacy has represented people's opportunities for learning, expression, creativity, public connection, civic participation and critical judgment (Livingstone, 2007). The concept of media literacy has developed from two theoretical assumptions: inoculation theory and cultural studies theory, and they see the agenda of media literacy differently. The inoculation approach is to empower individuals to explore and to control the effects of media on themselves, while cultural studies approaches focused on transforming society through the work of activists to motivate students to change institutions and make them more democratic (Christ & Potter, 1998). So far, media literacy practices in mainland China followed the inoculation approach more rather than that of cultural studies.

Further, the focus of culture studies is not on aesthetic aspect of text but rather what these texts reveal in terms of social systems, such as inequitable distribution of power in culture (Silverblatt, Ferry & Finan, 1999). This article would suggest Chinese researchers should challenge themselves by examining media literacy and media education in a broader social, cultural and political context. So far, most of the concerns of Chinese media literacy research are still wandering around the media but away from the mediated world, which is greatly shaped by Chinese political and social systems, and under which both the media and education systems are the last to change in a fundamental way (Zhang, 2012). Surely, to be media literate means to be critical viewers and users of all forms of media, and media education should certainly teach students to engage in media texts, and it should also teach them to challenge media institutions, such as analyzing the value or the ideology behind the news and popular culture.

The challenge from the new media communication is another important issue. Considering the great popularity of social media and fast growth of e-commerce, media literacy research and practice has never been so important in China. Communication is crucial to China's future development, especially under the new media environment. China faces two areas of challenges in communications.

One is communication effectiveness at the official level. Formalized, politically correct and slogan-like official languages have lost their persuasive appeal. Political leaders in particular need to learn public communication skills, especially skills for engaging in dialogue with their constituents. The other is the public themselves who also need to improve their skills and method of expressing their views on proper platform.

With the rapid development of the Internet and mobile, traditional communication mode was challenged. In Chinese context, on the one hand, social media created public access to the dissemination of information and opportunities for participation. On the other hand, while the number of Internet users in China reached nearly 632 million by the end of June 2014, with 527 million mobile Internet users, also users of Internet financing begin to take shape, online financial service innovations spring up (CNNIC, 2014). Internet develops from “extensive” to “deep”, and life of Internet users becomes entirely networked. However, we also see 700 million people still struggling at the bottom of the digital divide and may suffer from the new social exclusion. With new media content production and dissemination, information control, moral panics and post-modern citizenship were concerned deeply. Therefore, concepts of the digital divide, cultural participation and online risks should be the new discourse to reconstruct the framework of media literacy in China.

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Political Peculiarities of Media Education in Brazilian Favelas

Leonardo Custódio

In the low-income, violence-ridden urban areas of Rio de Janeiro known as *favelas* (see Perlman, 2010), there is a phenomenon whose analysis may contribute to theories and practices of media education. I refer to how young favela dwellers have used media in struggles for human rights and social justice. Some volunteer as journalists at local, community-based newspapers and radio stations, media that often challenge prejudicial discourses against favelas. Other young people create multimedia collectives to denounce police violence and other human rights violations, using social networks online to circulate denouncing videos, photos and texts. They also interact with other favela dwellers and civil society actors. I call these practices “favela media activism.”

During my ethnographic fieldwork¹ (2011-2014), I realized that favela youth who engage in favela media activism had either participated in media education projects by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or interacted with people who had. In this chapter², I analyse the relationship between participation in NGO-driven media education and favela media activism in Rio de Janeiro. I argue that media education projects play a very important role in dwellers’ decision-making processes regarding engaging in media activism. I contend that the importance of these projects lies in the political peculiarities of media education in favelas.

Since the 1990s, NGOs have been important educational and vocational alternatives to the precarious public education system in favelas (Gohn, 2011). Some projects promote journalism training, while others combine critical lectures about mainstream media in Brazil with workshops on journalism, photojournalism and advertising. The projects vary in length from a couple of months to a year, and their regularity also varies depending on NGO resources. Some projects are conducted on a yearly basis and mobilize hundreds of applicants

from different favela and non-favela environments. Others do not have regular schedules, and struggle to mobilize a few dozen of participants. In most cases, participants are students exploring extracurricular education. However, adults also participate, especially in the evenings or on weekends. In all cases, the projects are free of charge.

There are over a thousand favelas in Rio de Janeiro, so it is difficult to estimate the exact number of active NGOs. For this study, I familiarized myself with four organizations that promote media education. In addition to lessons on media and journalism, participants also debated about the living conditions in favelas with former project participants, guest university professors, and media professionals. They discussed and explained the history of favelas, the exploitation of the working poor, and urban violence, and also discussed negative media representations and discrimination. In other words, the practices of media education in favelas aim at promoting both critical awareness regarding social injustice (including the role of mainstream media) and technical skills in media and journalism for favela youth *themselves* to act for change.

The emphasis on social inequality in the NGO projects is problematically small in the literature on media education and youth civic engagement. On the one hand, some media education scholars focus on pedagogic methods and procedures to foster youth civic engagement. On the other, there are scholars who see the importance of media education for youth civic engagement from a media and democracy perspective. These streams sometimes connect but mostly represent different research traditions, with one essential similarity: the meanings of “democracy” and “civic engagement.” The Western-centric understanding of these notions tends to make these theories somewhat incompatible with the NGO-driven media education in favelas.

In media education literature, the idea of youth civic engagement appears in its preparatory paradigm (Hobbs, 2008). David Buckingham (2003) explains that the preparatory paradigm of media education differs from the more protective form of teaching, which aims to shield students from the negative influences of especially television, but also the Internet. The preparatory paradigm takes into consideration the young people’s knowledge and experience with media. The methodological focus on dialogue and media production places the preparatory model in “a more general form of ‘democratic citizenship’” (p. 13). A similar perception of the enactment of “democratic citizenship” through media appears in the second stream, with discourses regarding youth civic engagement in media and democracy studies. In some studies (e.g. Bennett, 2008; Olsson & Dahlgren, 2010), the overall idea is that new media allow individuals to act in both traditional politics (e.g. elections, party campaigns, governmental routines) and politics in everyday life (e.g. activism, NGOs). In these discourses, media education is part of a preparation process at schools for young people to become critical media audiences and active citizens online.

The relevance of both streams in today's media-saturated world is unquestionable. However, one problem is that they seem to imply that the combination of knowledge about media and the opportunity to make one's voice heard online is an effective way for young people to engage in politics – how then should young people who live in contexts where the freedom of association is discouraged, repressed or non-existent be taken into consideration? This is not an exclusivity of the youth in the so-called Global South; what about the youth in the ghettos of the developed world? What about excluded and discriminated young immigrants or immigrant descendants, even in well-established welfare systems?

Some authors have been critical of the reduced approaches to class in media education literature. For instance, Stuart Poyntz argues that the critical value of media competence “must always be conceived in relation to those social, political, or cultural power structures that limit how these competences take shape” (Poyntz, 2006, p. 158). Sanjay Asthana claims that “disenfranchised, low-income young people living at the margins of urban centres have largely been invisible from public discussions” (Asthana, 2012, p. 8). Citing a media education project in the peripheries of New York, Katherine G. Fry (2014) asks a similar set of concerned questions:

In this instance, media literacy education addressed a pressing need by giving symbolic, social, and emotional power to a group who'd been at the receiving end of physical force in a socially and economically depressed neighbourhood. The students needed their own kind of educational force so they could push back. The question is: should that be the purpose of *all* media literacy education? To prepare for real-world, absolute push back? Or is that the purpose of only *some* kinds of media literacy education, in some circumstances, for some people? Or, should that *never* be the purpose? Should we think of media literacy education as a shield, not a sword? (Fry, 2014, p. 126)

Following these questions and concerns, this chapter is a reflection on how we can design media education to also include marginalized youth in processes of civic engagement through media. My goal is to analyse the relationship between NGO-driven media education and favela media activism. By doing so, this article adds to the work of scholars (Asthana, 2012; Fry, 2014; Poyntz, 2006) who believe that media education should also tackle issues of class, social exclusion and social inequality. For this purpose, I try to problematize the meanings of the contested notions of “democracy”, “citizenship” and “politics” in contexts of social injustice and human rights violations (cf. Alvarez, Dagnino & Escobar, 1998; Souza Santos, 2005). This chapter can also contribute to the work of NGOs and scholars who have developed media education praxis for social change in Brazil (Soares, 2011). In addition, this chapter follows the path of a landmark Nordicom anthology published (Eleá, 2014) as an effort to bridge media education experiences and expertise between Europe and Brazil.

In order to understand the political role media education plays in favelas, first I describe a recent case of favela media activism. In this case, some of the activists involved were former participants of NGO-driven media education projects. Then, I present three peculiarities of these projects; these are not methodological, but political. In favelas, media education happens (a) in the realm of non-formal education, (b) within social movement struggles against the consequences of social inequality, (c) culminating in practices that redefine the notion of citizenship. These practices are part of bottom-up processes to “democratize democracy” (Souza Santos, 2005).

The media education behind favela media activism

One example of what I refer to as “favela media activism” happened in May 2013 after a fire destroyed a favela in Rio de Janeiro. It was a warm autumn morning when the cardboard and wood shacks of favela *Bandeira 1* burned into ashes, injuring a few and leaving hundreds homeless. Despite the impact of the tragedy, the public reactions of governmental authorities and the attention of mainstream media to the living conditions of the dwellers lasted only until the fire department had extinguished the flames a day later. In support of *Bandeira 1* dwellers, a number of activists used their media skills and technologies to denounce the precariousness of the favela, mobilize aid and push the city government to assist the victims of the fire³.

“Favela media activism” refers to the uses of media technologies, techniques and different forms of journalism combined with a number of activist and pedagogic strategies to mobilize support and participation in struggles for human rights and social justice. Scholars have used the term “media activism” in reference to struggles against the power concentration of corporate media (Opel, 2004) and to the uses of online media as instruments in confrontational activism and protest (Meikle, 2002). However, the emphasis on the context of “favela” indicates some characteristics of media activism as actions favela dwellers and their supporters perform against the marks and consequences of social inequality in Brazil’s everyday life. Thus, favela media activism is about challenging discrimination and negative media representations; creating self-representation; sharing critical knowledge with local populations; generating public awareness about human rights violations (e.g. police violence) and social injustice (e.g. governmental negligence); and mobilizing collective actions in support of the struggles of favela dwellers.

The case of favela media activism in support of *Bandeira 1* dwellers had the multimedia collective *Favela em Foco* [Favela on Focus] as one of its main articulators. The group defines itself as:

a multimedia collective formed by photographers from *espaços populares* [favelas and working class peripheral neighbourhoods] that act in Rio de Janeiro's favelas approaching issues related to these spaces. [Our] fundamental goal is to decolonize the stereotypical and marginalized look at favelas that corporatist media very often take. The different customs, culture, arts, peculiarities, histories as well as [the favelas'] demands and the neglect of the spheres of political power are everyday practices that the collective documents. We make the content public through multimedia platforms⁴.

These goals and characteristics were evident during their actions after the fire at *Bandeira 1. Favela em Foco* – with the support of individual activists and other collective actors – documented the destruction of the favela through videos and photographs. In addition, the collective circulated the denouncing videos⁵ and photographs in social networks online to generate awareness and mobilization to support the dwellers⁶. The activists also wrote blog posts to both report on the post-fire situation and collect donations of food and other basic needs⁷. Finally, the collective mobilized supporters to organize an event two months later, called *Ocupa B1* (Occupy B1). During *Ocupa B1*, favela and non-favela activists promoted workshops on music, capoeira and photography among the dwellers. They also exhibited films and photographs of the dwellers' own struggles and the protests still under way in Brazil (Custódio, 2013)⁸.

What does media education have to do with favela media activism? Elsewhere (Custódio, 2014), I have reflected upon the offline dimensions of favela media activism in Rio de Janeiro. The emphasis on the use of online media prevents us from noticing the layers of face-to-face interactions and sociability in the offline spheres of everyday life, for example the NGO-driven media education projects. In these projects, favela dwellers learn about the political and economic roles of media conglomerates in Brazil. They also learn how to use different media technologies and to produce different forms of journalism. Most importantly, they get to know people from different social backgrounds who share an existing or newfound urge to act somehow to generate some kind of social change.

This process is evident in *Favela em Foco*'s description of how they created the collective⁹. Young dwellers of the favela Jacarezinho created the group in 2007 while attending a photography workshop. The organizers of the workshop were photographers from *Observatório de Favelas*, one of the most active NGOs in promoting human rights along with critical and vocational education for favela dwellers¹⁰. During the workshop, the young participants decided to “document the everyday life of the favela of Jacarezinho” (*Favela em Foco*, 2011) through a magazine “to be distributed for free to the dwellers of Jacarezinho and neighbour communities as well as to schools, NGOs and local companies.” (ibid) Their goal was also to use websites, blogs and social networks to circulate information to “change the stereotypes we still have regarding favelas.” (ibid) Soon, however, the youngsters discontinued the initiative. Nevertheless, in 2009 they enrolled in

Observatório de Favelas' school of photographers. During their participation in the NGO's educational project, the youngsters met other people from different favelas and peripheral neighbourhoods. This is when they created the collective *Favela em Foco*.

Political peculiarities of media education in favelas

In essence, media education practices in favelas match the general definition of the term in international debates (Hobbs, 2008). That is, media education is “the process of teaching and learning about the media.” (Buckingham, 2003, p. 4) This process “aims to develop *both* critical understanding *and* active participation” (ibid) by enabling people to “interpret and make informed judgements as consumers of media” (ibid) and “to become producers of media in their own right” (ibid). However, the processes of media education in favelas have at least three political peculiarities that are interrelated, and concern the context in which NGOs act: NGO-driven media education (a) happens in the realm of non-formal education, (b) in social movement struggles against the consequences of social inequality, (c) culminating in practices that redefine the notion of citizenship.

Non-formal media education

The first political peculiarity of media education in favelas is that it happens outside the school system in the realm of non-formal education. The division between formal and non-formal education “reflects the gulf between government provision through the school system, on the one hand, and the needs and interests of marginal populations who are most alienated from the system on the other” (Smith, 2001). In Brazil, public schools – where most favela dwellers study – are constant targets of public criticism for their low-quality services and consequent high number of dropouts (cf. Bonal & Tarabini, 2014). The precarious school system and the growth of civil society concerns about education explain why non-formal education is crucial in favelas and other poor environments.

In Brazil, non-formal education happens in “collective actions and practices organized in social movements as well as in social organizations and associations” (Gohn, 2011, p. 108). It has five dimensions: (a) the learning of civic rights, (b) the development of vocational skills, (c) the exercise and practice of community-based organization, (d) the flexible and spontaneous learning of traditional school subjects, and (e) the “education developed in and through media.” *Observatório de Favelas* – the NGO where the members of *Favela em Foco* came together as a collective – presents these elements in its two media education projects: *Imagens do Povo* [Images of the People] and *ESPOCC – Escola Popular de Comunicação Crítica* [People's School of Critical Communication].

Imagens do Povo (created in 2004) combines photography with human and

civil rights to train favela and non-favela dwellers to be photographers able to document and value the history and culture of favelas. *Imagens do Povo* also maintains a photo agency to support photographers in their search for a position on the labour market¹¹. *ESPOCC* (created in 2005) aims at “initiating youths and adults from favelas and peripheral neighbourhoods in knowledge and experiences with the theory, methodology and languages of *comunicação popular* [people’s communication] in order to empower their critical and transforming agency.” (ESPOCC, 2012a) *ESPOCC* bases its yearly courses on three key questions: “Can people from favelas and peripheral neighbourhoods challenge dominant representations and represent themselves? Can they identify and solve their own communication-related obstacles? Can these experiences be sustainable?” (ESPOCC, 2012b) Since 2012, *ESPOCC* has promoted courses on “affirmative advertising” (non-profit, community-oriented forms of advertising to value sociability, local culture and entrepreneurship)¹².

Media education against social inequality

The brief description of *Observatório de Favelas* projects leads to the second peculiarity of media education in favelas. As socio-pedagogic processes, media education happens in struggles against the consequences of social inequality. The methods of NGOs like *Observatório de Favelas* follow the path of Paulo Freire’s seminal perception of critical pedagogy and communication as processes that fuel the bottom-up struggles of people on the less privileged sides of social divides (Freire, 1987). Media education has grown significantly, both as pedagogic methodologies in non-formal educational practices and as repertoires of social movements.

It is possible to make a rough sketch of the trajectory of media education in social movements in Brazil. This trajectory, represented in three key moments since the 1960s, still exists today as struggles for the democratization of media and society (Paiva, Sodré & Custódio, 2015). In the 1960-70s, media education was provided underground, hidden from the military regime as methods of basic education and community articulation of rural and urban poor populations. A well-known case of grassroots media education occurred at radio broadcasting schools that progressive sectors of the Catholic Church promoted. At these schools, youths and adults “created content for literacy” in “a series of activities complementary to the schools in order to motivate community mobilization and organization” (Fávero, 2006, p. 130).

During the period of the democratic transition throughout the 1980s, these grassroots practices of media education multiplied among a diversity of civic actors. Different forms of social movements, associations and organizations (e.g. landless and homeless movements, dwellers’ associations, labour unions, student unions and others) generated educational process through which participants

engaged in the individual and collective acquisition of socio-political knowledge (Gohn, 2012). This includes participation in practices of *comunicação popular*; that is, grassroots media meant to promote people's participation in communication processes as "a channel to express the denunciations and demands of the oppressed populations" (Peruzzo, 1998, p. 124-125). The making of *comunicação popular* demanded technical and journalistic training, combined with a raising of awareness concerning civic rights and politics.

Since the 1990s, NGOs have occupied a prominent position in promoting non-formal education – including media education – in Brazil (Gohn, 2010). This is the case with *Observatório de Favelas*, which mostly works with issues related to the human rights and vocational training of favela dwellers. The NGO's more propositional than confrontational *modus operandi* has facilitated its cooperation with corporations and governmental bodies. The media education projects at *Observatório de Favelas* receive financial support from state and federal governments, as well as the state-owned oil company Petrobrás.

However, this relationship with the spheres of political and economic power (Dagnino, 2010) has triggered a number of accusations towards NGOs in general – and *Observatório de Favelas* in particular – claiming that they perpetuate the ephemeral logics of projects to remain in the pipeline of public and corporatist funding. Former participants of the media education projects at *Observatório de Favelas* and other NGOs in favelas tended to be grateful for their experience in the project, even if they did not agree with the institution's ties. This mixture of gratitude and suspicion, illustrated below, appeared in the interviews I held with former participants of NGO-driven media education projects:

Interviewee: Today we like these institutions a lot. We have the affective ties, the sociability. But the youth – for ourselves acting as thinkers and discussing the social problems – we wonder: "you see, the institution also needs poverty to maintain itself" [...] in a way [the institution] is also exploiting poverty since [they] receive money for what [they] do.

Despite the controversy over institutional procedures, it is clear that NGO-driven media education plays an important role in the struggles of favela dwellers against the impacts of social inequality. This importance lies in the third – and perhaps most fundamental – peculiarity of media education in favelas: how media education practitioners and organizations understand citizenship.

Redefining citizenship in media education

In discourses about media education and democracy, active citizenship is often perceived as the ability to participate in public debate in well-informed and proactive ways. Thus, these discourses indicate that engaging in democratic deliberation is an effective way to enact citizenship. The problem in post-authoritarian, unequal and neo-liberal Brazil is that the country's apparently stable democratic

system remains repressive, unjust and unwilling to create spheres of dialogue, especially with low-income constituents¹³.

Therefore, democratic deliberation seems insufficient, especially in poor urban environments like favelas. Favelas are places where the state does not guarantee quality basic services (e.g. education, healthcare and leisure) and where urban violence – by both criminals and the police – is a fact. In addition, there is a general discrimination and criminalization of favela dwellers (cf. Perlman, 2010). In such contexts, being well-informed and speaking up may not be enough. In the case of *Bandeira 1*, for example, the media activism of favela dwellers after the fire mobilized support in civil society, but elicited little reaction from the governmental authorities.

In these circumstances, NGO-driven media education shares the same understanding of citizenship as in bottom-up social movements that *challenge democracy* as it is in Brazil. In other words, the latent objective in these actions is to democratize a democratic system that exploits, excludes and represses those who cannot afford to pay to have their civil and human rights respected (Souza Santos, 2005). From a Brazilian perspective, Evelina Dagnino (2005) argues that social movements in Latin America have redefined citizenship through their struggles for poor, marginalized and other subaltern peoples to have “the right to have rights” (p. 5).

In the media education projects of *Observatório de Favelas*, the members of *Favela em Foco* came together as an active social subject after learning (or improving their knowledge) about the uses of media for different kinds of media activism. In its actions, *Favela em Foco* has struggled for the recognition of demands for housing, security and other human rights. When they use videos and photographs as instruments for their activism, they aim at transforming dominant representations that discriminate and criminalize favela dwellers. When they create photo exhibits and workshops to share their knowledge in and about media with other favela dwellers, they reinforce the political importance of media education in struggles against the consequences of social inequality.

Problematizing politics in media education discourses

The analysis of the three peculiarities of NGO-driven media education – actions in non-formal education against social inequality following a redefined understanding of citizenship – highlights the importance of the political characteristics in media education studies. In the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, basic civic and human rights are constantly violated or non-existent. In these cases, following the Latin American tradition of cultural politics (Alvarez et al., 1998), people exert the political in their everyday lives when they challenge the repressive power of the state and dare to demand proper housing and protection from the state police, as well as higher-quality public education, healthcare and leisure facili-

ties. They also act politically when they create different forms of representation to challenge the discrimination and criminalization of favela dwellers. Because engaging in this kind of politics is “a process of social learning” (Dagnino, 1998, p. 52), non-formal education – and media education in particular – can play a very important role if the consequences of social inequality are recognized as constraints to the enactment of citizenship.

This chapter has shown in brief some characteristics of media education processes with purposes of promoting youth civic engagement in contexts of social inequality. In reflecting on the relationship between favela media activism and NGO-driven media education, my goal was to present the ways educators and activists have pursued in order to foster citizenship enactment among poor urban youths. I also suggested that more inclusive media education would prepare marginalized youth to raise their own voices and act upon their self-established demands and needs. We cannot define civic engagement according to how we assume democracy is, but rather to how different people from different socioeconomic backgrounds experience it. Neither can we only see media education as a school discipline that prepares young people for possibly becoming engaged citizens in the future. In contexts like favelas, as the saying goes, children and young people become adults much faster. So why should we only think of media education as preparation for future citizens, when new knowledge and skills may change their lives now?

The lesson we can take from the case of *Favela em Foco* and *Observatório de Favelas* is that it is possible to respond to the urgency of poor urban life and foster civic engagement through media education. In this chapter, I have mainly argued that it is important to broaden our perception of what citizenship, democracy and politics mean if we are to increase the range of the impact of media education practices. However, other questions remain unanswered. What exactly is happening in the NGO-driven media education projects that makes people feel they have to act for change? How can these experiences in non-formal education be adapted to the formal school system? How should policies be developed so as to consider the different socioeconomic realities of youth in a certain society? These and other questions should definitely work as triggers for debate on how to expand the democratic potential of media education. For this purpose, debating about cases on the poorer sides of social divides is certainly an important step in the right direction.

Notes

1. Methodological note: for the empirical materials, I engaged in observations online and on spot. I also conducted interviews and informal conversations with activists from favelas.
2. I want to thank Professor Sirkku Kotilainen and the participants of the Media Education Futures Conference, as well as Professor Caroline Bassett and the colleagues at the Hiomo Discussion Group at CMT (University of Tampere), for commenting on earlier versions of this chapter.

3. For a report about the fire (in English), see: <http://www.rioonwatch.org/?p=9235>
4. The history of *Favela em Foco* is available (in Portuguese) on their blog: <http://favelaemfoco.wordpress.com>
5. Watch the video (in Portuguese) here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHOc3MA3Y-PA#t=179>
6. See photos at: www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.662198223805626.1073741827.100000463634176&type=1
7. See a blog post (in Portuguese) at: <http://favelaemfoco.wordpress.com/2013/05/24/desabrigados-da-favela-bandeira-1/>
8. Read more (in Portuguese) about *Ocupa B1*: <http://favelaemfoco.wordpress.com/2013/07/18/ocupa-b1-ato-politico-cultural-contra-o-descaso-da-prefeitura-do-rio-de-janeiro/>
9. Read *Favela em Foco*'s history [in Portuguese] here: <http://en.gravatar.com/favelaemfoco>
10. Read more about *Observatório de Favelas* here: <http://observatoriodefavelas.org.br/en>
11. Read more about *Imagens do Povo* (in Portuguese) here: <http://www.imagensdopovo.org.br/>
12. Read more about ESPOCC (in Portuguese) here: <http://www.espocc.org.br/>
13. The Brazilian state repression has been evident in the high rate of police crimes in favelas. To read more, see <http://www.rioonwatch.org/>.

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Media and Information Literacies and the Well-being of Young People

Comparative Perspectives

Sirkku Kotilainen & Manisha Pathak-Shelat

Young people's increasing engagement with the media as consumers and producers is seen as a global phenomenon and global media conglomerates have been successful, at least partially, in shaping a global youth culture in a considerable number of worldwide locations. For example, in our rapidly globalizing world, affluent, urban, English-speaking young people from various countries may show similar media habits and practices. There are, however, locally situated processes for young people to experience the media and learn media literacy practices. Comparative research can unearth the similarities and differences between young people in different locations – locally, nationally, and globally (Pathak-Shelat, Kotilainen & Hirsjärvi, 2013; Livingstone & Haddon, 2009) – and help us design more meaningful MIL initiatives.

Early efforts in media literacy were globally North-centric. Central global institutions like UNESCO took the lead in developing media literacy curricula and teacher training materials, mainly with the help of experts in the global North. There has been a gradual increase in involvement by media literacy practitioners from other parts of the world, but they have little research support to back their work. Under the circumstances, comparative research becomes extremely important. Unequal living conditions and disparities, together with other social realities, construct young people's life worlds in the global context. However, very little is known about the cultures of media and information literacies young people are practising on a global scale; and even less is known about media and information literacies with respect to human well-being and self-empowerment in widely different contexts. Pathak-Shelat (2013) has noted connections between MIL and charters on children's needs and rights, for example the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Some important children's rights – for example, to communicate

knowledge, to be heard, to self-expression, and to a safe media environment – are closely linked to media literacy.

Specifically for MIL programmes, the challenges seem to lie in creating local versions of the global charters, declarations, and learning materials, which mostly present the ideal situation regarding both MIL and youth well-being from a socio-cultural perspective. Consequently, the central question that emerges is: What should be taken into account when planning local and international implementations of MIL so that youth well-being becomes an achievable goal? This chapter aims to answer this question based on the results of our Comparative Research on Youth Media Participation (2009-2011), which focused on discovering ways of youth participation through the media and the aspects of media and information literacies that young people are practising. These were explored through questionnaires, interviews and media diaries with young people aged 11-18 years in Argentina, Egypt, Finland, and India. The research was funded by the Finnish Academy.

Emphasis on well-being in relations with MIL

In the last two decades, earlier notions of child well-being have shifted from “child saving to child development” (Kahn, 2010) and from “child welfare to child well-being” (Ben-Arieh, 2010). In this chapter, our understanding of well-being stems from sociologist Erik Allardt (1976), who includes dimensions of having, loving, and being as key components of human well-being. All three of these elements are related to one another, and none of them is sufficient on its own to produce human well-being (Allardt, 1976).

Allardt’s conceptualization of well-being has informed the dimensions of MIL that we consider important with respect to the well-being of young people. It is comparatively easy to understand the importance of “having” for well-being. Apart from having the basic means and resources for living a healthy, fulfilling life, in the context of media, “having” is associated with media and infrastructure access. The aspect of “loving” centres around relationships. Creating human relationships and networks through the media is important in the context of our study. Allardt describes “being” as the opposite of alienation from society and human life, and includes “self-actualizing” as an important factor in the category of “being”. Self-actualizing includes the subjective feeling of necessity, respect, acting (including possibilities for hobbies and other free-time activities), and possibilities for political participation (Allardt, 1976, p. 47).

Media literacy contributes to the well-being of children and young people in several important ways: it provides young people with effective tools for identity exploration, self-expression, making connections with diverse groups of people in a safe and ethical manner, developing intercultural understanding, and developing hobbies. Media literacy is considered an important tool in informed

citizenship development and, therefore, also an important tool for democracy (Kipping, 2004; Scheuer, 2009).

The conceptual framework of our research acknowledges the notions of multimodal transmedia literacies, cultural experiences, and cultural discourses young people acquire in their relationships with the media. The project approaches media literacies not only as individual abilities, but also as social practices embedded in certain cultural and political contexts (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007); as practices that help participation and engagement through and with the media include attitudes, critical judgments, and ethical reflections on the media, among other skills (Jenkins et al., 2009).

Our approach acknowledges differences in the life worlds of young people. Moreover, youth is regarded as not only a cultural construction, but also a socio-physical period in the human life course. Youngsters under 18 years of age are living through adolescence, and their desires and practices, including media use, are on the move (Mannheim, 1928/1952); but rather than a linear transition to adulthood, it is more a shifting of contextual positions, even in their relations to the media: moving backwards and forwards, taking different subject positions (Asthana, 2012). Respecting young people's agency and life world differences has led to our youth-centred approach to research in which young people's feelings, opinions, and perceptions about media and well-being are considered valuable. The aim has been to make visible young people with their multiple voices (Livingstone, 2012).

The comparative study sites: Argentina, Egypt, Finland, India

We studied the profiles of the four participating countries in both quantitative and qualitative ways, and found considerable differences among them. Here we summarize the country profiles based on three important indexes: the Human Development Index (HDI), a combination of indicators of life expectancy, educational attainment and income; the Gender Inequality Index (GII), reflecting women's disadvantage in the three dimensions reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market; and the Press Freedom Index, compiled by Reporters Without Borders (rsf.org), which reflects the degree of freedom that journalists, news organizations, and citizens enjoy in each country, and the efforts made by the authorities to respect and ensure respect for this freedom. These indexes may not paint a nuanced picture of any single location, but combining them with the Gini Index, which reflects the economic inequality within a country (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI>), allows us to obtain profiles of these four countries:

Finland is a northern European, mainly Christian (Protestant) country, with very high human development, good gender equality, quite good economic equality, and good press freedom. Argentina is a South American, mainly Christian

(Catholic) country, with high human development, some problems with press freedom, and moderate gender equality but quite high economic inequality within the country. Egypt is a northern African, mainly Muslim country, while India is a multilingual South Asian democratic country with a Hindu majority and a sizeable Muslim and Christian population. Some aspects of the statistical profiles of Egypt and India are quite similar: moderate human development, low gender equality, moderate economic equality and a somewhat difficult situation regarding press freedom. At the same time, these two countries have highly developed, affluent, and progressive pockets that perform differently from the national averages.

Our team had lead researchers in every country who were intimately familiar with the aspects of the country profiles that could not be revealed through statistics and needed qualitative insight. All the data, including interviews, media diaries and questionnaire data, were collected from one urban and one rural area in each country; in the capital of the country/state (except in the case of India, where the data were collected in the state of Gujarat), and one rural area far from the capital.

Linking MIL practices to aspects of well-being through the results

Based on the data from the four participating countries, Kotilainen and Suoninen (2013) found three MIL-related common themes that are closely relevant for youth well-being as formulated by Allardt (1976):

1. *Practices in media use and motives for media use:* Using the media to be informed about the world and to support one's interests and hobbies; making and maintaining connections with others; giving and receiving help etc.
2. *Activities, participation in events through public media:* Expressing through public media. This does not necessarily always refer to proper MIL skills, but at least to the courage and confidence for societal or cultural participation through the media.
3. *Ethical reflections including media criticism:* Reflecting ethically on the uses of media (by oneself or others); thinking critically regarding the media and the quality of information.

Our analysis around these three themes showed that individual, political, economic, and cultural factors generate huge differences – both between and within the countries – with reference to “having”, “loving”, and “being”. In the following sections, we discuss each of these themes with reference to inter- and intra-country differences revealed in our study.

