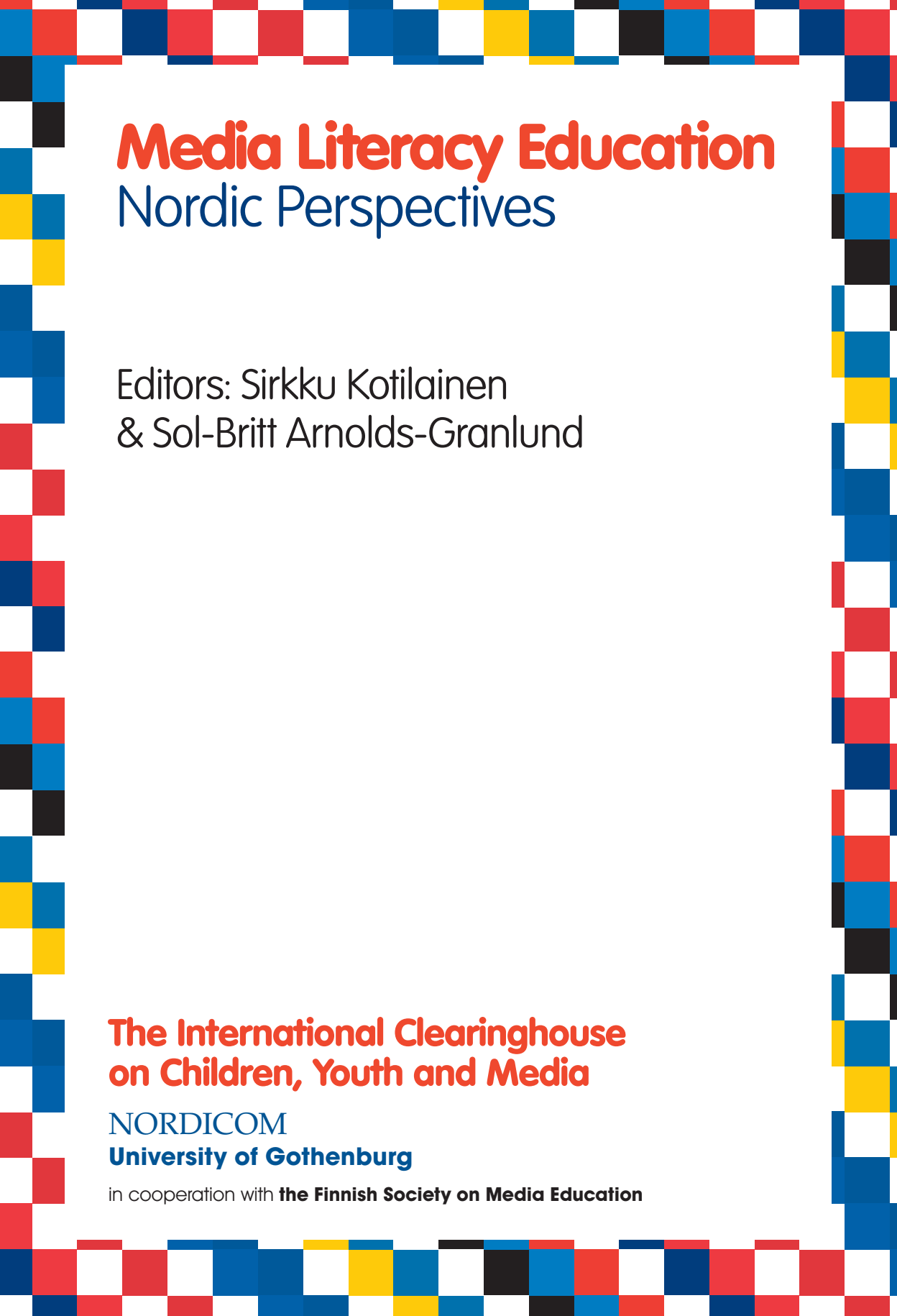




Media Literacy Education Nordic Perspectives

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& Sol-Britt Arnolds-Granlund

**The International Clearinghouse
on Children, Youth and Media**

NORDICOM
University of Gothenburg

in cooperation with **the Finnish Society on Media Education**

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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.

Nordicom is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and 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 a *newsletter*. 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

Media Literacy Education

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Nordic Perspectives

Sirkku Kotilainen & Sol-Britt Arnolds-Granlund (eds)

NORDICOM

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ISBN 978-91-86523-00-8

The Nordic Ministers of Culture have made globalization as one of their top priorities, unified in the strategy: “Creativity – the Nordic response to globalization”. The aim is to create *a more visible Nordic Region, a more knowledge-based Nordic Region* and *a more prosperous Nordic Region*. This publication is part of “Creativity – the Nordic response to globalization”.

Published by:

Nordicom

University of Gothenburg

Box 713

SE 405 30 Göteborg

in cooperation with the Finnish Society on Media Education

Cover by: Karin Persson

Printed by: Litorapid Media AB, Göteborg, 2010

Environmental certification according to ISO 14001

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Introduction

Insights to Nordic Research on Media Literacies

Sirkku Kotilainen & Sol-Britt Arnolds-Granlund

The societies and cultures of today, especially in the Western countries, are mediated and digitally converged. This means, among other things, that the boundaries between what have been called traditional and digital media are increasingly blurred. By means of this digital media, the information society has gradually emerged replacing the industrial society. Unlike this publication's researchers, most Nordic children and young people have lived in digitally mediated cultures their entire lives.

Digital culture offers different relationships with media to the ones that have existed earlier. For example, media¹ now offers access to publicity more than ever, especially by means of the Internet. Media content and media use also blur the boundaries between childhoods, youth, and maturity as users can already be formulated when they are toddlers. For these kinds of reasons, needs for enhancing media literacy are more prevalent than ever before, both in a wider global context and a Nordic, western one, in particular.

Digital agency is needed in information societies. This agency implies skills and knowledge about how media work and how one can participate through media. Globally, enhancing media literacy is related to aspects of Human Rights, especially to the Rights of the Child, including possibilities for safe media use and participation, i.e. the right to have one's voice heard through the media. This is an important aspect of social responsibility for media environments in which children and young people live and in which media literacy is enhanced. Growing to become a media literate person would mean being empowered in one's life and in society, locally and globally. In this publication, current definitions of media literacy and evaluations of educational case studies from Nordic viewpoints are presented.

During recent years, there have been important policy efforts for developing media literacy education around the world. One milestone has been the UN Alliance of Civilisations Media Literacy Clearinghouse (www.aocmedialiteracy.org/), "conceived as a participatory global repository of information, resources, and good practices relevant to Media Literacy Education, Media Education Policy and Youth Media". On this site publications can be downloaded and

links to national organizations can be found in several languages. Furthermore, the International Clearinghouse for Children, Youth and Media at NORDICOM has been putting forward initiatives on children and media, and media literacy education for several years and has also published global insights on these subject areas. The aim is to broaden the academic view by focusing on studies from non Anglo-American countries, and thus move away from studies that have formed the mainstream since the beginning of media literacy education (for more see Erstad in this volume). This publication belongs to an effort bringing the Nordic studies on media literacy education in a global sight and discussions and shows how lively and multiple research on Media Literacy and education is in Nordic countries.

This publication is the result of Nordic collaboration and joint efforts. The fundamental aim and sincere intention of the writers has been to scrutinize the field of media education in general and of media literacy in particular. The outcome is presented in the form of thirteen articles, which have been passed the requirements, starting from the application for a paper at the first Nordic conference on media literacy education ever, titled as *medialiteracy.info*, in 2007 in Vasa, Finland. The conference had participants from 16 countries around the world. It was organized by the Finnish Society on Media Education, an association which was established by researchers and practitioners two years earlier (see more www.mediaeducation.fi). The conference was organized with the funding of the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Finnish Ministry of Education. This collection of articles is published in collaboration with NORDICOM and the Finnish Society on Media Education.

The Nordic countries include Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, geographically situated in the North of Europe. These countries have a lot in common culturally, but they have many differences as well, for example regarding the development of and challenges posed by media literacy education. The articles are written from different perspectives and various cultural angles, each of them shedding light on the field of media education.

The publication has two main parts, the first one titled: *Children, Young People and Media Literacies*, where media literacy is discussed on a more general level in relation to children and media. The second part, *Media Literacy Education – Developments in the Nordic Countries*, takes on a more specific educational perspective.

The first article, *Media Literacy and Education – The Past, Present and the Future* by Ola Erstad, University of Oslo, Norway serves as a grand opening for the publication by discussing media literacy in a historical and cultural context, with a special focus on the educational setting. Erstad raises the somewhat demanding question of why issues of media literacy and media education are in a marginal position in school curricula and school activities even though the implications of the digital turn for media education are significant.

From this broad start Ingunn Hagen, University of Trondheim, Norway, in *Children and Young People in a Changing Media Environment: Some Challenges*, puts focus on media research and how children and young people are

portrayed as audiences and users in this context. Hagen presents two portraits of adolescents to illustrate how informants may position themselves as media users. She suggests that the development of media education and the promotion of media literacy should be informed by a methodologically and theoretically based understanding of children and young people's media habits.

In a further piece of research on media education on a general level, Sol-Britt Arnolds-Granlund, Åbo Akademi University, Finland, in *Conceptual Considerations in Media Education*, hints at the need for clarification with regard to concepts used. She brings forth a number of concepts that emerge within the media-pedagogical field, and in the manner of a wittgensteinian language game demonstrates the meaning that both the intra-linguistic and the inter-linguistic concept investigations have for the understanding of media-pedagogical research. Although the article at the outset is a matter of Finnish concern with two official languages (Finnish and Swedish), the issue is well known globally. After now having considered the topic on a general level the following two articles will focus more specifically on media literacy as a practice and competence.

In *Media Literacy as a Focal Practice* the Finnish researchers Reijo Kupiainen, University of Tampere and Sara Sintonen, University of Helsinki, look beyond abilities, skills, and competencies regarding media literacy. They propose more of the types of participatory practices that they call focal. Kupiainen and Sintonen argue that these kinds of practices do not involve any critical aspects of media literacy and media education, nor is it a question of "media education 2.0" but one of media education in relation to participatory digital culture. This is also the basis for future media education.

In the final article of the first part of the publication, *Constructing Media Literacy as a Civic Competence*, Niina Uusitalo, University of Tampere, Finland examines the construction of media literacy as a civic competence from theoretical and methodological points of view. The aim of this article is not to deny that media literacy may boost an individual's confidence and competence as a citizen. However, Uusitalo points out that defining media literacy as a civic competence is very much a discursive effort. Emphasizing media literacy as an essential civic competence means participating in the construction of ideal citizenship.

In the second part, *Media Literacy Education – Developments in the Nordic Countries*, the publication takes a turn from the general level and focuses in on educational issues. The articles of this part mainly focus on instructional issues but deal with classroom research and curricular issues as well.

The discussion about civics in the first part continues here, now taking an instructional perspective. In *Civic Media Education Supports a Public Voice for Youths* the Finnish authors Sirkku Kotilainen, Finnish Youth Research Network/ University of Jyväskylä and Leena Rantala, University of Tampere argue that the role of public media production has not been paid enough attention in civic pedagogic settings. The article is based on two follow-up studies which show that youth citizenship can be strengthened with youth civic participation, including media production, audiences through media publicity, and pedagogy understood as a learning community.

Mapping Filmmaking across Contexts: Portraits of Four Young Filmmakers in Scandinavia is based on a collaborative research project by Øystein Gilje, University of Oslo, Norway, Lisbeth Frølund, University of Aarhus, Denmark, Fredrik Lindstrand, Stockholm University, Sweden and Lisa Öhman-Gullberg, Stockholm University, Sweden. The authors aim to understand how, why, and where young filmmakers in Scandinavia find resources for filmmaking. While all of the youngsters appear to use different learning contexts for filmmaking, whether formal, non-formal or informal, they position themselves differently. They conclude with a model for mapping young filmmakers' learning paths and positions.

In *Media Education – Between Theory and Practice* Ole Christensen, University College of Copenhagen and Birgitte Tufte, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark, discuss a broad media- and information education approach. They present two models; the first is the so-called Zigzag model that has been used for years in relation to traditional media, and the second the Typhoon model, used in relation to multimedia. The article is completed by project examples and ends with a discussion about the future of media education.

Creativity in Media Education: Merging Different Mindsets is the article written by Stefán Jökulsson, University of Iceland, for this publication. He shows how Eastern philosophy can shed light on creativity in general, as well as on students' media production in educational settings. Two Western mini-stories, told by a media educator and a visual artist, are put up against the ideas of three Taoist or Buddhist writers. In conclusion no-action is considered as important as action, no-thinking as important as thinking and intuitive insights as valuable as logical reasoning.

Kadri Ugur and Halliki Harro-Loit, University of Tartu, Estonia, provide, in *Media Literacy in the Estonian National Curriculum*, a critical analysis of the curriculum and discuss the possibilities of implementing components of media literacy into it. They conclude that the implementation of media literacy into the national education policy would be a multi-dimensional process that should include the development of the national curriculum, teacher education in accordance to the in-service training, and various projects that support adult-education.

In her article *Teachers Using an Expanded Text Concept and Media Pedagogy for Children with Dyslexia* Karin Forsling, Karlstad University, Sweden, presents a case study from the teacher's point of view. Integrating aesthetics, media literacy, and ICT in a project, teachers describe and reflect upon their progress. In her study Forsling observed that working with an expanded text concept affects both children and adults in view of personal progress and self-insight.