Practices and motives in media use

Access to media and infrastructure (representing the “having” aspect of well-being), of course, is of primary importance in shaping media use and practices. Based on the study results, different developmental phases of user cultures can be termed “non-access at home”, “access at home” and “personal access at home”, and it is important to note that these different user cultures are not always country-specific. In rural areas in the South, especially India, young people had very limited media access at home but their affluent urban counterparts had all the media easily accessible at home. The “access at home” phase was particularly visible in Egypt, where this was found in several homes, often shared, mainly in urban areas but also in some rural ones. In Finland, the young respondents had mostly personal access at home, particularly to the Internet, and there was no difference between urban and rural areas. Even here, however, some of the immigrant and rural youth had lower access than other young Finns. Argentina also showed a mix of the three stages for different young people. The quality of access in this respect leads to different kinds of possibilities for choosing information sources, meaning-making, making connections, and for media participation.

However, cultural patterns, apart from access and availability, strongly influenced young people’s media practices. These included gender roles, the importance of school achievement, the proximity of friends and family, and the young people’s autonomy with respect to media use, but despite these differences we know from our qualitative results that the motives for media use seem to be very similar in all the countries. These motives include gathering information, maintaining one’s social network, having fun and playing games, and enhancing one’s own skills (Kotilainen, Suoninen, Hirsjärvi & Kolomainen, 2011).

An important insight from our research concerns the young people’s desire to form connections with one another and the world. Contrary to popular perception, young people in all the countries showed interest in news and current affairs, both local and global. A majority of the young respondents sought information about news, current affairs or politics through media, although their choice of medium (willingly or due to circumstances) varied greatly.

Youth media practices leaned heavily towards “loving”, or building networks, relationships, and connections. Young people in all the countries used the media to connect with friends and family. A majority of the respondents used some medium (including telephone and mobile phone) to keep in touch with their friends. Over half of all respondents said they used some form of media when they wanted to spend time with family or friends. Media use for these motives also took many different forms, like watching television or movies together, in which case using the media also became a social event (in the case of India and Argentina), or hanging out online with friends (in the case of Finland). A noteworthy aspect of making connections through media was that it helped young

people find other youth, beyond their geographic proximity, with whom they shared common identities (for example, a gay boy in Finland) or interests (for example, Finnish Manga-Anime culture fans or Indian Harry Potter fans). We are aware of the widespread concern about the risks young people face online. The young people in our study in all the countries, however, echoed the “stranger danger” discourse with reference to the Internet that is so prevalent today, except for a few who did not venture out on social media.

For example, the Indian interviews showed a high level of sharing when it comes to new gadgets, applications, mobile phone discount schemes, movies, and television programmes. This peer activity plays a vital role in the learning processes of the children (see e.g. Jenkins, 2009; Ito et al., 2010), and has a strong implication for the MIL initiatives because of the possibility of the “ripple effect” of MIL programmes. The strong tendency of peer learning raises our hopes that young people who undergo formal MIL training are likely to influence a much wider group of other young people.

Participation in events through public media

Opportunities for self-expression and cultural participation are strongly linked to the “being” aspect of well-being as conceptualized by Allardt. Expressing oneself through the media, however, is an area that also shows considerable differences between and within countries. Over half of the respondents to the questionnaire reported having published their opinions through some medium. School emerged as an important site for facilitating media production and expression, though school-based initiatives were mostly adult-initiated and -managed. In Argentina and India, over a fifth of the respondents said they had published their opinions by preparing media content of some type, connected to the school (e.g. school paper or school radio channel), while this figure was only about 15% in Egypt and Finland.

Contrary to school-based activities, when it came to self-initiated expression young people in all the countries chose spaces and channels with minimum gatekeeping, e.g. writing on online discussion sites, publishing their own videos online, or calling in or sending messages to a radio or television programme. The interviews revealed several reasons for such choices that were similar across the countries: lack of courage to publicly present their opinion, lack of confidence in their knowledge of political and social issues, lack of facts and figures to support their opinion, a fear of being ridiculed by peers or appearing wrong in the eyes of their peers, and finally the cynical feeling that their expression was not going to be noticed or change anything. These areas, then, appear to be important to address in MIL programmes.

We observed that the local and national political situation also played an important role in public expression. For example, the Egyptian respondents to

the questionnaire reported having a much more active role in submitting and creating news material through media than did the young people in the other countries. This is understandable, considering that the data were gathered in Egypt mostly during December 2010 and January 2011 – just before and during the Arab Spring. In Finland, on the other hand, the expression sprung from DIY fandom or pop-culture areas (for example, creating YouTube videos by appropriating various commercial pop-culture images); and in India (especially for three of the girls interviewed), the expression took a literary form of poetry or fan fiction. One characteristic of the DIY self-expression through the Internet was a complete disregard for copyright laws.

These findings have several implications for MIL initiatives. Self-expression is crucial for well-being, and this area requires strong MIL inputs – from supporting media access and fluency training for young people with low access, to building the confidence and communication competencies, to developing awareness about ethics and copyright for those already proficient at production.

Ethical reflections including media criticism

Reflections about media are linked to well-being and have remained the core element of MIL, because of the possibilities to influence one's own life. The critical reading of media also facilitates participation in discussions about media, or may even lead to the creation of alternative youth media content and form (e.g. Kotilainen & Rantala, 2009; Kotilainen et al., 2011).

The first important observation we made in our study was that critical thinking was not associated with high media access, and use does not guarantee a high level of critical thinking about the media. Local cultures, including civic ones, may be an influential factor here. For example, in the interviews among the Finnish young people, analytic comments on media use or on the media itself were practically non-existent. Most interviewees talked about pleasure, entertainment, and the usefulness of media content; the few exceptions were those who had formerly participated in an MIL programme. The young Indians, on the other hand – even those with low access – were highly critical of media practices and content, and had much to say about media bias, sensationalism in the news, the negative impact of media on society, and their own expectations from the media that they felt were not adequately fulfilled.

Ethical and critical reflections about media and media use continue to be a crucial area for MIL focus in all the countries for sustaining the youth awareness of media and media use, including issues of safety online. Moreover, ethical and critical reflections on media, for example at school, enhance the knowledge regarding cultural diversity and (inter)cultural dialogue (Perez-Tornero & Varis, 2010).

A situated approach to media and information literacy

Our findings indicate that “universal” MIL curricula, developed by international organizations such as UNESCO or experts from any one region of the world, cannot address the well-being of our large and diverse global youth population. At the same time, rigid country-specific curricula may also exclude several groups of young people who deviate from the notion of so-called “normal” or “average” young people. However, we definitely see a relevant role for international organizations as well as educators (international, national, and local) in the modular and situated approach to MIL we are developing. We suggest three important dimensions for planning specific MIL programmes: media and infrastructural access, political situation, and local media cultures including opportunities for MIL.

Considering the first dimension, media and infrastructural access, the Indian data show that media technologies and services such as the Internet are not yet easily available in small towns and villages, and are also not completely affordable for everyone. These conditions were also prevalent in sub-groups of young people in Argentina and Egypt. The Finnish interviews of rural young people also showed examples of “digital differentiation” based on socio-economic and cognitive resources (Peter & Valkenburg, 2006). This example highlights the need of access and support to such young people in all the countries. The Indian statistical and qualitative data and the statistical data in Argentina also show that, for young people from non-urban and low-income backgrounds, school can be a safe space to experiment with the media. Unfortunately, our interviews in India show that many parents and schools still subscribe to the “inoculation” approach to the media rather than allowing young people opportunities to experiment with it and finding teachable moments for critical literacy. Young Indians, regardless of economic background or geographical location, also showed keen interest in civic issues and current affairs, and demonstrated a high level of emotional participation in current events, but rarely had the opportunity for actual civic participation and expression through the media. Creating participation opportunities for such young people emerges as a key component of MIL programmes. Besides, as our data from Argentina, Egypt, and India showed, the Internet is hardly the key medium for all the young people. This means that MIL initiatives for these young people have to pay attention to print and broadcast media practices as well.

With reference to the second dimension of the political situation, we call attention to the fact that a large number of youth in the world today suffer from the negative consequences of political conflict, some on a global scale and some highly localized. For example, young Egyptians were experiencing the Arab Spring and the resulting upheavals in their lives at the same time as our data collection was taking place. The youth in Gujarat were familiar with the harrowing

experience of communal riots. Argentina has long had a volatile political climate. Some of the needs and aspirations concerning well-being change during crisis situations, as do practices of media participation, as we clearly observed in the case of our Egyptian respondents. There is, however, also another broader aspect of the political situation in the non-crisis environment that shapes the policies that influence the lives of the young in local settings, including their media use.

The dimension of local cultures includes the nature of social networks, perceptions around youth and gender roles, cultures of youth media production and adult intervention in and control of youth media use, availability of leisure time and leisure or hobby options, and formal as well as informal opportunities to acquire MIL skills. All these aspects are directly and indirectly linked to youth well-being. Globalization interacts differently with different local cultures and locations and, again, different young people in the same locations also experience the complex consequences very differently. In the villages of India, for example, we found young people with extended families settled in Dubai, Canada, the UK, or the US, which gave them more information and better access to some media technologies; but again, their use of these gadgets depended upon the electricity and Internet infrastructure in the village, local peer cultures, gender roles, and opportunities for learning new skills. Similarly, global conflicts have increased the number of immigrants to Finland, and these young people are wrestling with negotiating the cultural practices of their home and host countries.

MIL initiatives can become more relevant for youth well-being when they are designed with sensitivity to the above three frames. We observed, for example, that in Finland the young generation has been born into a highly mediated culture. These young respondents have mostly personal access to the media at home, particularly to the Internet, and there is no difference between urban and rural areas. Higher media access and use, however, do not automatically translate into well-being. The focus of MIL programmes for these young people, then, should be on critical literacy that can help them negotiate the abundance of media and information in a meaningful way. The complexities of ethics in this new environment, challenges to personal safety and integrity, and constructive use are important areas for young Finns. At the same time, we did find several groups of young people in the other three countries who have similar access profiles and could benefit from a similar MIL focus, albeit with due consideration to their local situation. The Internet seems to be the key medium for these young people, so new media literacies should be given significant attention for this group across countries. These media-savvy young people can also benefit from spaces and practices that help them connect to young people in other parts of the world and channel their media skills towards higher public participation. This privileged group of young people can be encouraged to share their advanced skills in peer-to-peer spaces. At the same time, even with easy and

personal access at home, the gender gap in confidence regarding media skills is noteworthy in every country, and needs to be addressed in MIL programmes.

In the case of uprising and the evolution of a new regime, this study suggests that it is important to emphasize media criticism and ethical reflections together with participatory activities in relation to media among young people. We agree with Saleh (2013, p. 210) that media literacy education should insist on reflection on "...the level of success, or lack of success, of the social movements in attaining the political change desired..." The role of government also becomes a complex issue in such situations. For example, the governments of Finland and Argentina have taken an active interest in promoting MIL initiatives for young people; but as in the case of Egypt, when the government is in a problematic situation or has a vested interest in repressing the public spheres, it cannot be expected to support critical media literacy. In Argentina the government has supported media education projects aiming to sustain democracy, which does not have a long history in the country. According to Argentinean educator Murdochowitz (2013, p. 373), media literacy is "meant to teach students to face and oppose any reduction of the public sphere...to build citizens who would challenge and use information, to make choices, decisions, and judgments and to participate...". Young people in marginal as well as privileged situations in other countries can benefit from a similar focus, as participation is the key to self-actualization and hence well-being (Allardt, 1976). To this end, we conclude that young people in all countries and locations would benefit from youth media production projects that enhance connection, expression, and participation.

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Media Learning in Primary School Classrooms

Following the Teacher's Pedagogy and the Child's Experience

Marketa Zezulkova

*I would like to become a teacher either in kindergarten or in school.
You get to study with children, you get to help them.
I could play with them, tell them fairy tales, and sing with them.*
Janička, first grade, six years old, Czech Republic

Janička well summarizes the three elements of formal education on which this chapter concentrates: teachers, young learners, and media. Building on an intercultural and interdisciplinary research project exploring *media learning* in primary school classrooms, this chapter brings together teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices with children's multifaceted media engagements. As a result, it argues for media learning on a primary school level that addresses the child in his or her complexity instead of reducing itself to teaching *media literacy* skills.

Researching media learning

Media literacy education focusing on the learner's ability to access, analyse, and create media in a variety of contexts is commonly concerned with the development of critical understanding, at least in the majority of the EU member states (Hartai, 2014). Yet arguing that a media literate person, even a primary school child, is mainly a critical and responsible information seeker and information producer (Buckingham, 2009) might lead to primary education neglecting the diversity and plurality of children's media tastes and practices. This may also overlook the significant developmental (Piaget, 1923) and sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1934) changes amplified by entering compulsory education (Langmeier and Krejčířová, 2009), which takes place roughly between the ages of five and nine. As Jung (1934) argued and Mayes (2005) elaborated, the student is a

living medium whose complexity cannot be fully acknowledged or efficiently nurtured by a cognitive-rationalist curriculum alone. Therefore, the research project discussed in this chapter distanced itself from studies preoccupied with the adaptation and implementation of media literacy education to the lower grades. Instead, the project set out to investigate current and potential *media learning* – defined here as both intentional and naturally occurring learning about media with, from, in, or even without the physical presence of, media – across the first three grades of compulsory education. The intention behind this was to explore a possible purpose and form of formal media learning, grounded in classroom research conducted with primary school teachers and their six- to nine-year-old pupils.

Applying inductive reasoning, the classroom research began with a three-month inquiry into two Czech schools in 2012, which then guided an investigation at two schools in the US. The research sought strong support for the conclusions, or *justified true beliefs* (Plato, approx. 369BC), rather than *absolute truth*. Accordingly, “certainty of” was replaced with “confidence in” the research results (Hammersley, 1992, p. 50-51). To gain greater confidence in the outcomes of the research conducted at the Czech and US public schools, further but significantly more limited investigation was carried out at two Maltese single-gender Catholic schools as well as one public and one private school in Colombia in 2013.

Primarily the Czech and US educators and school management, and secondarily the Maltese and Colombian ones, were interviewed to explore their “holistic belief systems” – a whole theory comprising interconnected partial theories (Block, 2000, p.360) – regarding the role of media and education in the learner’s lives. Although the teachers felt confident discussing media-related topics in general terms they sometimes struggled to recall concrete situations, as they were neither specialized media educators nor media or media education enthusiasts. Consequently, classroom observations were conducted in all four countries to supplement the interviews and generate an authentic inside view. Respect for the children’s right to be heard, coupled with the idea that they are experts on childhood as a world governed by them (Danby & Farrell, 2005), led this research to “seek to directly access children’s views and opinions, [...] in order to understand children’s lives in their own terms” (Coyne, 2010, p. 452). Unfortunately, due to the unavoidable hierarchy of gatekeepers with whom I had to negotiate at different stages of the research process, only the Czech and US children could be interviewed and thus actively participate in the project. A total of 65 pupils (33 girls and 32 boys) took part in the individual as well as group photo-elicitation interviews. Fifteen photo-elicitation group interviews were conducted, the groups being grade-specific and mostly of mixed gender.

Photo elicitation was used in the project as what Wagner (1979) called *interview stimuli*. The project used photographs of people interacting with media during the group interviews, and a set of cards with drawings of various media

platforms and technologies for the individual interviews. The aim of the group and individual photo-elicitation interviews was to further explore the ways in which *any* media were involved in a variety of the children's actions, feelings, relationships, and meaning-makings, both inside and outside the classroom environment, and to bring these together with the teachers' pedagogic beliefs and practices. The teachers and children acted as guides through their media-related experiences; therefore, any reductionist or dualistic approach to media came from them rather than from the research project itself.

When learning and media experiences meet

The study discovered a number of concrete contextual issues, relevant only to the individual cases. At the same time, however, I heard and witnessed what Mill (1875) described as "parallel cases" (p. 223) that increasingly called for closer attention. Mill claimed that induction, as applied in this research project, "consists in inferring from some individual instances in which a phenomenon is observed to occur" that it was to occur again "under sufficient degree of similarity of circumstances", comprising from this phenomenon a parallel case (*ibid.*). One of the two main parallel cases discovered by this project was that despite the varying contexts within which the individual primary school operated, the teachers all aimed at holistically addressing the learner in his or her intellectual, physical, emotional, sociocultural, creative, and moral complexity as a *harmonious whole* (Mayes, 2005).

First-grade teacher, Czech Republic: At primary school level the children are still very small, so they should be educated in all areas. To nurture a person who is able to differentiate between good and bad – to develop his own views and attitudes. Emotional and social education should not to be forgotten. The same goes for physical education: not to educate a professional sportsman, but rather a child with all-around strengths.

Third-grade teacher, US: I'd love them to grow in all the areas. [...] I want them to be doing whatever they're doing now but better. [...] If there's any kind of personal challenges they have, I want them to be able to overcome it. [...] So I'm thinking of sort of the whole student. [...] To teach them both of those things; to be successful at the things that are your strengths [...] and the things that make you happy that you like to work on [...] and also just be someone that someone else can look up to and respect.

The second parallel case was that the children's complex and multidimensional media-related experiences equally engaged them in their wholeness.

Each child's *media life* (Deuze 2011) was situated within the subjective holistic system in which everything was interconnected and dialogic; as were the diverse media platforms, texts, and practices:

David (3rd grade, 9 years, Czech): Playing theatre is my favourite. [...] Those diverse ways of creating theatre, those various scenes. [...] I guess I'd also miss having a DVD player, because that's where I play songs, and stuff like that, for my theatre. [...] If there's a song or melody good for theatre play, I use it. [...] Sometimes I sing and dance. [...] I'm putting money aside. I want to buy a witch mask. [...] I watch *YouTube* almost every day. I just watched Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White*. [...] Because there're evil queens and I love the evil. [...] I want to play evil in theatre. That's why I need the witch mask. [...] I like scary and spooky stories. In our class we all do. [...] Our teacher played *A Bouquet of Folk Legends [Kytice]* by Karel Jaromir Erben and [...] it wasn't so scary, not for me, but *the Water Goblin [Vodník]*; that was awful, but really good!"

The holistic system co-constructed and co-orchestrated by the child was a fluid and fluent "lived experience" (Husserl 1900/01[1970]), or as Dewey (1916) described it, "a single continuous interaction of a great diversity (literally countless in number) of energies" (p. 93). This complexity might be hidden to those trying to comprehend children's media engagements in a reductionist rather than inclusive manner. However, this was not the case in this research project exploring the participants' life in, with, and through diverse media as *a complete whole*, ultimately leading towards the understanding of the child's pan-media experience as holistic and lived.

Although both primary education and media engagements represented holistic processes in these young children's lives, constituting themselves in a single lived experience, the teachers were unsure about the role of *media learning* in the context of their pedagogy. I will illustrate this by focusing on the sociocultural and emotional dimensions, although cognitive, physical, and partly also spiritual phenomena were also explored and found to be inherently embodied in the child's lived and lived pan-media experience.

To begin with, the teachers described a "friendly atmosphere" as one of the main conditions for developing and maintaining an "effective learning environment". The classroom was repeatedly referred to as a "community", "home", and "family" with the sense of belonging, caring and tolerance. According to the educators, the children had to gradually learn to share, respectfully listen, reflect, readjust/strengthen their own thoughts, collaborate, and compromise, among other social skills and knowledge crucial to their immediate and future learning as well as overall wellbeing. As Piaget (1923) suggested, these years are particularly important to the child's social development, as somewhere around this age a shift should occur from egocentrism to the ability to see from others' perspectives and to sympathize, with the classroom representing almost an ideal environment for social learning (Vygotsky, 1934) with its rich dynamics and constantly occurring social events. The US teachers articulated this especially well:

Second-grade teacher: I think I try, right from the beginning, to focus on building a community. Having them really care about one another. [...] We need to see how we can make it the best functioning room, how everyone can succeed in this room at one time and what we need to do to help everyone be able to do that. [...] I try to just take the time to make them feel like this is a home and we're a family.

Second-grade teacher: Still too, developmentally they're young. They're still thinking that the centre of the universe is themselves, at seven, eight years old they're starting to branch out to think, to know and be aware that other people have good ideas too, it's not only my idea that's good. I have to listen to other people. [...] It just takes practice.

The educators agreed that the topic of media, as a Maltese teacher said, “comes out in this time during the day that it's more about the social versus the academic”. They additionally argued, as a Colombian school principal put it, that media “are an inherent part of children's personal and social development, [influencing] them in their values, principles and even the way they are thinking”. They subsequently acknowledged that media played an important role in the children's lives from an early age and mainly outside the school environment, which the teachers believed significantly limited their position and participation in the pupils' media-related engagements. They considered drawing upon media predominantly in the situations they evaluated as negatively influencing the classroom's friendly community – due to mocking and feelings of exclusion – and when fostering the individual child's socialization and individuation. Here, *individuation* refers to a process through which an individual separates from others, developing his or her unique self (Jung, 1963, 1969), as the Czech educators for instance worried:

Third-grade teacher: Children should learn about media in order to be able to find their own way to learning, play, life; it's important that the children as small as these are already capable of this; so they won't let themselves be swallowed by media.

Assistant Principal: One has to disagree with the sexualization of childhood, telling girls to put makeup on, do their hair and use their body to succeed. [...] Children have to know that it's okay to not be who the media tell us we should be, and to not have what the media tell us we should have. We want them to feel good about themselves.

The worries expressed by the school staff seemed to be of some, but relatively little, relevance to the observed and interviewed child participants. As media, according to Stocking (1968), are both the witnesses to and creators of sociocultural plurality and diversity, so were the children. Firstly, although it was common amongst the learners – as well as amongst the teachers – to argue that the children *all* played, watched, listened, or read the same media texts or engaged

with the same media forms and platforms, this *never* seemed to be the case as far as this research was concerned. When declining to participate in a certain media practice or media-related social activity that was popular in the classroom peer culture, the children did not claim to feel excluded. Yet, understanding the adult's expectations, they often felt guilty for being influenced by their peers while they felt proud for standing out:

Kristina (3rd grade, 9 years, Czech): I watch *Pokémon*. I like it, because... Hmm, our class is watching it too." [*Doubtful tone of voice and look*]

Marketa: Anything else you and your class like to watch?"

Kristina: I used to watch *Chucky* [*Child's Play*], because we all did. But then my friend started to talk about it a lot, so I stopped. I don't like it when someone talks about something too much! [*Confident and assertive*]

Group of US second-graders, all seven years old:

Leila: My cousin told me a new DS is coming out. [...]

Gavin: It's good to get a new one, because it has more space to put games on.

Leila: I don't think it's good to get a new one, because your mom might not have enough money. You want to have a house to live in; you don't want to live under a tree. You want to have a TV. You want to have food to eat.

Abigail: If you have your own money to buy it, or if you get a coupon, then you could buy it.

Leila: But if you don't, you need to buy things you need to live on, not spend your money on like DS or Wii and stuff.

Secondly, a rich variety of subcultures were apparent in the classrooms, which arguably allowed each child to be an active participant in at least one of these subcultures, and thus in one way or another contribute to, and be included in, the "whole" classroom media culture. In particular, the third-grade teacher assistant was worried about nine-year-old Emily. He said, "She doesn't have [electronic and digital] media at home, and she isn't interested in them. It's a nice way of life, but then it's hard for her to make friends. [...] She often doesn't have anything to say when the children discuss the video games or TV shows they like. [...] It isn't right to force her, but on the other hand, the gap's increasing and we want her to be part of the collective, so we need to find a way to help her with that." The interviews with Emily revealed that she indeed had a computer with Internet access at home, but rather than playing online and video games, she preferred searching for images and then printing, cutting, collecting and sometimes displaying what she had chosen – or *curating* (Potter, 2012). Although overlooked by the teachers, this form of media curatorship was enjoyed by many of her classmates and other participating children.

Thirdly, at any point these young children suggested that they should form a homogenous social group, in which all members would interact with the same media platforms and texts. In a group photo-elicitation interview with Emily and

three of her male classmates, the boys often led the discourse away from media towards their shared interests, excluding me rather than Emily. For instance, when Emily mentioned “I don’t use a mobile phone; I just call sometimes”, Jakub turned to her and with a friendly voice and a smile said “You don’t use any electronics, you prefer to be outside, right?”, and the group happily began discussing their outdoor activities. Moreover, the young research participants were not only aware that their own and the others’ media choices were unique and constantly evolving; the second- and third-graders also viewed their classroom media culture for what it was – dynamic, flexible and ever-changing:

*Abby (2nd grade, 7 years, US): Sesame Street is a show for little kids... I watched it when I was like three. And I remember watching it a lot! [...] When I was like this tall [shows] I used to watch *The Smurfs*. [...] Now we [she and her classmates] like to watch *iCarly*; before, it was *Hannah Montana*, like Miley Cyrus.*

*Kinsley (3rd grade, 8 years, US): When I was like in first grade, it was like *Pokémon*. Second grade was like [unintelligible 00:15:39]. This year it’s like football.*

Lastly, even though the learners transposed their favourite media texts, characters and themes into the classroom culture, these were re-told, re-imagined, re-created, and re-enacted according to the children’s individual and collective preferences and in the context of their own sociocultural lives. Within these interpretative processes the children often referred to media, but “the source text/artefact [was] not drawn upon in an extended manner” (Marsh, 2014, p. 125). Therefore, even a child unfamiliar with the source could participate. For example, a Czech classroom was transformed into a battlefield by a group of boys running, jumping, crawling and hiding, pretending to be at war. The boys then explained that they were playing “Call of Duty”. When asked if they played the *Call of Duty* videogame, only three of the nine boys said they did. The others had either heard about the franchise from their friends or watched related videos on *YouTube*, while they also talked about one of the boys’ father, who was in the Army. Comparably, a mixed group of the US children played a traditional playground freeze tag game which was now called *Angry Birds* and the players were divided into “piggies” and “birdies”. Both groups acted as “authors of their own games” (Burn, 2014, p. 18) while remixing popular media texts with folkloric forms of play with which they “all” were familiar (Willett, 2014). Similarly, a Maltese teacher remembered that not engaging directly with the media source usually did not exclude a child from the source-related classroom interactions:

There was a TV show with a couple of the characters that children even used to imitate. One of them, for example, she had a particular way of speaking and we would be in the middle of the lesson, talking about something, and they would say something in the way that character would say it. [...] Some parents didn’t allow them to watch it... but what I see a lot is that even though there is some peer pressure, in most cases it is not excessive, pushing a girl

aside because she doesn't watch the show. I think the opposite happens, they fill her in, they tell her what is happening. So even though she [doesn't watch] herself, she knows what is going on. It brings them closer.

Corsaro (2011), who stressed that the "deep emotional appreciation of children's membership in their peer cultures" is fuelled by media (p. 118), also suggested that "children seek, in adult caretakers and peers, the emotional bonds and feelings of security they first established in families" (p. 123). The teachers recognized this and placed great emphasis on not only a peer-to-peer but also a teacher-learner relationship. Yet, although a personal connection with each learner, trust, and reciprocal appreciation were seen as the basis of a "good" teacher-learner relationship, only few perceived knowing about, and participating in, children's media cultures as imperative, or at least helpful:

First grade teacher, US: I always try to connect to my students, to their personal life, to their home life, to each kid as a person. My biggest goal is to make sure that each student is happy, happy as a child. [...] I think it's more important you make a connection to each kid before you worry about the academics because the academics will only come if they believe that you believe in them. [...] Popular culture is where they're growing up; it's important to recognise that and learn how to benefit from it in classrooms."

Although happiness was the ultimate goal, the children were encouraged to explore distinct emotions and feelings, upon which the educators then drew when supporting the learners' emotional development. The educators shared with me a number of stories about pupils learning to understand their feelings and control their emotions, yet none of them included media (except books in this case). They tended to overlook the children's wide-ranging and meaningful media-related emotions and feelings. For instance, the children talked about sadness and even grief when asked about their media experiences, as Czech first-grader Terka shared: "It was sad; when they were taking papa Smurf away I cried for half of the whole day". They felt *pride* in their own, and *admiration* for the others', media skills and knowledge. US first-grader Imprá said, about playing *Angry Birds*, "I'm really good at this game – I'm an expert", but emphasized that her father was even better. On the one hand media were connected to *love/appreciation*, as nine-year-old Nikolka remembered: "I have this favourite book about *the Little Sorrel Squirrel*. [...] First my grandma had it, then my uncle, then my mom and now me. So it's my most favourite book." On the other hand, the children felt *anxiety* and *uncertainty* about the possible effects of media consumption and production:

Fin (3rd grade, 9 years, US): I don't think games can make you violent but my mom told me that. I think maybe because they're so much fun, and that some kids never stop playing the murdering games, then they actually want to do it and then you can't stop.

Marketa: Do you think it could happen to you?

Fin: I don't know. Maybe. I don't really want to. I want to be free, not in jail. I want to be free man! And get a job.

In contrast, *fear* evoked directly by the media rather than by someone else's accounts of the media, was not always evaluated as negative. For example, seven-year-old Imagine explained: "I love Harry Potter. [...] I'm on the fifth [book]. I love this book, because there are so many adventures; I love adventures. There are also mysteries. But in the second book, I was trembling. It was scary [laughing]! [...] But the movies – I don't watch. They give me nightmares." The children also talked about *jealousy*, *anger*, or *disappointment* with a certain unworldliness and humour, as they appeared to accept these feelings and emotions as part of being the "child".

It seemed that it was no secret to the young participants that childhood is both a combination of a developmental stage on the way to adulthood (Piaget, 1926), as well as a world with its own rights, rules, media, and cultures (Postman, 1982). For instance, on one occasion I observed a Czech third-grade teacher, Milada, facilitating a day of critical and creative learning activities around the topic of advertising. At one point, Milada asked if the pupils believed that "advertising can negatively influence" them. Samuel gave the anticipated answer:

Negatively, like we think everything they want to sell us is good, because they say so, because we're not as smart as adults yet. Adults already went through it and learnt, that maybe the cheaper yogurts are healthier than the expensive ones with toys shown on TV. They know it's just waste of money.

The next day I interviewed a group of four children and asked several follow-up questions, including which yogurt they would buy now. Samuel said, while others nodded in agreement, "the one with a toy. It doesn't taste as good, but the toys are fun". Adam continued, "because why should kids want the healthier yogurt, if they can have the one with a toy?".

Holistic and lived media learning

As illustrated, the primary school teachers tended to focus on the potentially negative role of media in the child's life and development. They believed they were expected to rectify and modify, firstly, the role of media in the child's social relationships and development, and secondly, the child's media preferences and practices, for example, by uncovering media's hidden agendas. If the finger was to be pointed at the most probable source of this belief, it would be those scholarly and popular conceptions that have "followed normative assumptions and expectations of vague but powerful concomitants and effects presumed to accompany changes in the diffusion of" media literacy (Graff, 1987, p. 9). Any causal and reductionist approach to media learning might be in danger of

overlooking the premise that the primary school child's learning experience and media experience are holistic and lived, and should therefore be understood and approached as a single continuous experience.

Based on the findings highlighted in this chapter, the primary school teacher could, for instance, benefit from diverse media subcultures and plays the child co-created and engaged in, when building and maintaining classroom community. The sense of heterogeneity and homogeneity connected to individual and collective media preferences and practices, as well as classroom media trends, could assist the nurturing and balancing of sociocultural development and individuation. The teacher's participation in the child's media culture could possibly strengthen pupil-teacher relationships, while emotional involvement with media could be used as a valuable source and reference point for emotional development within which children explore their own, and others', feelings and emotions. By practising such "reflexive and negotiated pedagogy that bear[s] witness to the complexity of" one's media life (McDougall, 2014, p. 3), the child should be encouraged to learn about media through exploring and reflecting on the subjective role they play in his or her individual and collective life. In return, the primary school teacher could draw upon the child's own holistic and lived media experience, instead of relying on popular and even scholarly conceptions, when nurturing the learner as a harmonious whole.

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Public Opinion Research as a Prerequisite for Media Education Strategies and Policies

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Media education is part of the basic entitlement of every citizen, in every country in the world, to freedom of expression and the right to information and it is instrumental in building and sustaining democracy.

UNESCO, 1999, p. 2.¹

This chapter introduces a new approach to the implementation of media education policies in countries accessing the EU. We are exploring the degree to which public opinion research has been recognized by the Member States as an important prerequisite for new policies, for the period 2007 to 2013. This time frame is important because of initiatives coming from the EU primarily through recommendations regarding media literacy activities, listed in the directives 2007/65/EC and 2010/13/EU. In Croatia² the media literacy recommendations prior to our research had not been implemented, and a lack of relevant scientific research as well as low media education³ for the improvement of media literacy⁴ are still seen as problems in Croatia.

Compared to Croatia, in the last decade in the EU we have seen many examples of high-quality media literacy research that has attempted to describe, explain and pinpoint media consumption habits; of not only minors (EU Kids online⁵, MEDIAPPRO⁶ and Ofcom⁷) but also adults (Ofcom, 2013, 2014) and the general public. This research has helped raise awareness, and in some countries has been used to promote new media education policies.

In the meantime, EAVI⁸, the Danish Technological Institute (DTI), Ofcom, Active Watch from Romania, and UNESCO have proposed new ways to assess media literacy, while new projects and networks (COST ISO906 “Transforming Audiences, Transforming Societies”, EMEDUS⁹, ANR TRANSLIT¹⁰) have provided a fresh perspective on and interpretation of the role of media education in our

societies. Most initiatives have attempted to assess, map and evaluate media literacy and media education levels and impact, but have not taken into account the general public opinion.

There are many examples of countries with outstanding media education policies and programs (Belgium, Denmark, Finland¹¹...), although they have not conducted any kind of public opinion research, asking the public for its opinion on media education.¹² Central to our argument is the belief that media users are civil society actors (Hasebrink, 2012), and for this reason they should be approached on all matters concerning media education policies. “Media governance has to take into account that users also act as citizens who have certain normative and value-based expectations concerning media performance within society (...)” (Hasebrink, 2012, p. 70).

We also argue that media policies in some countries could be more easily introduced if they were based on public opinion research. On the other hand, there could also be situations in which decisions are reached on the basis of poor arguments and misleading data. “In reviewing recent national directives and research, O’Neill and Hagen (2009) caution that political pressure may lead to defining media literacy in terms of what is easily measurable, than addressing the complexities and challenges of literate practice” (Bulger, 2012, p. 85). From our point of view, the high quality and wide scope of public opinion research on media education is a key requirement in countries where there is an evident lack of research data, based upon which public officials are expected to formulate concrete policies. Such a perspective can be demonstrated through two examples of good practice.

The first is “Media and Information Literacy (MIL) – Policy and Strategy Guidelines”, published by UNESCO in 2013. These emphasize the need for evaluation in action plans for MIL: “Efforts, including research to ascertain the extent to which MIL policies and strategies lead to greater and more effective participation of citizens in knowledge societies” (2013, p. 97). The second example of good practice is the document “Good Media Policy – National Policy Guidelines 2013-2016”, published by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. From our perspective, these two documents are a kind of benchmark for countries embarking on the introduction of new media education policies. They are also good examples of what governments can do to promote transparent policies. Still, these documents lack a broader, general public perspective on media education policies.

The Croatian ministries, however, have conducted no public opinion research, which would facilitate the creation of new media education policies. Nevertheless, this chapter will demonstrate that Croatia has, in just a short few months, made great progress with respect to public opinion research, initiated and organized by NGOs. It has motivated various stakeholders and political party members, and has fulfilled conditions for the first parliamentary discussion on media literacy, with the specific goal of including media literacy in the Strategy of Education,

Science and Technology, the fundamental document on the basis of which all Croatian education laws are to be introduced.

The first public opinion research on media education

The first, and presently the only, public opinion research on media education in Croatia was conducted in June 2013 by the marketing, media and public opinion research agency Ipsos Puls and the Association for Communication and Media Culture (DKMK), using the CATI method (computer-assisted telephone interviews) on a representative sample of citizens of the Republic of Croatia. A total of 1,080 subjects participated in the study.

The main goal of the study was to examine the opinions of Croatian citizens in regard to media education. The objectives of the research were to examine the views of Croatian citizens concerning the introduction of media education into the Croatian education system, when media education should start, and who is most responsible for the media education of children. Based on these objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: The majority of citizens of the Republic of Croatia believe that media education should be introduced into the Croatian education system.

H2: The majority of citizens of the Republic of Croatia believe that media education should start in primary school.

H3: The majority citizens of the Republic of Croatia believe that parents are the most responsible for the media education of children.

Research results

In this research, the purpose of media education was explained as the education “which would teach pupils about media use and how to relate to media content”. Results showed that 62% of citizens believe media education should be introduced into the Croatian education system. The view that media education should not be introduced into the education system is held by 23.5% of the citizens, of whom 11.8% justify this view due to an already large amount of content in the country’s education system¹³, and 11.7% do not believe media education is important and feel it should therefore not be in the education system at all. A total of 14.5% of the citizens had no opinion.

The research revealed significant variations in the citizens’ views depending on their age (see Table 1). While 72.6% of the citizens between the ages of 50 and 59 years and 65.4% of those between 20 and 29 believe media education should be introduced into the education system, this view is shared by significantly fewer individuals, for instance, between the ages of 60 and 74 years (52.6%). The most important results pertain to the age group for which media education is intended: children aged 10-19 years. According to the research results, 67.6%

of children of this age believe media education should indeed be part of the education system.

Table 1. Introducing media education into the Croatian education system

Do you believe media education should be introduced into the education system, with the purpose of teaching pupils about media use and how to relate to media content?						
		Sample size	Yes	No, there is already too much content in the education system	No, this is not very relevant	Do not know/ no opinion
Whole sample		1,080	62.0%	11.8%	11.7%	14.5%
Sex	Male	524	63.1%	11.2%	13.6%	12.1%
	Female	556	61.0%	12.4%	9.9%	16.8%
Age group	10-19	156	67.6%	10.5%	14.3%	7.6%
	20-29	166	65.4%	14.1%	14.8%	5.7%
	30-39	176	61.7%	14.8%	13.6%	9.9%
	40-49	189	57.2%	15.6%	8.7%	18.4%
	50-59	161	72.6%	8.8%	8.3%	10.4%
	60-74	232	52.6%	7.7%	11.0%	28.7%
Education	Primary school	440	58.6%	9.9%	11.1%	20.4%
	Secondary school	510	63.8%	13.6%	12.1%	10.5%
	University	130	66.4%	11.1%	12.3%	10.2%
Town population	Above 100,000	273	54.9%	15.7%	15.0%	14.4%
	10,001 to 100,000	215	68.0%	8.7%	11.2%	12.1%
	2,001 to 10,000	175	62.4%	12.2%	9.1%	16.3%
	Less than 2,000	416	63.4%	10.7%	10.9%	15.1%

Note: N=1,080.

The majority of citizens of the Republic of Croatia who believe media education should be incorporated into the country's education system (N=640) expressed the view that media education should be part of other subjects. This view was held by 55.2% of those interviewed. A significantly smaller number of citizens (27.9%) believe a separate media education subject should be introduced into primary and secondary schools. It must be highlighted that in Croatia, media education is already an integral part of another subject, media culture, which along with Croatian language, literature and language expression forms the four components of Croatian as a school subject.

Those who are most in favor of having media education as a separate subject are those for whom it would be intended – primary and secondary school children. A total of 46% of children between aged 10-19¹⁴ believe media education should be a school subject on its own. This belief is supported mostly by citizens with a primary school education, followed by those with a university education and, lastly, by those with a secondary school education.

The majority of Croatian citizens, almost 42.7%, believe media education should start between Grades 5 and 8 of primary school, which confirms the second hypothesis. The view that media education should start between Grades 1 and 4 is supported by 22.6% of the population, while 15% of the population believe secondary school is an ideal time to start media education. About an equal percentage of citizens believe media education should begin in preschool. Research results confirmed yet again that the children themselves are very interested in media education. As many as 64.1% of the children aged 10-19 years believe media education should start between Grades 5 and 8. It is important to note that in Croatia children attend Grade 5 at the age of 10.

Croatian citizens (48.4%) believe parents, preschool and primary school teachers are equally responsible for media education of children, which refutes the third hypothesis. However, a high percentage, namely 41.7% of the respondents, believe media education is primarily the responsibility of parents. Only 3.6% believe media education is the sole responsibility of teachers.

Although most international (as well as Croatian) studies reveal that children use the media from a very early age (Common Sense Media, 2013; Ofcom, 2014; Holloway, Green & Livingstone, 2013; Ilišin, Marinović Bobinac & Radin, 2001; Sindik & Veselinović, 2010; Sindik, 2012), research results show that most parents – as much as 69.2% of parents to children between the ages of 0 and 3 years – do not talk to their children about the content they see in the media! According to our results, 74.8% of parents of children aged 4-6 years spend time talking to their children about media content. The same is done by 75.3% of parents of children aged 7-10 years, 87.7% of parents of children aged 15 to 17, and 89.8% of parents of children aged 11 to 14.

Our research has shown that Croatian citizens, particularly those for whom media education is intended, are indeed highly interested in obtaining a media education.

At a turning point

Since our initial publication of partial results of the research and embarking upon intensive advocacy (numerous meetings with stakeholders, participation in public debates about education policies) and awareness-raising activities (publishing articles and reports in the media, as well as new scientific research), activities for strengthening the education system (holding expert forums, initiating new specialized study programs in this area, organizing scientific conferences), and the presentation of new volunteer programs for the empowerment of teachers, children and parents, Croatia finds itself nearing a turning point in the implementation of an entirely new media education paradigm.

The research we have presented has had a decisive influence on most of the activities planned and implemented in the past year, with the goal of promoting

media education and pressuring policymakers and other target audiences to take action. We used a model that we believe is applicable across the region in most countries accessing the EU. The model opens up new possibilities for engaging civil society organizations, which will be illustrated through examples of key activities of the Association for Communication and Media Culture (DKMK). However, several important stages preceded the creation of this model.

Uniting and active volunteering

Three years prior to conducting this research, we prompted a group of active students at the University of Zagreb's Faculty of Political Science Study of Journalism and the Centre for Croatian Studies Department of Communication to establish an association with the purpose of promoting media education throughout the entire education system of Croatia. This gave the students an opportunity and an institution through which they could create their own education programs, but in the process they needed to be supported with the help of special Training of Trainers (ToT) programs and additional pedagogical training. This type of collaboration with the youth was something new, although many associations and public institutions participate in media education programs to a lesser or greater extent (CINAZ, Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, Pragma, Croatian Film Association, Project Child Safety on the Internet *Safe FIVE for a safer Internet*, Partners in Learning, CSI, CARNet, Telecentar, Croatian Association of School Librarians...). However, when it comes to the number and mode of work of volunteers, the Association for Communication and Media Culture (DKMK) still boasts a unique approach to working with youth on media education programs, and exemplifies that which theorists claim is an important dimension of media users' participation in policy management and creation: the uniting of media users, as a fundamental condition (cf. Hasebrink, 2012).

Analysis and critical evaluation of the media

In 2012, in collaboration with the Office of the Ombudsman for Children and the Media Section of the Croatian Heritage Association, an anthology entitled *Djeca medija: od marginalizacije do senzacije* (Children of the Media: from Marginalization to Sensation) was published, edited and authored by DKMK members. This volume, providing the most comprehensive analysis of reporting about children in the Croatian daily press from 2010, includes an analysis 3,453 newspaper articles in seven Croatian dailies¹⁵. Such an undertaking on a voluntary basis has never before been conducted in Croatian science. Through active participation and steadfast work, students quickly and successfully mastered the second and third levels of the media literacy concept, analysis and critical evaluation (cf. Aufderheide, 1993; Livingstone et al., 2012), by learning how to analyze and evaluate media content through the application of scientific methodology¹⁶.

Creating new media

Following the successful implementation of the first two stages, we created the right conditions for the youth to launch their own medium. The non-commercial, volunteer website www.djecamedija.org was launched with the purpose of providing young people with an opportunity to express themselves in the media, and with time this portal has become a hub for obtaining information and learning about media education for other target audiences as well (teachers, associates, parents). As part of the project, 39 radio shows on media literacy were produced, and in 2013, thanks to successful cooperation with the town of Velika Gorica, the brochure *Dobrodošli u svijet interneta – Sigurni uz Djecu medija*¹⁷ (Welcome to the Internet World – Safe with Children of the Media) was completed and published, and has grown to become an indispensable text in efforts at informing and empowering children and parents on the dangers of cyberbullying.

Action

After being empowered with new knowledge and skills and after starting to express themselves in the media, the students, in close cooperation with their mentors and task leaders, began organizing workshops across Croatia for pupils at primary and secondary schools. To date there have been 270 workshops organized, for more than 3,600 participants. The project also includes workshops for parents and teachers, which are held by the students' mentors. Altogether, 70 volunteers participate in the project, and a majority of them have taken part in various conferences and round-table discussions organized in Croatia in the past two years¹⁸.

Raising awareness in the scientific community

In June 2012, in cooperation with the Media Section of the Croatian Heritage Association, the scientific symposium "Media and Children" was held, pooling together all Croatian researchers studying the relationship between the media and children. The symposium was attended by teachers, associates, and representatives of government agencies and other institutions. The Declaration on Media Culture¹⁹ was also adopted, as the first document in Croatia calling upon all stakeholders in Croatian society to become actively involved in the promotion of media literacy.

Cooperation with organizations as a prerequisite for conducting research

Apart from cooperating with organizations on the local level, djecamedija.org and DKMK also have a partnership with EAVI, which has led to the adaptation of the animated film *A Journey to Media Literacy* for use by the Croatian public, in great part thanks to the efforts of DKMK volunteers.

Nevertheless, cooperation with the marketing, media and public opinion research agency Ipsos Puls was the crucial factor that led to great progress. This agency conducted the previously described public opinion survey – a central part of this study – without charging a fee. We believe it is especially important for all countries to establish such cooperation with similar agencies, in all EU Member States.

Publicity

All activities conducted within the project must place great emphasis on visibility and perception on the part of key target groups. For 18 months, the authors of this study have published a weekly column on the topic of media education in the most influential educational weekly *Školske novine*, a central publication for teachers and their associates in Croatia. This activity was also based on volunteer work. As a result, *Školske novine* has helped raise media education awareness at primary and secondary schools.

Pressure

As a result of previously conducted activities, research, organizations' willingness to cooperate and the participation of our associate in the ANR TRANSLIT project, after two years we were able to establish cooperation with the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the key institution responsible for the implementation of education policies in Croatia. Ministry officials continue to uphold quality communication with association members, and have demonstrated complaisance and a willingness for cooperation²⁰.

In light of the aforementioned activities and the first public opinion research on media education, the DKMK, in collaboration with the Office of the Ombudsman for Children and the association Partners in Learning, ultimately initiated and on February 10, 2014 organized a thematic session in the Croatian Parliament about media literacy, entitled "Media literacy for the safety of children in the world of media and the Internet". The session was held by the Information, Informatization and Media Committee; the Education, Science and Culture Committee; and the Family, Youth and Sport Committee, with the presence of more than 120 participants and representatives of all target audiences, including children, young people and their teachers.

At the conclusion of the parliamentary discussion, recommendations were made by the organizer that also stressed the need for the "Republic of Croatia to adopt, implement and honor in full, as soon as possible, the key European recommendations and resolutions related to media literacy and to introduce media education and training programs (including programs on safe Internet use) at all levels of the education and training system, as well as in institutions

and civil society organizations conducting informal education” and for, *inter alia*, media literacy to be “given its place in public policies...”²¹.

Conclusion

Perhaps you have gotten the impression that Croatia has become an example for other countries in promoting media education and sensitizing the public. The example we have described fosters volunteerism, which proved to be the greatest asset and a guarantor of sustainability, as most other projects with short-term funding have difficulty remaining sustainable after their completion, whereas volunteerism offers lasting stability. However, we are also aware that volunteerism in itself is not enough.

Taking into account all these facts, we believe the DKMK, thanks to the Office of the Ombudsman for Children, succeeded in opening the way towards a stronger cooperation among all institutions concerning the need to introduce media education in schools and to raise critical awareness of the role and influence of the media in society as a whole – through initiating a parliamentary debate on media literacy and through other actions different from the actions, practices and experiences in other EU countries, as well as other countries in the vicinity of Croatia.

The eight-step model we have presented could come to be applicable beyond Croatia, particularly in neighboring countries with similar experiences and education practices. It is a model that encourages public debate on media education. Conducting research on media habits is an activity of decisive importance in the process of situation analysis, prior to the formulation new policies; however, to us it seems that it is absolutely essential to include the public in all levels of the discussion, as early as possible. This was also recognized by Hasebrink (2012), who writes: “Following participatory liberal theory, the role of civil society is to identify upcoming problems (Barber, 1984; Dahlgren, 2002) and introduce them into the political system” (Hasebrink, 2012, p. 65).

The example of Croatia also demonstrates that the public is highly proficient in articulating its interests, and that it sees media education as a priority. This has even greater relevance when the focus is on young people as a target group, which is why in the course of two years the Association for Communication and Media Culture volunteers set out to accomplish that which Croatian institutions had failed to do on their own. Furthermore, the Croatian example shows that “civil society actors are able to articulate latent or new risks to be dealt with by politics, regulators and media companies” (Heming, 2000, as cited in Hasebrink, 2012, p. 65).

But the most important outcome of our model was achieved in October 2014: the final version of the Strategy of Education, Science and Technology,

adopted by the Croatian Parliament, included media literacy as one of its objectives. However, in order for a significant advance to occur in media literacy in society, a strong and open cooperation between all institutions will be required, which will further encourage long-term research as one of the prerequisites for successful media education.

Notes

1. “Media and Information Literacy”, as the ultimate outcome of media education, is defined by UNESCO “as a set of competencies that empowers citizens to access, retrieve, understand, evaluate and use, to create as well as share information and media content in all formats, using various tools, in a critical, ethical and effective way, in order to participate and engage in personal, professional and societal activities” (UNESCO, 2013, p. 29).
2. Croatia became a member of the EU on July 1, 2013.
3. “Media education is the process of teaching and learning about media; media literacy is – the outcome – the knowledge and skills learners acquire” (Buckingham, 2012, p. 4).
4. Media literacy is “the ability to access the media, to understand and to critically evaluate different aspects of the media and media contents and to create communications in variety of contexts” (European Commission Recommendation 2009/625/EC, p. 10).
5. Department of Media and Communications, the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), Digital Agenda for Europe, a Europe 2020 Initiative.
6. “A European Research Project – Media Appropriation of New Media by Youth”, http://www.clemi.org/fichier/plug_download/14916/download_fichier_fr_mediapro_english.pdf
7. Independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries.
8. European Association for Viewers Interests.
9. European Media Literacy Education Study.
10. French National Research Project TRANSLIT.
11. Detailed information on the ANR TRANSLIT project: <http://ppemi.ens-cachan.fr/doku.php>
12. In most countries there are regular media consumption and credibility polls, but most of them do not include questions on media literacy and/or media education. In recent years the Flanders/Belgium Flemish Knowledge Centre for Media Literacy, Medijawijs.be, has introduced new monitoring instruments: Participation in Flanders; Media Literacy Field Monitor; Digime-tar; and Media literacy of children and youngsters related to consumption of news. A good example is Romania, where in 2008 Active Watch conducted a study on the “Evaluation of Media Literacy Level in Romania”: <http://www.activewatch.ro/Assets/Upload/files/Media%20Literacy%20in%20Romania%20MMA%20Research%20English%20Report.pdf>, March 27, 2014. Even in the most extensive reports aiming to assess media literacy levels, public opinion research is still marginal. A good example is the study “Testing and Refining Criteria to Assess Media Literacy Levels in Europe”, from April 2011, conducted by EAVI and DTI: (http://www.eavi.eu/joomla/images/stories/Publications/study_testing_and_refining_ml_levels_in_europe.pdf, March 27, 2014).
13. For more information about the Croatian education system, visit <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=2497>.
14. Children in Croatia start primary school at the age of six and secondary school at 14.
15. Since its publication, this text has become an integral part of required reading at several Croatian universities at the graduate and postgraduate levels. Based upon the research, the Ombudsman for Children presented recommendations in her regular annual address before the Croatian Parliament in 2011.
16. Although projects related to academic creativity have existed in Croatia for many years, there is no record of any other project that helps students objectively and reliably encode media content and explain media phenomena through the application of scientific methodology.
17. <http://www.djecamedija.org/brosurainternet.pdf>, April 10, 2014.

18. As a result of project activities, the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA) invited university professors representing the project to speak at expert conferences for the training of primary and secondary school teachers and professors.
19. More details about the Declaration: <http://www.djecamedija.org/?p=62>, April 3, 2014.
20. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (MSES) representative confirmed that there are numerous opportunities for collaboration, and that media education will be included as an area within Citizenship Education, but also as a priority area in the funding of community-based programs. The need for support in the field of fostering and developing inter-ministerial cooperation was also expressed, particularly with the Ministry of Culture, and the possibility was opened for organizing a special conference on media education by the MSES (personal correspondence, February 2014).
21. (http://www.dijete.hr/attachments/1808_PREPORUKE%20ZA%20TEMATSKU%20SJEDNICU.pdf; <http://www.sabor.hr/u-saboru-odrzana-tematska-sjednica-medijska-pismen>; <http://www.djecamedija.org/?p=4062>, April 3, 2014.

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Making Futures

The Politics of Media Education

Matteo Stocchetti

Futures in the making: crisis and education

What triggers concerns about the future, in general and in relation to media education in particular? And how should we think the role of media education in the future based on our concerns?

My starting point is that interest in the future is triggered by the problems of the present. In relation to the future of media education, a most relevant problem among these is *the relationship between the crisis of capitalism and the role of digital technology*. The crisis I refer to is the one Terry Eagleton describes in his book *Why Marx Was Right* (2011). According to Eagleton, the “reorganization” of the capitalist system towards the end of the 1970s was driven by the “sudden fade-out of the postwar boom”, by “intensified competition...forcing down rates of profit, drying up sources of investment and slowing the rate of growth” (Eagleton, 2011, p. 5).

This notion of crisis is interesting, as it establishes the grounds for arguing the relevance of media education in relation to a) its pedagogical dimension, or the formation of individuals rather than the transmission of knowledge and skills, b) the politics of education, or the competition for the control over a social activity of fundamental importance for the reproduction of society, and c) the role of media education in the disambiguation of the ideological indeterminacy of digital technology: the fact that this technology and its applications can serve both oppression and emancipation.

One implication of this indeterminacy is that although the possibility is remote that the digital “revolution” may bring about a real, political revolution, *this mere possibility alone is frightening enough to worry hegemonic actors*. Digital technology alone does not bring about revolution, defined as a subversion of social order, but only the possibility for this subversion to happen. It can foster participation and

sometimes even new forms of democracy. But it can also foster surveillance and repression. Mature capitalist societies are those in which the digital “revolution” has notably failed, so far, to bring about a radical redistribution of wealth, safety, prestige and other values. However, the fear of its revolutionary effects, with the anxiety and aggressiveness that accompany fear, persists among the influential elite in these societies and leads to at least two outcomes: first the reaffirmation of the moral functions of the market and, second, to a greater interest in the anti-revolutionary or repressive potential of digital technology. The “war on terror” and the rise of worldwide digital surveillance are presumably the most visible responses to this fear. Less visible, but not less influential, is the cultural recovery of the moral role of the “self-regulating market” to accommodate the needs of moral order and discipline worldwide within the terms of economic globalization waged as religious war (McKinley, 2007). The fear of the revolutionary or “radical” potential (Winston, 1986) of new technologies may be enough for those who can take advantage of the integrative force of the global market to construe diversity as a threat and to enforce the “free market” as a normative social technology: a system of conventions and rule to ensure that the market rewards those who know and comply with its “laws” and punishes those who do not.

To understand the role of (media) education in this crisis, the direction of change and why the hopes of some are the fear of others, one has to look at media education as a form of power/knowledge and conceive of possible futures in terms of the politics of (media) education. Concerns about the future have a different connotation depending on how we construe this role in relation to the forces that shape the future. Thus, media education can follow or lead: if it “follows”, then we need to understand who will “win” the politics of education and perhaps discuss how the values, practices, methods, meanings, traditions and all that constitutes media education will relate to the values, ambitions, strategies, etc., of the “winner”. If media education instead “leads”, then the concern is about the values, ambitions, strategies and all that will be needed for the pursuit of a desirable social order.

My exercise in future-telling is based on a simple idea: the future of media education is a function of ideas and power. Ideas are influential in shaping alternative visions. Power, or more precisely relations of power, will establish which one vision will be more likely to occur. As I shall argue, identifying the main ideas is far from simple, but is still easier than predicting the outcomes of political competition.

The crisis of capitalism, the intimate connection between the forces of globalization and digital technology, and the fundamental indeterminacy of digital technology, are some of the most important sources of inspiration for my discussion about the future of media education. One can argue that media education itself, as a distinctive domain of educational practice and research, has been born out of the hopes and fears associated with this crisis, this connection and this

indeterminacy. In my discussion about the future of media education, however, I suggest that relevant issues are located not at the educational but the pedagogical level. These are not so much those concerning the transfer of knowledge and skills, but rather those pertaining to the formation of personality, or the process which establishes in the individual the fundamental disposition towards the world and society that in later life will orient and motivate learning, the uses of knowledge, and other relevant capacities and resources. And my point here is that the politics of education in fact entails the competition for the control over the nature of this disposition: over the nature of the personalities that should inspire education in general and media education in particular.

At least in principle, the choice between competing ideas depends on moral choices rather than scientific truths. All the empirical evidence in the world regarding the exploitative nature of capitalism and the violence of economic globalization may not convince the rational stakeholders of international corporations to abandon their beliefs. More plausibly, this evidence will trigger fear and inspire defensive measures such as the (divine?) justification of profit, a belief in the fundamental aggressiveness of “human nature”, and the conviction that some people are better than others.

My point here is therefore that the future of media education depends on the competition for the control over its pedagogical foundations. This competition is political and, as such, is a matter of ideas and power, among other things. Within the limits of this chapter, I will leave issues of power aside to concentrate on the role of some of the ideas that I believe today are especially influential in the relevant discussions; more precisely, the idea that media education should be inspired by a) the “needs” of the market and, in particular, the “labour market”, in response to the “challenges” of global economic competition, b) the “needs” of a “future” ruled by a digital technology deprived of its truly revolutionary potential, and c) a certain idea of the Individual – with a capital “I” – that is ancient, fragmented, contested from “within”, challenged in postmodernism but still charming to many of us in education.

The “needs” of the global markets

The idea that the future of media education should be thought in relation to the “needs” of the global market is a tenet of Neoliberalism, and should not be confused with the older idea that education should also prepare a person for working life. The latter idea of education does not reduce the meaning of people’s life to the production/consumption process and, most importantly, does not give the market control over the content, meaning and practice of learning.

In its Neoliberal connotation, this idea reflects the capitalist belief that a social order based on the “self-regulating market” is a legitimate and even desirable one. The influence of this idea was greatly enhanced by the interpretation of the end

of the Cold War as a result of the intrinsic political and economic, if not moral, superiority of liberal capitalism over competing ideologies. In the discourse that promotes this idea, the market is construed as an independent or “sovereign” agent: one that is not influenced by or responsible to any higher authority, but is nevertheless endorsed with legitimate political authority.

If the idea that education should be driven by markets prevails, media education will have at least three salient traits. First, it will be mostly private or semi-private. During the last 20 years or so, the concentration of capital in the media industry and the formation of mega-corporations with enormous influence on educational systems have been coupled by the global standardization of educational assessment assisted by sanctions. This constitutes a powerful socio-economic media infrastructure committed to two main tasks: first to support the credibility of global capitalism in times of crisis and, second, to replace the values and ideals inspiring public education with those more compatible with the “needs” of the market. Media education will have to perform the political legitimization of the market. A regime of enhanced inequalities can survive only if supported by an extensive and pervasive ideological infrastructure of political propaganda and control. Compliance and the naturalization of inequalities will be fundamental pedagogical values cross-cutting a dualistic media education.

Second, the main pedagogical feature of this (mostly corporate) media education will be double pedagogical grounds for the elite, or “leaders”, and the people – something I like to call “pedagogical dualism”. Media education for the elite will construe media as a tool for establishing and preserving unequal relations of power through, e.g., surveillance, persuasive communication or simply profit while masses will be trained as media “workers”, “consumers” or “prosumers” – the notion used to describe the hybrid profile of the media users who make social media a profitable business. The “entrepreneur” will be the “hero” of this pedagogy and individuals like Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg etc. the models to follow.

Third, the subjugation of media education to the “needs” of the (global) market will deprive education of its dynamic role as an important source of change in society. Fundamental among these “needs” is flexibility and the effort to “liquefy”¹ societies and relations, to make them compatible with and dependent on the globalized process of production and the “needs” of the largest corporations within it. The idea that education should “follow” the labour market and try to keep up with the ephemeral “educational demand” of skilled labour is an ideological move that effectively neutralizes the role of education (and media education in particular) in the process of social change. If education follows then the market leads, and it is not hard to see how this will accelerate the proletarianization of professional educators, the decline of academic/intellectual freedom, and the tendency towards the standardization of the criteria for learning assessment.

The needs of the future

Another influential idea is that media education should be inspired by the “needs” of the future and its inhabitants: the alleged needs of the now younger generations in order to live in a future where the only certainty is that everything will continue to change at growing speed. This idea is a reflection of technological determinism, an influential element of modernism, and is promoted in our age by notions such as those of “digital natives” or “net generation” (Prensky, 2001; Tapscott, 1998; Tapscott, 2008), which have become influential in our everyday thinking despite their numerous critics (e.g. Bennet et al., 2008; Bennet, 2010; Hargittai, 2010; Hargittai & Hinnart, 2008; Helsper & Enyon, 2010; Jones et al., 2010; Kennedy et al., 2010; and Van Dijk, 2005).

To fulfil the needs of the future, education must be “freed” from the past and “open” to the revolutionary potential of digital technology. Digital technology makes the past obsolete and transforms the present into a prologue of the future, announced by the prophets of digital future in education. The main problem with this idea is that, depending on its interpretation, it is either trivial or manipulative. It is trivial if it suggests that education should prepare new generations to live in a world different from the one their parents or educators lived in. It is manipulative if, when and to the extent that the future is discursively constructed to control the present. Some of the manipulative elements in this idea relate to the notion of “change”, the role of technology and the representations of the future.

First, the notion of change is a tricky one: fundamental and yet conceptually underdeveloped. It is fundamental because it is so dramatic and radical to make even reflections on the past seem obsolete, and because it is constitutive of the educational distinctiveness of the “digital generation”: the community that allegedly incarnates the future and promotes its “needs”. But the notion of change is also underdeveloped. The world has changed, so the argument goes, and it has changed so much that most of the content and methods of education used in the past cannot apply to the education for the future. For all the importance of these “changes”, however, the promoters of this idea are scarcely inclined to question its source and nature: to question what has actually changed, how, why, in what direction, with what consequences, and so on.

Second, the idea that the future of media education should be inspired by the “needs” of a future ruled by the same forces that produce such a radical change contains elements of technological determinism which are far from progressive. Technological determinism construes technology and technological development as independent forces capable of bringing about changes that can be effectively addressed only through adaptation – and not, for example, through rejection or subversion. Digital technology is the implicit source of change, the “revolution” that is beyond control and even, seemingly, critical investigation. But it is also the crucial educational resource for effectively adapting to these “changes” and

successfully addressing the “needs”. The invitation to update the content and methods of education in response to unspecified but dramatic changes brought about by technological development, when the process of technological development itself is construed as an independent process, assumes the traits of an offer that “cannot be refused”. This “invitation” construes the role of technology as the independent variable of social change, hiding the politics of technological development, hiding the influence and interests of the social forces that support technological innovation and, in the specifics, the spread of digital technology. Most importantly, when discussing the future of media education, it promotes compliance with the “forces” of technological development as a fundamental pedagogical value to be enforced on teachers and students alike.