Finnish Media Education and the Israel-Palestinian Conflict – What Did We Learn on the Crossing Borders Project? is written by Mari Maasilta, University of Tampere, Finland. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the theme of the project that involved Danish, Israeli, Palestinian, and Finnish teachers. One of the specific objectives was to develop together and share media and global education materials between all the schools involved in the project. Special attention is paid to the learning experiences of the students, whether they

developed a critical attitude with regard to media and their own professional roles during the project.

The publication ends by looking at the world from a global perspective. In *Global Mediagraphy – A Teaching Method in Media Education*, Soilikki Vetteranta, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway, claims that even though the globalization of media and communications is an important subject matter at universities, the teaching methods are not well developed. In this study she tests a method, *Global Mediagraphy*, on her masters' students. Her aim was to make a connection between abstract globalization theories and concrete societal, historical, and cultural experiences in the students' families, and to measure these against the backdrop of contemporary media development over four generations. She concludes by claiming that students can gain better insight into the globalization process by writing their own family chronicles in light of contemporary epoch-making events.

The final words of the publication are provided by Per Lundgren, director of the 2010 World Summit on Media for Children and Youth to be held in Karlstad Sweden. In his conclusion he asks how recent international Media Literacy Education policy breakthroughs can contribute to strengthening pedagogical praxis with geopolitical relevance in a cultural context? From the Nordic viewpoint he suggests that these countries should continue to cooperate in developing Media Literacy Education in the Nordic community and in more local, national policies.

Finally, thank you to those who have participated in producing this publication. Firstly we want to thank all the authors. Thank you for your efforts and for being patient in revising and re-revising your texts. We also want to thank our Nordic editorial board, professors Ola Erstad, Birgitte Tufte, Lasse Högberg and director Per Lundgren, who have supported the editing of the publication. Your support has been priceless. M.Ed. Tina Holms needs a very special thank you for the coordination of the editorial work. Finally, we wish to warmly thank NORDICOM and the Finnish Society on Media Education which have made this publication possible.

Jyväskylä and Vaasa, March 2010

Sirkku Kotilainen Sol-Britt Arnolds-Granlund

Note

1. Our definition of media in this publication is broad, including print, audiovisual, and digital media. Mostly in educational contexts in the articles meanings of the media concept are crossed and mixed.

Part I

Children, Young People and Media Literacies

Media Literacy and Education

The Past, Present and Future

Ola Erstad

Abstract

Media education in the Nordic countries is of special interest due of its long history. However, it has remained in a marginal position in school curricula and school activities. The aim of this article is to place present discussions on media literacy into a broader historical and cultural context with a special focus on the educational setting. One key question today is to which extent developments in digital media represent a change in perspectives on mediation and media literacy. The article will explore some issues and developments within media education, with an emphasis on the Nordic countries and especially some recent developments in Norway. In addition, the article discusses the implications of the digital turn for media education today. The overall objective is to discuss the rationale for media education and media literacy in schools, reflecting on some developments, possibilities, and challenges in this area today.

Keywords: media literacy, media education, mediation, curriculum development, digital turn

Over the last thirty years media education and media literacy have become increasingly interesting as knowledge domains. The main task of this subject area is to make explicit and reflect upon the impact of contemporary media culture, especially the communicative processes of both analogue and digital media. Media education is the only academic subject area taught in schools where the book is not the main medium used for learning, but rather a broad set of different media are utilized. Media literacy, a key term within media education, is also seen as an interrelation and bridging between what kids do with media in their leisure time and as the outcome of organized learning activities in schools. In recent years the concept of media literacy has become more and more prevalent in policy initiatives around the world, in research projects, and in educational practice.¹

Developments in the Nordic countries are of special interest due to the prevalent access to technologies in every part of these societies, especially within schools, and that media education has a long history in these countries. Still,

media education and media literacy has never gained a strong hold within these school systems. The aim of this article is to place present discussions on media literacy into a broader historical and cultural context with a special focus on the educational setting. Two important research questions arise as a part of this. Even though there have been many initiatives in the Nordic countries during the last decades, issues of media literacy and media education have remained in a marginal position in school curricula and school activities, why is that? The second question deals with the extent to which digital media represent a change in perspectives on mediation and media literacy.

In the first section of this article my understanding of the key concepts and the importance of these concepts for research will be presented. The next section will explore some issues and developments within media education, with an emphasis on the Nordic countries and especially some recent developments in Norway that are of general interest. The last section will look more closely at the implications of the digital turn for media education today. The overall focus of this article is then to discuss the rationale for media education and media literacy in schools, and reflect on some developments, possibilities, and challenges in this area today.

Mediation and Media Literacy

Media literacy is often defined within the broader concepts of mediatization, globalization, and commercialization, and is also linked to developments of the information or knowledge society. The all-embracing question is: What is needed in order to be a literate person in the 21st Century? This question can be approached by looking into two broad concepts that transcend specific media themselves, but which relate to meaning-making and learning. That is the concepts of mediation and literacy.

In a general sense the term mediation can be associated with the objectification of symbolic meaning in time and space as part of socio-historic development. This term highlights the importance of studying the tools and resources used for human development in social practices. Any culture incorporates a number of different tools, or what many call artifacts (Wartofsky 1979). In order to study a culture you need to first grasp the knowledge and ideas built into the developments of certain tools or artifacts. Development of material resources goes hand in hand with the development of ideas and intellectual knowledge (Säljö 2005).

A key concept in writings on this interrelationship is mediated action (Wertsch 1998). Transformations of mediated action can be seen in the introduction of new cultural tools such as the calculator and the computer, and the controversies these developments raise among educationalists.

One could focus on the emergence and influence of a new mediational means in sociocultural history where forces of industrialization and technological

development come into play. An important instance of the latter sort is what has happened to social and psychological processes with the appearance of modern computers. Regardless of the particular case or the genetic domain involved, the general point is that the introduction of a new mediational means creates a kind of imbalance in the systemic organization of mediated action, an imbalance that sets off changes in other elements such as the agent and changes in mediated action in general. (ibid. p. 43)

The point to infer from this is that modern technologies are important cultural tools to take into consideration, and that they have broad cultural and social implications. In this sense new technologies cannot only be seen as a continuation of old technologies, what some might describe as remediation (Bolter & Grusin 1999), but also as something transforming the way we create knowledge and meaning, communicate and interact. In media education the focus has been on the role of modern media both on a macro, meso and micro level. The aim has been to understand the media and their developments per se, and also to analyze their implications on social life and cultural development.

The conceptual development of literacy and technology goes back to the 'New Literacy Studies' of the 1970s and 1980s. Several researchers at that time (see for example Street 1984, Graff 1979) were critical of the conception of literacy as a neutral set of skills, what Brian Street (1984) describes as 'the autonomous model of literacy', where literacy, seen as a set of neutral skills, can be used in different contexts and for different purposes to complete a set of tasks. The 'New Literacy Studies' expanded this limited notion of literacy to take account of socio-cultural influences (see for example Scribner and Cole 1981).

The term literacies emerged to signal the different ways people use language and different systems of representation in social practices. As stated by Pahl and Rowsell; "Literacy as decoding and encoding without consideration of context belies the complex nature of reading and writing. When we read and write, we are always doing it in a certain place for a certain purpose" (2005: 3). The consequence was that the concept of literacy was opened up to include interaction with different text forms and studying them in different social practices (Barton 1994). Similar influences can be traced to studies of how children and youth use different media. Within media education in schools, the term media literacy has been used to indicate the need to teach children about the social and cultural influences of different media in our society (Tyner 1998, Buckingham 2003). The term media literacy builds on these conceptions and is then linked to the development of information and communication technologies and modalities.

In this sense the concept of mediation is a key issue in media education, indicating the different mediational processes we are involved in, and the different cultural tools and media that are part of our culture. The aim within media education and media literacy is then to enable students to reflect on the implications of such cultural processes and the implications of different media, i.e. mediating the media.

International Discussions on Media Literacy and Education

In a special issue on media literacy from 1998, the editor of *The Journal of Communication*, Alan Rubin, starts by contemplating the following: "For several decades we have been debating issues surrounding media literacy. It is somewhat perplexing why we really understand so little about the subject." (1998: 3). Even though the literature on media literacy, more recently described as digital literacy, has increased tremendously, it is fair to say that we are still perplexed that we do not know more about this important issue. One reason is of course the complexity and different dimensions of media literacy, not only relating to educational concerns, but also to broader issues of cultural development defined by technology and the rise of the knowledge society.

It is important to distinguish between policy initiatives, research and educational practice within this field. On a policy level the perspectives on media literacy have often been ambitious in the sense that there is a belief that students will become critical media users simply by being taught about the media at school. Policy debates have often been triggered by calls for protection from harmful content, and media education has been seen as a solution. The practices of media education have been detached from the policy debates in many countries. The practices have been developed by motivated teachers both through active personal interests in modern media and by building on the media culture and media use of young people. Research in this area has been less obvious. Some overviews and a few key people, like David Buckingham, have been important, but as a field of research it has not been defined in any systematic way.

The special issue on media literacy, mentioned above, marked an interesting outlook on the field of media literacy towards the end of the 1990s. However, the issue focused mainly on the American perspective, with the exception of a single article, written by Buckingham, on developments in the UK. In this way, vital descriptions of developments in Australia, Canada and the Nordic countries have been left out. Even though the cultural context for contributions in this special issue was limited, the authors brought forward some important general issues concerning media education worldwide. The first section consists of four contributions from key people within media education. These articles focus on children and adolescents, and reflect on challenges and issues associated with media literacy education and tackle how the next generation should be taught to become educated members of our media-saturated culture (Christ & Potter 1998: 5-6). In different ways the articles highlight key debates (Hobbs 1998), issues (Kubey 1998), perspectives (Brown 1998) and historic shifts in substance (Buckingham 1998) that have dominated the media literacy movement. These represent familiar issues about the characteristics of media literacy programs in schools; to what extent media literacy is a specific subject, or part of other subjects; the relationship between theory, analysis and practice, and so on and so forth. These developments show the polarization between the two main theoretical views on media literacy, inoculation theory, that is the influence of

media, and cultural studies, that is the use and meaning-making of media in cultural contexts (Christ & Potter 1998: 8).

The second section of this special issue is interesting because it consists of four contributions where scholars bring theoretical innovations to the field of media literacy. Messaris (1998) focuses on visual analogy and syntax as key components of a visual literacy, highlighting the visual aspects of modern media and cultural consumption. Zettl (1998) argues for the importance of media aesthetics as the foundation for a model of media literacy. These two contributions are interesting in the way they open up traditional understandings of media literacy. Meyrowitz (1998) makes a strong case that media literacy is a complex construct that needs to be conceptualized as a number of literacies, multiple literacies that challenge students' performances in several respects. Finally, Lewis and Jhally (1998) represent an activist orientation to media literacy and go beyond textual analysis into ideological/political economy issues. As of 1998 all of these contributions are interesting in the way that they show the complexities of the debates about media literacy, and the important questions that these debates raise concerning what it means to be literate in our media culture.

Then ten years later, in 2008, the International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media published a book with an international outlook on media education, called 'Empowerment through media education: An intercultural dialogue' (Carlsson, Tayie, Jacquinet-Delaunay & Tornero 2008). This book presents a strong international perspective, based on several seminars organized by UNESCO, showing trends, developments and different approaches in media literacy and media education. It has an altogether different stance than the collection of texts mentioned above. Its reference is the 25th year anniversary of the Grünwald declaration. In its presentation of approaches it does not bring forth anything new; it is rather in what is called 'the international dialogue' that this book brings forward a different perspective to the one mentioned above, which is mainly American. Media education and media literacy issues have also formerly been important in other parts of the globe, outside the western world. However, the impact of such issues seems to have increased in later years due to the developments in digital media.

On a European level there have been several initiatives in later years to consolidate the status of media literacy across different European countries. This shows that media literacy is high on the political agenda in many European countries, but that there is a large variation between how this is integrated in educational practices. Similar initiatives can be seen in the European Charter for Media Literacy². What is evident from these European initiatives is that a lot of attention is now directed towards media literacy on a policy level both in the European Commission and in individual countries. This also shows that many initiatives are taken on the level of educational practices, but that we lack a strong research agenda to substantiate and direct these initiatives.

Media Education in the Nordic Countries

Developments in the Nordic countries are similar in many respects to developments in other countries, and have to a large degree been influenced by debates and approaches in countries like the UK, the US, Australia and Canada (Erstad 1997). At the same time there are some issues that have been more prevalent in the Nordic countries than in other countries.

An important aspect is, of course, that the educational systems in the Nordic countries are different from educational systems in other parts of the world. There has been a much stronger tradition of project-based learning, a strong emphasis on equal possibilities and a high access to media. Also the broader social structure and the welfare society model, which is similar in all the Nordic countries, have created a different framework. This in sum makes it interesting in itself to look closer at developments in the Nordic countries. I will not attend to the developments in each Nordic country, but mention a few overall trends.

Issues of learning about the media have been prevalent in the Nordic countries since the 1950s, starting with media like film and newspapers as objects of analysis. It has been part of national curricula since the beginning of the 1970s. However, even though it has been stressed as an important area, both as part of other subjects and as a specific subject domain, it has always been marginalized compared to other core subject domains in the curricula.

Research and practice in this area has been influenced by developments in media research in the Nordic countries. This can be seen in the way different areas of media research are written into textbooks for schools and how research on media audiences transcends methodological approaches within media studies in schools. A strong motivating force for initiatives on media education in the Nordic countries has been the growing media culture of children outside of schools during the last fifty years, what Tufte (1995) has described as a 'parallel culture' to schooling. Partly seen as a threat by policymakers, and partly seen as an element of empowerment for the young by youth researchers.