And who are these forces? Claiming that technology is the fundamental and independent force that shapes the future implies that the actors that control technological development control the future. If technology is construed as an agent, however, the claim itself hides the role of these actors, and the invitation to adapt the future of media education to their visions becomes a form of propaganda: a manipulative way to promote the visions, values and interests of certain political actors against those of others.

Third and finally, the uncritical notions of social change and technological development embedded in this idea raise important questions concerning the future – or, more precisely, the nature of the interests inspiring the reflection upon the future of media education. Interpreting technology as the maker of the future in a present, whereby everything is different from the past and everything is possible in the future, creates an atmosphere of urgency and resolves uncertainty with the kind of determinism associated with natural phenomena. In practice, it accepts technological development as a “natural” process and portrays the future as an extension of it. From this perspective the future can only be like the present, but more so.

Luckily for us, the question of what the “needs of the future” are will probably remain speculative just like the one concerning the sex of the angels because, as Terry Eagleton recently reminded us, the “future does not exist”. Forging images of it “is a kind of lie”, and:

Foretelling the future... it is a tactic for shielding ourselves from the open-ended nature of the present, with all its precariousness and unpredictability...you can also seek to monopolize the future as a way of dominating the present. (Eagleton, 2011, pp. 65-66)

Discussing the future based on a present that is completely disconnected from the past carries the risk of a rather shallow discussion.

A representation of the future based on corporate interpretations of technological determinism creates false educational needs to manipulate the future. It credits digital technology with a “revolutionary” potential to make the past

irrelevant, but then neglects the same potential when discussing the influence of the institutions of global capitalism, and capitalism itself, in the future. It postulates that “digital” generations are completely different from previous ones, but assumes that future “new generations” will be simply more “digital”, discounting the possibility of discontinuous change in their moral, ethical, political and ideological attitudes. It calls for a dramatic, anti-humanistic reform of schooling, but evokes a frightening future as something inevitable for which education should prepare rather than something it can contribute to avoiding.

The best slogan that comes to mind to describe the future of media education as inspired by an intellectual regime of technological determinism is “program or be programmed” (Rushkoff, 2010). Although I am relatively sure that the intentions of its author were emancipative, this slogan establishes the centrality of the “code” over other forms of knowledge. In this regime, the main goal of media education will be to provide individuals with the basic skills to participate in a social world created and maintained by the “code”.

Technological determinism, however, will not emancipate media education from the ideological constraints of the market. Rather, it will change the grounds on which the normative claim rests: from the market as a disciplining institution still rooted in meanings, to the “code” as an institution that is compelling because of its lack of meaning. The autonomy of the “code” from issues of meaning – the process that postmodernism recognizes as the emancipation of the sign – re-positions relations of power and the problem of social change in (conceptual) spaces beyond the reach of organized action (which requires shared, durable and reliable meanings) and therefore beyond the possibility of subversion or simply non-incremental change. This feature is what explains the popularity of technological determinism compared to global capitalism: it serves the latter nicely but in addition provides an order that, based on the absence of meaning, leaves no grounds for ideological criticism, i.e. criticism based on different hierarchies of meaningful values.

Finally, in the practices of media education, technological determinism supports administrative control and the managerialization of education – the relative shift in influence from educators to administrators – in the promotion of a pedagogy that prioritizes efficiency and compliance over interpretation and criticism. The decline of the humanities will accelerate. They will be perceived as not only unproductive, but even a bit heretic: a form of pedagogical upbringing that preaches the centrality of meaning and purpose in the social construction of reality is a fundamental challenge to the rule of the “code”.

A certain idea of the individual

The third idea I would like to discuss, from the liberal-democratic tradition, is that the future of media education should address the needs of the Individual.

Not just “individuals” construed responding to the needs of the market or compatible with the “code” reproducing a social order always identical to itself, but the Individual: the ideal – and in many respects culture-specific – representation of that unique educational outcome necessary for the existence of freedom and democracy. Despite its relative invisibility in the most visible debates about the future of media education, this idea still has an irresistible charm among educators. Considered in some of its core elements (e.g. the individual is not a tool but rather an end), this is a very old pedagogical idea that dates at least as far back as Socrates. I am not referring here to the intellectual tradition in philosophy that goes under the name of Individualism, although that tradition is important and surely influential to this idea. What I have in mind is a rather less systematic set of clues and impressions, views and attitudes, beliefs and inclinations which ultimately locate the Individual as the subject of an emancipative project. In this project, the individual and society participate in a symbiotic relationship in which each party acknowledges the other as a necessary condition in the experience of the social world: a form of relationship that today is commonly referred to as “dialogical” (see, e.g. Jovchelovitch, 2007).

I would like to mention at least three main features of this idea as they are discussed by some of the many authors who have contributed to its development in the modern era. These consist of a) the representation of the human being as an open project, b) the legitimization of education as fundamental for democracy and c) critical consciousness as the key pedagogical outcome.

The first feature is pleasantly described by John Stuart Mill in the following passage from his essay “On Liberty”:

Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the inward forces which make it a living thing (...) It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it, and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation. (Mill, 1948, pp. 72-76)

The second point, and the argument for the legitimization of education in relation to the “needs” of democratic regimes, was famously made by John Dewey. Perhaps less famously, but more importantly, Dewey (2008, p. 105) is explicit about the notion that democracy “is more than a form of government”, arguing that it is a form of living with others, a form of communication. In this point, as part of a deeper explanation of the linkage between education and democracy, the role of media education is fundamentally political.²

The argument for the Individual as a pedagogical inspiration for democratic ideals is presented in even more radical terms by Bertrand Russell, discussing the “dangers inherent in the ideal of citizenship if narrowly conceived” (Russell,

1932, p. 18). Also in democracies, and to the extent that education in Russell's time was "part of the struggle for power between religions, classes and nations... The pupil is not considered for his own sake, but as a recruit: the educational machine is not concerned with his welfare, but with ulterior political purposes" (ibid., p. 233). But the education inspired by the goal of creating "good" individuals is something quite different from the education that aims to form "good" citizens. Democratic citizenship, however, needs at least one important quality of the former: resistance to compliance without awareness of the terms of compromise. Ultimately, for Russell, democracy is better served by educating not "citizens" but individuals equipped with the capacity and will to resist conformity.

Finally, to my knowledge, the most explicit case in support of the pedagogical relevance of critical consciousness was made by Paulo Freire. Describing what he calls "critical transitive consciousness" he suggests that this notion includes intellectual skills and moral inclinations:

The critically transitive consciousness is characterized by depth in the interpretation of problems; by the substitution of causal principles for magical explanations; by the testing of one's "findings" and by openness to revision; by the attempt to avoid distortion when perceiving problems and to avoid preconceived notions when analysing them; by refusing to transfer responsibility; by rejecting passive positions; by soundness of argumentation; by the practice of dialogue rather than polemics; by receptivity to the new for reasons beyond mere novelty and by the good sense not to reject the old just because it is old – by accepting what is valid in both old and new. (Freire, 1989, p. 15)

If the idea that education should be driven by a certain idea of the Individual as an open-ended, emancipative pedagogical project is to survive the changes brought about by the influence of the first two ideas I discussed here, the main challenge for media education should be to protect, or "vaccinate", individuals and society from the risks associated with those ideas. I also believe that at least three steps are necessary to meet this challenge. First, and on normative grounds, emancipative media education should embrace egalitarianism and dialogicality as core pedagogical principles. Egalitarianism prescribes that every individual should be educated as a member of society with entitlements equal to those of anyone else, and that emancipative or critical media education should not be exclusive content for the elite. Dialogicality, from this perspective, is a pedagogical method aiming to develop "critical subjectivity" as the point of maturation of an evolutionary process in which the individual self is constructed in communication with society through "learning-within-relationship" (Heron, 1992; Heron & Reason, 1997; Yorks & Kasl, 2002).

Second, and in relation to technological development, an emancipative media education should be based on a critical and selective endorsement of technological innovation and recognize, for example, that the idea of a digital "revolution"

has ambivalent implications. These implications can be oppressive or emancipative, depending on which “social vision” or “discursive framework” (Ferneding, 2003, pp. 80-84) inspires the role of digital technology in education. The spread of digital technology has generated important challenges to the political systems of less developed or underdeveloped societies. In advanced societies, however, the digital turn has not subverted the social structure but has coincided with an acceleration in the concentration of political power and wealth in the hands of the (especially financial) elite and the deterioration of the political influence of lower classes. We can reject the rhetoric of “digital revolution” as propaganda, but we cannot deny the changes³.

The last step I want to mention is the most important one and is preliminary to the other two: as professional educators, we must first be the kind of individuals we would like our students to become. In a sense, this is more about being than about teaching: more about our qualities as individuals than about our professional qualifications. More technically, if one believes that a certain idea of Individual should be the core of our professional identity, this idea is something we need to “grow into” before it can effectively inspire our pedagogical work. Especially critical consciousness is a quality that professional educators should aim to achieve, as Freire suggests,

...not through an intellectual effort alone, but through praxis – through the authentic union of action and reflection. Such reflective action cannot be denied to the people. If it were, the people would be no more than activist pawns in the hands of a leadership that reserved for itself the right of decision making. (Freire, 1985, p. 87)

From this perspective, our concerns about the future of media education may well turn into opportunities for professional, intellectual and emotional growth since, after all, every crisis bears the promise of a new beginning.

Notes

1. To use the image of Zygmunt Bauman.
2. It may be worth noting that in *Democracy and Education* Dewey criticizes the pedagogies of both Rousseau and Plato, suggesting a pedagogy in which the individual is educated as a constitutive element of society: not a few leading the many (Plato) and not “natural” education (Rousseau), but education as a deliberate effort to create a society of equals.
3. From this perspective, the idea that media education should be inspired by the needs of the future is fine, as long as the future is left open and technology is critically “questioned”, as Karen Ferneding suggests, and not adopted as a “*technique*... reflecting the abdication of our responsibility” towards the social purposes of its uses (Ferneding, 2003, pp. 254-55).

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2. Practical Papers and Case Studies

Teaching a Journalism that Never Dies

A Learning Caravan in the Asian Borderlands

Li Xiguang

As I opened the yurt door, the sun was jumping out of the vast grassland of the Tuva Republic. In the morning sunshine, the Yenesei River was flowing peacefully at the foot of a snowcapped mountain. It was the first morning since we had arrived in Tuva. It had taken us two years to get a visa, seven hours of flight, and 12 hours on a bus.

“Get up, you lazy students,” I called as I knocked at every yurt door in the camp, before I walked to the bank of the Yenisei with my new Nikon. I didn’t want my students to miss this brilliant photo opportunity.

When I got back to the camp an hour later, all the yurts were still silent. I opened door of the boys’ yurt. The boys were lying in bed playing with their iPhones.

At this moment back in China, like my students, most people were reading WeChat or Weibo¹ in bed. When they wake up in the morning they have no time for the toilet, no time to brush their teeth, no time to take a shower, no time to put on their clothes. Rubbing their eyes, they turn on the mobile phone beside their pillow, and start their day by viewing Weibo or WeChat. The Chinese have changed the essential preoccupation of human nature from what Confucius described as “food and sex” to Internet chat. In an effort to be the first to be informed of the news as well as the first to post cursing words about the news, most Chinese lower their heads every four seconds. They lower their heads at least 200 times a day – while eating, riding the metro, driving their car, reading a book, having a meeting, listening to a lecture, giving a lecture, getting a massage, or having sex. “If my doctor told me I had only one minute to live, I would take a quick look at Weibo,” someone wrote in his Weibo.

Following in the footsteps of Facebook, Weibo and WeChat have arrogantly proclaimed “We have taken over the world”. To survive in this crazy media

world, it seems that journalists have no option but to attract the audience's eye by sensationalizing celebrities, sex, scandals, privacy and violence. Facing this media landscape in which the Chinese journalists are reporting, and the Chinese journalism educators are teaching, there has been increasing discussion about a "dying journalism". Critics are increasingly skeptical as to whether journalism can be part of deep learning and deep writing.

Over the past 15 years, I have taken over 500 learning and writing students on the nomadic roads or Buddhist pilgrim roads in the borderlands of Asia, where we roam for a week in a place that has no connection via the Internet or TV, and has not been deeply penetrated by the social media.

During the week-long workshop in the remote and isolated Asian borderland, I give the students hands-on coaching following the ancient Chinese art of journalistic writing, *ji* (record), a pure description and unbiased record containing no loaded language, no ideological labels, no hidden agenda. Before taking the students on the road, I ask them to read classic journalistic writings like the *Records of the Buddhist Kingdoms* by early fifth-century Buddhist traveler Faxian, and the *Records of the Western Region of Great Tang* by seventh-century Buddhist traveler Xuanzang. In these early journalism writings, students can learn the most essential element of *ji*, making valuable records for writing the final draft of history, instead of simply writing its first draft.

The writings of Faxian and Xuanzang are narrative road journals, minutely recording their travel experiences with a wealth of geographical and humanistic information. They described central and south Asia with their firsthand observations, full of unusual sights and lively details. When translated into modern Chinese or English, they are not dry and dull but are instead engaging and easy to read.

Different from modern journalism, which emphasizes being critical, suspicious, offensive and interfering, Faxian and Xuanzang advocate the universal human value of compassion. I always instruct my students that compassion should be at the heart of good journalism; journalism is not to inflict pain and destroy someone, but rather to destroy people's pain. Good journalism should always offer a shelter for anyone drifting on a bitter sea.

The following are some brief looks at some of our journeys as a learning caravan of media pedagogies on slow journalism.

Hands-on teaching and learning

Thirteen years ago, I led 20 freshmen in a writing seminar in a Tibetan area in western Sichuan province.

"Why didn't you get your story today?" I asked Qiu Tan, a student from Beijing. The assignment I had given her was to write about family planning among Tibetans. "I rode a tractor for a day to a mountainous village. I met people.

But I didn't get a chance to speak to the villagers. I've never talked to strangers before," she said, her ruby face growing redder.

Because of this exchange, I spent the whole evening using my 20 years of experience from traveling the world to instruct the students in how to approach and speak to strangers.

It was dark outside the next evening. We were anxiously waiting for Qiu Tan at the dinner table when she ran into the inn and announced loudly, "I have my story!" "In the beginning, the village chief was reluctant to answer any questions on the topic. But after some chat, he told me a secret: 'The condoms never worked with our women. They cooked and ate all of them, and they still got pregnant.'"

Most students traveling with the caravan are freshmen. They have been passively taught and have recited textbooks in their previous years of study. This was the first time many of them had experienced this kind of hands-on training. Travelling in the caravan seminar, the students work in groups of two or three. During the day, they walk around and talk to strangers in the borderlands. At night, when all the groups return to camp (a large yurt, coffee room or hotel room), the whole class gathers to report on interesting people or stories they discovered during the day. The teacher listens to their presentations as an observer and a facilitator, not judging, and only interrupting with guiding questions to help the students focus their stories, dig for more details, or develop more relevant topics or themes.

Traveling with students, the teacher's job is to stimulate their curiosity about everything they see and hear. The teacher is responsible for giving them constant guidance in keeping records of the meaningful pictures, people and quotes they have seen and heard.

The teacher must follow at least one group of students and listen when they interview someone. If a student asks an inappropriate question, the teacher should follow this up by asking the correct question and rectifying the student's mistake. Back at camp in the evening, the teacher is responsible for organizing and guiding a discussion. The teacher listens quietly to the students' presentations about their findings during the day. Before the end of the discussion, the teacher will help each student identify a story idea, which the student will further investigate the next day.

"Caravanserai of the mind"

The students boarded the train from Beijing to Lhasa with two banned reading materials in their backpacks: the book *Seven Years in Tibet* by Heinrich Harrer, and a statement by Richard Gere. In this statement, Gere, a popular Hollywood icon, says that the opening of the railway on the roof of the world is "the most serious threat by the Chinese yet to the survival of Tibet's unique religious, cultural and linguistic identity."²

Seven Years in Tibet is the personal history of Heinrich Harrer, a German prisoner of war who escaped from a British camp in India and made his way to Tibet during the Second World War. Miles Young, my co-teacher in the learning caravan, gave each student a copy of the book to provide stimulating reading and a common ground for discussion.

On the train, a student interviewed two young Dutch tourists who were reading *Lost Horizon*, a novel by English writer James Hilton inspired by Austrian-American explorer Joseph Rock's travel in the Yunnan and Tibetan borderlands. It is the story of a plane crash in Shangri-La, which is believed to be a remote place in the Himalayas, a kind of hideaway or paradise. "Why didn't China let Tibet be a free country?" the young Dutch traveler angrily asked the Chinese students. Obviously, the two tourists believed the Shangri-La myth about Tibet.

Some students were reading the serial adventure books by Swedish explorer Sven Hedin, whose adventure narratives about the veiled nature of Tibet popularized the notion of Shangri-La.

After two days' journey from Central China through Qinghai Gobi, the Tibetan grasslands, and snow and glacial mountains along the Beijing-Tibetan railway, we arrived at Lhasa. Having drunk warm butter tea and eaten Yak and mutton, the students began their first seminar in Tibet:

Miles: Can anyone tell me why I gave you that book, a rather odd book, to read? Why did I give you that book to read?

Student: The book provides us with a new perspective to see Tibet. All the information we get from the sources is from the positive side, and we don't know the negative side. So this book provides us with these things.

Miles: Another view? A different view?

Miles: Helen, is there something in the book that's odd in your view?

Student: I felt that the writer was flattering the nobles. He spent most of his time making friends with them, attending different parties. That's my conclusion.

Miles: There's something in this book which doesn't seem as simple as it appears. Why did I give you this book? I want to exercise your mind, because your mind is a muscle like the other muscles of your body.

After this exercise of mind, most students agreed that Richard Gere's criticism of the great Tibetan railway has nothing to do with environmental impact. It is the deeply-rooted cultural myth of Shangri-La in the West. Some Westerners' misunderstanding of Tibet does not come from their hostility toward China but rather from the Western need for a dream to sustain them in this era of globalization.

Passing through the Pamir Mountains

It was midnight when the plane started flying over the Pamir Mountains. I was reading a book about the Taliban in the quiet cabin. Suddenly, I saw the captain

lead students Sha Sha and Tian Jia to the plane's cockpit. Through the window, I saw the snow-capped Karakorum Mountains. A huge glacier canyon rose steeply into the sky, with ice cliffs standing like a wall. The two students were in the cockpit. My heart, or the plane, gave a shudder. Fifteen minutes later, the girls walked back into the cabin with big smiles on their faces. I asked Sha Sha as she walked by, "What were you doing in there?" "We sat in the pilot's seat," she said. "You weren't flying the plane over the big mountains, were you?" "The captain taught us how to fly a plane." This was the first time my learning caravan had come to Pakistan, but its people's warmth to us was overwhelming.

For thousands of years, Chinese Buddhist travelers trekked over the snowy mountain on their way to Buddhist schools in Taxila, while traders journeyed to Arabian seaports to ship their goods to western Asia and Africa. In order to make it easier for the travelers to pass the Pamir Mountains, China constructed the 1,300-kilometer Karakoram Highway in 1979, linking Kashgar in Xinjiang and Gilgit in Pakistan. The permanent residents of Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang can travel freely on the highway with a special pass, and there is daily bus service through the border area between Gilgit and Kashgar. Faxian and Xuanzang monks traveled this road during the Tang Dynasty.

Half an hour later our plane landed safely in Islamabad, and the next morning a bus carrying 30 Chinese students left Islamabad for Taxila in the northern mountains. Our guards, carrying rifles, rode in a pickup truck leading the way. The narrow, dusty road was bustling with colorfully painted trucks, tractors, horse carts, pickups and motorcycles. Two veiled, young Muslim women wearing black robes sat in the back seat of a Chinese-made motorized tricycle. Along the roadside, people were selling flowers and fish.

Taxila is at the crossroads between China and south and central Asia. To the west, across the Indus River, are Afghanistan and central Asia. Two thousand years ago, when Alexander the Great came here, Taxila was the center of the Gandhara Buddhist civilization; but today, this ancient city is on the verge of extinction due to the decade of war in Afghanistan.

It was raining when we arrived at Taxila. In the drizzle, I lit a candle and placed it on a small altar on the wall of Room 24. This room has been identified by Pakistani archaeologists as the place where Chinese Buddhist monk Xuanzang read, prayed and slept during his two-year study at Taxila in the seventh century. Xuanzang's journey to Taxila and south Asia has been featured in the popular Chinese classical novel *Pilgrim to the West*, written in the sixteenth century. The magnificent Buddhist temples and stupas in Taxila were recorded as *Xitian* (western paradise) in the novel. *Xitian Qujing*, seeking Buddhist sutras in the western paradise, is a common household phrase in China. But few of my students knew where Xitian was until they came to Taxila. Watching the lighted candle, 30 Chinese students knelt to pay homage to the earliest Chinese student to study abroad.

I led the students to a spacious hall, which had been the preaching room for Xuanzang and his schoolmates. Sitting around me on the stone floor, the students reflected on their reading of the *Records of the Western Region of Great Tang* by Xuanzang.

On the northern Asian borderlands

We flew Siberia Airlines from Beijing International Airport. The plane landed at a small airport of Krasnoyarsk, which Russian writer Anton Chekhov described as the most beautiful city in Siberia. The Yenisei River flows through the city. Sitting at the front row, I inhaled a cold wind when the plane door opened.

My students and I stood in long queues to pass Russian customs before walking out of the airport. We rode a broken-down bus on a bumpy asphalt road, and then turned off onto a flat road to Tuva. The highway passed through a dense forest of pine and birch trees, but when it drove over the Sayan mountains the lush birch and pine forest disappeared. We entered a landscape of vast steppe grasslands. Our bus then turned onto a bumpy trail. Before darkness fell, we saw camping yurts by the mighty Yenisei River.

Unlike Mongolians, the Tuvan do not hang a picture of Genghis Khan in their yurts. But like most northern Asian nomadic people, the Tuvans are Tibetan Buddhists, and hang pictures of Panchen Lama and Dalai Lama in their houses or yurts. Our Tuvan interpreter was offended when a student remarked that Tuvans spoke and dressed like Mongolians. “We’re not Mongols even though there are some Mongolian words in our vocabulary,” she said.

In the morning, we took a trip to the mountains. On a steep rocky hill known as Bear Mountain, on some rocks we saw figures of deer and of people riding horses; these were the earliest rock carvings ever found. In the evening when we were back at our yurts, we interviewed a Shaman master of Tuva. My grandmother always sought the assistance of a Shaman when a family member was ill.

After dinner in a big yurt, I moderated seminars of the Tuva caravan. I asked the students to follow this rule in their discussions and presentations: 1) every student talks for two minutes about what surprised or did not surprise him or her today, using an anecdote or a detail; 2) the next student is not allowed to repeat what previous students have said; 3) every student was required to write ten micro-blogs or make an 800-word diary entry before bed. Many students complained that they had found little to read about Tuva before this trip and that their knowledge about Tuva was too superficial to write anything more in-depth. Most of the available contemporary books about Tuva and the other inner lands of Asia are in English, and are not written by the local people.

But the big problem for the students was the local food. Despite the story I had told again and again about the monk Faxian’s courage in walking fearlessly in the Taklimakan Desert on his journey to India, most students complained

about the lack of meat in their bowls only two days after arriving at the yurt camp of Tuva.

Riding the Trans-Siberian railway

Among the hills covered with shrubs and thorns, 19-year-old Moscow University student Galina, in her bikini and with a big iron cooking pot on her back, was walking in the hot sun. She was leading a group of Chinese and Russian students in search of the place where legendary Chinese diplomat Su Wu used to herd sheep by Lake Baikal. After three hours of trekking in the bush, most of the Chinese students (particularly the boys) were completely worn out, while their Russian counterparts were valiantly marching forward like Mongolian warriors or Cossack soldiers.

It was the first time our caravan had gone to Lake Baikal and also the first time we were joined by Russian students. A week earlier, after a 69-hour train trip from Beijing, we had arrived at the Siberian city of Irkutsk, situated halfway between Moscow and Beijing and about 70 km west of Lake Baikal.

Despite difficult communications and a harsh climate, Irkutsk was a transit point from China to Europe for centuries. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, great quantities of Siberian furs were exported to China. Irkutsk has also been used for the exile of criminals and political prisoners since the nineteenth century. But the first political prisoner in Siberia was none other than Su Wu, 2,000 years ago.

After breakfast, co-teacher Miles Young led a seminar in the vacant dining car discussing “the Great Game”. The students were reading two books about the Great Game, *Tournament of Shadows: the Great Game and the race for empire in Central Asia* by American authors Karl Meyer and Shareen Brysac, and *The Great Game: on secret service in high Asia* by British author Peter Hopkirk, which was assigned reading for the students on the train.

The Great Game was a term for the clandestine struggle between the British Victorian Empire and the Russian Tsarist Empire for control over the heartland of Asia.

In 1906, Tsar Nicholas II sent Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim, a Russian secret agent, to China. Mannerheim disguised himself as an archaeological scholar, and using a Finnish passport travelled to China with French scholar Paul Pelliot. Mannerheim travelled extensively in China’s western provinces. On his way to Beijing he stopped at Mount Wutai, the sacred Buddhist mountain of Tibetan Buddhism, where he met the thirteenth Dalai Lama.

Waving the book by Peter Hopkirk in the air, Young wanted the students to express their views on Agvan Dorjiev, a Buriyat lama favored by Tsar Nicholas II:

“Dorjiev had a dream to make a mighty condition of Buddhism by political means, but his final wish was to make religion free from politics and realize the

ideal of creating a Buddhist world,” said student Li Mengxi in her critique of the book. “Dorjiev tried his best to prove that Russia was the mythical land of Shambhala to the north, such as the construction of the St. Petersburg Tibetan Temple.”

Miles bombarded the students with one question after another: Does Buddhism have to be Tantric? The danger of the attractiveness of Shambhala thinking, how can it be misleading? Compare the credulity with which Tsarist Russia greeted Dorjiev with that of Hollywood’s credulity for the fourteenth Dalai Lama today. Compare Dorjiev with Su Wu.

Student Qi Hanting looked at the issue from the perspective of current world politics: “The Great Game between Russia and Great Britain over Central Asia in the nineteenth century serves as a wake-up call to look at a new Great Game, pitting an aggressive America against newly emerged global power China and regional power Russia over the region from the former Soviet republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan to the most volatile borderlands stretching from Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan to Kashmir.”

The learning caravan never stops

Fifteen years have passed since I took students for the first writing caravan to Lop Nur in China’s western province of Xinjiang. The learning caravan has always been cited as the most helpful and knowledgeable journalism class when alumni have gathered many years after graduating from the university.

Over the past decade, books on media ethics have become rare finds in antique shops, and newsworthiness has destroyed the fundamentals of human nature; but my caravan of teaching a slow journalism will never die.

Notes

1. WeChat and Weibo are the most popular social media in China. Nearly one billion people connect each other through instant voice, photo, video and text messages through them.
2. Railroad to Perdition, Breaking News, The New York Times, 2006-07-1 [2014-02-12] http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/15/opinion/15gere.html_br

The Use of Social Networks Online

A Cause of Intergenerational Conflicts?

Maria Aparecida Campos Mamede-Neves
& Stella Maria Peixoto de Azevedo Pedrosa

In the late 1940s, mainly due to the drastic social changes occurred after World War II, Europe and the United States were the scenes of great cultural transformation, dramatically affecting family relationships. In Brazil it was no different. The Brazilian pattern of social conduct, always similar to the European way, for the same reason, suffered a great change in the habits of the urban classes, inspired by the American way of life, transforming the concept of family, revolutionizing mainly intergenerational relations. Radio, television, and (now in the 21st century) the Internet are regarded as the privileged vehicles that sustain these changes. It is claimed that digital social network is a factor that increase the intergenerational gap, more specifically between parents and children.

In relation to family patterns, different arrangements can be noted. We can find siblings related by blood but with only one parent in common; families built through second marriage, in which both members of the couple bring their own children from previous relationships as well as any so-called “independent productions”. Today, these families, as well as single parents, are able to support their children just as well as traditional families have in the past. It is from this tangle of wires that the functions of the family group emerge. All these considerations form the issue that gives relevance to this work.

Are children and parents tangled in the nets?

The generation that serves as the object of our investigation was born at the turn of the millennium, a very special moment in world globalization; somewhat ironically, these young people are called the “Me Me Me” generation.

Conceived in a digital, democratic age that is also witnessing the breakdown of the traditional family, it is common practice that specifically urban youth are

used to asking for and getting what they want. The urban youth of this generation have grown up in an environment with greater access to information and better facilities, afforded by the technological advances created only recently by previous generations. Therefore, it is normal for them to develop a greater intimacy with communication tools and become completely plugged in.

Actants, in the media fragmentation that occurs at high speed in multiplatform environments – not only computers – they use tablets, smartphones, gaming platforms, and so on.

Disregarding traditional rules about when and how to sleep, wake up or perform tasks, these young people can spend all night catching up on emails, checking Facebook, reading news and surfing on research websites. Their patterns are very different than those of their parents, and distant from the daily habits of their grandparents, which are based mostly on authority and hierarchy.

Thus, the youths are often considered distracted, superficial and even selfish, since very often their slogan is to be integrated and interacting all the time, acting as the owners of their lives as much as possible. As the nodes of the network are no longer fixed to a geographical point, young people can now move around while modifying the network itself as a whole. Their isolation in its horizontal access, with predominantly exchanges between peers of the same age, becomes an obstacle to intergenerational relationships.

However, the individualism attributed to these youths can also be seen from another point – i.e., not negative – if it is seen as a way for them to assert themselves as people, fighting for their rights. This serves as a counterpoint to the idea that there is a mass of society caused by globalization.

These young people's production of new codes in networks that are poorly understood by many parents, stresses the experiential gap between generations.

The research

The project named “The social media and the parent-child relationships” (Mamede-Neves, 2013) entailed research whose central issue was the forms of education among parents today, at a time when social media is posing great fascination for pre-teens and teens. This situation seems to place the possibilities of parents in their educational competencies between two extreme points of a familiar pattern: relational and symbolic.

The research instrument was built by the CREMIT team at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano (Italy), and was then translated, adapted and validated for use in Brazil. The questionnaire consisted of 31 questions covering the following topics:

- a) the profile of the youth and his/her family (who live with him/her at home, who are primarily responsible, etc.);

- b) general characteristics of use of the Internet and social networks;
- c) aspects of their daily interactions with family members (presence of family members in the social network, confidence and parental approval, closer to family, control and surveillance of the use of the Internet and computer); and
- d) aspects of their relationships with peers, teachers and other school actors (youth sociability and confidence in itself).

The research examined a purposive sample of 404 students, from the sixth grade in elementary school to the second year of high school (11-19 years old) attending eight schools (state and private, religious and secular) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, aiming at mapping their social network user profiles and their relationships with their families regarding this matter. In this group the gender division was balanced, with only slightly more females (56.9%).

Regarding the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), the most recent Census (from 2010) (IBGE, 2013) from Rio de Janeiro shows how the access to computers (with and without Internet), as well as cell phones, is regarded within the population, compared to the access enjoyed by the young people in our research.

It is possible to note some similarity between the data from the purposive sample and the results of the 2010 Census (IBGE, 2013). The report shows significant growth in the presence of technological information and communication in Brazilian households and people's use of them, particularly regarding items such as mobile phones, laptops and 3G modems. Also according to this report, the growth in the proportion of households with Internet access was the largest in the entire series, monitored since 2005. According IBGE, possession of equipment slipped by 10 % points, with 45% of households containing equipment in the most recent survey. Assuming that the IBGE contained all age groups, the young participants of our survey (10-22 years) indicate stronger access and use of new technologies than the population average. These data refer only to the use of new technologies, although today it has evidence that around 80% of adults in urban areas of Brazil have joined the use of mobile devices.

In social networks, many teenagers often use gimmicks such as fake profiles to introduce themselves. Why do they do this? Because these fake profiles represent masks of the self, a way to hide and, at the same time, a way to reveal what is hidden. This kind of representation can occur through an image that shocks (e.g., through a tragic image) or by showing part of one's body that is presented as a dismemberment, something that shocks through its extravagance or irreverence. Regarding the youths' representations of themselves in social networks, 54.7% remain a simple picture of the face and 11.4% show an image from their daily

life, which adds up to 66.1%. “Artistic” images are used by 8.9% of the youths, and 6.4% present a detail of themselves or use characters that represent them. These data indicate a strong link between personal profile and identity.

Here we emphasize the feeling of affiliation that young people at this stage of life often develop with their peers, first with companions of the same gender (isophilic situations) and, later throughout adolescence, also strengthening relations with peers of different genders (heterophilic situations) (Sullivan, 1968). In fact, studies in psychology led by Erickson, an author devoted to the study of youth identity, point out how crucial the experience of these two situations are for young people’s development in this period of life, to consolidate their identity and, consequently, their range of social groups (Erickson, 1972).

When asked about the relationship between their profile on social networks and their true identity, 45.8% answered that they were highly integrated. Only 16% answered that they were less integrated or that there was a complete split between them.

Neither we nor the youths’ parents expected this to be the result. Considering common practice regarding the social representations of today’s youth, we expected them to mostly be a representation of the youths themselves, a fake and iconic image of their taste, or simply a neutral image. But, somehow, this different result matches other data about their identity concerning the way they live their lives. These representations are also in line with what the youths say about their relationships with their parents, reflecting a balanced profile regarding family and social networks.

We also asked if the profile they posted on social networks described them as being part of a whole, with certain differences from other young people; or, on the contrary, if it hid parts of their lives, showing different ways of being that did not reflect their usual behavior. We verified that the group distributed in the range between “totally false” and “totally true” is not to be characterized as a pattern. Only the statement “Your profile allows you to show yourself positively” presented a significant concentration of 170 responses as being “totally true” (N=385), which aligns with the other answers concerning their profiles.

Another question concerned the degree of agreement with the person who they were, or the degree of coherence of the self. To examine this, we presented the youths with 12 statements that could be classified between “totally false” and “totally true”.

Once more, the group presents a balanced distribution in intermediate degrees between “true” and “false” in almost all statements, not constituting a pattern. However, there is a tendency in the group to consider totally false statements that present them as people with contradictory ideas about themselves, unaware of who they are, changing their “personality” according to the moment. Interesting to note is that 198 teenagers reject the possibility that others are better acquainted with them than they themselves are.

Another topic that offers a better idea of these young people's profiles was their knowledge of how their activities and feelings on a daily basis were. We also observed that an average of 215 young people presented a framework that did not entail negative feelings about their self. Thus, there was a concentration on one level.

We believe that this question may have been misunderstood, since depression can refer to either a symptomatology or, in a more everyday understanding, simply a way of describing that something is bothering us. Therefore, we excluded this particular finding.

Young people show a strong presence (over 80%) on social networks, and 48% use them daily. At the time of the research, the tablet had not yet reached the popularity it has very quickly gained in such a short time. A percentage of 75.3% of youths report having a cell phone with Internet access, which indicates the strong presence of equipment as a gateway to the network, especially for social networking online.

We also infer that the more or less intense participation in social networks has little effect on the sociability of young people at school.

When asked to describe in one word what social networking meant to them, the most frequent descriptions were *friends*, *Internet*, *photos*, *communication*, and *fun*. The young people's desire to talk, communicate, chat and share are all ramifications of the word *friends*, which has a different connotation than their parents idea of the word. It does not mean special people, those closer to you, but rather everyone with whom the young people have only one link within the social networks. This conceptual difference is very important in the configuration of intergenerational differences.

Young people and their family

As for the structure of the youths' families, it partially reflected the diversity of situations found today. We observed that in this group of youths the idea of family as the central unit of social organization remains, presenting different types and forms, assuming essential social functions for the existence of collective life.

For 57.4% of the young people, the structure of their families is conventional, with the father and mother living together. For 32.9% their parents live apart, and for 7.7% of them their parents were deceased. Much of the students come from a family with up to three children, with a total of 88.6% showing a structure composed of them and a sibling.

Therefore, the data collected in the survey in this regard (57.4%) are aligned with those from IBGE (54.9%). On the other hand, regarding the constitution of the family, 47.5% marked "home with two children", this is similar to data from the IBGE census, in which the average number of children for each woman is two.

Despite good relations with parents indicated by the data, 58.2% of adolescents also affirm that is the mother responsible for their education while 36% indicate the father. For both groups the father are the economical provider for the family which reflects yet the design of traditional family, what could be a contradiction with the group's profile.

As the other person who participates in the young people's formation, the trend is a slight dispersion to other family arrangements, for instance the new partner of the father or the mother, referred to as stepmother or stepfather. In these cases, the majority of the youths cite their actual parent as the one actually concerned with their education.

The level of the youths' approval (acceptance) of the parents participating the most in their education reached (81,9%) on a scale of 1 (minimum approval) to 5 (total approval); again, we found results similar to those in the last Brazilian census (2010). In the case of our research this is more significant, however, because it was an intentional sample of families from the urban center of Rio de Janeiro and was therefore more vulnerable to cultural changes.

Regarding data had presented a good harmony between the youths and their families, it couldn't be considered the reality, since we understand that in a primary group such as the family, it is expected that always there will be points of disagreement. But three of the propositions in the questionnaire, which contradicted the others, were also marked as true. These data were regarded as the youths expressing an evaluation of their real families, with their ups and downs, rather than idealized families. So, we consider that this item was aligned with the other data presented, which suggest a maturity in this group who feels no need to give bluff responses.

We examined the young people's position concerning their everyday relationships with their parents on a scale ranging from "I'm not able" to "I'm fully able". The items concerned dialogue with their parents, for instance their being confidants and understanding the youths' point of view, and the youths accepting their parents' recommendations and criticisms but on the other hand also feeling secure in expressing their reasons.

While the answers are distributed across all the points of the scale, there is a clear trend toward the young people considering themselves fully capable of having a good everyday relationship with their parents, regarding either their recommendations, the trust placed in them, or their criticism of any errors committed. In this survey group, the youths state that their parents listen to their views and consider their position.

Specifically regarding parental control of the youths' activities on the Internet and social networks, most of the data are distributed at the intermediate level. However, the answers are presented in a more accentuated way as they express information such as "parents never interfere" than "parents always interfere".

The perception of the parent domain – translated into ready-made conclusions about what the youths think and want – proved to be balanced, with a relationship of contact via cell phone, which also revealed the median response “neither too intense nor totally absent”.

Regarding the hours the young people spent on the Internet and their family’s position on this, a question was raised as to whether there was a correlation between hours on the Internet and proximity of contact with the family. We found a slight downward trend in a closer relationship with the parents, as the youths spent more time on the network, with a variance that can be considered low.

We also measured the amount of control exercised by these parents on the use of Internet, and observed a relationship between greater parental control and the youths spending fewer hours per day on the Internet. This data could represent the relationship between the control/care of parents and the time the youths spend on the network. In other words, the presence of parents had the most effect in controlling the time the youths spent using the data also revealed an inverse relationship between parental supervision on the use of the internet by young people. However, young people do not understand such monitoring as a constraint, but as a care by parents.

The data also highlighted the relationship between the harmony between the adolescent and his/her family and how the family is present in the control, monitoring and caring about what this young person is using the Internet for. This allows us to infer that the higher the degree of monitoring and control by responsible parties the higher the harmony within the family. The security offered by the family that sets limits and rules without being rigid strengthens the young people’s ego.

On the other hand, an urgent need for strict control over the use of social networking within the family may simply reflect the inverse degree of approximation and mutual interest in the parent-youth dyad.

Parents demonstrated average level of control over both the Internet use and the everyday life of their children, a compromise between absolute control and carelessness. The empirical analysis showed that the young people studied are satisfactorily integrating social networking into their daily lives and family relationships, with few cases of exaggerated Internet use or excessive parental control over the use.

The results also suggest an unexpected relationship, between a greater control/surveillance by parents and a greater family harmony along with the youths’ participation in family activities. This re-signifies the binomial control/surveillance as “extra care, concern and monitoring from parents” and not necessarily repression.

Some conclusions

The discussion in this study regarding the importance of the family's role in young people's social networking leads us to some conclusions.

Overall, the survey showed young people with significant autonomy and criticism regarding social networks. In fact, social networks and the Internet are being integrated into their daily lives; although there are indeed some cases in which there is excessive use, interfering with school activities and sleep, indicating a certain disharmony in use. Young people do not feel guilty about this, however. Therefore, let this serve as a warning regarding the normalization of certain habits that are not always healthy.

The survey found that parents do not fail to participate in the daily life of their children, but do so more through the cell phone. The technical ability to use digital applications and instant messaging still seem to be the main obstacle for these parents; thus, the cell phone offers itself as an easier and more available technology.

From the young people's point of view, parents did not exhibit oppressive control and surveillance; contrary to expectations, greater control/parental supervision was directly related to greater harmony within the family. Parental control was seen by the young people as a form of care and attention that generated effects. For example, we found a correlation between this control and a reduced number of hours spent on the Internet by the young people.

We also noticed that family control contributed more to the dialogue than did effective control over the computer, which could reflect the parents' unfamiliarity with technology, thus implying an intergenerational gap. But it could also be a consequence of the maturity of these parents to understand that, in relation to caring for their children, the best method is frank and straight talk. This family action, in greater contact with the young people, is thus a form of education for the use of online networks.

The research also revealed that social networking sites can become escape environments, if young people's relationship with their family is not good or if they feel insecure about themselves. In this case, being more competent in online spaces could be a way to compensate for this difficulty.

Finally, we acknowledge that the data discussed here are not conclusive, since the research had a qualitative design. However, without a shadow of a doubt, this research raises the issue of how much education needs to be aware of intra-family affective aspects, and also to better understand youths' actions in the areas of online socialization. We believe that when it comes to intergenerational conflict, within a very short time social networks will cease to be regarded as villains.

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Teen Prosumers

Possible Mission on the Web

Daniela Cinque & Claudia D'Antoni

From the analysis of some of the journalistic and scientific literature on the subject, we notice that young adults have predominantly been described as a generation detached from their identity and somehow indefinite (Coupland, 1991; Kotler, Keller 2007), characterized more by their “absence” of future, certainties, trust and values (Blask, 1996; Lodoli, 2002; Delzio, 2007; Galimberti, 2007) than by a “presence” of ability, competence, creativeness, production, and construction (Palfrey, Gassner, 2009; Tapscott, 2009; Jenkins, 2009). The media contribute to strengthening this image through a dramatic presentation of events: consider the excess of crime news, or the recurrent aggravation at such phenomena as cyber bullying or Internet dependence. At the same time, the analysis of the juvenile symbolic horizon introduces a scenery of meaningful communicative and social practices, an autonomous and public cultural representation and production (blogs, Tumblr, social networks) that confirms Buckingham’s (2003) intuition about the centrality of the *production* within the educational media perspective. On closer inspection, it is possible to find proactive and creative practices on the web, through which young adults and particularly teenagers are trying to express their daily lives and their perceptions of reality.

The objective of the current inquiry is to focus attention on these teen *prosumers*, particularly some forms of identity construction and cultural self-production on the web, and in the meantime bring into focus the role of the web in arousing or eroding the teens’ social capital. The objective is to contribute to the debate on the demand for “how to give voice to young adults, to their experiences, opinions, how to observe their media involvement, how they modify their consumptions, turning it into productivity” (Morcellini, 2006, p.11).

So the question underlying the present topic is: What are the teen cultural productions on the Internet? In other words, what are the dynamics of sense through

which users produce, tell about and share their experience? What are the values of reference and pillars of knowledge at their disposal in the web environment?

Method

With a conceptual approach, it is possible to connect these questions to the general hypothesis, according to which the web environment is perceived by teenagers as a space of continuity with the offline dimension (Zhao, Grasmuck & Martin, 2008); this answers their need for self-presentation and narration, melded with the layout of a collective storytelling that in the meantime vouches for their sense of belonging.

At this point, we believe that self-presentation is a good starting point for delineating the identity and productive behaviors of Italian teens on the web for at least two reasons: firstly, it has been individualized as a conclusive element of the communicative interaction on social networks, particularly Facebook (Boccia, Artieri & Gemini, 2004). Therefore, it is possible to extend such a meaningful role to other web environments. We also believe that deepening the self-presentation theme from the teens' point of view as consumers of a niche constitutes a useful database for the construction of a greater and more representative sample of the young population.

Regarding the effectiveness of this approach we have chosen to hold a pilot survey, focusing our attention on the following expressive environments: blogs, Tumblr, web radio, and fan fiction.

Referring to these four environments, we have chosen to conduct qualitative analysis on the case studies that seem to be more productive on the web, based on the following selection criteria:

- 1) creator's self-presentation and identity
- 2) conversations and interactions
- 3) recurring themes
- 4) virtual semantic communities as participative prostheses

This being a pilot survey, we have chosen a representative sample from a well-considered database. Five blogs, two Tumblr profiles, two web radio stations and one TV fan fiction forum have been selected, as we believe they are closely connected to our object of study in terms of productivity. We have also begun reflecting on TV fan fiction forum.

In the first phase of our survey, we deeply analyzed the contents of some of the selected blogs and Tumblr profiles, and noticed possible points of contact between productions and activities carried out in the online environment used by the prosumers. In this phase, we have started analyzing the contents of the web radio stations selected. A third phase will be devoted to fan fiction.

Results

The four specified environments comprise forms of traceable and enjoyable online self-production, in which young people invest the following media educational competencies:

- *writing*: for the creation, publication and reproduction of content (blogs, Tumblr), including creative content (fan fiction), through the use of digital languages;
- *critical thought and conscious fruition*: by favoring the ability to read and create multimedia products (web radio) and crossmedia products (fan fiction) on the Internet.

The fan fiction in this phase is introduced as a hybrid form, as it connects writing and video production (e.g. trailers) without neglecting reading (of both the written and digital text).

Within this general picture, some further comments on the method are in order when it comes to microblogging environments: in most cases they have a “short life”, and the exercise of writing ends at the exact same moment that the user declares he or she is finally free from a difficult past and is ready to embrace a new present. Will this be a chance? Regarding such intentions, it is important to specify that the concept of brevity, as an interpretation category, reflects an adult-centered point of view, which is the point of view here as well. In fact, on closer inspection, two months of life for a teenager are infinitely long and dense in meanings, experiences, and feelings.

Blogs and Tumblr order the content of their profile pages according to an inverse chronology, so that the most recently published post is the first to be shown on the timeline. Therefore, in order to get an idea of the blogger’s productive activity and understand his or her personality online, it is necessary to go back in the timeline and pick up traces that are different, either in their nature (comments, photos, images, links to other digital content) or due to a blending of several users’ materials.

In the analysis of these two forms of microblogging, in some cases the originality and peculiarity of some columns were surprising: “Urban Dictionary”, for instance, has the purpose of explaining terms used by teens that would otherwise remain unknown to adults. Regarding this aim, we observed that on the one hand the blog authors they cite a legitimate demand to create a proper language, communicative flow and identification through slang; on the other hand there is also, in this case, the urgency to be listened to and understood. “Lexical Wardrobe” instead invites readers to enrich their cultural, lexical “wardrobe”, by publishing and sharing “new colorful and light words”, accompanied by two or three lines of comment and perhaps a photo.

It is clear that such forms of online diaries take shape through a cultural self-production on the web. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that within these environments arises a further form of active and creative production. In some cases, in fact, we observe a periodic publication of episodes of a “spy story” entirely conceived and realized by users. This is a way to test one’s abilities and knowledge, to venture into hybrid forms of production, mixing the textual storytelling components with the audiovisual, interactive ones.

Interactions on relevant themes are not lacking – e.g. political matters, the debate on new technologies, the smoking problem among teenagers¹, and observations on love affairs and difficulties². Such reflections are often made explicit and synthesized through self-produced sentences or borrowed from the web together with images, a particularly valorized element in Tumblr that contributes to its success.

In other passages on the blogs and Tumblr pages selected, teens’ fashions and habits are described as conformity. They talk about the elements and attitudes that make them feel “out of place” and “outside the group”, versus the vital necessity to adhere to a certain standard to receive social recognition and have, in fact, an identity. The online writing becomes a virtual cathartic method. Accordingly, the web becomes the only possible area to exhibit one’s own anxieties, trace oscillating emotions between victory and defeat, and express forms of solidarity bound by one’s affiliations with online niches.

Some profiles, then, stand out as environments of exploitation of personal capitalism, based on young people’s ability to undertake and share their projects (Bonomi & Rullani, 2005) and a desire not to be alone. F and E, two teenagers whose precise age is not apparent, define themselves in their initial blog presentation as “administrators”: a “refinement” that in our opinion stands in relief to the intervention of the two young users in the semantic co-construction of sense on the web (Cortoni, 2013) that sometimes seems to have the intent of going beyond the confinements of an immediate reference context. On the blog they sometimes show excerpts from poems that hold special meaning for them, both in English and in German.

These two bloggers estimate that they have had 618 readers in total, with 20 from the United States and six from Germany (from April to November 2013). The homepage declares their intent to use this tool as an environment not only for storytelling but also for comparison, opinion sharing, and criticism, for which an email address is provided.

We therefore note a declared availability to both risk in the production and critical review of thinking as well as a typically adolescent form of collective solidarity: in this case, expressed in the management of the intergenerational conflict and in the sharing of the interiorization of behavioral rules “from” and “within” the adult world, with which they also make attempts at conciliation and mediation³.

Our sample's microblogging spaces are an evident expression of "inside"-world storytelling, a world in which we are immediately included in only seven minutes after the first "Hi" in the initial post, a world that alternates between activity and stasis, autonomy and dependence, and expressions of great joy and deep disappointment. It is a world where everyone does not always show their best side, because they fail to be open since they are afraid to face the part of themselves that is difficult to face⁴.

The First Radio of a Teenager and *Imaginary Radio* are the two case studies whose contents are still in the analysis phase. Beyond the dimension of entertainment, of the musical listening and personal involvement, these two environments strike elevated levels of interaction, construction and sense of community that appeal to their consumers.

In the first case the themes of some episodes are decided by the consumers, and the web radio is realized entirely at an amateur level by a teenager broadcasting almost all afternoons from her bedroom. The high degree of interactivity is sustained by the blog, together with a Twitter account, which becomes a space for the comparison and critical analysis of content. M interacts with the public on Twitter almost in answer to the need for collective recognition and "on-air" gratification.

One often has the impression that tweeting corresponds more to the need to express oneself publicly, drawing out the user's inner life by remaining virtually anonymous, being listened to by someone and listening through a different voice to what is communicated. M, in fact, does not offer decisive suggestions, as would appear to be more natural at a young age in a peer-to-peer relationship. M often limits interactions to reassuring, showing empathy with the consumer in an attempt to always give a smile and never a judgment: what the user and audience reciprocally look for are listening, empathy, complicity, social recognition, and companionship.

The second case study, currently in the analysis phase, is *Imaginary Radio*, also an interesting experiment of social capital in cooperation aimed at achieving a common objective. This web radio station is a more structured organization than the previous case. It has been conceived as an antenna, ready "to receive and broadcast signals from the world that will come." The main character is a digitally careful generation that exists online and in the world, communicating through words, music, blogs and social media.

At the microphone and acting as editors are youth who define themselves as "imaginary people" and "imaginary messengers" from all over Italy who answered the call through a Facebook profile (although the invitation to collaborate is always open). Also, in this case every episode is entirely realized by them with no intervention by adults. Topics range from music to cinema, books, and current events, including the whole daily universe of today's teenager; fast in using technologies and, at the same time, dealing with thousands of questions about the world that surrounds them⁵.

Each week, the scheduled content production becomes a real, open laboratory for experimentation and study. Further, exploiting the potential of social media, *Imaginary Radio* is beginning to re-broadcast its content over the entire Italian territory, and to make the broadcast available to the teen audience in constant search of curiosities and novelty.

Besides the ordinary planning, *Imaginary Radio* has realized a number of special programs and has been recognized at the last three editions of the Sanremo Songs Festival. They participated in the concert for the Emilia Romagna Region earthquake victims and the concert in memory of Lucio Dalla on March 4 2013 in Bologna, and in May 2012 were a media partner with Radio1 for the European Festival of “Allegromosso” music schools. Since 2011, they have also collaborated with Gr1 Ragazzi (on Radio Rai 1).

Conclusion

From what we know thus far, we can see that the serious attempt to study and understand the juvenile world requires us to abandon generalizations, stereotypes and adult-centered points of view. Regarding this intention, Margherita F., a young storyteller, writes:

Besides, I read articles sprung from the pen of esteemed anthropologists. They were all majestically related to the juvenile uneasiness, and periodically appeared in a great deal of magazines. They spoke of scarce motivation, incapable parents, a total lack of values, a refolding of the society on itself, and a search for an imaginary buzz. As I was saying, I read them through, one after the other, and then I reflected on this. There were myriad questions that came to me:

- Am I fit to live?
- Why do they say I'm a drug addict covered with piercings?
- Why do people waste their time putting ugly ideas in my mother's head?
And so on.

A second consideration that matured in these first phases of analysis is connected to the emergence of a second necessity: the recovery of the role of cultural mediation by adults. Margherita F. again writes:

When I experienced the role of a useless and maladjusted 13-year-old girl, if someone had helped me notice that I was ruining my life, I probably wouldn't have spent my precious time conversing with a corpse [she refers to Kurt Cobain]. I needed a human being who pointed me a different direction, far from suicide, but up to the end of my fifteenth year I had to manage it. I admit that it was not easy.

In conclusion, this first level of survey shows a vivacious community in which media too seem to assume a reflexive value. The analyzed cases not only show

a discreet attention to the content statements, but also to the form.

Based on the evidence so far, we believe it is important to analyze these statements using a wider selection of people, including more in-depth interviews. It would also be interesting to verify, for instance in the case of microblogging entertainment, whether bloggers ever return to reread their own posts and profiles after a certain period of time: what remains, and what value does this give to the previous posts?

It may be possible to answer such questions through future studies with a wider scope.

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Notes

1. "Suspended between the world of infancy and adulthood, teens often experiment with cigarettes as a symbol and anticipation of an adult age. Smoking is an easy way to affirm themselves, to show off to themselves, to the group, to the grown up's world that they are no longer children".
2. "Writing about someone is the only way to wait for him without doing something evil".
3. "As all we know, in the adolescent age it very often happens that you quarrel with your parents (it also happens to me). Well, here's what normally happens:
First of all a girl might like, for example, a shirt that her mother doesn't like, because it's too tight; it may happen that the girl argues and wants to go home; with her mother she can never do or say anything. They go home, and the girl races to her bedroom and gets on the Internet; her mother comes and yells at her to tidy up her room, or to do her homework. So her daughter obeys her, despite being bored, and there's a wall dividing her from her mother.
Here then are some suggestions to keep calm:
– take a deep breath and count to 5 or 10;
– tell your mother that "you would like" that thing, or that you can do what she's asking as soon as you've finished the other thing;
– obey ;)
– And if you're still upset, close yourself in your bedroom and use as many bad words as possible. This relieves you;
– If you've found peace and you've quarreled with your mother, go and apologize to her.
This advice will be useful in most cases ;)
Warm regards from F."
4. "It helps to imagine you're the most beautiful flower, a rose maybe. With thorns to protect you and petals to embellish you. A red rose. It's sometimes happened, however, that you were just a simple daisy. Yellow was the sun resplendent inside you, white the ghost that concealed you. I accepted myself, but the others didn't. I was 'less beautiful.' Correct. Appearances deceive. So red a rose as the blood pouring out of your fingertips. So yellow a daisy as the line rising on your face. But who knows if one day, can't I, a yellow lawn daisy, become a white garden rose?"
5. An episode about wall writers: "At times they're much more artistic than real artists. They have nothing to do with artistic works. In Bologna they're thinking about giving the jail to those

people. Of course, they should respect some kinds of rules. They shouldn't write on ancient buildings, but jail is unfair. They could ask them to embellish spaces by giving them only some indications. What do you think?"

An episode devoted to violence against women: "The boys of this generation don't look at the emotions of a woman. Stupid! We can keep on talking about it. That's the only thing we can do. Here we are. We're always here for you. *Imaginary Radio* is here for you."

Media Literacy and Identity of Adolescent Students in Media Fiction

María José Díaz-Aguado, Laia Falcón,
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This pilot study was carried out at a secondary school in Madrid, a private center financially supported by the local public administration. The 19 adolescents who participated were in fourth grade (the last year of compulsory school); aged 15 to 16; ten girls and nine boys; eight from the majority Spanish group and 11 foreigners, from minority ethnic and cultural groups. Their families gave informed consent.

Why is media literacy needed? Over the last two decades, psychological studies on adolescence have underlined the need to correct the negative description usually applied to this age, deeply influenced by certain stories spread by media: it is a time of challenges, opportunities and great changes, when teenagers have to find their place in the world by obtaining information, comparing alternatives and making decisions that will affect their whole lives (Hamburg & Hamburg, 2004). As proposed by UNESCO (2011), media literacy is a priority aim of education, required to exercise our rights in an information society as it provides citizens with the skills necessary to find, evaluate, use, and create communication so that they can achieve their goals in all life's areas.

It is principally through our own narratives that we introduce ourselves to the world, and it is through a culture's narrative that it provides models of identity to its members (Bruner, 1996). Thus, one of the main aims of education is to help build stories that will improve culture and allow each individual to find his or her own place in the world, changing it for the better.

What are teenagers like? What role does the school play in their development? Are there common characteristics among teens from different times? Why do adults – especially those who work with adolescents – tend to perceive them as if they were more irresponsible, selfish and immature than they actually are? The social definition of adolescence depends on how we answer these questions,

having a decisive influence on people going through this important stage of life, on those responsible for educating them, and also on the images and meanings that build up our culture and its generational transmission.

There are two main kinds of competences that ensure the contribution of education to media literacy:

- 1) *Reception competences*: analyzing meanings, codes and resources, so that young audiences can reach a deep understanding of audiovisual stories by analyzing narrative sequences and detecting coherences and contradictions in order to develop a receivers' critical capability.
- 2) *Creation competences*: thinking and producing audiovisual messages, with special emphasis on stories about personal identity.

The school programs we have developed (Díaz-Aguado, 2004) include activities that allow teenagers to play both these roles. The elaboration through cooperative learning teams working on a shared project (e.g. a campaign against racism, violence or substance abuse) can later be remembered, analyzed and used as a pattern of identification. This would stimulate the acquisition of both the meta-cognitive skills necessary when using media literacy, and the values to transmit. Although new media have increased their influence among teenagers, television still plays a major role. They usually watch it alone in their own rooms, without the company of adults (Eggermont, 2006), searching for references that will help them in the construction of their identity. Presumably, this is the reason why teenagers prefer narratives in which the main characters are adolescents (Harwood, 1997) who rebel against authority and deal with contemporary and controversial issues. Consequently, these narratives become a regular part of conversations with their peers (Thornham & Purvis, 2005). This can help us understand the outstanding success among adolescent targets of certain *teen series* broadcast over the past few years in many countries, for example in Spain since 2007 (Funes, 2008).

An analysis conducted in the US on the highest rated TV series shows that its plots focus on sexuality (70%) from a temporal perspective, overfocused on a hedonistic and fatalistic present (with only 10% referring to responsibilities and possible consequences), an approach associated with an increase in sexual activity in adolescence at an earlier age (Rivadeneira & Lebowitz, 2008). Studies carried out on one of the most popular Spanish TV series, *Al salir de clase*,¹ have shown that it portrays a stereotyped image of adolescents – mixing contradictory values and problems, and suggesting emotional instability, rebellion, lack of discipline, selfishness, materialism, and an exaggerated tendency to be involved in risk situations (sects, substance abuse, rape, accidental pregnancy, etc.) – that is used as a magnet to attract certain audiences (Montero, 2005).

Our proposal is intended to provide an updated and viable model of media literacy by focusing on one of the most difficult issues presented in previous

programs (Díaz-Aguado, 2004, Núñez, 2014) – the construction of adolescent identity regarding school – in order to enable the development of skills that may help adolescents:

- 1) understand that audiovisual fiction follows economic, narrative and media factors that may affect its representations;
- 2) learn to critically analyze media representations;
- 3) apply the skills described above to evaluate teenage student characters delivered by the different types of audiovisual narratives;
- 4) be aware of the possible influence such representations may exercise on the construction of the teenage identity, taking into account the characteristics that match what we want to develop (e.g., the ability to fight for the future they want) and those that may constitute an obstacle (e.g., defeatism regarding the future);
- 5) apply the previous aims to the inner storytelling of their self-identities by integrating the role that school plays in their future.

In order to increase its effectiveness, this proposal should be included in comprehensive educational value programs (Díaz-Aguado, 2004).

Method of the pilot study

Selected stories

Following the mentioned aims, the specific narratives were chosen according to three main criteria. The plots should:

- 1) underline the search for teenage identity within the academic context;
- 2) share a common period and context of production;
- 3) contrast in narrative genres.

Based on these criteria, and after a significant previous examination of their characters and treatments, three stories were chosen: all of them focusing on students 16 to 18 years old and framed within an academic year, produced in Europe (as an expression of a cultural heritage participants claimed as their own), and broadcast between 2007 and 2010. The selected TV drama series sample was *Física o Química*², highly popular among Spanish, French and American young audiences. The selected season, premiering in 2010 as part of the TV series created by Carlos Montero, uses the school as an excuse to mix teen characters with certain treatments, techniques and conflicts of adults' intrigue and drama. The second sample was *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (film directed by David Yates, premiering in the UK in 2007), the fifth episode of the film version of the literary saga by J. K. Rowling, considered a major success and remark-

able for its educational values: a significant case of the increase in fiction sagas that use the lives and development of adolescents as their metaphorical core. For the third sample, we chose the alternative production *Entre les murs*³ (film directed by Laurent Cantet, premiering in France in 2008), especially focused on the reality of education.

The comparative research on these stories (Falcón & Díaz-Aguado, 2014) suggested a possibility to explore them in class regarding the following questions: What are their main characters like? What are their main motivations and concerns? What changes entail their plots? Is the school context – in which the narrative is set – of any importance?

Participants and context

All the students showed great interest not only in the work of the audiovisual skills but also on the responsibility for making something that could help improve the education of adolescents.

The study took place at the end of the school year, after a previous program (16 sessions) in which the adolescents had worked on equality, human rights, tolerance, bullying, violence, drugs and new technologies. Each cooperative team (containing 4 or 5 members) presented an audiovisual summary of the program, with proposals for the prevention of violence and drug addiction. These audiovisual productions were presented to a live audience and within a highly motivating context. Six weeks after these presentations, the following activities were conducted by the students and recorded on video for later analysis and use in teacher training, with the help of a professional team.

Proposal

Activation of previous schemes

The teacher informed the students that they would work as if they were media professionals, creating stories about teenage students and keeping in mind the influence such narratives could have on younger audiences. At this point, the teacher asked the following questions:

- What TV shows have you seen that include teenage as main characters? Have you seen *Física o Química*? What is it about?
- Have you ever seen a *Harry Potter* film? What is it about?
- Have you seen *Entre les murs*? What is it about?

The answers to these questions allowed us to judge the group, regarding the narratives they would have to work with. The only answer to the question “What is it about?” was “teenagers’ lives”, revealing the necessity to teach them how to distinguish certain codes used in the setup of the characters. Additionally, they

had to learn the deep difference between these characters' lives and the daily lives of most real teenagers. All the students had seen *Harry Potter*, and answered that it was about "a school of magic", reflecting the importance of understanding the meaning of the metaphors, since they contain an important part of the educational value of these narratives. The movie *Entre les murs* was new to the whole group. These results highlighted a common starting point concerning the acquisition of a better understanding of the stories submitted.

Introduction to aesthetics of the image and narrative meaning

The goal of this activity is to help teenagers understand some of the codes, aims and resources of each type of narrative, the starting point of pondering and discussing the possible influence of such codes on adolescent targets. In the pilot study we employed nine sequences, three from each of the stories (opening, central conflict, and ending). The following are descriptions of three of these sequences:

1) Opening scene from *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*: Harry fights a "dementor", a powerful ghost who tries to steal his hope and will to live. In order to defend himself, Harry uses a magic procedure he learned at school: "Focus on your best memories, the ones that give you strength and courage".