Media production has had a strong position within the practices of media education in K-12. In line with Dewey's principle of 'learning by doing', the emphasis on producing films, newspapers, radio, web-pages, etc. by students themselves has been considered important (Erstad 1997). The strong position of project-based learning, especially in Denmark, has aided in making this possible in schools (Tufte 1995). Maybe more so than in many other countries, the production part, in comparison to the emphasis on critique (Burn & Durran 2007: 13), has always been very strong in media education in the Nordic countries.

The aesthetic dimension has also been an important part of how media literacy has been conceived in the Nordic countries. Kirsten Drotner, for example, in her book 'Att skabe sig-selv' ('To Create Yourself') (1991), presents experiences from a project that follows young people in their production of video, that while connected to school is not part of any school curricula. The youngsters make the videos for their own sake, drawing on their own media

culture, and not because someone tells them to do so. In her analysis Drotner shows how the aesthetic dimension of these productions draws on a culture of images, music interests and the body in creating a cultural expression that is different from what these young people are confronted with at school and which is more connected to their identities as 'youth'. By using cultural studies as a perspective this study is an example of an instance where learning is conceptualized in a much broader sense than it is in schools.

Drotner's explorations of aesthetics within media pedagogy³ have been further elaborated theoretically by some Swedish researchers, especially Jan Thavenius (1995), during the 1990s. In their writings about media pedagogy Drotner, Thavenius and others relate their analysis closely to the German tradition of 'bildung'. A similar concept does not exist in the English language, but it is indicative of being or becoming 'literate' (see Arnolds-Granlund in this publication). Their arguments are that media pedagogy and the growth of media culture as resources for identity formation and learning break off from the elitist conception of 'bildung', that the role of education is to introduce the young to some pre-specified books in order for them to possess what is defined as necessary for becoming 'literate'⁴. The ways in which young people use media culture today create a new way of conceptualizing what it means to become 'literate' or competent in our culture. This link to 'bildung' could be called a characteristic of media pedagogy and media education in the Nordic countries as compared to many other countries.

The technology push within our education systems has been the central challenge in the Nordic countries from the mid-1990s onward. The main focus has been on the technology itself, and on getting access to computers and the Internet in schools. Media education has become marginalized compared to the strong impact of ICTs in schools. It is only in recent years that issues of critique, reflection, production, and creativity have started to come up, with similar perspectives to those that have been part of media education for years. There is presently a challenge involved in making media education experiences explicit for the people dominating the agenda with regards to how computers and the Internet are used in school settings. In recent years Finland seems to have been the Nordic country with the strongest community of researchers and media education teachers that have seen to that media education and media literacy can regain an impact on the educational agenda. Some initiatives within school curricula in Norway also point in this direction.

Curriculum Initiative in Norway

In the Norwegian educational context, the one that I am most familiar with, media education has a long tradition reaching back to the mid 1970s (Erstad 1997, Gilje 2002). However, as in most other countries, the subject has had a marginal position in the national curriculum (Lavender et al. 2003). Towards the end of the 1980s a cross-curricular theme, called 'Media and Electronic

Data Processing', in the national curriculum for primary and lower secondary education, stated that teachers *could* implement media and computers both as tools for learning and as objects of analysis in all subjects. In practice, however, there was a clear split between media studies and information technology, with a focus on the latter in the 1990s.

Until the end of the late 1990s, the public discourse on media education, as seen in curricula for compulsory schooling, revolved around developing critical thinking among students in their relation to media messages. However, over the past eight years there has been a shift towards emphasizing on content creation and digital production. A new interest in media education emerged in connection to curriculum reforms in the late 1990s. This interest was due to the growing concern among interest groups in the graphic-design industry about implementing 'media and communication studies' at the upper secondary level (16- to 19-year-old students). The public debate was not only about the convergence of old and new media forms, but it was also argued that there was a great need for such "media competence" in the future job market, especially in relation to production and design. The three-year course as part of vocational training started in 2000/2001. The course structure today (school year 2008/09) is based on a joint first-year foundational course, after which students are to choose between a crafts-oriented specialization and a course that qualifies for higher education. The emphasis is clearly on media production in both tracks.

In general, the course provides an introduction to basic principles in media and communication, combining text, image and sound so as to lay a broad foundation for further education and for employment. Furthermore, the course deals with various forms of communication, content distribution and expression within diverse media genres and fields (movie, photo, advertisement and the Internet). The curricular aims clearly maintain that media production is a necessary requirement for learning about affordances and restraints within diverse media domains. In addition, the syllabus describes project work as a core feature and method for all courses in 'Media and communication'.

One interesting dimension in the development of this subject in Norwegian Upper Secondary Education is the enormous increase in the number of students applying to take this three-year course. In many schools only some of the applicants can be enrolled. In the last couple of years it has become the most popular subject among students in vocational training, and more and more schools are establishing it as a school subject. For all schools offering the subject, it has involved huge investments in equipment as well as huge effort in attracting competent teachers from both the industry and academic media studies.

Facing the Digital Turn: History and Future at the Present

The important question today is what we can draw on from former historic developments in media education and media literacy, and to what extent the

developments in digital media during the last decade indicate something new for this area of research.

Christ and Potter, in their outlook on the field ten years ago, stated that; "Though the calls for media literacy are not new, what is new is the rise of relatively inexpensive media that allow students to produce their own works, the rapid transnational transmission of programming, and the concerted effort by several countries over the last 2 decades to develop national curricula." (1998: 5). These developments in digital technologies, the increased access to such technologies among the population, especially in the Nordic countries, and curriculum efforts in many countries to reflect on technological developments, have only increased during the last decade.

This can be seen in many research publications in recent years. Much has been written about the educational implications of information and communication technologies (ICT) (Law, Pelgrum & Plomp 2008, Kozma 2003). At the same time there has been some attention placed on the policy developments in media education that have been growing worldwide (Carlsson et al. 2008) and on media literacy (see section above). However, it still remains unclear to what extent we are looking at something dramatically new within media education and media literacy, or whether it is simply a case of continuation of former processes, with the only change being that it is now digital.

This question is the focus of a special issue of the 'Media, Technology and Learning' journal (2007), in which the editors, Buckingham and Bragg, try to highlight what might be considered new in media education as a consequence of the growth and qualitative development of digital media. From the contributions to this special issue it is clear that some aspects of these media bring in something qualitatively new, which in turn means that we need to redefine what we mean by media education and media literacy. In the ways that digital media create new conditions for media education three areas in particular seem relevant (Buckingham 2007).

The first concerns the object of analysis of media education, and to what extent digital media change the conceptual framework of these studies on the mediating role of media (*ibid.*). As many have pointed out, digital media represent some important changes in genres and multimodality as compared to the older mass media like television, film, or newspapers, at the same time as they are remediations of older mediational means and genres (Bolter & Grusin 1999). Furthermore, they change our traditional conceptions of media use and structures of media production and ownership. These developments are therefore more a matter of adjusting older concepts within media education, such as Production, Language, Representation and Audience, to fit the new situation created by the web and new media forms like games.

The second area concerns production practices and the aspect of creativity. This is probably digital media's most important new impact. For young people in general access to a computer, and especially different software, combined with tools such as digital video and the Internet, means that media or content production has become a common cultural activity. While previously it was

predominantly an activity for a few enthusiasts, today it is also an important part of media education, inside and outside of schools. For the students of media education it has also meant that they can now work with production practices much more easily. Their creative potentials might then acquire tools that make the students' work more exploratory. In their studies of media literacy practices, Burn and Durran (2007) have shown the importance of digital media practices. The point here is not just to study the practices themselves, but how such practices might encourage more reflective use of the media, which is an important task of media education (Erstad, Gilje & de Lange 2007).

The third area in which media educators need to respond to new digital media is the potential of emerging forms of participatory media culture (Buckingham 2007). This involves the role of informal learning practices where students are involved as 'learners' and as 'teachers', for example in the way they relate, collaborate and build communities of practices in online gaming cultures. The impact of social media in later years has only increased this 'participatory culture' (Jenkins 2006). In addition, the development of digital media has led to media literacy, or digital literacy as it has been termed recently, being defined more broadly across the curriculum.

The points made above raise several issues concerning media education and media literacy. What is the role of school settings, or the teacher, in relation to such developments? In the Nordic context, that I am best acquainted with, media education could be said to be at a crossroad. Developments in the years to come might take a number of different routes.

The Future of Media Literacy and Media Education

My belief is that media education in the future will be different from what it has represented in the past. These developments can already be seen in the Nordic countries, where access to technology is not much of an issue anymore. There is less need for media education as a special subject in the curriculum in the traditional sense, and it will now either be developed into a much stronger key subject area in the curriculum, encompassing other traditional subjects of literacy, or it will become an integrated part of all subjects. This latter development can be seen in the recent national curriculum in Norway. The focus is then shifting from media education itself towards the broader issues of importance linked to the concept of media literacy.

There are some trajectories of issues that are similar throughout, from the Grünewald declaration in 1982 until the present. These are macro issues of citizenship and socialization in a mediatized society and the emphasis on empowerment of individual actors in their reflective use of different media. Some issues change over time due to media developments, such as the emphasis on conceptual development, analysis and practice, and some issues can be considered novel and a part of media literacies today due to the impact of digital technologies on society as a whole.

The basic perspective should be to study how new technologies represent new cultural tools and mediated actions that create new meaning structures. This is a key issue of media education and media literacy in general. These tools create new possibilities for how people relate to each other, how knowledge is defined in negotiation between actors, and also how it changes our conception of the learning environments in which actors negotiate meaning. Empowerment is related to the active use of different tools, with persons that have the competencies and reflective abilities to use them.

It is strange that issues within media education have not come up stronger in the overall educational agenda, and that the subject area has remained at the margins of the curriculum in most countries. During the last decade the dominating discourse around information and communication technologies and the so-called new digital media within education has been directed towards issues of access and to possibilities represented by these technologies. Only recently have issues that resonate to discussions on media education during the 1980s and 1990s started to come up. Today there is a need to make these historic references to media education more explicit.

Looking ahead, the most important issue is to establish a research agenda with a stronger impetus, building on initiatives from media education and former perspectives on media literacy. We tend to forget history within this area. At the moment we do not have large-scale, long-term research to establish a body of evidence on which our strategies could be based. This is a critical point to be made, and one that this book tries to compensate by showing some of the present research being carried out in the Nordic countries. In our strategies for the future we need to combine former experiences, results, and directions from media education with the present challenges in studying issues of empowerment, with structural developments within media, and with the implications of user-generated content creation.

Notes

1. See for example the study on 'Current trends and approaches to media literacy in Europe', which was commissioned by the Commission of the European Community in 2006, and involving several European countries. (http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/studies/index_en.htm)
2. <http://www.euromedialiteracy.eu/>
3. Media pedagogy is a term that is often used in the Nordic countries, as something broader than media education, which is more an expression of the practices within the subject in schools.

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Children and Young People in a Changing Media Environment: Some Challenges

Ingunn Hagen

Abstract

This article focuses on challenges related to grasping how children and young people operate in the new media landscape. It pays attention to how children and young people are portrayed in public discourses and in research on their media use. In addition to an overview of some recent research in this field, the author also draws on her own research to discuss children's use of new and old media. She presents two portraits of adolescents to illustrate how informants may position themselves as media users. The article concludes with a suggestion that the debate about media education and (digital) media literacy needs to be "evidence based"; it should draw on insights from research on children and young people's media use.

Keywords: children and young people's media use, new media/ICT use, positioning, media education, digital media literacy

Children are not only 'diligent' users of all media; the media are also fully integrated in their everyday lives and represent, despite their subtle and taken for granted presence, both a particular quality and a particular cultural dimension in their existence. (Christensen 1999: 9, author's translation)

The purpose of this article is to reflect on how children and young people are often portrayed as audiences and users in media research. There is currently a great concern to develop media education and promote media literacy for children and young people (see for example O'Neill and Hagen, 2009). In my opinion, a methodological and theoretical based understanding of children and young people's media habits should inform media education and our notions of media literacy.

In my discussion of research on children and young people's use of new media, I will pay particular attention to research projects taking place in Europe, emphasizing on some of the Nordic countries. I will then present the research

project “New Information Technology and the Young Generation: Evolving Identities and Values in a Mediated Environment”.¹ The focus of this research project is on how children and young people use new and traditional media and what meaning this has for them. I will provide two portraits of young interviewees in order to illuminate the significance new and old media might have in children’s lives. Finally, I will use the key findings from an American study for comparison.²

Discourses on Children and Young People’s Media Use

Public discourses about children and young people’s media habits are often characterized by contradictory images: on the one hand, children, and especially young children, are considered innocent and vulnerable. They are regarded as subjects that must be protected. On the other hand, children and young people are depicted as pioneers; active and competent and with an almost natural talent for media use (see Hagen 2003b). Some English researchers capture another set of contrasting images in public documents and in the media, which they think: “currently construct young children in a paradoxical relationship with new technologies, both at the vanguard of the digital revolution ‘effortlessly grasping the tools’ of the new technologies, and at the rear, requiring educational policy interventions to ensure their acquisition of ‘key skills’ in ICT” (Facer et al. 2001: 9). Thus, children are depicted both as vulnerable and as extraordinarily clever. Such portrayals of children as media users are discursive constructions. These may impact policy makers, media researchers, and how children are treated. Constructions of children as audiences may be used both to restrict access to certain content (such as sex, violence, and advertising) and also to secure them suitable content (that is regarded as high quality and age-appropriate).