The explanation in the classroom about the meaning of metaphors leads to the formulation of important questions, directly linked to the key role played by school learning in the reinforcement of the teenager and his ability to overcome adversity. "Where did Harry learn to use that magic formula to beat those trying to steal his good memories, his hope, and his strength to fight for his future?", the teacher asked. "At Hogwarts", answered several students. "What's Hogwarts?", the teacher persisted. "His school, the place he goes to learn."

2) Opening scene of the sixth season of *Física o Química*: on their way to class, three boys and three girls express through an inner monologue their detachment from school. They describe it as a handicap, and declare explicitly that nothing they can do there will improve their personal growth. Even if they seem to be very different from each other – offering an interesting variety of gradients, from rebelliousness and heroism to comic relief – the six students share a strong conviction: the future is of no importance, and attending secondary school is not only useless but also torture.

Explanation in the classroom: the sequence generates a discussion on how to detect and approach a problem. "How was hopelessness represented in *Harry Potter*?", asked the teacher. "As a monster", the students answered. "And how is it represented in this other story?", added the teacher. This analysis helps the group notice how the apathy and hopelessness shown by the characters in *Física o Química* are not addressed as a negative point, but as an excuse for comedy

and empathy for them; their defeated words seem to present the characters as more admirable, interesting, or even funny.

3) *Entre les murs*, scene portraying the last class of the year: the teacher asked the group what they had learned during the course, in order to perform one last activity on communication skills and a discussion session. Some students remembered the theory precisely while others had doubts, but all were able to express themselves much better than at the beginning of the year. *Explanation in the classroom*: the sequence serves as a shared conclusion on how the tools acquired in school – such as the ability to express oneself through words – may help us achieve key goals in our lives.

Debate within heterogeneous teams

In order to enrich the debate, the teams were formed by 4 to 6 students, to take advantage of the classroom's diversity regarding gender, cultural background, level of integration, and performance. A debate arose when the students attempted to answer the four questions listed below (each team organized their answers in double-entry tables, which helped distinguish the answers to each question regarding the three narratives):

- 1) “Rate – from 1 to 10 points – the extent to which the main characters physically resemble real students and teachers in secondary schools. Please explain your score.”
- 2) “Besides being ‘successful’, what could be the other goals of these stories? What effects could these goals have on adolescent audiences? Would these consequences somehow affect these films or series?”
- 3) “What are the adolescent characters in each story like? What worries or motivates them? Are they able to fight for the future they want?”
- 4) “What is the school like? *What is it used for* in each story? How do the characters benefit from it? What elements of it do they value? What is the teaching staff like?”

Debate with the whole group

The debate starts with the presentation of the conclusions of each team.

About Física o Química

Regarding this series, known by the whole group before these activities, the following conclusions were presented:

- 1) *To what extent does the series reflect the adolescents' reality in secondary schools?* The five groups agreed that “it does not reflect reality”, basing their

answers on the fact that the characters seemed to care only about image, gossip, parties and sex. “Besides, all of them dressed up to go to school” (this final remark is also mentioned in Question 3).

- 2) *How does it influence teenagers?* “It can affect teen audiences in the sense that they may want to be like them, adopting their worries and neglecting their studies”, answered Team 4; “We’re more than image, gossip, parties and especially sex (...) we are what we think, we want to be loved, we worry about what we want to become in life”.
- 3) *What are the teenagers in the TV series like?* Team one: “They’re always dressed up in expensive clothes”; “Their only motivation is to get out of class to start their life without being bothered”; “They don’t care about what happens inside the classroom.”
- 4) *What is the school like?* Team 5: “It’s just a meeting point. Teens get nothing from that school. They don’t care about it.”

About *Entre les murs*

Regarding the film, which no member of the group had seen before, they presented the following conclusions:

- 1) *To what extent does it reflect the reality of secondary school teenagers?* The five groups agreed that it reflected reality quite well, basing their answers on several facts, for example: each student had his or her own style (“You can’t look perfect every day”), and there was a diversity of races and cultures like in their own high school.
- 2) *How does it influence teenagers?* Team 2: “The movie highlights the students’ rebelliousness and shows their gradual change of mind and improvement. It could help increase awareness among students regarding their behavior, once they’ve learned that not fulfilling their goals can hurt them a lot.” Team 4: “The teacher tries to encourage the students to have a goal so they’ll become someone; that’s so important.”
- 3) *What are the teenagers in the movie like?* Team 5: “They’re like we are in real life. They’re concerned about not being listened to, about not being taken into consideration. At the beginning they don’t have motivation. But at the end, they have renewed hope and are ready to fight for their future; they feel motivated.”
- 4) *What’s the school like? What’s the teaching staff like?* Team 3: “The teacher encourages the students. He tries to instill good values and understand his students, making them fight for what they want, for their future.”

About *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

Regarding this film, which was known by everyone in the group, they presented the following conclusions:

- 1) *To what extent does it reflect the reality of secondary school teenagers?* The five teams agreed that it actually reflected real life "...because every character has a different style and comes from a different culture"; "The characters grow and mature like we do: by learning how to face new problems like adults".
- 2) *How does it influence teenagers?* Team 1: "It helps them gain confidence and fight for their goals."
- 3) *What are the teenagers in the movie like?* Team 3: "The characters are motivated by their friends; they want to overcome their fears. They're capable of fighting, winning and keeping going."

Creation of audiovisual stories about teenagers in school contexts

In order to encourage the incorporation of the latest advances in the concept of self-identity, participants should try to apply what they have learned in the construction of their own stories. The role the school may play in their development should also be incorporated.

As an illustration of the relevance and potential of the activity, it should be noted that the students and teachers decided two weeks later to produce an audiovisual story about life at the school. The participating students coached other pupils from the above groups, showing great maturity and determination. In the story – presented on the school's website – they applied what they had learned in these activities (e.g. media literacy), and adopted as their own some of the codes and resources from the best rated narratives (*The Class* and *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*).

Conclusions

The analysis of the process generated by the proposed activities within the pilot study leads to the following conclusions:

- 1) *Adequacy of the procedures.* The chosen teaching-learning method seems to be feasible and suitable for digital natives, as it:
 - uses as its starting point very powerful images and messages on the proposed topic, allowing face-to-face interaction, immediate acknowledgement of its efficiency, and good distribution of participation; and
 - provides a context that allows digital natives to progress from features they were already familiar with to more complicated ones. Thus, they

can appropriate certain complex academic skills such as abstraction, concentration, anticipation of consequences, planning a sequence of activities, implementation, and the overcoming of obstacles, encouraging a continuing effort to get medium- and long-term results.

- 2) *Diversity of characters and participating students.* Both films presented rich palettes of teenager characters (with differences in appearance and cultural background similar to those among the participating students), which made it easier for the participants to identify with the values transmitted. On the other hand, this diversity was not as meaningful in the series, which led to a lesser level of identification, and even a questioning of the message transmitted by this narrative. Without the previous debate on this question, would this distance from such attractive and “familiar” characters have been acknowledged? We do not believe so: although further research is needed to answer this question, the contrast between this new answer and the first one the group gave (“The TV series is about the lives of teenagers”) seems meaningful. The help offered by a shared debate on the matter is significant: we should start putting into practice these activities, focusing on the type of diversity among characters and its relationship with the lives of the teenagers who are targeted.
- 3) *Explanation and discussion about the codes, conditions, goals, influence and messages transmitted by the narratives.* The activities seem to have helped the participants understand the influence a distortion of characters (of their physical image, or by reducing their diversity and complexity) may have on adolescents (i.e. “Teens may try to copy them in an attempt to be like them.”). Moreover, an understanding of the metaphors focusing on educational values improves the effectiveness of the program: the analysis of scenes showing the reality of the classroom – with its problems, doubts and challenges – seems to have served as a mirror to question certain problematic behaviors such as disruption, and helped the students empathize with teachers who try to motivate their classes and help them develop basic life skills.
- 4) *Acquisition of core competences to understand and develop stories.* The language used by the teenagers during the discussions and elaboration on the conclusions is quite similar to the one adults use to explain the importance of education. In interpreting this, it should be noted that they were asked to perform “like media professionals searching to improve the development of adolescents”. Their maturity is more keenly manifested when they produce – coaching teenagers younger than themselves – their own audiovisual stories about their relationship with school: they are not simply concerned about giving the teacher a “correct” answer, but rather something deeper and linked to ideas they have made their own. Arising

from role theory, role-play tends to generate thought-shifting along with the values and behaviors associated with that particular role; thus it would be advisable to encourage teenagers to play the role of a media professional narrator trying to improve adolescent development.

- 5) *Contrast between narratives*. The results of the pilot study show (as proposed in the UNESCO 2011 AMI curriculum) the value of educational activities that compare different types of narratives, a goal we have reached by comparing popular commercial productions with an independent one, almost linked to the aesthetics of documental films.
- 6) *Narrative analysis and identity construction*. By following the analysis scheme of narratives, the chosen narratives seem highly suitable for teaching three crucial media literacy skills, needed for the construction of self-identity in media society: (1) to spot patterns that may influence one's search for and adoption of reference models; (2) to distinguish between positive and negative components of the reference models, according to what one actually wants to incorporate into one's identity; (3) to develop new proposals and alternatives, becoming author and main character of one's own life script.

Notes

1. In English: "When the class finishes".
2. Literally in English: "Physics or Chemistry".
3. In English: "The Class"

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Corporal Imaginaries

Gender Perspective Applied to Digital Media Literacy in Early Childhood

Ana Solano, Tamara Bueno Doral & Noelia García Castillo

The methodological basis of YOYOMIOMIO¹, a video installation intended for display in museums, is fundamentally based on the research of two authors. On the one hand, Marshall McLuhan, by coining the expression *global village*, assured that technologies would be considered extensions of our bodies and senses. This prediction, launched during the 1960s, according to which mass media are observed as prolongations of our nervous system, has actually been surpassed; our bodies now interact with all kinds of electronic elements. On the other hand, Haraway (1991) provides feminism with a powerful understanding of the new possibilities for the human being of today: the postmodern subject by means of the cyborg. In this understanding, the cyborg era is in an advanced state, with the deconstruction of our own bodies to create new models that interact with the electronic elements implanted in them.

The main objective of YOYOMIOMIO, which will be described throughout this chapter, has been to translate into artistic language McLuhan's exploration in the visual and acoustic space, as well as Haraway's assertions about the sex/gender system. In addition, the authors have developed a research methodology that combines electronic art with the creation of corporal imaginaries during the early childhood years.

Gender socialization during early childhood

As we address the theme of children's cognitive development it is essential to mention Jean Piaget's contributions, which are gathered in reference compilations; among these, we highlight the work of Moyer-Gusé and Riddle (2010). The second stage set out by Piaget, which coincides with the child users of the video installation YOYOMIOMIO, is conceptualized as the preoperational stage.

Moyer-Gusé and Riddle (2010) outline that children from three to seven years old go beyond physical exploration, as they begin to think and reason. Nevertheless, this cognitive ability is restricted by a set of aspects: egocentrism, specific instead of abstract thinking, attention focused on a single element, difficulty distinguishing between fantasy and reality, problems with moral judgements, and difficulty making inferences.

Moyer-Gusé and Riddle (2010) admit that, despite its high relevance, Piaget's theory of development stages has been criticized by some experts who claim that children's development is more gradual, or that many preoperational children are more advanced. Even so, Moyer-Gusé and Riddle consider Piaget's contributions highly useful for understanding children's interaction with the mass media.

Afterwards, Guidano and Liotti (1983) established three main phases for personal identity acquisition, a classification that Jayme (1999) applied to gender identity development. During the first phase, corresponding to early childhood and preschool, the child begins to distinguish between the self and others, and to become aware of his or her own individuality based on his or her own feelings and others' awareness. Significant people in the environment are those who have influence in the child's acquisition of the idea of gender. At the end of this process, gender is regarded as an invariable trait of the person, not defined by merely circumstantial and modifiable aspects. Finally, the child will come to understand the immovable fact of being a boy or a girl.

As children advance through the ensuing phases, which will finish at the end of adolescence, their personal identity will become more consolidated by means of a total identification with a certain model. Jayme (1999) asserts that these models can vary over time, but that they invariably reflect the dictatorship of gender.

According to Martin (2013, p. 1), "gender socialization is the process through which children learn about the social expectations, attitudes and behaviours associated with one's gender". Furthermore, gender is considered to be one of the first social categories children become aware of. However, this gender identity acquisition is a result of the convergence of a set of factors, both cognitive and emotional, that will appear throughout childhood (Jayme, 1999). Jayme describes the following socializing agents that define this social learning:

- *Parents.* The main source of models to imitate. In addition, they communicate differing expectations to their children according to their gender. As it is dictated by social tradition with previously agreed-on stereotypes, parents will dress boys and girls each in a particular way, and will assign them different colours, tasks and toys. Hence, progenitors transmit the contents of femininity and masculinity to the approaching generation.
- *School.* After family, school is the socializing agent par excellence, specially relating to gender. This is because "gender is a major organizing principle, applied to uniforms, curricular subjects, administrative practices, classroom

activities and even the use of space within and around the school” (Acker, 1994, p. 93). The transmission of gender establishes differing standards that delimit the possibilities for boys and girls as individual human beings. Within this aspect, educational work plays a crucial role.

- *Peers.* Even during early childhood, children prefer the company of those they consider more similar and closer to them. Due to this, they are more likely to share their time with their same-gender peers. Groups formed separately by boys and girls are defined by opposing characteristics referring to the number of members and the aspects observed as relevant for them (Martin, 2013).
- *Play.* One of the most important methods for transmitting the traditional concepts of femininity and masculinity, but also for exercising cultural roles assigned to gender. Just as Jayme (1999) reports in her research, by the age of three years, boys and girls seem to show a preference towards categorizing toys according to their gender. Despite the passage of time and the growth of the video-game industry, toys for boys include activities such as construction, fighting, action or competitiveness. Meanwhile, toys for girls continue to perpetuate occupational gender roles – mother and housewife, nurse, artist, professional within beauty and fashion, shop assistant, journalist, and teacher (Bueno Doral and García Castillo, 2012).
- *Mass media.* Last but not least, the role of mass media as transmitters of socializing content is expanding with the contemporary development of virtual media. Among all media we still have to include television, whose role in the socialization of children has been thoroughly documented through diverse perspectives such as Social Learning Theory, Cultivation Theory or Uses and Gratifications Theory (Van Evra, 1998); as well as television advertising. We should also not forget the vital importance of the Internet, which Generation Z children frequently access using their parents’ smart devices.

Familiarization in childhood with museums and art

Social reality is constructed, and children are an essential part of this process of construction. The imaginary is one of the constituent elements of the procedure. In the words of Vygotsky (1998):

Imagination, as the basis of all creative activity, is an important component of absolutely all aspects of cultural life, enabling artistic, scientific, and technical creation alike. In this sense, absolutely everything around us that was created by the hand of man, the entire world of human culture, as distinct from the world of nature, all this is the product of human imagination and of creation based on this imagination. (pp. 9-10)

Through children's interaction with installations in museums, we can study the possibilities of this process of reconsideration of their worlds and the basis on which reality is stabilized. Since the 1970s, museums have made considerable effort to adopt a prominent educational function; nevertheless, they ought to develop new narratives that increase the value of material culture and that communicate attractive knowledge and values to visitors (Pol & Asensio, 2006).

This is an important issue, as the child audience is one of the most important target groups for museums in Spain. However, the current cultural products and services offered by Spanish museums and conceived for children are usually of minor relevance or even virtually non-existent. In addition, studies examining visitors' attitudes and opinions are recent and scarce in this country, and this tendency is even worse regarding the child audience. Very few cultural institutions maintain this kind of data over time in order to obtain a real estimate of the evolution in audiences depending on the different activities that are carried out. To conclude, in the case of childhood, structural analysis needs to be conducted with a functional examination (Asensio & Pol, 2002).

The interactive video installation YOYOMIOMIO

YOYOMIOMIO is a video installation for children aged three to four years, and was designed to be displayed at museums. It is an experimental and play area that allows children to create a corporal imaginary by means of a combination of certain components related to gender schemas. This educational experience is simultaneously accompanied by the projection of an animated film based on a new narrative for children, completing the process of learning that is offered in the video installation. YOYOMIOMIO has been displayed at *Parque de las Ciencias in Granada*, at the *International Festival of Almeria*, and at the *Kursaal Museum in Algeciras*.

The video installation is 95 cm in height, in order to create a familiar space that avoids intimidating or shocking the children. There is a limit of six users per session, so that everyone can create their corporal models on the touch screens during the approximate 30 minutes it takes to interact with the different elements of the video installation.

At this point, we would like to point out that there is no closed procedure or itinerary imposed on the children. Despite all the above-mentioned observations, some instructors (teachers or museum staff who have been duly informed) accompany the children during their first contact with the interactive environment, created exclusively for them.

Image 1. The YOYOMIOMIO video installation



Artist Ana Solano designed this interactive video installation with the following *main objectives*:

- Children's identification with the five elements by means of a narrative piece projected in an 'identity crater'.
- Construction and deconstruction of a corporal imaginary before gender conceptualization has taken place. This is the reason for the age selection of those who are to experiment with YOYOMIOMIO.
- Observation of the corporal imaginaries created and projected, as well as of the audiovisual proposals arranged in the different sections of the video installation.

After a complex process of research deriving from documentary analysis and prior experimentation, Solano conceived the video installation with the following important *aspects* or principles to consider:

- *Chromatic language.* The use of three colours – orange, blue and green – in the identity crater, on touch screens and in audiovisual pieces. These colours are used in an identity way in each corporal imaginary, which is translated to the rest of the artistic video installation, creating a whole.
- *Tactile sensation.* Materials are crafted considering the sense of touch, so that the pressure the children apply to the elements invites them to relax and concentrate. This atmosphere is a result of a combination of soft textures, comfortable padding and round forms.
- *New technologies.* The use of screens, projectors and cameras that are close to digital natives' reality.

- *Safety*. Consideration of the selection of shapes and fireproof materials –in both inner padding and external textiles.

The video installation

The YOYOMIOMIO² piece is an interactive video installation designed for those in early childhood. As we mentioned in the theoretical framework, at this first stage boys and girls are pure interactive beings. Their associative conscience is linked to collective imagination, subjectivity, improvisation and creation.

The interconnection among the different electronic art tools that can be found in the video installation comes from the abstract play; that is to say, the conjunction of the abstract and the real.

This interconnection takes place by means of three factors:

- the Self as an interactive process
- the Self associated with the imaginary of knowledge or an interaction between the subjective and the real
- the Self as identification with the construction of subject/object

We translate this concept and begin the process of interaction within the video installation.

Image 2. Children using the YOYOMIOMIO video installation



Construction of the space

The letters forming the title encircle the piece, with the Os in the word YOYOMIOMIO serving as the doorways marking the beginning of the activity. Thus, we include a symbolic approach of language that allows the recognition of oneself and others.

The inner area is designed with distinct spaces offering different activities, including connections between visual, tangible and acoustic aspects. Projectors and loudspeakers hang from a large upper ring. From the central column, three displays project in real time the corporal imaginaries created by the children. Under these displays, we find the three touchscreens on which children accomplish the creative and transforming activity.

Touchscreens, as an artwork in motion that is easily and uniformly recognizable, propose the creation of a corporal imaginary to the children before gender conceptualization has taken place. The graphic elements offered on the screens include different acoustic and phonetic responses. When one of these graphic elements is moved across the screen, it acquires its own identity. In this way, the children can work with both the abstract and the real dimensions. These creations of imaginaries are shown by means of screen captures in real time, on larger displays located outside the video installation.

Perception of and identification with the crater

The crater shows an animated short film aiming to be an identity loop that, through a new narrative, gives an account of the transformation of the elements. Music and sounds are specifically designed for the different proposals inside the video installation, so this soundscape puts children in contact with the interaction of the piece.

In the short film *Nací pez³ (I was born a fish)*, Ana Solano uses a new model of audiovisual story with no reference to Aristotle's mimesis. It is a sound tale with a non-verbal narrative, and refers to the origin of the process of knowledge about the transformation of the four elements – earth, air, fire and water – to which Solano adds a fifth element, metal. This incorporation of the metal element, due to its consideration as an integral part of our bodies, is a response to the latest technological revolutions in consumer electronics, which transform the human body into a new human being that can be defined as a cyborg subject.

The narrative score is based on the visual space, and offers simultaneous access to a non-acoustic space based on new electronic technologies. These cutting-edge technologies use touch as a central concept, and allow the child to connect a multitude of audiovisual proposals among different devices. With this procedure, game is used as a base of simultaneous action and communication for the transformations of the five proposed elements.

Nací pez is an animated short film lasting six minutes, and makes use of an interaction of subjective and objective dimensions. Sound is its narrative component. The video begins with an offscreen voice that relates the development and evolution of the elements – earth, air, fire and water – starting with the Greek myth in which the sea nymph Thetis gives birth to the rivers, and finishing with the last component, the metal that is present in the robot.

Observation

Another space, composed of three television displays, offers proposals to the children watching fragments of the animated short film being shown in the identity crater. There, they discover and recognize interaction with objects and identify the relations between the different areas of the video installation.

Finally, there is the zone in which the entire interactive itinerary starts. Apart from being the beginning of these proposals, it is also a rest area for the children who have finished the activity.

Preliminary results observed in children

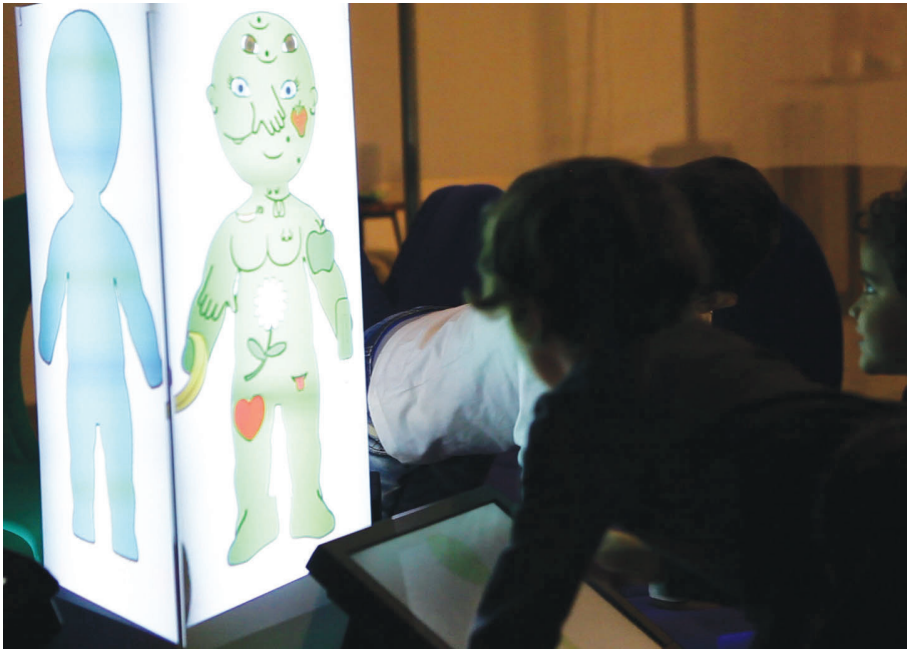
1) One of the observed results is that the video installation contributes to the development of multiple intelligences. The theory of multiple intelligences maintains that, instead of a unique intelligence in human beings, there is a diversity of intelligences that determine individuals' potential. These significant accents are defined by children's strengths and weaknesses in a series of expansion scenes of intelligence (Gardner, 1998). Seven intelligences are developed with the appropriate use of the piece: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

2) As regards the suitability of the selected age range, we emphasize that five-year-olds respect their own feminine or masculine identities when creating their corporal imaginaries. Thus, experimentation with this age group is irrelevant because gender conceptualization has taken place. Nevertheless, three- and four-year-olds are conscious of having deconstructed a body when creating their own corporal imaginaries. This process is in harmony with the cyborg concept.

3) The observations indicate that very young children create using sound and phonetic similarities, so real sense is unnecessary in their constructions. For the creation of their corporal imaginaries, we note that they generate distance between their bodies and the building game. The children were aware of working with another reality on the screen.

4) In all cases, the creation of a new corporal imaginary amuses the children. They laugh when they use any body organ, fruit, flower, etc. and relocate it in unusual places. For example, a child placed an ice cream cone on a foot of the figure, saying it was funny because he could go barefoot. Placing sexual organs on the neck amused them, because in this reality they did not have to go to the toilet. Some placed both sexual organs – masculine and feminine – on their corporal imaginaries. They also played with the different senses: placing ears on the hands, eyes on the mouth, the nose on the forehead, etc. By means of these deconstructions, they play to create the corporal imaginary they conceive in their minds.

Image 3. One of the corporal imaginaries created.



5) We have observed in these children a remarkable desire to discover the world and themselves through a playful approach. This way of learning differs from the one they are familiar with. They get involved very easily, developing their creative potential during the identification process with the diverse components proposed in the video installation.

Conclusions

We consider that museums should design strategies including projects combining art, education and research. The planning of activities offered by these institutions must be done considering child psychology, as well as game, creativity and imagination. Too often, museums fail to connect with the child audience because their unique characteristics are not considered in-depth. We have also observed a lack of spaces appropriate for small children in the museums where the video installation has been displayed.

Connecting multiple intelligences with pedagogy in museums is hugely important, because this approach offers new ways to connect with museum audiences. As we have demonstrated in this study, the video installation YOYOMIOMIO allows the generation of new ways of relating among the artist creator, the research process, and the audience.

We stress the value of art in the learning process. Electronic art has a remarkable experimentation component that results in a mixture of artistic languages as well as in a fusion with game. These characteristics enable a greater extension of subjectivity and non-verbal children's language.

We conclude that this preliminary observation is relevant due to the potential of this research. Thus, to achieve conclusive results through a child psychology methodology, we need to continue with the experimentation process; that is, displaying the video installation in new and different museums, even outside our own country, with the aim of accomplishing comparative cross-cultural analysis.

Notes

1. Translated into English: 'I-I-MINE-MINE'.
2. Explanatory video available at <http://vimeo.com/82375985>
3. Available at <http://vimeo.com/77397845>

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A Framework for the Future

When Kindergartens Go Online

Klaus Thestrup

Digital World Citizens

The research project *Digital World Citizens* in Denmark aims to investigate how children and pedagogues can communicate with kindergartens and others around the globe. The children involved are aged three and six years, and digital media such as Facebook, Skype, Instagram, Google Images and YouTube naturally play an important part in this work. On the hardware side, it incorporates a mix of laptops, printers, cameras and tablets. The project began in November 2011, and is developing through a number of smaller subprojects taking place at different kindergartens.

The project is based on both basic and applied research. It has always been a part of the processes to discover how children and pedagogues can use narratives and technologies by simply trying them out to reveal at least local patterns. It has always been applied, as every idea has immediately been implemented in everyday life at the kindergartens as an ongoing response to the fact that even kindergartens are part of the globalized media society.

The simple yet daring research question for the project is: *How can children and pedagogues in an experimenting community be and become digital world citizens?* Behind this question is the development of a certain pedagogical position, called the experimenting community, which will be discussed later in this chapter. There is also the belief that the ultimate aim of a kindergarten is for its children and pedagogues to become citizens in a globalized media and knowledge society in order to get jobs, be educated and join democratic processes – through being digital world citizens here and now in their actual kindergarten life.

An example of activities within the project

This chapter does not focus on the project's background (e.g. "MediaPLAYING-communities," 2009). Neither does it demonstrate examples and methods, which can be found elsewhere (e.g. Henningsen, Jerg & Thestrup, 2009; Thestrup, 2012a, 2012b, 2013). However, one example will be mentioned here to give an idea of possible activities in the project. One Christmas, three kindergartens spread out over the country shared activities and the same story. The kindergartens competed in a friendly way over who could make the longest garlands, baked and sent Christmas cakes to each other, and made instructional videos on how to make various Christmas decorations. Everything was filmed and photographed, and posted to a common Facebook group.

The kindergartens developed a shared fictive conflict on the Facebook group page, where the children could communicate with two elf characters, the nice and clever *Kallesok* and the trickster *Hanok Nok*. Hanok Nok could make things at the kindergarten disappear, and the children could ask Kallesok for help to find them again. This same basic conflict between two characters could be repeated in a number of ways at each kindergarten, and consisted of both digital and analogue elements. Among other things, the children tried to catch Hanok Nok in the sandboxes by digging traps and covering them with branches and placing a gift on top as bait. These activities were photographed to show the other kindergartens what they were up to.

The way children use narratives and technology

Behind the research question is also the impact of Nordic research on children's play culture, especially through the term *mediaplay*. Margareta Rönnerberg introduced this term in 1983 to show that children, when playing, used situations, characters and sentences from TV series and films on TV (Rönnerberg, 1983). She also realized that they were not simply copying what they saw. Film and TV were used as manuscript drafts or frameworks for action (Rönnerberg, 1987). Later, video documentarist Lars Henningsen showed that *mediaplay* concerned not only how children used a given narrative in role play but also how they used the technology itself when playing (Henningsen 1999, 2005). Later again, Kjetil Sandvik stated that *mediaplay* is play with both narratives and technology, and that these can happen simultaneously. The media-based narrative is still the inspiration, but the media-based technology, for example a camera, gives children the reflexive opportunity to see what they themselves are doing (Sandvik, 2009).

Mediaplay is closely connected to a specific ability in children's play culture. Children are able to cultivate narratives and technology as sources of material for playing. To do this, the children are capable of both repeating formulas for the play they want to unfold and simultaneously improvising the formula as needed

(Mouritsen, 1996, 2001). William Corsaro calls children's play an *interpretive re-production* (Corsaro, 2005) while Jan Kampmann rephrases it as *interpretive new-production* (Kampmann, 2010), emphasizing children's ability to produce new meaning when playing.

The open laboratory as part of a pedagogical position

The experimenting community is a pedagogical strategy whereby children and pedagogues jointly experiment and play with both narratives and technology (Thestrup, 2013). To do this, a combination of elements is needed.

First there is *the open laboratory*: the kindergarten is a workshop where all communication, technologies, narratives and materials – digital as well as analogue, screen as well as body – can be taken apart, re-mixed and used for communication, play and activities again. The centre is a group of people who investigate the already given possibilities and invent new ones. In principle, anything can be introduced and used in cooperation with anything else. The group might not know in advance how to do it, but the pedagogy in itself scaffolds the questions: *What can this technology do? What do we want it to do? What is this narrative about? How is it told? How do we want to use it?* In the already given use of a certain type of media, a material is a possibility but not a necessity. The same goes for communication. The radicalness lies in the process: the given use exists, but can disappear and a new use can emerge through experimentation.

In the open laboratory there is *the participating pedagogue*, whereby the pedagogue is the guide who ensures that everyone can contribute: the participant, who knows as little as or less than the other participants; the master, who knows more; and finally the agent, who sustains the culture. This definition comes from the way the pedagogue can play with children. The pedagogue has to make an active choice when doing this. One can take part in playing primarily to observe what is going on in the children's play culture, but it is also possible to play as a pedagogue, co-staging what might happen. The pedagogue is inside the process rather than outside, asking: *What do we want to play? How do we play this game?* The pedagogy is not meant to propagate already existing answers, but to make it possible to ask questions that might or might not have an answer. One way of doing this is to play or to frame an activity. The question must be approached through something the group does in a certain way.

From within the process, the pedagogue and the children have an important relation to each other; they need each other to find answers. The pedagogue might or might not learn something new directly from a child or a group of children, but the pedagogical situation at least makes it possible for everyone to look for answers.