It is also significant how different media are constructed: is TV a source of learning and entertainment, or does it have “an irresistible ability to ‘brainwash’ and ‘narcotize’ children, drawing them away from other, more worthwhile activities and influences” (Buckingham 2003: 165)? And is the computer an irreplaceable tool for the future, or is it particularly harmful – giving children access to sex sites and violent games, and potentially creating new dependency? The computer is seen as a symbol of progress and the information society. Parents, teachers, and politicians alike want children to have access to and competence about computers, because they are seen as preconditions for learning and for future careers. But parents also worry that the intensive use of computers may create dependency. It is often the prototypical working-class boy who is feared to be addicted to computer games (Walkerdine 1998). In relation to children, the potential and dangers intensify: “Children, as the symbols of the future themselves, are at the heart of debates about how the possibilities that ICT afford should be realized, and about the ‘new’ dangers that these technologies might also bring for the Net generation” (Holloway & Valentine 2003: 1)

Conception of Child Audiences or Users

In the process of debating and researching children's use of media, the child audiences and users are also constructed or positioned (see Buckingham 1998). The notion of children as a special audience is often an unquestioned premise in media studies on children. It is assumed that children are different from, rather than similar to, adults. Children as a special audience or users usually invoke moral and ideological assumptions (cf. Buckingham 2003).

The common assumption that children are different from other audience groups has a hegemonic, but not exclusive, position in research (see also Olesen 2003). This discourse is closely linked with the notion of the developing child, implying that children have to develop cognitively, emotionally, in terms of personality, and socially in order to become adults. In the last decade an alternative to this notion of the developing child has emerged, presupposing childhood as a social construction (see also Haddon 2004). In the so-called 'new childhood studies', the suggestion is to study children in their current condition rather than as citizens of the future (see James et al. 1998, Rogers et al. 2004). This growing literature of new childhood sociology implies that media should be seen as an integral part of children's present lives, not just as instruments that may promote or hamper their development.

One can identify certain images of children as implicit in the different theoretical perspectives used in media studies of child audiences. Olesen suggests that "there are at least three fundamental perspectives on the relationship between children and the media: an essentialist perspective, a constructivist perspective, and a contextualist perspective" (2003: 22). *Essentialism* focuses on children's inherent qualities. Children are by nature childlike, in contrast to adults. *Constructivism*, on the other hand, emphasizes children as actors; children are regarded as active in creating meaning from media texts. *Contextualism*, as the third category, emphasizes the children's environment or the context of their media use. The three described positions are not incompatible, but should rather be considered complementary, at least in the consequences they have for the study of children's media use. While essentialism emphasizes the potential effect on the child audience, constructivism leads to emphasis on children's interpretation of media texts, and contextualism leads to emphasis on the context of children's media use, and also the context for the production of children's media. However, as Olesen argues, it is important to keep in mind "that the perspectives are linked with particular images of the child audience as meaning-influences (essentialism), meaning-structuring (constructivism) and meaning structured (contextualism)" (2003: 26).

Research on Children and Young People's Media Use

Extensive research has been carried out in the broad field of media and children. There has been several thousand research reports in the more limited

field of children and television alone (see Buckingham 2003). An oft-quoted research project in this field is the large, comparative, European research project on “Children, Young People, and the Changing Media Environment” mentioned earlier.³ The primary research aims of the “Children, Young People and the Changing Media Environment” were to map the access to and use of new media in homes and in schools, to provide an account of media activities and domestic leisure, and to understand the meaning of the changing media environment, for children and also for their parents. The interest in “new media” was narrowed down to a focus on domestic electronic screens in this study (see Livingstone & Bovill 1999).⁴

The results of the Livingstone project for the Nordic countries are particularly interesting as the Nordic countries (and the Netherlands) are seen as pioneers of new technologies, in the sense that there is widespread access to and use of computers, the Internet, and mobile phones. The Nordic countries included in the project were Denmark, Sweden, and Finland. The Nordic countries could be characterized as having peer-oriented cultures, in contrast to family-oriented cultures – like Spain, France and Italy – or even moderately family-oriented cultures – like the UK and Germany (see Suoninen 2001). This has consequences for the time children, and young people especially, spend with friends (rather than with their families), and for the personal freedom they are allowed when using media.

In her book Drotner (2001) discusses the results of the Danish part of the Livingstone study. In her writings on the Swedish part of the “Children, Young People and the Changing Media Environment” project, Sjøberg (2002, 2003, 2004) focuses on screen media; television, computer, and Internet use among Swedish young people. In Denmark, like in Sweden and other European countries, TV is the number one daily medium used by children and young people (Drotner 2001). Sjøberg claims that the social significance of use differed for different media: “In comparison to computer games and the Internet, television is to a much greater extent a *family medium*, where the social value of watching with other family members is appreciated” (op. cit. p. 149). Computer games, on the other hand, are found to be more of a *peer medium*, especially for boys. Even though the Internet may be used with friends or with family members, the most frequent use seemed to be as an *individual medium*.

Media developments among youngsters suggest that new media are often added and may lead to specialized use (cf. Johnson-Smaragdi 2001). Sjøberg calls this *media accumulation* and suggests that “[a]dditive media use is the outcome of choices made in relation to (in addition to the social context) the psychological state of the user, such as his/her being bored, sad, or wanting to relax, and thereby serves various purposes” (2003: 154). Thus, reasons for using a particular medium are related to factors like available content, the social context of consumption, and the emotional state of the person.

A newer Swedish study (Dunkels 2007) focuses on children’s strategies on the Internet. In this study it is pointed out that the use of communication channels like instant messaging and net communities is increasing. For most of the

children interviewed in this study, the Internet provides an additional arena for interaction with others and is perceived to provide increased opportunities. The children seemed less concerned with the negative sides of their Internet habits. This author also points to the gap between parents and children in relation to the Internet, and the fact that most children have had little education or training in relation to Internet use.

A Norwegian Perspective

I also want to discuss the large study on “Digital Childhood” conducted in Norway. The study had the subtitle “Children’s access, use and experiences of media technology”. The main goal of this research project has been to understand the impact that media technology has on children between 7 and 12 years of age. The main conclusion drawn from the “Digital Childhood” study is that children use media technology in a variety of ways.

The research perspective that was developed for the project on “New Information Technology and the Young Generation” could be characterized as an ethnographically informed reception study with analytical inspiration drawn from discursive psychology. Thus, our research focus has been influenced by the recent “ethnographic turn” in qualitative audience research which has been characterized as a change in focus from decoding to context (cf. Morley 1992, see also Hagen 2004/1998). Our research focus was on the role of media technology in the lives of children and young people. We wanted to understand what meanings children and young people attributed to computers and other media used in their everyday lives (see Hagen & Nayar 1997). I will focus on the interviews from Norway here.

Since we were interested in meaning-making, we interviewed our young informants through qualitative, semi-structured interviews, combined with home observations. The age span of our interviewees was 6 to 18 years, which is the age children attend school in Norway. We made sure to include both girls and boys and there was also some diversity in ethnicity. Thus, 25 young interviewees were asked to describe their use of different media in their daily lives, in their own words. Similar interviews were also conducted with most of the children’s parents. This was viewed as a way of broadening our knowledge about media use in the children and young people’s home contexts, and also of capturing some of the negotiations that normally take place between children and their parents regarding media. Despite the fact that this study took place a few years ago (interviews in 1999 and 2000), some of the qualitative patterns still remain.

We found it important to pay attention to conditions that lay premises for the access children have and the choices they make in relation to new and old media. One important contextual factor is in fact the ever-changing media environment. The term media environment itself implies that media are regarded as a contextual or framing factor (c.f. Livingstone 2003). Like in many other countries, the media landscape in Norway has changed radically in the last two

decades. During these decades Norwegian homes have been characterized by massive media saturation: the young generation has grown up with PCs, the Internet, with multiple television channels, and mobile phones. The presence of multiple channels and media is taken for granted more by children and youth than it is by adults and the older generations.

A second significant contextual factor lies in the changes in children's everyday lives. For example, in recent years there have been many more restrictions on children's abilities to move around on their own in Norway, whether going to school, participating in leisure activities, or just playing with other children (Liden 1999). Increased restrictions can easily facilitate increased media use by children. It could also be, as Liden (*op. cit.*) points out in her study of Norwegian children, that the increasing availability of new media technologies in the home makes it more attractive for children to stay inside. Factors like children's ability to choose other activities, like going out with friend, taking part in organized activities, or to be with friends in their home, are important for understanding the role media play in their everyday lives. For example, is using the computer or watching TV the preferred activity, or was it chosen because the child felt that s/he lacked other alternatives?

The M(media) Generation: Two Portraits of the Young

In this Norwegian study, I emphasize results related to computer use and television viewing. The reason for this is that among the children we interviewed, television and computers were particularly central. Nevertheless, the media the children used varied, and what they expressed was important to them. But the overall picture was that media was very important in the everyday lives of these children. For many, media use would take up much of their leisure time. Many of the interviewees in our research project expected that their lives would have been "boring" without the media they were used to (see Hagen 2003b).

In our study television emerged as the medium the most children spent the most time on, and many expressed that television was their favorite medium. In this sense they resemble the adult population, for whom television is also the preferred medium. Television was also the medium that many of our interviewees expressed they expected they would miss the most. Among our interviewees, the choice whether to watch television or not "would depend" on a number of factors like what other activities they could choose between – going out, being with friends, playing, or participating in organized activities (cf. Livingstone 2002, Sjöberg 2003). It would of course also matter what programs were currently available. Many children reported that they had favorite programs that they liked to watch. The number of television sets in the house also mattered, as did where they were placed. If, for example, the children had a TV in their own room, they were often able to use it more freely.

The interest in computers and the Internet increased with age among our interviewees. This concurs with other research findings, including the Norwe-

gian “Digital Childhood” project (see Torgersen 2004). All of the households in our study had a computer, thus all of the children interviewed had access to a computer at home. The use of computers at school varied, especially for the younger children. It was particularly the boys who were interested in computer games, something which is in line with international research (see Drotner 2001, Lemish et al. 2001). However, younger girls also took some interest in game playing. With increasing age, girls seemed to find it more interesting to use the computer for communication and for searching for information.

In order to provide a more detailed picture of the meaning children attribute to media use, I will present two selected portraits of my interviewees – a boy and a girl. One point is to contextualize these two young people’s media use in the greater context of their everyday lives and leisure (cf. Holm Sørensen et al. 2001). Another point is to illustrate that by paying attention to discursive aspects, like positioning, one may get a deeper understanding of the processes involved in attributing significance to media technology. I find the concepts of Davies and Harré (1990) illuminating; they are interested in ‘discursive practices’ and the ways in which people are ‘positioned’ through those practices. Davies and Harré define positioning as “the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines” (op.cit. 48). This notion of ‘positioning’ is seen as a contribution to understanding selfhood – as a way of talking about the discursive production of selves.

Mike, 12½ Years Old – “The Computer Master”

For Mike, the pleasure in using the computer seems to be related to a strong sense of mastery. He says that he often acts as a computer consultant for both his father and his mother, something his mother confirmed. For him mastering the computer, better than his significant adults, seems to be important. He also emphasizes that he has grown up with computers. Mike has his own portable computer in his room, with CD-ROM and Internet access.

Mike estimates that he uses an equal amount of time for computer games and for the Internet, but he admits that the time he spends on the Internet has increased. He also thinks that Chat is very enjoyable. Meeting people from other countries, especially distant ones, is also fun according to Mike. He mentions that he has chatted with people from the Philippines and Africa. He finds this much more interesting than chatting locally or nationally. He also enjoys being able to use English in these meetings.

Mike says that he uses the computer a lot at school; he describes his school as a computer pioneer. He also explains that there are two computers in each classroom, as well as a separate computer room with Internet access. Mike stated that it is “incredibly popular to be friends with the guy who works in the computer room”. This “friendship” developed in order to increase the opportunities to play computer games and to use the Internet at school. Still, Mike is not terribly impressed with the computer education he receives at

school because, as he says, “we mostly know more than the teachers. I myself function as support for the teacher during computer lessons.” He seems to be quite proud of his support role.

Mike says that he also enjoys watching television. He says that he watches 1-2 hours a day and mentions a few series he enjoys watching, like “Glamour”, “Hotel Cæsar” (Norwegian daily soap opera), and “Mash”. He also mentions factual programs like “Globus 2” (Norwegian documentary). Mike says that in their house they are only able to watch four channels, and that there are at least two other channels (TV 3 and Discovery Channel) that he would really have wanted to have. Mike explains that their house is “protected”, so they are not allowed to have cable or satellite, something he is a bit upset about. He feels especially bad because he does not have better access to more international channels. He would have liked to use TV a bit more. Mike also has a Play station (console game) that he says he enjoys using.

Hege 16 Years Old – “The Film Girl”

Hege is fascinated by film. She says that she goes to the movies regularly. She emphasizes that she appreciates the films and producers more than the actors and says that her wish is to become a film producer (her mother, who came home during the interview, encouraged her to reveal this wish). Hege seems to have rather concrete plans for further education in relation to film editing. She says she watches less television than she did in earlier years. She explains that she mainly uses the computer for homework, but that she has just started to chat and is intrigued by the possibilities the Internet provides.

Hege says that she associates computers with the Internet, even though she does not have Internet access at home. She explains that she is able to use the Internet at school and she seems to be fascinated by its potential. She says she mainly uses two days – Monday and Thursday – as her homework days. Besides using the Internet for school projects, Hege says that she has recently started to use IRC (chat groups) and she is also writing e-mails at school. She relates that she has been chatting with people in the US because she likes to speak English. She says that she has also been practicing at getting faster with the common introduction phrases used in IRC.

Hege tells us about a recent incident when she “suddenly entered a page where there was someone who had very similar film interests to mine [Hitchcock films], then I got very excited and just sat there for two hours and read. That was very enjoyable.” Hege has also sent an email to the person responsible for this web page. This has made her very enthusiastic about the potential of the Internet. Hege says she feels she has easy access to computers in her high school, especially as compared to her former situation in secondary school.

Hege actively distances herself from those she calls “*computer nerds*”, those who are too dependent on and use too much time on computers. In contrast to this image, she emphasizes that: “there is a value in having friends and in having relations with other people”. However, Hege also states that she sees the

potential for knowledge, growth, and contact in using the Internet. Regarding her relationship to computers, Hege expresses that she “would rather get info from the computer than about the computer.”

Hege characterizes her former relationship to television as one of “a real ‘TV slave’”, but she does “not try to hide that”. Currently she does not spend too much time on television because she has too many other things to do. She says that she mainly watches TV on Tuesday nights (when she watches *Ally McBeal*), sometimes in the weekends, and if there is a film on Sunday or Monday evening. She says she also records televised films in order to watch them later if she is busy when they are broadcasted. She explains that her father sometimes limits her brother’s and her TV viewing if he feels they have watched too much. According to Hege TV is a source of conflict in her family, as her parents would prefer that their children help around the house and not watch so much TV.

Media Educationalists Need Knowledge about Child Media Uses

My general findings confirm that television is still the dominant medium among children and young people (Endestad et al. 2004, see Livingstone and Bovill, 2001, Rideout et al. 2005). TV continues to have a stronghold among children and young people in Norway (see Tønnessen 2007, Vaage 2008, Medietilsynet 2008). But the importance of computers and the Internet is steadily increasing as computers and Internet access become more readily available. Thus, my findings are similar to those of the Kaiser researchers: “Computers and the Internet are rapidly becoming a nearly universal presence in young people’s lives...” (Rideout et al. 2005: 30). Children’s interest in computers also increases with age (cf. Tønnessen 2007, Torgersen 2004). Moreover, the Internet and the communicative turn of computers seem to decrease the gender gap that has existed in use (see Gansmo et al. 2003).

For comparison, the American Kaiser study emphasizes that young people today live “media saturated lives” (Rideout et al. 2005: 6). According to this study, American children spend more time on media use – especially watching TV – than children in most European countries. The study suggests that the home media environment and the presence of media in the bedroom are influential in the sense that easy access to media will increase the time spent on media use. Moreover, Rideout et al. point to an interesting aspect of young people’s media use, namely their capacity for media multitasking, most often using TV and surfing the Internet. Multitasking implies that children use several different kinds of media simultaneously, seemingly without much effort (see also Holm Sørensen 2001). The consequence of such multitasking is an interesting and important topic for future research.

The relationship between children and media will continue to be a widely discussed topic, both in the media and in research (cf. Hagen & Wold 2009).

The contribution of researchers should be to diversify the often contradictory, but still stereotypical, images for children's media use, and to examine underlying assumptions and dominant discourses. Capturing specific children as active and interactive meaning-making subjects, operating within a specific media environment with certain dominant discourses framing their understandings, seem to be a very fruitful approach. Media use is so dominant in the lives of children and young people that they could be characterized as a Generation M (Rideout et al. 2005). Just how important it is depends on the child's age, gender, interests, and a number of other contextual factors. In this article I have focused on some of the Nordic countries, and Norway in particular. The results demonstrate the significance of contextual factors (like media environment and peer orientation), and a number of ingredients and interrelations, including individual, social, cultural and discursive ones, for media use.

With regard to TV and computer use, I have discussed some general patterns in my research findings, but I also wanted to show that one has to get into detailed descriptions of individual interviewees to capture the significance different media might have for a person. My strategy was to contextualize media use, and also to focus on the (discursive) positioning to capture how informants portray themselves in the interview situation. Children and young people position themselves when they talk about their media use, drawing upon cultural resources like discourses related to the topic being studied. In this way, the interviewees recreated cultural discourses about computer use and gender. It is precisely through the articulation of individuals and their positioning that the cultural impact of various discourses can become visible. In this way, meanings are negotiated and cultural patterns manifested.

I think the concern with regard to media education and media literacy should be evidence based. Only when we properly understand the significance of media – TV, the Internet, and also mobile phones – in the lives of children and young people, can we develop meaningful curricula and means to initiate reflections about the opportunities and risks related to Internet and media use. Media statistics, qualitative patterns, and portraits of how individuals and families view themselves as media users, can all be illuminating and provide knowledge. Such knowledge and reflections could be useful for children, parents, educators, researchers, and policy makers alike.

Notes

1. The research project "New Information Technology and the Young Generation: Evolving Identities and Values in a Mediated Environment" (Hagen & Nayar, 1997) was made possible by the funding provided for three years by the Norwegian Research Council's SKIKT program.
2. The study was performed by the Kaiser Family Foundation. The executive summary report has the title "Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 year olds." This Kaiser study was based on a nationally representative sample of 2032 8 to 18 year olds (3rd to 12th grade). In addition to the school-based survey, 694 youngsters completed seven-day media diaries (<http://www.kaiserfamilyfoundation.org/entmedia/7250.cfm>)

3. What started out as a follow-up of Himmelweit et al.'s famous study of *Television and the Child* from 1958 became a study of how new and old media were integrated in the lives of children in 12 countries (11 European countries and Israel).
4. In this study, children were interviewed both through qualitative interviews (performed in 9 of the 12 countries) which preceded the survey (Children's Survey Questionnaire). The sample size of the survey was 11.368 children (all countries included).

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Conceptual Considerations in Media Education

Sol-Britt Arnolds-Granlund

Abstract

Children today live their lives in a media society, in a constantly ongoing noise of sounds and pictures. Media educational goals are set in the Finnish national curricula, and these goals aim to develop the skills that pupils need in order to understand and use media. Generally, these goals emphasize teaching about and by the means of media. The article discusses concepts that are in use within Finnish curricula and within wider research. Focus is mainly placed on the “medieläskunnighet” (*media reading ability*), “medieläsfärdighet” (*media using ability*), “mediekunnande” (*media skill*), “mediekompetens” (*media competence*), and “mediebildning” (*being media literate*) concepts. The concepts are collected from curricular texts and from research within the field of media education. The analysis shows how the concepts, as they are related to one another, together build dimensions of a qualitative progression and simultaneously as well three aspects of a comprehensive ability. The aim of the article is to raise a discussion among researchers, teachers, and other practitioners in the field about which abilities, knowledge, and attitudes are needed in a media society. What are the upbringing and instruction that form the outcome of these goals like? Where are they conducted? Who conducts them? How are they conducted? A natural consequence of such a discussion would be a comprehensive, Nordic, multi-disciplinary research project.

Keywords: media literacy, media education, media-pedagogy

The news is real and series are not. This is also why the news is more frightening, because one knows that this has really happened. (Lisa, 11 years old) (Häggman 2004)

Here Lisa shows proof of *media literacy* or *media skill* or *media competence* – or maybe she is even *media literate*? There are many concepts to choose between when trying to describe the capacities Lisa is here providing an example of. The plurality of concepts available within the field of media-pedagogy

indicates a difficulty in capturing the significance of what kind of capacity it is about. The concepts media-education and media-pedagogy will be elaborated upon further in the article.

As a person belonging to the Swedish speaking population of the officially bilingual Finland, I have faced the multiple uses and meanings of concepts in media-pedagogy. At the outset this article takes a local perspective in its discussion of the media-pedagogical concepts currently in use; it mainly presents the situation within a Finnish context. Yet, the content and the discussion about different concepts in use, is a global phenomenon, even if the concepts are not exactly the same in different parts of the world. Nevertheless, a discussion about the use of concepts needs to proceed along with progressions in this new field of research.

A Media-pedagogical Commission

There is a media-pedagogical commission recorded in the Finnish curriculums for both basic and upper secondary education (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004, National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003). *Media knowledge*¹ makes up one of the cross curricular themes that, according to the national curriculums, should pervade all instruction. The media concept is even mentioned in the goal formulations of the *Vocational upper secondary education and training*.

When Lisa answered questions about the TV-news in 2004, the new curriculum was not yet in use at her school. Despite this fact, Lisa demonstrated proof of a certain kind of know how. Either way, media-pedagogical work had occurred in schools long before the goal formulations were laid down. For example the *Newspapers in Education* activity had occurred in Finnish schools already since 1964 (Puro 2008). Before I go on to discuss the significance of media-pedagogy and the different dimensions of media proficiency, I want to concentrate on the concepts that exist in the Finnish curricula for primary and secondary schools, and in this way highlight the media-educational expectations these steering documents embody. This means that the main focus of this article will be on Swedish media-pedagogical concepts, but also Finnish and English concepts will be discussed. However, the meanings discussed are somewhat universal.

In Swedish the concept *media literacy* has two meanings, “*medieläskunnighet*” refers to the ability to understand media messages and “*medieläsfärdighet*” connotes a practical skill, an ability to practically use media messages. In this article I give the English *media literacy* concept three meanings in accordance with how it is understood in Swedish: *the ability to read media*, *the ability to use media*, and *the state of being media literate*. The core concept I have in mind when I talk about being literate is the Swedish concept of “*bildning*”, which in meaning is close to literacy (see Potter 1998/2005), or being educated, literate, and cultivated (see Gadamer 1997 and Gustavsson 1996).

Both the concepts *media literacy as a reading ability* and the *media literacy as a using ability*, as well as the concept *media knowledge*, emerge in the Swedish speaking population's curriculum for basic education (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004). *Media knowledge* is most often used in reference to the *Communication and media knowledge* (in Swedish "Kommunikation och mediekunskap") cross-curricular theme. In the national curriculum (2004) for primary and upper secondary education there are themes that "should permeate all education" in school. The goal that the student should practice *media knowledge* "both as a user and a producer" is also determined in this document (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004: 37).

This article thus brings forth a number of concepts that emerge within the media-pedagogical field today, and demonstrates the significance that both the intra-linguistic and the inter-linguistic concept investigations have for the understanding of the relatively newly established area that media-pedagogical research is. I move on a purely synoptic level and make no distinction between concepts for production-, presentation-, or recipient- situations, nor do I set apart concepts that relate to different kinds of media (see e.g. Kotilainen 1999). My aim is tentative and can be considered a type of "language game" in a Wittgensteinian manner, at the outset with regard to the Swedish language. As this article has been translated into English, I try to correspond the language game logically also in that language.

The need for clarification regarding media-pedagogical concepts is, however, not only a need when educational goals are being formulated but also in concrete teaching situations, not least when instruction is being evaluated and target achievements are being finalized. Therefore the ultimate aim of the article is to generate a discussion among researchers, teachers, and other practical actors in the field around media-educational concepts, one that would hopefully lead to collective efforts being made to straighten out and define central concepts for the field itself. I maintain that the absence of such an investigation has left a gaping hole until now.

Before I move on the concepts that make up the focus of the article, *media literacy as a reading ability*, *media literacy as a using ability*, *media knowledge*, *media competence*, and *being media literate*, I want to lay a foundation for the article's readability by analyzing and defining the key concepts.² I will in short elucidate the two meanings of the concepts *media-education* and *media-pedagogy* (mediepedagogik). Firstly, the concepts education (undervisning) and pedagogy (pedagogik) are distinguished from each other in that the first is regarded as non-normative and the latter, consequently, as normative. Secondly, the frequently used Finnish concept "kasvatus" translates into "up-bringing" in Swedish, which could be regarded a normative activity. Further on in the article I will distinguish between these two meanings (for more about the normative and non-normative aspects of education and pedagogy see e.g. Kansanen 2003 and Sjöberg 2002).

Media, IT, and ICT

In Swedish the word *media* is a plural form, and an abbreviation, of the Latin “medium” meaning middle or midpoint (Svenska akademins ordbok SAOB [Dictionary of Swedish Academy]). *Media* is a collective noun that exists as both an independent word and as the first element in composite words or concepts (e.g. media literacy) (SAOB, Reuter 1996). A traditional way of defining a concept is to focus on its technique, its function, or its meaning.

Media as an object focuses on the technical properties and provides an obvious way of distinguishing between different media. Proceeding from this focus, a distinction is traditionally made between so-called old and new or digital forms of media. Such a distinction is untenable in the long-term as the number of individuals for whom computers and the Internet are “new” grows increasingly smaller; these mediums have always existed for them. The old-new distinction is thus deemed irrelevant in this context.

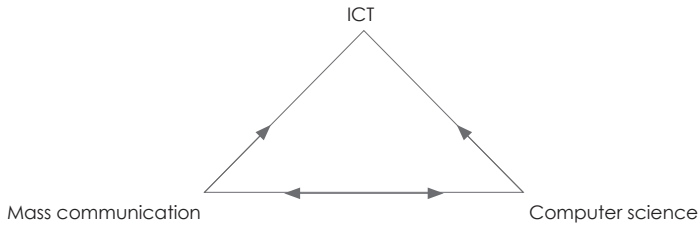
Another not entirely unusual way of defining the media concept is to start from its function. The basic function is communication between two parties (e.g. letters, telephone) or, according to the logic of the first media-age, from a few senders to many receivers (e.g. newspapers, radio, television). The information technological changes in the second media-age have seen the recipients of mass-communication turn into producers of it themselves (Poster 1995).

A third way of defining the media concept is to proceed from the social meaning of media. This meaning varies depending on whether or not the media belong to the mass-media group. The meaning of the non-mass-media techniques could be described as local while the mass-media’s social meaning is global (Drotner, Bruhn Jensen, Poulsen & Schröder 1996).

It is, however, not only the contents of media that have meaning for society. A glance into the past will show that media and communication techniques not only produce contents, but have also formed the boundaries for what can be expressed. The social meaning of media does not only pertain to content and function but also to the logic that it conveys through its constitution, by being made up of the techniques it is.