Content as part of the communication between kindergartens

Then there is *the necessary point of interest*: the centre of the experimenting community is something between us that is of common interest. It can be the content of a story, how something in a movie has been constructed, characters from a computer game, or the sound and moves in a music video. It can also be certain piece of software or hardware that draws interest. It can be a tablet, a Skype session, or how to erase images on a digital camera. In short: it can be not only content and dramaturgy but also tool. The group of people is there to play and experiment. The pedagogy focuses on the fact that we are together, doing something specific that is important to do at this very moment. The question is: *How do we use this content and this form – and how do we change it?*

The examination of a certain point of interest is situated in a certain pedagogical situation. The pedagogical context at a kindergarten is unfolding life, not simply making references to it. To answer the questions that are asked can be of great importance and be connected quite directly to everyday culture. If life is seen as complex, then playing and shaping things together can be seen as a ladder, which we use to climb up a bit to see and perhaps understand a bit more of the world we exist in (Szatkowski, 1992). Doing this, we simultaneously move on from where we are and what we know to something we do not yet know. Playing and transformation exist as a vital part of this cultural *now*. The desire is to unfold life and ask questions about it.

Then there is *the transformative communication*: ideas, narratives and visual material from others are transformed into local actions and then posted online for others to use as they see fit. The actual physical space, the open laboratory at the kindergarten, is the place where cultural expressions from others are encountered, used and changed. Observations from Digital World Citizens so far indicate that it seems important for the children to have the opportunity to use the expressions they see or hear as sources of material, through which they transform themselves.

The dynamic culture at the kindergarten

Finally, the experimenting community is based on *the dynamic culture*. The pedagogy around mediaplay takes its starting point in children's play culture, but can be extended into a more general point of view on culture. The relation between formula and improvisation is not something that only exists in children. Kirsten Hastrup describes a given culture in two terms: Speciality and flexibility (Hastrup, 2004). The specific is the already existing cultural rules that one follows, while flexibility is the ability in the culture to change. Speciality and flexibility are closely connected, as the already known provides a surplus to allow us to react to new situations.

Iben Jensen points out that culture can be seen as complex. It is something you negotiate, and the importance of something can be investigated (Jensen, 2005). Christian Jantzen states that culture is pragmatic; something you do as an ongoing process of interpretation and realization (Jantzen, 2005). The consequence of the pragmatic way of understanding culture is that a given cultural pattern is a possibility but not a necessity. A person can use parts of a pattern or, in principle, make a new one.

The process of interaction between some kind of repetition and some kind of change can be very dynamic. In a sense, the relation is unstable and stable at the same time, as it is always possible to continue improvising and making new formulas to repeat inside the culture. It is not only a question of negotiating meaning, being adaptive or flexible; it is also a question of, at the very core of a culture, being able to establish both new formulas and new improvisations in an interchangeable way. The improvisation may create a new formula, and the formula may create new improvisation. The culture does not adapt but rather it interacts.

How can a kindergarten communicate?

If an experimenting community has to communicate with, e.g., other experimenting communities, there has to be space and time for experimenting, making drafts, and changing one's own and others' examples. Below are four elements of a basic communication setup to start with:

- *Storing*: One needs to be able to store one's own or others' images and video clips for further use. The storage facility can be spread out over more than one device or be stored online. Space is important, as video uses more data than text does, but it is equally important to accept that the storage will probably be spread out on many devices and that images and video clips on one device have to be available for use on another. Each experimenting community has to have places for storage, but also common places for all the experimenting communities involved.
- *Producing*: One needs to be able to produce images and video clips whether it involves using an app with just one or two functions or an editing programme, or a combination of the two. One has to expect that there will be a constantly changing list of possible apps and programmes to use. Actually, the never-ending list of apps seems to support an experimenting mode, as it is always possible to try something different.
- *Showing*: There has to be a place to present images and video clips, be it a finished series of images, a finished video, sketches or a single image to be viewed and possibly used by someone else. Showing is an essential

part of an ongoing process, as an image or a clip might be used by others for another purpose but is simultaneously already an artefact representing questions and values. It is a small product situated in time, ready to immediately become a process again.

- *Talking*: There has to be the possibility to talk with others, whether this is done via live communication like through Skype or commentaries like on Facebook. The point is that this is a possibility during a process to inform, be inspired, negotiate, and make decisions if needed.

This communication setup is not just a technological question. It is of course also this, as the technology itself allows the active participation of children and pedagogues as both producers and users, *prod-users* (Bruns, 2008). But the communication setup is placed inside the framework of the experimenting community and emphasizes the role of the experiment, of everyday culture and time.

One observation in the project is that play, digital technology and a procedural understanding of narratives fit very well together. Play unfolds in time, and in the everyday culture at a kindergarten the children can often leave, resume and change the play. Narratives can be treated in the same way as conflicts, being re-formulated in different ways. Something similar applies to a social media platform like Facebook. This is a technology that allows you to walk to and fro in the midst of your everyday life to see if someone has written a commentary or uploaded an image. If not, you can leave the tablet; but if there has been a comment within the group you can react to it immediately or not. Your reaction could be to go somewhere else and take a picture to upload, or organize a game to play. At a kindergarten, the use of body and numerous tools is so rooted in everyday practice that the response to Facebook does not have to be simply sitting at the tablet for a long time.

When the kindergarten is the centre of the world

The role of the kindergarten changes when one frames it as an open laboratory inhabited by an experimenting community. With digital media, the kindergarten can interact with anyone locally, regionally or globally, and the information needed for investigating points of interest is readily at hand. It is also a place where expressions can start and where any expression from somewhere else can be re-mixed. One can also enter more or less binding agreements on what to do together, when and how. The kindergarten acts in the real world with children and pedagogues as people who want to know, tell, play and communicate.

The kindergarten is potentially at the centre of the world, and not just a place on the outskirts of a city meant to take care of children while their parents are at work. The actual pedagogical borders of the kindergarten are no longer the fence around it, but rather meeting places around the world. The kindergarten

shifts from turning inwards towards itself to also turning outwards towards someone not known in advance.

This turn towards a world outside the kindergarten itself and the challenges involved in doing it have a certain resonance in, e.g., the EU Lifelong Learning Programme (EU, 2007). One of the competences defined here involves interpersonal and intercultural dialogue, mirroring the need for the nations and cultures within the EU to be able to communicate and cooperate across any differences they might have. Today, this is of course equally important on a global scale. And then there is the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states children's right to express their points of view in the form they wish, as well as to play and take part in cultural life (UNICEF, 1989). This includes playing and communicating online between kindergartens themselves, or between kindergartens and others.

To be able to take part in this change, pedagogues and children have to have, to use and continue to acquire *Digital World Citizen Competences*:

- *Transforming*: This is vital to communication in the experimenting community. Not matter what may come of images, video clips or narratives, children and pedagogues can change them into something else in the open laboratory. One looks for possibilities in the actual expression, transform it through formula and improvisation, and exchange the new expression again. In the transformation lies invention as well, social as well as technological. Transformation can occur on the level of content, form or dramaturgy, as well as involving how to use inspiration.
- *Telling*: This includes both the use of technology and narratives, and the ability to tell someone else about what one thinks and acts out as important. One can construct, choose and show something, even if it is just one photo or one clip. Both children and pedagogues must learn how to use interactive tools, along with any other tool that might be relevant. It is not necessary to know all the features of any given software in advance in order to use it. Telling includes telling both each other within the group and someone outside the group. This can occur, for instance, through making small documentaries on doing something or showing essential parts of an action, which in itself can demonstrate how to do something.
- *Constructing*: As you never know who or what you will meet online, you never know what kind of communication is possible. If it is another kindergarten somewhere in the world, you never know how that kindergarten perceives pedagogy, communication and culture. You start from scratch every time a possible new connection is established. On the other hand, the other party also does not know these things about you. One has to learn to ask; to accept that one might not understand the reason why something is said or done somewhere else in a completely different context. One can-

not expect to establish a communication consisting of the same pedagogy, etc., right away – if ever. But to establish the possibility, the parties have to be able to construct communication and culture together. There must be established concrete ways to store, produce, show and talk.

- *To reflect*: Distance counts on a global scale. One cannot simply meet in the same time and space, and strangely enough this inherent distance offers a certain advantage. One does not have to do or become the same as the others. One can be inspired, or leave it if necessary. One can be changed, or not. One can agree or not agree, but one cannot stop reflecting on why and how others understand and act in the world we live in. It is necessary to reflect upon what it means to be a citizen in a globalized media and knowledge society and upon how one communicates, constructs culture and negotiates meaning.
- *To play*: To do all the above, there is a meta-competence that simply has to be in place to make transforming, telling, constructing and reflecting work – and that is to play. Children and pedagogues have to play together or in different groups to be able to maintain play and to play in new forms. The pedagogical space has to give place for both the experimenting community as a cultural form and for children's own self-organized play culture. This also goes for the play culture of the grown-ups. One might even say that the best way to perform digital world citizenship is to find ways to play together through the digital media between us, involving the analogue space we exist in.

The next step in the project is to communicate across borders on a more global scale. The experiences hitherto will be used to encounter children and pedagogues at kindergartens as well as people in other settings. Arrangements are being made with kindergartens in other countries focusing on cultural exchange, as possible differences between pedagogy and culture might become clearer when one leaves a national or Nordic context to exchange and co-produce.

But it is also going to be part of the project to deliberately start from scratch in order to find ways to use digital media and possibly establish communication with different people whereby the context, the different approaches and the software needed are not known in advance. If pedagogues and children are to be and become digital world citizens, there can be no faking it. The experimenting community as a pedagogical position must “go real”, and thus so will we. This has already started at one of the kindergartens, where at this very moment they are using Instagram and discussing who should see their photos – as the children there say: “The whole world, of course...”

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Media Literacy and the EU

From Consumer Protection to Audience Development

Dag Asbjørnsen

During the last part of the 1990s, it became increasingly clear that the emerging digital media could not be effectively regulated by traditional means. The proliferation of potentially harmful content in media like the web or computer games posed new challenges to regulatory bodies. This resulted in, for example, the 1997 creation of a “Department for New Media” within the Norwegian Board of Film Classification¹. Similar initiatives were launched in a number of European countries, most notably in the Nordic countries² and the UK.

At the same time, a number of policy initiatives were launched at the EU level. All these policy documents had to deal with the question of how to protect minors in the online environment, taking into account the regulatory challenges posed by the new digital media. I will show how this led to an inclusion of awareness-raising and media literacy as a tool within this context, and how media literacy later developed into a policy field in its own right, also leaning on the goal of audience development.

Method

In this chapter I will examine the development of the concept of media literacy through a close reading of the most important EU documents from the end of the 1990s until today. The material used will be rather narrow, and will not include research, conferences or other EU initiatives. However, I will claim that a reading of these documents will give a good picture of the development of this policy field in the EU.

The beginning: awareness-raising and media education

As mentioned above, during the late part of the 1990s there was growing attention to the possible harmful content of the so-called new media. As the Internet and the new media services were not regulated at any national or international level, there was no easy way to handle these issues. In the 1996 Commission *Green Paper on the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity*, a number of options were discussed. These include parental control, filtering software for the Internet, information provided by the content providers, different levels of legal liability, and awareness-raising.

In the working paper produced after the public consultation on the Green Paper, the Commission widened the context of awareness-raising to more than just protection:

As well as being protected, children and young people must be given their rightful place within the information society. To achieve this, the following two aims must be achieved:

- to exploit the potential of the media to help educate tomorrow's citizens;
- to help tomorrow's citizens understand the media and use them responsibly (European Commission, 1997, p. 11).

The second point is developed in an interesting way. The Commission calls for partnerships between different European organizations, with the aim of:

setting up and supporting inter-professional networks capable of defining implementing and evaluating pilot schemes in education in the visual image and mastery of new communication tools, particular attention being given to exploiting all national and local educational and cultural structures. (European Commission, 1997, p. 12)

In the context of the protection of minors, it is interesting that the Commission at this early stage proposes what is in effect a media literacy initiative. This goes far beyond the narrower goal of protection, and sees media education as part of the education needed in a society becoming increasingly mediatized, and where the media play an ever greater role in children's everyday lives as well as in society – and this was long before the arrival of the “social media”.

Only the narrow understanding of awareness-raising and media education as a way of protecting minors found its way into the official Commission documents. The most important of these is perhaps the 1997 revision of the so-called *Television without Frontiers Directive* (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 1997). This revision of the original 1989 Directive (The Council of the European Communities, 1989) was made in the context of new online services. The recitals mention the above-referenced Green Paper, but few of the awareness-raising parts of the discussions are reflected in the text. In a revised Article 22b, the Directive calls on the Commission to carry out an

“investigation” concerning parental control devices in television sets, as well as the use of a rating system and the possible awareness and educational measures connected to it.

The same rather narrow approach is predominant in the Council Recommendation of 24 September 1998 on the protection of minors and human dignity. The Recommendation calls upon the members states to promote actions that can enable minors to use the new online services “responsibly”, by:

...improving the level of awareness among parents, educators and teachers of the potential of these services and of the means that they may be made safe for minors. (The Council of the European Union, 1998, p. 3)

Equal weight is placed on the potential and safety of these services; the Recommendation continues in the next paragraph to ask Member States to facilitate:

...access to quality content and services for minors, including...in educational establishments and public places. (The Council of the European Union, 1998, p. 3)

No mention is made of the media education initiatives discussed above. The idea rather seems to be that it is sufficient to steer young people away from harmful content towards what is good for them. In this lies a clearly paternalistic approach to the subject. It is “parents, educators and teachers” (The Council of the European Union, 1998, p. 3) who should be more aware of the risks, and the means to avoid them, for the benefit of the minors. And while the Commission after the Green Paper spoke about children and young people having their “rightful place in the information society” (European Commission, 1997, p 11), this Recommendation is preoccupied with making good choices on behalf of them.

The first *Safer Internet Programme* was launched in 1999. The legal base of the Programme refers to both the Green Paper and the Recommendation, and to the need for awareness-raising actions and education. Action line 3 of the programme is dedicated to awareness-raising. It is clearly stated that the target audience for these actions are “parents and teachers” (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 1999, Annex 1, p. 3); thus, the Programme reflects the approach of the Recommendation. Awareness needs to be built regarding the best ways to protect children from harm, including using filters, and applications for support from the programme should focus on how to identify useful content and block what is harmful. As we can see, the focus is rather narrow.

In conclusion, all these documents from the late 1990s include some form of awareness-raising and educational measures, which may well be seen as a first phase of media literacy policy in the EU, before the concept itself had appeared in any document. The policy is focused on the new online media, and is rather paternalistic in its approach. On the other hand, the Commission comments on the public consultation on the Green Paper point towards a more open and general

approach to media education, focusing on the rights of the child, citizenship, and the need for knowledge about the media in order to be a conscious user.

The concept: media literacy enters into protection discourse

In 2003 the *Television without Frontiers* (TVWF) Directive was once again on the agenda. The Commission had launched a public consultation on the need to update or adapt the Directive, and the conclusions of the consultation were presented in the Commission Communication of 15 December 2003 on *The future of European regulatory audiovisual policy*. With this document, the concept of media literacy is finally launched into EU policies.

In addition to possible amendments to the Directive, the Communication also discusses a revision of the 1998 *Recommendation on the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity*. As we remember, the scope of the Recommendation was rather limited when it came to awareness and education. Now, the stakeholder input to the consultation helps the Commission paint another picture, saying:

The changing media landscape, resulting from new technologies and media innovation makes it necessary to teach children (and parents) to use the media effectively. To know where to find information and how to interpret it nowadays represents an essential skill. (Commission of the European Communities, 2003, p. 22)

We note how the focus has shifted from the parents and educators to the children (with the parents still present in parentheses) and how this is a general and essential skill needed in today's society, not only in the context of protection. And what should this skill be called? The continuation of the paragraph provides the answer:

A number of stakeholders who participated in the public consultation concerning the TVWF Directive also suggested (...) to include media literacy among the subjects of the Recommendation. (Commission of the European Communities, 2003, p. 22)

Of course, this concept did not appear out of thin air. In media regulation discourse, it had been on the agenda for some time. Most notably, in 2003 the UK regulator OFCOM was charged with establishing a programme for media literacy, which has been very influential on European regulating authorities. One might then assume that the term media literacy had been floating around in regulation policy circles a while, before eventually finding its way into EU documents. And from this point on it seems to be found everywhere.

Before revising the Directive or the Recommendation, in 2005 the Commission launched a new edition of the *Safer Internet Programme*. The focus of this second programme is now clearly on awareness-raising, and around 50% of its budget will be used on these actions. The concept of media literacy is also there

– well, not quite; for some reason it is called media *and information* literacy. The programme will designate “awareness-raising nodes” (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2005a, Annex 1, p. 5), which should have a clear mandate to “educate the public in safer use of Internet and new online technologies or in media and information literacy”. More specifically, they should include among their tasks to:

where appropriate, cooperate with work in areas related to this programme such as in the wider fields of media and information literacy or consumer protection. (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2005a, Annex 1, p. 5)

It is interesting that media and information literacy is seen as something “related” and “wider” than awareness-raising, when it could very well be seen as the core issue of the protection of minors in the online world.

When the *Recommendation on the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity* is finally revised in 2006, media literacy is strongly present. The Recommendation now calls on Member States to promote:

Action to enable minors to make responsible use of audiovisual and on-line information services, notably by improving the level of awareness among parents, teachers and trainers of the potential of the new services and of the means whereby they may be made safe for minors, in particular through media literacy and education programmes and for instance by continuous training within school education. (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2006a, p. 3)

The context is still of course the protection of minors, and the target groups are the same: teachers and parents. Education is singled out as an important area, and the Recommendation contains a whole Annex dedicated to possible media literacy actions. A bit disappointingly for media literacy advocates, these actions do not concern *general* media literacy actions but are instead restricted to actions that concern knowledge about possible risks and responsible use of the Internet, better knowledge about filtering techniques and hotline use – and information campaigns to achieve this goal.

In 2007 the *TVWF Directive* is revised, and renamed the *AVMS Directive*. Importantly, it provides a definition of media literacy in Recital 37:

Media literacy refers to skills, knowledge and understanding that allow consumers to use media effectively and safely. Media-literate people are able to exercise informed choices, understand the nature of content and services, and take advantage of the full range of opportunities offered by new communication technologies. They are better able to protect themselves and their families from harmful or offensive material. Therefore the development of media literacy in all sections of society should be promoted and its progress followed closely. (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2007, p. 5)

Described in this optimistic manner, media literate people sound like the ideal consumers for the new services of the 21st century. Not only are they able to choose the best way to use these services; they can also protect themselves (and their families) against harmful content. It is interesting that the Directive defines media-literate people as precisely “consumers” rather than citizens or audiences.

When it comes to strategy, the Directive (Recital 37, *ibid*) simply refers to the 2006 Recommendation, which, as we have seen, is very limited in scope and mainly concentrates on Internet safety. Developing media literacy in all sections of society requires a more comprehensive and general media literacy education policy, which the Directive seems to ignore. At any rate, it leaves it to the Member States to develop such a policy.

As for measurement, the Directive in Article 26 includes a reporting obligation for the Commission on the levels of media literacy in all Member States. We will return to this reporting and measurement exercise later.

One might conclude that the introduction of the concept of media literacy in EU documents from 2003 onwards seems more like a new rhetoric than a real policy. What had previously been called awareness-raising is renamed media literacy, but in essence amounts to informing about harmful content on the Internet. As for the Directive, the focus is much the same, in addition to the vision of the ideal consumer for the new online services, leading to market development and economic growth. In conclusion, the EU is still not in possession of a real policy on media literacy.

Cultural policy: heritage and audience development

The first two sections have dealt with media literacy within the context of the protection of minors. We will now show how it enters the EU political discourse from a different angle: cultural diversity and increasing the audience of European films.

The first EU document to mention media literacy from a purely cultural point of view is in fact the 2005 *Recommendation on Film Heritage*. This recommendation deals with film archives and the collection, preservation and restoration of heritage films. But it also has chapters on educational use and “professional training and film literacy” (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2005b, p. 4), which aims at making the archived films available for educational activities. In particular, this chapter calls on Member States to:

18. Promote the use of film heritage as a way of strengthening the European dimension in education and promoting cultural diversity;
19. fostering and promoting visual education, film studies and media literacy in education at all levels, professional training programmes and European programmes. (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2005b, pp. 4-5)

Cultural diversity is the goal of these two recommendations, and the purpose of media literacy is to increase the knowledge about the European film heritage, which is a goal in itself.

We find a slightly different approach in *The MEDIA 2007 Programme* supporting the audiovisual sector. The Programme decision of 15 November 2006 mentions terms related to media (and film) literacy without using the concepts. In connection to supporting cinema networks, it is a priority to support activities that “contribute to the development of educational and awareness-raising activities for young cinema-goers”. And in the festival scheme, the festivals will receive support for “initiatives for image education organised by festivals for young people, in particular in close cooperation with schools and other institutions” (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2006b).

These educational, awareness-raising, image-educational activities have a clear purpose: to create an audience for European films, especially amongst young people.

The policy: bringing it all together

The 2007 *Commission Communication on Media Literacy* in the digital environment is the first EU document to deal purely with media literacy. This Communication brings together the goals of the protection of minors and of culture and diversity. It also contains a definition of the concept of media literacy, which is dubbed the “European definition”:

Media literacy is generally defined as the ability to access the media, to understand and to critically evaluate different aspects of the media and media contents and to create communications in a variety of contexts. (Commission of the European Communities, 2007, p. 3)

The Communication tries to combine different policy objectives. Its introduction mentions both democratic participation and the take-up of new technologies as ways of strengthening the European economy. It places media literacy within the context of active citizenship and better knowledge, while pointing to its instrumental use for a more competitive knowledge economy. In trying to unite all the different purposes of media literacy within the EU, it somehow obscures the concept more than clarifying it. It seems that this vagueness has followed media literacy ever since.

The Commission points out a number of concrete actions in the Communication, making the policy more understandable. Firstly, the Commission intends to follow up the reporting obligation of the *AVMS Directive*. The Commission plans to launch a study in 2008, developing assessment criteria and standards to use in this assessment. Furthermore, it mentions a study on the current state of media literacy in Europe, which contains suggestions for how to increase the

levels of media literacy. One of the main tools is the exchange of good practices, and the Commission asks Parliament and the Council to support events devoted to spreading good practices. Finally, the Commission asks Member States to help improve the levels of media literacy, promote research and reporting, and develop codes of conduct and co-regulatory frameworks.

It seems that what the Commission hopes to achieve is systematic work in Europe to increase the levels of media literacy, mainly through the exchange of best practices, which might include teaching media literacy in schools (this is a matter of subsidiarity). These media literacy levels will then be measured every time the Commission delivers the report on the *AVMS Directive*. The Commission will also promote research and develop its policy, assisted by its Expert Group.

This Communication was followed by a *Recommendation* in 2009. It contains many of the same elements as the Communication, though in a more structured way. The main new element is the increased emphasis on school education – the Commission calls on Member States to open a debate on the inclusion of media literacy in curricula (Commission of the European Communities, 2009, p 3).

Today: audience development and media in society

Media literacy has been reinforced in the new *Creative Europe Programme*, as part of audience development, supporting:

activities aimed at promoting film literacy and at increasing audiences' knowledge of, and interest in, European audiovisual works, including the audiovisual and cinematographic heritage, in particular among young audiences. (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2013, p. 8)

Introducing specific support for European film literacy projects is a major step for EU policy within media literacy. For the first time, initiatives like film clubs and film education activities can receive support from the EU.

But film literacy is not media literacy; it is narrower and has only one objective, audience development – even if it will also have the cultural significance of teaching young people about films, which of course has a value of its own. Media literacy exists in the *Creative Europe Programme* – in the cross-sectoral strand where support is provided for:

Conferences, seminars and policy dialogue, including in the field of cultural and media literacy, promoting digital networking where appropriate. (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2013, p. 10)

It remains to be seen what kind of media literacy actions will be funded under the *Creative Europe Programme*.

The last document to be mentioned is the recent *Council conclusions on Audiovisual Policy*. These conclusions point to both the *AVMS Directive* and the

Creative Europe Programme. As concerns the Directive, the Council invites the Commission to support the assessment of media literacy levels in the EU. And as for the Programme, the film literacy initiatives will be assessed and disseminated (Council of the European Union, 2014).

Media literacy policy today seems to stand on two different feet: the role of media in society (protection, empowerment) and the aim of audience development. How this will be developed under the new Juncker Commission remains to be seen.

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Notes

1. I worked in this department from 1997 to 2005.
2. In Denmark, the Media Council for Children and Young People (*Medierådet for børn og unge*) was established in 1997 mainly to conduct film classification, but its remit was soon expanded. The Swedish Media Council (*Statens medieråd*) and its predecessor *Våldsskildringsrådet* (1990-2004) started working in this field in 1998.

Media Education in Greece

Antecedents and the New Challenges in a Time of Crisis

Kostas Voros

This chapter aims firstly to briefly outline the history of media education in Greece, and secondly to highlight the implications of the current situation of financial and political crisis in Greece on media education in the country.

Educational developments

Over the past 15 years or so, the school curriculum in Greece has undergone considerable restructuring, with certain measures having implications on media education.

In 1997, the all-day primary school was introduced. Though it was initially relatively unstructured, the pressure to establish new subjects turned this initiative into a more structured space with its own curriculum. By providing a space for novel subjects, the all-day school played a pivotal role in enabling some of them to make their way into the formal curriculum.

Since the 2002-2003 school year a new national curriculum has been in place, entitled the Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework. The interdisciplinary approach to the knowledge that lies at its core is exercised within the dedicated Flexible Zone of interdisciplinary and creative activities. The Flexible Zone takes three hours per week, and encourages pupils' experiential learning through cross-curricular activities and projects.

Currently, the education landscape is characterized by the ideological priorities of the coalition government. Characteristically, the Education Committee of the ruling New Democracy party outlines three domains as having particular importance in education: religion, technological development and private education.

At the same time, the Ministry of Education is implementing in education the provisions included in the memorandum Greece signed with the troika of lenders

in 2009: the rolling out of a strict inspection system; increased working hours; the merging of schools and classrooms, resulting in an increased number of students per class; and teaching staff lay-offs. The education priorities are clearly looking back to the past: tests, competition, an emphasis on attainment and achievement.

Media education in Greece

The first references to media and education in Greece can be traced to the late 1970s, with the publication of books looking mainly at children's television practices and consumption. Perdikopoulos's (1973) *Television and book: is the book threatened by television?*, the first relevant research published in Greece, was followed by publications by Ghizelis in 1976, Voltis in 1977, Papandreou in 1978, and Tsardakis in 1984 (references cited in Kourti, 2002). In these, recommendations were made to reduce the amount of time devoted to media, and to largely condemn them by adopting a religious and moral stance.

School developments

In the curriculum, references to media and children can be found within the Cross Thematic Curriculum Framework. A guideline for students in Year 6 stated the need "to understand the basic parameters of the ways the mass media affect and form attitudes and behaviours" (YPEPTH, 2001a, p. 89). This comes under the Thematic Unit of "role models and habit formation from the mass media: negative and positive influences, television education". These statements imply that a one-way, cause-effect relationship exists between children and media, emphasizing the effects of media on individuals whilst ignoring what people can do with media and how they interact with them.

In the *Flexible Zone* textbook, an activity that explores students' viewing habits asks them questions such as: "Are there moments when you feel like television is 'bombarding' you?" (YPEPTH, 2001b, p.70) and "Can you think of different pursuits instead of watching television?" (ibid, p.72). The correct answers are already implied in the way the questions are phrased. In the same textbook an essay by Vasilis Vasilikos (ibid, p.78), a prominent novelist, attempts a comparison between books and media in which he views "image" as a danger to literary culture, pointing to the superior value of books.

The first, and to date only, organized and large-scale programme to introduce media education in the Greek curriculum has been the Melina Project – Education and Culture, a joint initiative between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture that ran as an in-service training programme from 1995 to 2003. The programme's aim was to teach the arts in schools, but also to teach *with* the arts.

In contrast to the prevailing protectionist stance at the time, the approach towards media was open rather than defensive. Media were seen as a form of

art and as an instrument for communication and expression.

An examination of the documents (Melina Project, 2002) and workshop practices reveals that the preferred media were photography and video. Equally, it was thought that learning the filmic language would equip students with the ability to read films more thoroughly and hence lead them to a greater appreciation of film work. In this sense, analogies can be detected here with the British Film Institute's notion of cineliteracy (BFI, 2000).

In a later publication, Theodoridis (2008), in charge of the Melina Project's audiovisual expression section, reiterates his position regarding film as an art form, with the aim of film education bringing children into contact with the cinematic expression while also enabling them to consider films' ideological and aesthetic aspects. Theodoridis regards the task of acquainting children with the language of media as among the first (chronologically, but also in terms of importance) in media education. The article strongly advocates the need for practical work in media education.

Film festivals

The Thessaloniki Film Festival, as part of its educational activities, offers a programme for students to produce a short film over several weekends during the school year.

The Olympia Children's Film Festival, which has an orientation towards "the development of quality films aimed at children and young people in Greece" (Olympia Children's Film Festival, 2005), organizes a series of workshops for children during the festival, at which they are taught the basics of filmmaking.

Although these initiatives claim to promote learning about different kinds of films (see the Thessaloniki Film Festival's (2008) aim of developing programmes to promote media literacy in all its varieties), this claim is confined to what can be termed as art films. This excludes the vast majority of films children usually watch, which derives from popular culture.

This stance echoes a wider European tradition that sees film as part of the cultural heritage and regards film appreciation as the aim of film education. This view is often informed by the assumption that film – and indeed art film – is a superior form compared to other media (for more on this debate see Burn & Durran, 2007).

Moreover, approaching media production as an end in itself is rather restrictive. In the current thinking in media education, production is utilized to allow students to critically reflect on aspects of media, which then feeds back into creating new insights (Buckingham, 2003; Buckingham, Grahame & Sefton-Green, 1995, Burn & Durran, 2007). This aspect remains absent from the initiatives above.

Official agents

The Institute of Audiovisual Media (IOM), charged with the promotion of media education, adopted the view that media education is a way of promoting responsible citizenship:

Media education comprises the right ‘reading’ and ‘writing’ of the new media in order for citizens to make correct choices both as active users with the right of choice at an individual level and as members of a wider societal group. (IOM, 2008)

A focal point of the IOM’s initiatives was the protection of minors from the dissemination of harmful content on the Internet, stemming from a desire to “adopt a responsible stance towards the hail of the new media” (ibid).

As part of the recent reshuffling of the public sector in Greece and cuts in funding, the IOM was closed down in 2011. The remit of media education was handed over to the state broadcaster, ERT, which itself was then shut down in June 2013. It is unclear as yet whether the new channel that emerged will include media education in its remit.

In 2010, the Ministry of Education embraced a teachers’ initiative on television education and encouraged schools to undertake relevant projects.

The Television Education Network was disseminated to 120 schools, and relevant teaching material was created and distributed. However, the fact that it operated within the framework of Health Education raises concerns that the initiative’s underlying assumption is that children are in danger from the media –in terms of either health or ideological manipulation – and therefore that the task of media education is one of protection. Incidentally, some of the early initiatives related to media education, especially in the US but also in Taiwan (Voros, Lin, Kim & Fabbro, 2008), came through the framework of Health Education, taking as their starting point paediatricians’ worries about children watching television long hours and the consequences this practice might have. The Network’s statements confirm some of these concerns, as its aims include: “to encourage positive use of television; children to form quality criteria for the selection of television programmes; to achieve reduction in viewing hours; to inform parents and pupils about the negative effects of excessive viewing”.

Academic sector

Lately, universities have begun to include the subject of media education in their programmes. The Pedagogic Departments at the universities of Athens, Ioannina and the Aegean have relevant courses for trainee teachers. The Department of Communication and Mass Media at the University of Athens (2008) has established the Observatory for the Development of Media Literacy Programmes, a research and training centre which offers media literacy in-service training programmes for teachers. Their mission statement states that “media education is not confronta-

tion with media or teaching that indiscriminately all messages are misleading” (ibid, 2008). Clearly non-protectionist, this initiative can be regarded amongst the most articulated voices in the media education field in Greece.