In contrast to media, that can be both analogous and digital, information technology (IT) includes only digital technology. *IT*, or computer as the technology used to be called, as a concept is younger than the media concept. The original function of *IT* was to create, collect, stock, and arrange data (Svenska datatermgruppen, [Swedish group of data terms]). To mark the possibility of active participation and communication, the communication concept was granted visibility; information technology became information and *communication* technology, *ICT* (Riis 2000, Säljö 2002). Information and communication technology became the place where the mass-communication and information-processing disciplines could meet and interplay with other disciplines in an unrestricted no man’s land (figure 1).

Proceeding from this analysis, I want to elevate the media concept and make it superior to the IT and ICT concepts that I regard as communicating

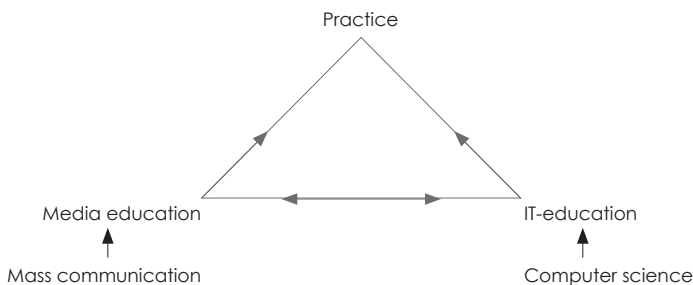
Figure 1. ICT as a Meeting Point for Mass-communication and Computer Science

technologies with a social significance, though not fully coinciding with the media concept's definitions. Therefore, from here on forth I will use the media concept as a generic term that includes both IT and ICT.

A Normative vs. Descriptive Activity

Shortly and simply put pedagogy implies the science of upbringing, teaching, and learning. Consequently media-pedagogy could be understood as upbringing, teaching, and learning where the media is present in some form (I will return to the problem areas of media-pedagogy later on in the article).

IT-pedagogy could, following the same logic, be considered upbringing, teaching, and learning where only information technology is used. This division could be entirely unproblematic if today's technology, in accordance with the convergence principle, becomes integrated to an increasing degree and gradually leads to the boundaries between telecommunication, Internet, and mass-communication disappearing (see e.g. Herkman 2002, Tekes 2005 on convergence).

Figure 2. Media-pedagogy and IT Education Meet in Common Practice

Regardless, the problem areas for both media- and IT-pedagogy should be the same: learning from media (informal learning), learning and teaching about media, and learning and teaching with the help of media, with it being implicit that the media concept includes IT (Modified from Erstad, 1997,

2006). Erstad's definitions of the research problems are as follows: learning from media, learning about media, and learning by the means of media. That includes informal learning, i.e. the form of learning that occurs outside of the formal educational system.

It is important to observe that this two-dimensional figure (figure 2) does not do justice to the complex reality that it intends to describe. Mass-communication and computer science are not the only disciplines that actualize media-pedagogical practice. The scope of practice, beyond being divided by the educational area's practical actors and researchers, is also divided by a number of practices and researchers in other disciplines with an interest in media and educational questions. Also disciplines such as psychology, cultural sciences, and film studies divide the arena for media-pedagogy despite the fact that they vary in terms of research perspective and take on differing scientific and theoretical approaches, research methods, and interests (see e.g. Egenfeldt-Nielsen & Heide Smith (2004) on different focuses within media research).

Kotilainen and Suoranta (2005) regard the different media-pedagogical perspectives as different tribes that approach the field from different perspectives, with different approaches, and that focus on and realize the activities in different ways. They do not see any sharp boundaries between the tribes, but mean that the members are able to walk in and out from each other and work according to the terms of the actual tribe during different times. *Media-pedagogy*, as the multi-disciplinary activity is termed, could be depicted as three-dimensional with several triangles crosscutting each other, yet in a manner that does not allow for the different disciplines to be discerned in practice.

In Finland both concepts *media pedagogy* and *media education*, or *upbringing* are in use. On the one hand e.g. *media pedagogy* is the name of a field of research in the faculties of education at the University of Lapland and Åbo Akademi University. On the other hand, the concept *media upbringing* is used as a part of the Swedish and Finnish names for the *The Finnish Society on Media Education* (www.mediaeducation.fi), which gathers together researchers and practitioners of media education. The concept "mediepedagogik" is also used in Germany, and in German speaking parts of Europe the concept "medienpädagogik" has been used within educational theory since 1960s. Today "medienpädagogik" is a discipline within education in Germany (Hüther & Podehl 2005).

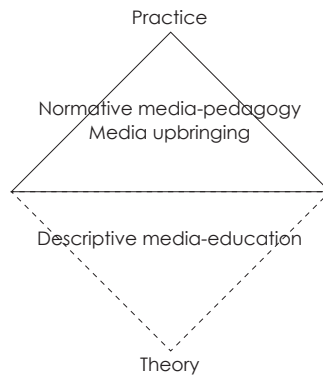
Media-pedagogy is, as previously mentioned, the science of upbringing, teaching, and learning about, from, and by the means of media. Nevertheless, the concept media education is also frequently used to signify the same thing. Yet, *media education*, *media-pedagogy*, and *media upbringing* are not synonymous concepts. The former, *media-education*, implies descriptivity and reflects on how the individual acts, whilst the two latter, *media-pedagogy* and *media upbringing*, signify normativity and discuss how individuals should act (see e.g. Uljens 1998 and Sjöberg 2002). Two poles are indicated here, a normative and a descriptive media-pedagogy.

The starting point for the reasoning I will utilize from here on forth is an observation as opposed to being the result of a scientific study. I namely

maintain that the use of the concept “media upbringing”, “mediakasvatus”, is more natural within the Finnish language-areas of Finland than the Swedish equivalent, “mediefostran”, is within Swedish parts of Finland; the concept “mediefostran” is not readily used in Finnish-Swedish. The explanation for this could possibly be found in the fact that the attitudes of the Finnish-Swedes regarding normativity may be similar to the attitudes of the Swedes i.e. the normative and imperative connotation of the upbringing concept is regarded as being odd. The *upbringing* concept arose earlier, in 1969, in the curricula for basic education in Sweden (Lgr 69), then disappeared completely from the 1980 curriculum (Lgr80), only to reappear again in a much reduced form in 1994 (Lpo94) (Leffler 2006).

Without any further discussion about media-pedagogical normativity respective descriptivity I want to propose a model of thought in which normative and descriptive media-pedagogy is implied as a field between theory and practice (figure 3).

Figure 3. Normative and Descriptive Media-pedagogy in a Field Between Theory and Practice



The figure should, however, not be understood so that theory and practice would be each other's opposites, but instead so that they make up different aspects of the same whole.

Literacy as an Ability to Read and Use Language

In line with the expansion of the media community in the wealthy part of the world and with the media becoming an increasingly natural part of human communication, the individual's ability to interpret and understand media messages has become a necessity. Language alone no longer suffices in explaining and understanding the meaning of media texts. Because the understanding of and communication by the means of media have changed, a new form of

literacy is needed (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996). With the intention of describing this ability a number of varying, but often related, concepts have emerged and this has in part led to a confusion of concepts. The aforementioned *media literacy*, *media knowledge*, and *media competence* concepts are among them. The concepts at the forefront of this article are: “*medieläskunnighet*”, *media literacy as a reading ability*, (“*medialukutieto*”), “*medieläsfärdighet*”, *media literacy as a using ability*, “*medialukutaito*”, “*mediekunnande*”, *media skill*, (*mediataito*), “*mediekompetens*”, *media competence*, “*mediakompetenssi*”, and “*mediebildning*”, *media literacy as being literate*, (*mediasivistys*). Observe that the concept “*medialukutieto*” is a construction only, a direct translation of the Swedish concept. This concept does not exist within the Finnish language.

In the following part of this article, concepts in three languages will be compared. The order of the concepts is logically Swedish, English, and Finnish. This because the concepts used are primarily in Swedish which are then translated into English. In order to highlight an additional linguistic aspect equivalents in Finnish are also used.

Literacy, first and foremost, refers to an individual’s ability to read and write and is closely linked to the individual’s survival in society. At this stage I want to remind the reader that the word “literate” in English implies something more than mere reading and writing ability and also suggests being educated and cultivated. I will return to this concept at the end of the article. Before that I want to focus for a moment on the literacy and reading ability concepts as they appear in the basic and secondary school curricula.

Despite the fact that reading and using ability tend to be used synonymously in everyday speech, they can be distinguished from one another on an analytical level. While the reading concept connotes something that the individual has knowledge about, the using ability concept implies something that the individual is both acquainted with and is able to handle (SAOB). The concepts suggest two different levels of reading, despite the fact that reading has long been considered something that an individual either masters or doesn’t. According to the *UNESCO Adult Literacy Survey*, the ability to read is today placed in a continuum in which five different levels refer to how well adults manage to take part of information in society (UNESCO 1993). On the first and lowest level the level of reading ability is quite elementary. The individual is, for example, just barely able to understand writing so that she can buy medicine for her child (UNESCO 1993). The highest level, level 5, mirrors a high standard of complex information processing. According to the PISA (2006) study, the literacy levels concern having the ability to draw information from a written text, to gain an overall understanding of the text, to interpret the text, to reflect over the content of the text, and to reflect over the form of the text. The classifications place the literacy levels in Finland at the highest level. Beyond understanding the significance of different types of texts and media texts, the literate person manages to use his/her proficiency to attain his/her own aims (Promemorior av undervisningsministeriets arbetsgrupper 2000: 4 [Memorandum from the Ministry of Education]).

Corresponding Concepts

Now that I have built a foundation for the understanding of the article, by defining the concepts *media*, *IT*, *ICT*, *media-pedagogy*, *media upbringing*, and *literacy as a reading and a using ability*, I can move on to analyze the concepts that are used to describe the proficiencies, knowledge, and attitudes that are needed in today's society. The concepts that I will now focus on are *media literacy as a reading and using ability*, *media skill*, *media competence*, and *media literacy as being literate*. I want to point out that I do not intend to develop a hierarchy similar to the one provided by UNESCO. What I will provide should instead be seen as a line of development for the dimensions or aspects of these abilities.

In a similar way to *literacy*, *media literacy as a reading ability* could also be considered the individual's fundamental understanding of media messages. Consequently, *media literacy as a using ability* could, comparably, be seen as the individual's ability to understand, interpret, and reflect over texts as well as use them for his/her own aims. These abilities could be said to involve the most basic capacities vis-a-vis media.

Nevertheless, an overly one-sided, linguistic focus with regards to media has brought its share of criticism. The concept of *multiliteracies*, that first came about as a complement to the strong focus of text, refers to a compilation of reading abilities beyond mere text reading proficiency. This multimodal discourse makes up a visual, spatial, auditory reading ability that the individual uses within society (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, New London group 1996). From the perspective of social theory *media literacy* could also be understood as social practice. This kind of new literacy should be seen as more than just understanding and using media. It is about a kind of social situatedness and the use of media within social circumstances (see e.g. in Lankshear & Knobel 2006). Either way, these capacities are not further elaborated upon within the range of this article.

"Mediataito", *media skill*, "mediekunnande" in Swedish, is included in the Finnish primary school curriculum (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004) in one of the seven cross-curricular themes, "Kommunikation och mediekunskap" in Swedish or *Viestintä ja medietaito* in Finnish and *Communication and media skill* in English. Within the translated Swedish version the concept "mediekunskap" is used although the meaning of "taito" connotes skills that go beyond the Swedish "kunskap" concept. "Taito" refers to *skill* or the "ability to do something practical", whilst "kunskap" or "tieto" means to "have thorough knowledge in a subject" (Lexin). "Mediakunnande" (*media skill*) would be a more suitable translation for communicating the meaning of the Finnish "mediataito". The concept "kunnande" (skill) is often used within technical terminology and means capacity and skill (SAOB).

The researchers Tella, Vahtivuori, Vuorento, Wäger & Oksanen (2001) and Tella & Ruokamo (2005) also suggest "mediataito", *media skill*, (in Swedish "mediakunnande"), as a more activity connoting alternative to the *media literacy*

as *reading ability* concept. The passivity that the researchers imply the concept connotes, should perhaps be interpreted so that it only concerns the arena of actions, or that the individual is not active in his actions during the reading activity. Mentally reading is, of course, far from a passive phenomenon. The five aspects of reading that are defined by the PISA studies (2006) can serve here as simple examples of the type of activity reading actually implies: drawing information, gaining understanding, interpreting, reflecting; these activities apply to both analogous and digital texts to a high degree.

Yet, according to Tella et al. and Tella and Ruokamo (2001, 2005) “*mediataito*”, *media skill*, (“*mediekunnande*” in Swedish), embodies more than a technical ability. They suggest it involves verbal, cultural, communicative, social, educational, ethical, and aesthetic capabilities as well. However, in this article, the meaning of the concepts and not what media-pedagogical qualities they should comprise, are used. I therefore wish to make a distinction between *knowledge* as an understanding about things, *kunskap* (in Finnish “*tieto*”), and *knowledge* as being able to do something practical, *kunnande*, (in Finnish “*taito*”), being aware that this distinction is only of theoretical interest. According to the Oxford English Dictionary Online the knowledge concept is defined as both *understanding* and *skill*.

Competence (From Latin “*competere*”) constitutes a more all-encompassing concept than the aforementioned ones, and hints at a proficiency that the individual secures for e.g. professional duties. Media competence, according to Kotilainen (1999), is included in the ability to understand media and different media texts, and to relate to them in an emotional way. Varis (1998) places media competence in a social perspective. He defines media competence as a type of communicative knowledge whereby the individual realizes the media’s social significance, understands that media interpretation differs from person to person, and furthermore that the media’s messages are always biased from economic, political, as well as cultural perspectives.

Erstad (2005) connects the media competence concept with *digital competence*. He defines *digital competence* as the types of abilities, knowledge, and attitudes that are needed in the learning society. He compares the competence concept with the upbringing concept. Competence is something one is and differs from qualification which hints at something one has. According to Erstad the concept also signifies a readiness to act and an ability to form judgments.

Similarly to the literacy concept, the multi-dimensional English *media literacy* concept includes not only *reading and using ability* but also an aspect of *being literate, educated, or cultivated* (Oxford English Dictionary Online). (For more about literacy also see e.g. Varis 1998). The Swedish concept “*bildning*”, that stands for being literate (educated, cultivated), is related to the Greek “*paideia*”, which means upbringing or education. Usually it is connected to the German “*bildung*” that means giving form (see Liedman, 2004). “*Bildning*” also refers to a comprehensive spiritual i.e. intellectual, aesthetic, and ethical, education and a refinement of habits and cultivation (SAOB). The difference between the

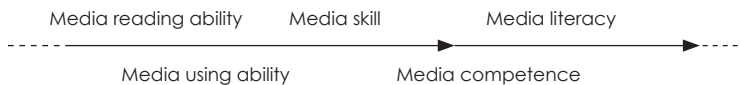
competence and *being literate* concepts is that the former suggests proficiency and qualifications, and the latter a holistic, also ethical and aesthetic, shaping of the human being.

Potter (1998/2005) claims that *media literacy* makes up a continuum without beginning or end and covers cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and ethical abilities and knowledge. A person can consequently be neither completely non-media literate nor readily media literate; media literacy involves a continual maturing and developmental process. According to Potter, the media literate individual is equally highly developed in all areas, cognitive, emotional, ethical, and aesthetic.

Being *literate* can also be considered a type of knowledge. In his definition of the concept of “bildning”, Gustavsson (1996) proceeds from Aristotle’s distinction of knowledge into three parts: “episteme”, scientific knowledge (to know that), “techne”, practical knowledge (to know how), and “fronesis”, practical wisdom (to know why). Following Gustavsson’s definition, being media literate (educated, cultivated) could consequently involve “knowing something about media, being able to use media, and doing the right/good things with the help of media”.

In this chapter *Media literacy as reading and using ability*, *media skill*, *media competence*, and *media literacy as being literate* have been analyzed and positioned in relation to one another. To this end the analysis has also shown that instead of building separate categories, the concepts often overlap and enter into one another. What distinguishes the concepts from each other is the fact that they have been formulated within different scientific contexts and apply to somewhat different situations. *Media skill* is suggested as an ability to communicate and learn in virtual learning environments while the *media competence* and *being media literate* concepts describe media-cultural abilities, abilities for the media society. But together these concepts build a visible progression so long as they are used in unity with their original meanings. Inspired by Potter, I place the concepts in a continuum (figure 4).

Figure 4. Dimensions in a Continuum

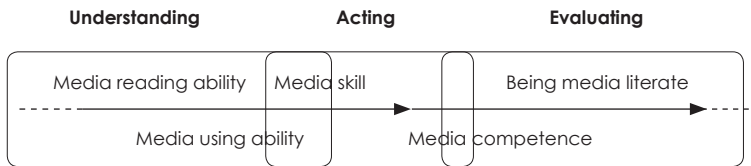


The figure assumes that the concepts are understood as follows: *media literacy as a reading ability* stands for understanding media messages in society, *media literacy as a using ability* means the ability to understand, interpret, and reflect over media and the ability to use media texts to achieve one’s own aims, *media skill* is about communicating through and producing media texts, *media competence* implies that on top of communicating through and producing media texts one also adopts a critical perspective and maintains a consciousness of one’s own interpretations of media texts, while *being media literate*

means, beyond what has been said thus far, to embody a holistic emotional, cognitive, ethical, and aesthetic level of development. The progression moves from left to right.

In the definition of these five concepts different semantic dimensions can be distinguished. A simple categorization of the five dimensions results in three aspects: an understanding aspect, an action aspect, and an evaluation aspect (See figure 5).

Figure 5. The Understanding, Action, and Evaluation Aspects of Media Knowledge



These aspects can be viewed as an individual progression from understanding to action and finally to evaluation, not unlike Aristotle's distinction of knowledge. According to Aristotle's definition of knowledge, media literacy could also be defined as "episteme" (to know or understand) "techne" (to do or to act), and "fronesis" (to know how to act in practical situations) (Arnolds-Granlund 2004; for more about Aristotle's distinctions of knowledge see Gustavsson 1996).

At this point I must warn of a simplification. The portrayal of the progression as a straight line can be somewhat misleading. As a development of this kind could be considered dependent on age and level of development (cognitive, emotional, moral), could happen without distinct transitions, and could lack a null point as well as an upper limit, a circular movement might be a more appropriate way of visualizing the development that the individual undergoes. Proceeding from his/her ability, the individual aims to understand, make use of, and evaluate the media that constitute a part of his/her world. In a circle of expedition and return, the individual covers new ground, forms new experiences, and returns not to the place where the expedition began but to a new platform from whence a new expedition can start (Gustavsson 1996: 49, also see Gadamer, 1960/1997). In this way the individual develops and conquers the abilities needed for life in the media society. A third way of looking at the five abilities is to describe them as different dimensions of the same ability. The circles in the hermeneutic process could be considered abilities in different phases of development. Abilities in which the understanding, action, and evaluation aspects are present and are represented by the level of development that the individual finds him/herself in at the time.

Concrete Consequences

In this article I have played a language game. I have analyzed and defined concepts that exist within the media-pedagogical field, primarily within a Finnish context. As the concepts are formulations of objectives in national school curricula, questions about “what” and “how” naturally arise. What do the upbringing and teaching that have these qualities as a target look like, where are they carried out, who does them, and how? I ask for the concrete consequences of the game.

The work needed to investigate and develop the question of the understanding, action, and evaluation of the “what” and “how” aspects, is clearly extensive, and yet it cannot be avoided in the long-term as objectives have already been set. But it is not solely the objective formulations that challenge us to explore the ability concepts for media society.

Further motives for action include the fact that during the last ten years Western societies have undergone a metamorphosis towards an information and knowledge society. Students in primary, secondary, vocational, and higher education institutions are all using ever-higher levels of IT and Internet for communication, studying, and learning. Efforts in developing media literacy can therefore not be regarded as the issue of any one individual nation but must rather be regarded, as literacy has been, as a matter of global interest. This is what makes World Summits, like the one to be held in Karlstad in 2010 (see Lundgren in this volume), decisive for a mutual understanding of the field.

As the development of the abilities needed for media society should not be considered an objective of education alone but should primarily be seen as a skill of citizenship, it naturally follows that all those who have a responsibility for upbringing and education partake in this labor. A lot of work has in fact already been carried out, but a comprehensive, Nordic, multi-disciplinary research project would be desirable in the quest for multimodal media-pedagogy and media upbringing.

Notes

1. Observe that in the text focused concepts are in English marked by Italics and in other languages by quotation marks.
2. Here I use the concept “being literate” for the Swedish equivalent “bildning”. Other similar concepts that could be used are “educated” and “cultivated” (Norstedts engelska ord). I also use “upbringing” for the Swedish concept “fostran” (Finnish “kasvatus”) instead of “education”. The concept “education” could be regarded including both “teaching” and “upbringing”. (See e.g. Uljens 2000, 2001).

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Media Literacy as a Focal Practice

Reijo Kupiainen & Sara Sintonen

Abstract

Media technology is possible to see as a *focal thing*, which demand focal practice. Media literacy is an example of this kind of practice. Instead of pure cognitive skill literacy in the digital era could be seen as a focal participation in the media environment and as a social use of media. It implies different kind of attitude, thinking and integration. The characters of media literacy are participation and sharing. Media literacy in the digital era is more collaborative, productive and distributive than earlier.

We live in a participatory culture. The matter of culture creation is no longer only in hands of experts or authorities. From this point of view opportunities to develop media literacy are almost crucial for future educators. In the participatory culture the learning processes should embrace a wide range of learners, individual preferences, genuine interest, creativity and mutual respect in a focal cohesion and reciprocity. These processes involve experiencing, experimenting and empathizing, and have also ethical dimensions. The learner creates, produces and understands information through its own personal experience, interpretation, imagination and operation together with peers. This also strengthens the understanding from self, own environment, history and background. Media literacy is then connected to functioning as a citizen, to communal life, to participation and reforming of it.

Keywords: media literacy, participation, internet, social media, empowerment

One of the basic outcomes of media education is media literacy. Media literacy is considered a broad-based competence in relation to several languages or forms of communication. According to the standard definition, media literacy is “*the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts*” (Ofcom 2008). This definition is based on the Aspen definition, which originally entailed four actions: access, analyse, evaluate and produce (Tyner 1998: 120). The concept of media literacy has changed in step with technological development. An important change in digital culture is that media technol-

ogy is, perhaps for the very first time, seen not as a danger to social life but on the contrary as a *sine quo non* for rich social and democratic activity. New digital culture is more participatory across various forms of media. Therefore, media literacy can be seen not so much as an *ability*, but as a *social and focal practice*. This renews media education as well. Media, media education and media literacy are entwined. The historical media age, and different forms of media strongly affect the pedagogy and concept of media education. Media literacy as an outcome of media education should also be viewed differently in the digital age we are living in.

In this article, we argue that we must see beyond abilities, skills and competencies, to the more participatory practices concerning media literacy. We call such practices “focal practices”. This involves also critical aspects of media literacy and media education. It is not a question of “media education 2.0”, but of media education in relation to participatory digital culture. This is the basis for future media education as well.

Media Literacy in a Process of Change

The development of media education has gone hand in hand with the development of media technology. In an age of mass communication and mass media, it became necessary to strengthen critical and cognitive abilities in receiving media messages. As David Buckingham (2003) argues, media education has gone hand in hand with the ideas of the Enlightenment. One objective of media education has been to develop autonomous and critical individuals with the strength to resist media manipulation and rhetoric. The age of video culture and music videos is also the age of the “active audience”. The paradigm of the active audience suggests that the meaning of media texts is not simply delivered to the audience but is also constructed by it. By using video cameras and other personal media equipment the audience is free to create their own meanings and their own media presentations. Media literacy was now understood as the ability to create and to use media devices, and to interpret different representations.

Thus the development of media education has been distinctly driven by media technology and is biased towards it, just as the first part of the phrase “media education” seems to suggest. In a Finnish history of media education, we can see some clear changes (Table 1).

In broad sense, technological development has changed the focus of media education from film and television to digital technology, games, and the Internet. This has meant a change from audiovisual education to media education that challenges the objectives of media literacy.

We approach these objectives from the wider perspective of socio-cultural literacy theory. In the context of literacy, there exist two ‘new’ issues that one can discuss (Lankshear & Knobel 2006: 63-101). First, the rise of digital technologies and the emergence of post-typographic forms of texts and text production means that digital media is as much of a “rich signal” as sound, text,

Table 1. Finnish Media Education in Recent Decades

1960 Popular liberal education	Audiovisual education Mass media education	Film, television, newspaper, mass communication
1970 Critical stance	Mass media education Communication education	Television, mass media
1980 Aesthetics, ethics	Communication education	Video, audiovisual culture, film, music videos
1990 Networking, interaction	Communications education Media education	Information technology, net technology, digital technology
2000 Multimodal media culture	Media education	Digital technology, multimodality

images, video, animations, or any combination of these would be. In the case of media education and media literacy, the emergence of new digital media is important. New competencies that enable people to combine different signals or media modes are needed in order to participate in digital society which is embedded in every part of human life and social practice: in work, leisure, home, education, the community, and the public sphere. The second ‘new’ issue is what Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel call “a new ethos stuff”. This entails a new concept of literacy that reflects a different mindset from that of the conventional and skill-based literacies.

From a socio-cultural perspective media literacy is like all literacy a social practice. Literacy has traditionally been understood as an individual and cognitive skill, as an ability to write and to read. From our point of view, literacy is a social process of everyday life and interaction. The idea of literacy is related to other people and to socially generated situations. This means that different texts (visual, linguistic, aural, tactile, etc.) are not simply decoded, skimmed, scanned and written, but discussed, collaborated, mixed, designed, rendered, and shared.

James Gee (1991) argues that literacy is linked to different discourses and ways of being in the world. These discourses comprise people, things, and characteristic ways of talking, acting, thinking, believing, valuing, writing and reading. Literacy is thus like a family of practices that includes various ways of acting, thinking and communicating. As Lankshear and Knobel (2007: 4) argue, “[l]iteracies call us to generate and communicate meanings and to invite others to make meaning from our texts in turn.”

We emphasise that literacy is an act of sharing. Peter Sloterdijk (1999), for example, describes literate humanism as participation in writing society. Books are like letters that must be delivered to others. To be literate means

to participate in literacy society, to discuss and forward messages with a critical attitude. This definition of literacy is appropriate for the concept of media literacy, especially with regard to digital and social media such as Facebook, LastFm, Wikipedia, or Flickr.

Digital and social media are examples of “new technologies”. The term ‘social media’ emphasises the word ‘social’. When people use social media they are no longer merely the audience or receiver of messages. Rather, they are also creating content themselves by for example writing weblogs or Wikipedia entries; they are sharing meanings and generating discussions on e.g. Facebook and Twitter. Thus media literacies are more participatory, collaborative and distributed in nature than the more individual and author-centred, conventional literacies (Lankshear & Knobel 2007: 9).