The publication of books and articles related to children and media indicates that there is growing research in the field, informed particularly by the recent paradigm shifts. Aslanidou (2000) conducted research on television news with secondary school students and, in line with reception theories that see the audience as playing an active role in interpreting media messages, found that they can make informed critical judgements.

Paschalidis (2000) outlines the key points of a proposal for the introduction of media education in the Greek school system, which he embeds within the tradition of Cultural Studies and its teaching in school, as outlined in Buckingham and Sefton-Green (1994). He sees media education as grounded in three main principles: an extended conceptualization of literacy which includes the visual mode of communication; the making and creative aspect of media literacy as an essential feature; children’s experience as the starting point and acknowledgment of their popular culture and taste. This proposal, which adopts a less grandiose pedagogy, could form a sound basis for the teaching of media in Greece.

Recent theoretical developments in the field gain prevalence in the Greek context as well. Wide acknowledgment has been given to the need for a multiliteracies approach to teaching, which draws on the theoretical orientations outlined by the New London Group (2000). Invoking this, Hatzisavvidis (2005) argues that “... the school should aim to bring the students in contact with other meaning-making sources, other than the linguistic one such as visual, oral, architectural etc” (p .42). The examples cited, nevertheless, include written text combined with pictures, drawings and diagrams; the moving image is absent. In fact, this is symptomatic of where things currently stand: neither in the above nor in other similar proposals can one find any more detailed accounts for approaching image in the classroom.

Conclusions

Media addressed

Of all media, only film has been addressed so far in Greece, and then mainly what has been termed art film. Among key media concepts, such as those outlined in the Media education Curriculum Statement (Bazalgette, 1989), the emphasis is exclusively on media language whereas issues such as representation or audience have not featured. Lately, attention has been given to computer games and the Internet, with the focus largely on issues of safety rather than the creative use of them. These media are seen primarily as sources of potential danger and are therefore dealt with largely from a protectionist standpoint.

It therefore appears that there has been a move to a point where popular culture is no longer overtly criticized but rather ignored, as people are perplexed as to how to deal with it.

Trajectories

Reporting for UNESCO on media education globally, Domaille and Buckingham (2001) found that there has been a shift worldwide from inoculation to empowerment approaches. Having examined the discourses embedded in the initiatives outlined above, I would claim that this move has not fully settled in Greece. At best, there is an ambivalence regarding the aims of media education: calls for protection still prevail, whereas voices for critical awareness struggle to be heard. In any case, what the UNESCO report observes in relation to this point seems to ring true in the case of Greece: “Generally speaking, countries with a less well-established tradition of media education still seem to be informed by a perceived need to ‘protect’ young people from the media” (ibid, p.13). It appears as if the history of educational progression is repeating itself: there is a degree of (unavoidable?) determinism that “needs” to be followed in moving from defence to autonomy in media education. Trajectories from other national contexts such as India and France (Meyer, 1986) indicate that the histories and patterns of media education movement follow similar routes.

Current developments

This chapter concludes with some remarks on the challenges media education is facing in this time of financial and political crisis in Greece, and its future prospects.

On the official policy level, as indicated, it is unlikely that the current conservative administration will place media education among its priorities.

Indicatively, soon after the abrupt closure of the state television channel ERT on June 11, 2013, Failos Kranidiotis (2013), member of the Political Committee of the ruling New Democracy party, commented on the “Dimokratia” newspaper:

We need to restructure state television. Surely, for some time there will be fewer productions than before. The ones made, though, will have to serve the national identity, the Greek positions on national issues, to promote patriotism, to promote the heroes, values and culture of our people. It would be inconceivable for these productions to be concerned artistically, scientifically or journalistically with the over-promotion of anti-Hellenic and nihilistic minority views. [my translation] (n.p.)

The article clearly points to the close ideological grip the government is attempting to exercise on social and cultural life through the manipulation of the media with the exclusion of other voices.

Rather than promoting media education, the opposite is the case: earlier efforts have been halted. In 2011, the Ministry of Education assigned expert groups the task of redrafting the guidelines for a number of school subjects – among them media education. The media education expert group produced a thorough and detailed media curriculum (Theodoridis & Leonida, 2011), the first of its kind in Greece, which sadly was never implemented.

In my opinion, the looming crisis presents us with a unique opportunity to further the cause of media education. If ever there was a demand for media education provision, that demand is even more pressing now, given the challenges the country faces. I argue that media education can be an indispensable tool in opening up the dialogue on the societal issues that currently have relevance in the lives of students in Greece. Jan Blommaert (2014) describes the situation aptly:

The economic crisis which has affected Greece severely is accompanied by various narratives and rhetorics regarding the nature, the origin and the solutions concerning the financial crisis. These narratives, with which we have now been fully accustomed, differ significantly from earlier rounds of hegemonic rhetorical narrations of economy, politics and society and they raise plenty and important questions regarding power and its abuse in the modern world.

It is the task of media education to engage students with these new political and media discourses. Nevertheless, the prevailing political and ideological forces in the country resist the introduction of media education in the formal education system. What would be a way forward, then?

On a theoretical level, a critical engagement with the above issues of the kind Kellner and Share (2007, p. 59) describe is essential: “we argue that critical media literacy aims to ... deepen the potential of literacy education to critically analyse relationships between media and audiences, information and power.”

At the same time, I would argue that the media education movement has undergone a period of irresolute liberalism, and that it is imperative in the given conditions to try to reclaim some of its lost political edge:

Media education, is one of the few instruments which teachers and students possess for beginning to challenge the great inequalities in knowledge and power which exist between those who manufacture information in their own interests and those who consume it innocently as news or entertainment. (Masterman, 1985, p. 11)

Masterman’s assertion would be a useful starting point, although I would not entirely subscribe to the passivity assigned to audiences here. On this issue, we need to take into account D. Buckingham’s (1998) arguments on the politics of the classroom and his reservations regarding the power of critique. Media education should be taught not as indoctrination but at least as a counter-balance to the one-sided information that is currently prevalent.

What would such a framework entail in practice? Firstly, spaces need to be created in the curriculum from among the teachers. The framework of the Flexible Zone in particular is quite appropriate, as it is more structured and will allow media education to enjoy a nationwide spread.

Engaging students in media work in schools would include showing, making and discussing media, creating networks where good practice can be shown and exchanged, promoting the media in schools through competitions and workshops, and providing every possible opportunity for children to write in media in order to communicate and express themselves. The issues pertaining to the crisis, an all-enveloping issue in Greece right now, can offer rich material that relates to children's personal daily experiences. This could provide opportunities for children to use media as a vehicle to engage in discussions with a multiplicity of aims: critical analysis through examining media images and representations of the crisis, which would result in a better understanding of the situation (cognitive aims); narrating personal stories (expressive aims); reflecting on the issues of crisis, making it possibly less of a burden to talk about (psychological aims).

Children should be encouraged to present alternative perspectives that are not expressed in the mainstream media, and contextualize things in ways that traditional media would not. They should also be able to challenge stereotypes and debate what they see. Knowing how to "read" the media language makes one less likely to succumb to various kinds of propaganda.

As the school system has proven too resistant to intervene in, we need to also work outside the school environment to reach children elsewhere. The activities of the Karpos Centre (2014), for instance, are a good example of the work being carried out to successfully promote media education outside the formal education sector.

It is also vital for the media education movement to align itself with broader movements of positive change in education regarding issues such as equal opportunity, the encroachment of the profit motive, and the critique of marketization in education. Bridges should be built with other initiatives that share similar interests, such as peace education and anti-racist education, given the recent rise of fascism in the country.

Future directions

The situation in media education in Greece is fragmented and its direction unclear. The current situation is comprised of a mixture of approaches to media as an art form, as a transparent language not involving critical thinking, coupled with fears about manipulation that lead to views of media education as a way of protection.

Particularly at school level, there have been no initiatives concerning the introduction of media education, which would have involved an analytical curriculum and explicit pedagogy.

Moving the case of media education in Greece forward, therefore, calls for twofold action. Firstly, there is a need to conduct original research in the Greek educational context regarding children and media, as it has been argued that exploring youth media experience and understanding youth media culture are key themes of media education (Buckingham, 1998; Lavander & Tufte, 2003). In doing so, policy makers and media educators would acquire a firmer understanding of what children know about media, what their media needs are, and what should be taught. Secondly, it would be equally productive to look elsewhere, at the international level, for best practice and models of media education that could be transferred to the local context, always taking into account the specificities and priorities of the Greek education system and society.

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Media Education as an Important Part of Library Services in Poland

Agata Walczak-Niewiadomska

The development of technology capable of sending and receiving media messages, as well as a significant increase in access to various types of equipment, has made computers, tablets, game consoles, smartphones, etc., commonplace in homes all around the world. An extensive infrastructure network and the latest generation of equipment have made it increasingly easy to transfer knowledge in educational processes at every level. Paradoxically, however, the rapid development of technology and the growing group of citizens able to buy the cheaper devices have contributed to the identification of new research problems involving, among other things, heavy users of the Internet and computer games, and the creation of a group of excluded people who do not keep up with this rapid rate of change. With the rapid increase in numbers of the youngest Internet users, a need has arisen to teach them to safely navigate the Internet and use its resources responsibly.

A child entering the world of media, often in the first months of life but also later, when coming into contact with virtual media, now more than ever needs a guide who can designate a framework for the safe use of the media and be there to offer help and support at various stages of the process. Common sense suggests that such knowledge should be offered by the most important people in the child's life – parents and carers – but the reality (confirmed by many scientific studies) is often very different. Due to lack of time, interest or relevant knowledge, parents are not always able to fulfill this task. In this context, the operations of various institutions in contact with the child at various stages of his or her development, including public libraries, become extremely important. The current text discusses the capabilities of and challenges faced by libraries in the field of media education, offering examples of project implementation against the background of the initiatives undertaken so far in Poland.

Media education (in Poland, the terms “media literacy” and “media education” are used interchangeably) was introduced in the UK education system as early as the 1930s. Today, after many decades of technological change and defining the area of interest, the issue is usually defined as “the ability to competently communicate in all forms of media, print and electronic, manifested in the conscious use, understanding, analysis and critical evaluation of verbal visual and audio messages” (*Edukacja medialna. Wikipedia*, 2014; ‘my translation’). Today, skills allowing a conscious and critical reception of media messages and selective use of the mass media play a significant role in the practical aspects of media literacy.

In Poland, media literacy remains the field of interest of several research centers, particularly pedagogical and media institutes. However, in the past few years the topic has come to be very important in the area of LIS (Library and Information Science), closely linking to information literacy competence and setting new directions for the development of various types of libraries (public, school, academic).

The origins of media literacy and readership in Poland

In the Polish educational system, for many years media and information literacy were part of the Polish language curriculum. In 1946, education reforms established a definition of self-education and information retrieval skills; and in 1983, the role of the school library as part of the school dedicated to supporting the work of teachers was formalized. At that point the curriculum of reading and information training was introduced, making school librarians responsible for its implementation. At the end of the 20th century, this was transformed into a cross-subject educational path (Reading and media education). Changes made in the next reform of the education system (2009) brought, among other things, the cancellation of this path, which meant that the school library lost one of the most important elements of its work.

For several years, the sustained efforts have been carried out by communities associated with institutions of formal and informal education to develop standards and lists of desired communication skills at different stages of education. A result of this is the creation of their own tools, including a catalog of media and information competences (Modern Poland Foundation – *Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska*), developed within the framework of the Digital Future (*Cyfrowa przyszłość*) project, as well as a model of competences related to use of the Internet by children aged 9 to 13 years, built by a team within the Children of the Network (*Dzieci Sieci*) project.

Media literacy in the official regulations

The term *media literacy*, considered from the perspective of school education, primarily appears in the regulations of the Ministry of National Education. In the core curriculum for general education, it is recognized in the following:

Since the mass media play an increasingly important role in both social and individual life, every teacher should devote much attention to media literacy, that is to educate students for the proper reception and use of the media (*Regulation of Ministry*, 2014; ‘my translation’).

Unfortunately, as was once highlighted by researchers (Piotrowska & Rozkosz, 2014), the Ministry did not define how this remark was to be developed, or within which school subjects. This led to a multi-dimensional discussion in educational and scientific circles.

The issue of information and media literacy in relation to children, adolescents and adults has been more clearly present in Poland in recent years. On the National Council of Radio and Television website, we read that “media literacy in Poland is mainly managed by non-governmental organizations” (*Krajowa Rada*, 2014), but the effects of government participation in the discussion are already noticeable, as exemplified by the recent rise of the Media Signpost web portal, functioning within the structure of the NCRT (National Council of Radio and Television), a government body – which according to the Constitution of the Polish State – is to uphold the freedom of speech, the right to information, and the public interest in broadcasting. Its duties include determining the conditions of consignors of radio and television programs, issuing opinions on draft legislative acts and international agreements relating to radio and television, and organizing research content and the reception of radio and television programs (*Krajowa Rada*, 2014). In designing the website, the NCRT, adopted the following definition of media competences:

One of the most important goals [...] is undoubtedly the development of selective and profound media reception skills, as well as conscious participation in them in a creative and responsible way. The media consumer, understanding, among other things, mechanisms of creation and selection of information used in media, can not only effectively and safely use the media, that is critically evaluate the received content, including advertising or other commercial messages, but can also be an active participant in the modern world of media (*Drogowskasz medialny*, 2014; ‘my translation’).

Since 2013, media and information literacy has been one of the priorities of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, which was officially announced by grant competition for the organization of activities aimed at preparing for the conscious use of new media. Forty-six institutions with different institutional status

- public libraries, museums, community centers, research institutions and NGOs
- have received funding for the years 2014-2015 (*Ministerstwo Kultury*, 2014).

The activities of NGOs in the field of media literacy

A lack of optimal solutions in the field of media literacy in schools inspired the NGOs, which for several years have been actively joining efforts to broaden citizens' awareness and knowledge. An example is the New Media Foundation (*Fundacja Nowe Media*), which has led training and workshops for five years now in the field of media literacy in Poland, Belarus, Ukraine and Lithuania (*Fundacja Nowe Media*, 2014). Its most recognizable actions are the website for the Youth Multimedia Action (*Młodzieżowa Akcja Multimedialna – MAM*), and the knowledge competitions Forum of Scribblers and Media Olympics. It has also created a project dedicated to public libraries, designed to introduce libraries and librarians to media literacy (*MAM 2013 in the library*).

The New Media Foundation has presented *qmama* – a tool for creating multimedia newspapers and presentations for activities using the project method. The tool, used by students and teachers at hundreds of schools throughout the country, supports teaching teamwork and communication between students, and allows for the preparation of publications containing not only text and photography but also sound recordings and films. During meetings at schools, experts explain how to encourage the media to refer to issues important to the local community, and discuss the rules of journalistic ethics.

Image 1. Main site of the Youth Multimedia Action by the New Media Foundation



In 2014, the results of the previously mentioned project Children of the network, organized by the Institute of Culture in the City of Gdańsk through funds from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, were presented. Thanks to the

cleverly run promotional campaign presenting the results found by the research team, composed of experts from various centers in Poland, the problems of the youngest generation (aged 9-13 years) were published in the national media, initiating a discussion on the state of children's knowledge and skills.

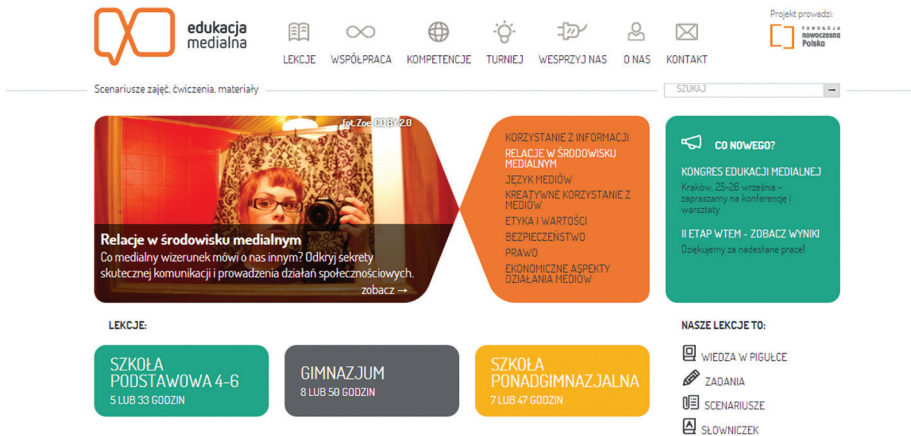
Equally important for raising awareness of the problems arising from the use of media among Poles is the activity of the Nobody's Children Foundation (*Fundacja Dzieci Niczyje*), established in 1991. It focuses on providing psychological, medical and legal assistance to parents and caregivers of abused children (*Fundacja Dzieci Niczyje*, 2014). One of the results of its activities in the field of media literacy is the website *Necio.pl*, run in cooperation with the Orange Foundation within the framework of the European Commission's Safer Internet program, aimed at children aged 4-6 years (*Necio*, 2014). The website, developed with great attention to graphics and functionality, includes educational materials for teachers in kindergarten or school as well as parents, for use in classes or at home to teach the safe use of the Internet. The aim of the project is to support carers of children of the age at which one enters the network environment, by providing them with ready-made lesson plans, multimedia materials, guides and other interesting items, such as suggestions for play (games, songs, poems). Without dismissing the efforts of the site's creators, even great ideas require appropriate promotion to succeed, which is unfortunately missing in this case. Offering evidence for this are the results of research conducted in 2013 by myself and PhD candidate Ewelina Makowska at the University of Lodz, on the role of the family in the media education of preschoolers in Poland in the context of Lodz (Walczak-Niewiadomska & Makowska, 2013). It was noted that only slightly over 11% of investigated parents were aware of the *Necio.pl* website, and a lack of knowledge transfer between kindergarten and carers concerning similar projects was observed.

Image 2. Main site of the *Necio* project



The activities of the Modern Poland Foundation, mentioned above, dedicated to supporting the development of the education system in the country, largely contributed to the acceleration of work to define the framework and standards of media literacy in Poland. The aim of the project initiated by MPF Digital Future (*Cyfrowa Przyszłość*, 2014) was to develop a program of media and information literacy for schools and institutions involved in non-formal education (libraries, community centers). The work was conducted in two stages – after the creation of a directory of media and information competences setting out categories of competence by age group for the first time in Poland, a *Media Literacy* website containing teaching materials to be used by teachers and other educators (publications, exercises and lesson plans) was launched. At this website one can find over 150 lessons for older classes in primary, middle and high school (10-18 years). Currently, work is being done to supplement the content of the materials for children of preschool age and classes 1-3 of primary school (3-9 years) (*Edukacja medialna*, 2014).

Image 3. Main site of the *Edukacja Medialna* web service



The tradition of teaching media literacy in school

The national survey conducted in 2010 on media literacy in Poland showed that 73% of respondents believed the school should be responsible for teaching Media Literacy, and 52% felt the obligation to provide knowledge should also rest on the family. These conclusions were not particularly surprising, given the long tradition of formal education institutions in the transfer of similar knowledge. By 2008, the *Reading and media education* path was an integral part of the curriculum in primary school, largely implemented by school librarians in special lessons. The removal of the path through the Ministry of Education regulations and the shift of its elements to other subjects met with a sharp reaction from teachers and librarians, but unfortunately their many protests did not lead

to its reinstatement in the core curriculum. Currently, media education is not a separate subject in school; instead, the core curriculum recommends that teachers pay “a great deal of attention to media education; that is, educate students in the proper reception and use of the media” (*Regulation of Ministry*, 2014, p. 2). How does this work in practice? Among the proposals regarding where and when to meet the challenges of media education are ideas including setting aside two additional hours per week for this purpose, offering additional journalism classes, or creating special media classes.

Media literacy outside the school

Appreciating the contribution of professionals pursuing media elements in a formal education program, it is impossible not to notice that the focus is on a fairly narrow group of users. For this reason, more and more frequently the literature and research postulate introducing elements of media literacy at public libraries, which, due to their wide profile of services and focus on the support of all citizens regardless of age, have a special predisposition for teaching groups of all readers. One of the most convincing arguments against this option is that media literacy in most countries is likely to be covered at all levels of formal education. Such an approach, however, discriminates against other groups of media consumers who, due to age, remain outside the formal education institutions. Speaking particularly of children aged 0-6 years and those aged 18+, the best solution to this situation is of course an extensive network of public libraries in Poland (which in 2012 numbered 8,182 in the country) (*National Library*, 2014) that attempt to meet the most important criteria for accommodating all types of users through continual modernization.

Taking into account the needs of such a diverse community, appropriate programs are being developed, adjusted to the level of perception and requirements of each group of recipients of media content. For classes held at the public library, there are three paths of action:

- Media education for young children (0-6 years old): introduction to the world of technology through learning how to operate and familiarize oneself with devices.
- Education for the family: with an emphasis on the attitudes and skills of parents in transmitting knowledge about Internet safety to their children (from the youngest to teenagers).
- Education for everyone: focusing on tips regarding the use of technology and the Internet (mainly with programs available for those aged 50+).

It should be noted that elements of these paths have already been implemented in the Polish public libraries, especially in relation to the activities for seniors and children of preschool age, but do not generally go beyond the specific facility.

Libraries should instead be part of a broader schedule of initiatives for media education, offering elaborated classes on a national scale. Examples of the public libraries' activity in the field of media literacy can often be found on the Internet. They are not usually part of a comprehensive plan including, e.g., all schools in the province, but are rather the result of the commitment, knowledge and experience of specific librarians. For instance, in June 2013 the Łask branch of the Public Library for Children organized a workshop for facility's preschooler patrons. Using the content of the *Necio.pl* website and the Klanza method, librarians worked to give the children hands-on knowledge about network security (*Bezpieczny Internet*, 2013).

Particular attention should be given to the activities of Polish *mediateks*, offering equipment and staff training to provide services in the field of media education; however, as indicated by existing implementations of programs and activities, such services are becoming increasingly frequent in the offerings of other facilities with basic equipment (e.g. computers with Internet access, multimedia projectors). The mediatek is a relatively new type of public library in the Polish context, dedicated to children and youth. The first ones were created at the beginning of the 21st century in Olsztyn (*Planeta 11*, 2014) and Wrocław (*Mediateka*, 2014a), thanks to a collaboration between the Municipal Public Libraries and the German Bertelsmann Foundation. Over the next decade a few others were launched, filling a unique function in the local community (Opole (*Mediateka*, 2014b), Zielona Góra (*Góra Mediów*, 2014), Warsaw (*Mediateka Start Meta*, 2014)). Their activities and mission largely managed to demystify the stereotype of the library – perceived by many citizens as well as the government as an unattractive and static place – which was confirmed by the announcement that more mediateks would be built all around Poland.

In Wrocław's MultiCentrum 1 by Mediatek, there are currently two types of classes in the family offering: *A child in the world of media* and *Family meeting in MultiCentrum*. *A child in the world of media* is an educational course for children aged 4–5 years and their carers. Educators propose games and tasks that teach logical thinking and aid in remembering numbers, letters and notes. These classes are especially intended for children who do not attend preschool. *Family meeting in MultiCentrum* is a program for children aged 5–9 years as well as their parents and grandparents. The program leaders prepare multimedia presentations, educational websites and various multimedia tasks for participants. Children and their carers work with the graphic programs Corel Painter Classic and Kai Super Goo, and then build moving constructions with K'nex blocks (*Multicenters*, 2014).

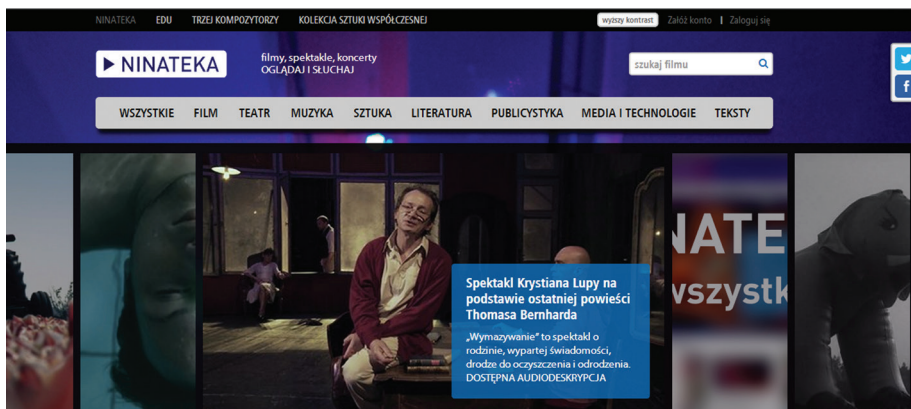
Since 2010, BiblioCamp (*BiblioCamp*, 2014) has been held annually, a project conducted by the Provincial and Municipal Public Library in Gdańsk. This educational and cultural project presents interesting and valuable initiatives in the area of new media, especially the Internet, and blogs, portals and other Internet initiatives related to Gdańsk play a special role. An important element

of the project is workshops that help participants gain practical skills and encourage creative use of the opportunities offered by virtual reality. BiblioCamp consists of three thematic modules: *City in the network*, *Culture in the network* and *Children for the network*. Many of the meetings and workshops are held at the Manhattan Library in Gdańsk (*Biblioteka Manhattan*, 2014), one of the city branches and mediateks in Poland, located in a shopping center.

Supporting actions

The reorganization of library services for the introduction of new programs requires professional support, which appears to come from both governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Thanks to the research activities and publications of these organizations, in recent years teachers and librarians have gained access to publications and multimedia materials to support their activities. They are usually issued on free licenses, which naturally makes them easier than ever to find on Internet sites, and thus more useful. Among recently announced programs are short videos about safe use of the Internet, implemented by the Information Society Development Foundation (*Bezpieczny Internet w bibliotece*, 2014). Publications in the aftermath of a study on the media in the lives of children and their competences are very helpful, as is a rich catalog of sources related to media literacy, found on foundations' and projects' websites (Tuominen & Kotilainen, 2012; Geryk et al., 2013; *Przewodnik*, 2014). With the launch of the Media Education service, teachers and cultural workers have gained an extremely easy-to-use access to teaching materials ready for use at a school, library or other educational institution. The world of media, film, animation, culture and the arts has also introduced Ninateka (*Narodowy Instytut*, 2014) – a service offered by the National Audiovisual Institute, containing a collection of movies, plays and concerts supplemented with lesson plans and exercises prepared for teachers.

Image 4. Main site of the Ninateka project



Summary

Experiences in many countries show that the richer the society and the related increase of the usability of electronic devices, the more it needs the support of and education for appropriate attitudes in the use of media resources. This extremely important assertion, frequently cited by experts, is gaining interest in legislative circles, as evidenced by the annual increase of the number of initiatives, workshops and training programs.

Libraries, regardless of which groups of readers they serve when it comes to age, beliefs or attitudes, will certainly have to pay greater attention to media education. Despite the various difficulties faced by teachers, educators and animators, we observe a high level of interest in the problem, in both formal and informal areas of education. For several years now, a marked increase can be noted in the number of publications and projects aimed at developing better standards and solutions in the field of media literacy in Poland. Not without significance is also the greater than ever commitment of the government, which has come to appreciate the relationship between students' media literacy and their future skills at all stages of education, corresponding with the European concept of "lifelong learning".

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Four Scenarios to Consider Regarding the Future of Media Education

Patrick Verniers

While the necessity and urgency of Media Education “for all” is now the subject of broad consensus around Europe, it remains difficult to identify its future effective integration in educational systems. Built around a diversity of practices, models and competences, Media Education today is emerging as a specialized and specific educational field. Several scenarios are possible for framing and thinking the future. From a transversal approach to a stand-alone disciplinary development, four main scenarios can be identified to help in thinking about the pathways to achieving effective Media Education for all citizens.

An emerging specialized field

Media Education is often perceived as an emerging field, combining different perspectives and based on a community of educational practices. At the crossroads of communication and education sciences, however, it is still experiencing some difficulties being acknowledged as a specialized field in both academic and education policy arenas.

The idea of building scenarios for the future development of Media Education does not imply an intent to predict what will happen. Neither does it claim to give an exact picture of the actual implementation status of Media Education; a number of recent studies and projects, such as EMEDUS (<http://www.eumedus.com/index.php/reports/reports-drafted-from-uab>) and ANR TRANSLIT (<http://ppemi.ens-cachan.fr/doku.php>), have already achieved this.

Scenario 1. A structured “standalone” discipline

The first scenario can be defined as a classical disciplinary approach. With a school system still largely organized around a set of autonomous disciplines, this scenario has the advantage of being easily implemented: simply by adding a new discipline to existing ones.

The advantage of this scenario is that it offers the possibility to develop a coherent and established curriculum, able to develop core competences in a pedagogical continuum, from elementary to upper secondary school. It is also a seductive scenario, as the discipline development will guarantee equal access for every citizen to acquire media literacy competences.

The problem of this scenario, however, is linked to the school system’s capacity to add a new discipline to existing ones. The school timetable is not expandable, and the crucial question comes immediately: if we add a new discipline, which one has to be removed?

A major risk related to this scenario is that Media Education could be locked up in a “small piece” of discipline, added to the others. Fundamentally, Media Education needs a cross-disciplinary approach as well as time and space to be sustainable.

The interesting aspect of this scenario is closely linked to the conception of Media Education: if media literacy competences engage technical, informational and social areas, integrating analysis and production competences, the limits of the school timetable capacities will quickly become evident; it will be very difficult to develop a large educational project within a single “standalone” discipline.

Following the same idea, a locked-up Media Education also means that it will be under the charge of a single teacher (even if he/she is specialized), avoiding any liability for the other teachers.

Some countries have tried this scenario in recent decades, implementing a specific disciplinary approach at different levels, which ultimately disappeared with the momentum of a school reform.

Scenario 2. An integrated and transversal development

Considering that Media Education needs a multidisciplinary approach, this scenario involves all the educational actors. Several disciplines will have to play a role in the development of media competences for learners, with some naturally more involved: the social sciences, history, economy, language, literature, etc.

With this approach, learners are engaged at several levels in Media Education learning activities, with the specific added value of each discipline. Teacher training is therefore a crucial element of implementation: both initial or in-service training in Media Education needs to be developed to empower teachers in establishing links between their specific field and Media Education.

This scenario constitutes the basis of a transversal approach, based on Media Education projects that can engage combined learning activities.

The most problematic issue regarding this scenario is the “sprinkling additive” effect inside the school system. As Media Education is the responsibility of a large range of teachers and educators, no one is officially in charge of it. This could lead to only a small involvement of everyone at the school.

The curricular coordination between the different learning programmes is also a challenge: a transversal approach needs a high level of coordination to build a homogenous and progressive learning.

Scenario 3: A project-oriented integration

This scenario intends to develop Media Education at the crossroads of school and society. Based on specific projects, handled by the learners themselves, Media Education is conceived as an open space and a citizenship experience.

Media creation and production pedagogies challenge the school system from inside.

From this perspective, the Media Education is not only managed by the teachers but also actively involves outside actors from the social environment: civil society, NGOs, youth organizations, cultural organizations, community media, etc.

This scenario is positioning Media Education as an open space where learners can invest in and develop media competences in close interaction with society, but also as a place where knowledge and disciplinary learning can be integrated around specific communicative projects.

Of course, this kind of integration is not easy to manage and has to face a kind of resistance by the school system to operate projects developed in close interaction with the environment. The risk of jeopardizing the school can be seen as a major constraint.

Scenario 4: A “meta” discipline

From this perspective, Media Education is conceived as a new way to access the emerging knowledge society. This scenario starts from the idea that school is no longer the place where knowledge is delivered, but rather where the learner develops his/her capacities to access, critically understand, and efficiently use the networked, mediated knowledge available online.

Media Education is built around a set of core informational, technical, and social competences that deserves a large range of disciplines. This central methodological framework will be articulated to every learning process.

This perspective requires a school system evolution that implies a completely new learning configuration, in which Media Education will play a central role.

Media Education has been built up over time as an autonomous domain with its own tools and methods... a "momentum" that still has to find ways of effectiveness inside the school system. There are multiple alternative scenarios that can be built by mixing and bridging those presented here; the idea of this brief scenario analysis is to offer a method of projection for considering alternative possible outcomes for Media Education.

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