Conventional literacies are bound to the realm of book culture. Lankshear and Knobel (*ibid.* 13) argue that the book is a text paradigm that has very important implications for some cultural forms. Books play a central role in organizing practices and routines in major social institutions, and they mediate “social relations of control and power, as between author and reader, the authorial voice as the voice of the expert and authority, teacher/expert and student/learner, priest/minister and congregation, and so on.” Lankshear and Knobel have characterised the difference between conventional literacies and what they call “new literacies” in various dimensions, within two different mindsets (cf. Table 2, below).

Mindset 1 emphasises the business-as-usual way of looking at the world, whereas mindset 2 tries to find new concepts, vocabularies, and practices for capturing the reality of the new media culture and new media literacies. In the

Table 2. Dimensions of Variation Between Mindsets

Mindset 1	Mindset 2
The world is much the same as before, only now it is more technologized, or technologized in more sophisticated ways. • The world is appropriately interpreted, understood and responded to in broadly physical-industrial terms • Value is a function of scarcity • An “industrial” view of production - Products as material artefacts - A focus on infrastructure and production units (e.g., a firm or company) - Tools for producing • Focus on individual intelligence • Expertise and authority are “located” in individuals and institutions • Space as enclosed and purpose – specific • Social relations of “bookspace”; a stable “textual order”	The world is very different from before, largely as a result of the emergence and uptake of digital electronic inter-networked technologies • The world cannot adequately be interpreted, understand or responded to in physical-industrial terms only • Value is a function of dispersion • A “post-industrial” view of production - Products as enabling services - A focus on leverage and infinite participation - Tools for mediating and relating • Focus on collective intelligence • Expertise and authority are distributed and collective; hybrid experts • Space as open, continuous and fluid • Social relations of emerging “digital media space”; texts in change

Source: Lankshear & Knobel 2007.

context of literacy, it is important to note that the world is by nature different from the way it was before. From this point of view, literacy implies increased collective and distributive activity where the focus is on collective intelligence. As previously mentioned, this occurs in, for example, video gaming, fan fiction writing, weblogging, using websites to participate in affinity practices, and in social practices involving mobile computing, all of which are examples of new forms of literacies.

New social media and technology are increasingly a part of life processes, and when people use technology they increasingly become members of a community engaged in similar activities. Wikis and blogospheres, for example, are forums of member communities that share a way of life and participate in a dialogue.

Literacy today is not so much the activity of any one individual person. Literacy is more collective and collaborative; 'we' are the subject of reading and writing. Ideally, the more users there are editing and sharing online, the more the content will improve and reflect multiple perspectives, and the more reliable, user-friendly, and accountable the resource will become (Lankshear & Knobel 2006: 45). The idea or value of the Internet is, therefore, that "it brings people into a relationship" (ibid. 49). This is also the value of media literacy: it brings people together to participate, to share, to collaborate, to produce, and to distribute knowledge and media presentations. Media literacy now implies focal participation in the media environment and its social use, or reading and writing together with others in a particular social context. We (Kupiainen & Sintonen 2009) name this *participatory media literacy*, where transparency of knowledge plays an important role. The main point of the "first mindset" was that knowledge was seen as a final result, not as a process of producing knowledge. In the "second mindset" this collective process of knowing is important and entails the sharing of ownership.

Participatory Culture

The cultural situation in the digital media age is something that has been termed "participatory culture". Henry Jenkins (2006) uses this term to refer to a culture in which the traditional roles of media producers and consumers have collapsed; they are now inseparable. Producers and consumers are seen as participants interacting with each other. For Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams (2006: 18), participatory culture implies a promise of collaboration through which peer production "will harness human skill, ingenuity and intelligence more efficiently and effectively than anything we have witnessed before." For them the basic principles are openness, peering, sharing, and global action. Jenkins (2006: 3) believes that basic forms of participatory culture are affiliations, expressions, collaborative problem solving, and circulations.

Wikipedia would be a paradigmatic example of participatory culture (cf. Suoranta & Vadén 2008: 70). Articles in Wikipedia are the outcome of collabo-

rative and participatory writing and sharing. Every article has three important buttons: 'edit this page', 'discussion' and 'history'. The edit button allows for anyone to participate and write on Wikipedia. Everyone is an expert in some area and is also able to share his or her expertise. In schools, for example, it is not only possible to read Wikipedia articles but it is also possible to write them or to write a wiki for one's whole school or own class. The discussion and history buttons show that knowledge has a history and that everything is controversial. These buttons provide a unique perspective on how the content has been created, criticised, and collaborated on. The truth is not handed down "from heaven", but is rather a consequence of discussion, argument, and debate. This is an important account in new media literacies. Participation helps one to understand that just as Wikipedia articles are written through choices and debates, so all media representations are the products of human interests and choices. And by sharing our knowledge and ideas, we are able to develop new and creative media texts.

In connection with participatory culture, media literacy exceeds purely cognitive and active dimensions. In participatory culture, media literacy involves social dimensions developed through collaboration and networking. Jenkins (2006) argues that at least 11 new skills belong to media literacy: play, performance, simulation, appropriation, multitasking, distributed cognition, collective intelligence, judgment, transmedia navigation, networking, and negotiation. This article cannot examine all of these skills, and such objectives require a rethinking of media education in closer relation to participatory culture.

Literacy as a Focal Practice

In social and participatory culture media literacy is collaborative and distributive. It has virtues that are often considered attributes of conventional literacy, such as concentration, attention and active participation. These virtues include what are known as *focal practices* (Borgmann 1984). Philosopher Albert Borgmann defines this concept as:

The resolute and regular dedication to a focal thing. It sponsors discipline and skill which are exercised in a unity of achievement and enjoyment, of mind, body, and the world, of myself and others, and in a social union. (Borgmann 1984: 219)

For Borgmann, the focal thing can be, for example, a violin or some other material and concrete artefact that demands patience, endurance, skill, and presence. In Borgmann's view, technological devices are not focal things, but from our point of view media have the potential to reconstruct authentic life and open collaboration in a social union, which is exactly what a focal thing does.

Let us take an example from focal practice. Below is a description of a family and some friends sitting down on a Friday evening to a traditional Jewish

Shabbat meal:

We begin with the *brachot* – the blessings over the candles, the wine, and the *challah* bread – and move to a dinner that in part calls on us to take a moment out of time, steeped in tradition, to reflect on the connections between those gathered at the table, and perhaps also to include a vigorous debate and discussion of things that matter to all present. Whether any of the participants at the meal be theists or not [...] the culture of the Shabbat table focuses on the character of each person present in some context, and binds the participants in some relationship – relations, we might add, that can so easily be absent with a fast-food, drive-through window experience. (Higgs, Light & Strong 2000: 11-12)

The important thing in focal practice is to share a moment with friends, family or collaborators and to do something together. Collaboration is based on individuals' common practices and discussion.

Media culture and media literacy are not incompatible with focal practices. Douglas Kellner (2000), for example, argues that media technologies can be examples of focal things. Kellner uses e-mail and computer communication as examples, but in social media we can see focal practices *par excellence*. In a focal practice friends gather together in a situation where they share thoughts and ideas and create meanings collaboratively. In the age of social media, they are able to meet and act together online, synchronically or asynchronously. Shared meanings and collaborative working online requires collective or participatory intelligence and other focal virtues.

From a socio-cultural point of view, texts are seen as artefacts, as objects that have a history and a material presence (Pahl & Rowsell 2005: 27). Gunther Kress (1997) argues that people write texts that signify one's own interpretations. We can infer that these interpretations are also shared. Text is, for Kress, some kind of material stuff that could consist for example of words, gestures in role-play, or audio-visual signs on a network. Meaning making is always formed somehow and for some material stuff. Meaning-as-form and form-as-meaning are always together. Even digital signs are material stuff in this way. Kate Pahl and Jennifer Rowsell (2005: 34) write that on the Internet "we have more choices than ever in our making and reading texts, which implies that, more than ever, we must understand and interpret the materiality of texts." For example in weblogs, it is possible to use different kinds of materials and modes of media, such as alphabets, video streaming, podcasts, music, pictures, links, rss-feeds, and colour. As Borgmann emphasizes, this materiality of texts is important in focal practices.

The aforementioned understanding and interpretation of the materiality of texts are both parts of media literacy. As a focal practice, media literacy requires material and focal things, signs and texts (stuff) in a shared social context. Like any other practice it requires three further components, outlined by Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole (1981: 236), these are technology,

knowledge, and skills. These are all dynamically connected to each other. In cooking, for example, which is a focal practice *per se*, people use technologies and have ideas and knowledge about how to make food. This in turn generates new tasks that call for refinements in knowledge, skills and technologies. Practice improves skills and knowledge. Such knowledge involves more than knowing what or how. These are traditional Aristotelian types of knowing. *Episteme* is a theoretical type of knowing, or knowing what. *Tekhné* is practical know-how. Aristotle also identified the concept of a third kind of knowledge, *fronesis*. *Fronesis* in an Aristotelian sense means that universal knowledge is tied to some particular context. This is an important type of knowledge in media literacy (cf. Kupiainen 2005: 153; cf. also Arnolds-Granlund in this volume). Scribner and Cole (1981: 236) argue that: “literacy is not simply knowing how to read a particular script, but applying this knowledge for specific purposes in specific contexts of use.” If we apply this definition to media literacy, we can say that writing a wiki article or making a video and uploading it to YouTube is a socially evolved and patterned activity that requires *fronesis*. Implementation of this activity depends on a new technology (the Internet, a camera, or a computer, for example) and shared cultural knowledge (modes of representation, conventions of form and style, alphabetic and visual language). To apply this knowledge, a writer or movie maker must use a complex set of skills: senso-motory, linguistic, cognitive, social, media, and others. Technology, knowledge and skills work together in a larger socio-cultural context.

James Paul Gee (2004: 77) writes about communities of practice in learning processes. Learning assumes an apprenticeship where learners “apprentice” to some group of people who share certain practices in e.g. learning to make food or to play video games. Becoming a media literate person demands a highly motivated engagement with social practices. The knowledge and skills required in such practices are learned in some concrete community. This community does not necessarily claim tight personal ties with the members nor must it necessarily label them. Writing a Wikipedia article requires no special membership in any group; social networks are open and free areas of working. Instead of the term ‘communities of practices’, the term ‘communities of literacy’ could be used when speaking about practices where literacy – and in this case media literacy – is needed and in use. Such literacy communities share some ideas and values but personal ties are unnecessary. This is why anonymity can be valuable in networking.

At the same time, participation in the community can empower persons involved in communities of literacy.

Future Media Education and a Literacy Challenge

Media literacy is a focal practice that even “digital natives” lack as newborns. It is a question within media education that has traditionally placed more em-

phasis on cognitive skills and mass media. We argue that present and future media education should be based on *focality*, or on focal things that generate media literacy as a focal practice. We also consider media literacy as a basis for the cultural and social orientation of ethically empowered future educators and learners. Media literacy could then be understood a shared process of culture renewal, for which the power also lies in focal practice.

Literacy is broader and more flexible than educators have tended to assume in the past. Literacy in the digital age also entails participation, sharing, collaboration, production and the distribution of knowledge, and media presentations. The matter of culture creation is no longer solely in the hands of experts or authorities. From this point of view, opportunities to develop ethically empowering media literacy become the most crucial thing for future educators. This viewpoint implies a different kind of attitude, thinking, and integration from the other viewpoints that many people in education are used to.

The question of morality typically arises when it comes to media education focused on media literacy, and media is often blamed for the collapse of moral standards. Media education is still widely compared to moral education, where the media educator acts like a moral gatekeeper or guard. The moral issues of media and media culture are relevant, but their relationship to media education is not so simple. As Tom Bentley (1998: 58) puts it, "There is a clear difference between prescribing and teaching the specific kind of behaviour that some of us might like to see, and developing young people's capacities to act as moral agents".

The learning processes in media education should embrace a wide range of learners, individual preferences, genuine interests, creativity, and mutual respect. The process involves not only reading and receiving, but also doing, experiencing, experimenting, and empathizing. In media education learning processes, the learner creates, produces, and understands information through his or her own personal experience, interpretation, imagination, and operation. Among other things, this reinforces and strengthens one's understanding of the self (Bruner 1996). This understanding is also a precondition for one's ability to adjust oneself as a part of a global environment and in relation to the time through which we pass. One's capacity to function as an active citizen will also increase when one finds the means and tools needed to express oneself.

Media education focused on media literacy is connected to one's functioning as a citizen, to communal life, to participation in it and to the reform of it. Criticism is one way to transform culture. Media culture must then also be seen as resources of culturally and socially oriented, ethically empowered citizenship. Within media literacy, criticism and creativity are skills, which can be developed individually and/or together with others. It is important to note that those who practice are in the best position to criticize; practice without critical awareness will surely be blind. It is also very important to educate people more widely about the impact of media culture on their lives. People should become conscious of questions such as "Whose interests do the media promote?" One integral part of being a media literate person involves the pos-

sibility of making personal choices and being an independent consumer of a wide range of culture.

Knowledge and understanding are constructed when individuals engage socially in talk and activity. Making meaning is thus a dialogical process (Driver et al. 2004: 62). The most critical feature in this process is the nature of the dialogue. In many cases, teaching becomes a learning process for the teacher as well. In the future, media education should be developed so that it enables teaching to be organized in a way that enhances diversity with an understanding of those being educated as individual learners and thinkers with different biological and psychological faculties. If the matter being taught has a practical application it will probably increase the learner's future-oriented attitude and to his or her motivation, ideally leading to social action. In media education, the importance of practical application and links to everyday experience can be found in both the knowledge and the skills taught as well as in the experiences acquired.

The pedagogy of future media education could be based on, for example, following four key ideas: agency, reflection, collaboration, and culture. The idea of agency entails that each learner takes more control over his or her own mental activity. Reflection focuses on understanding what is happening, what the learner is actually learning. The third idea involves sharing one's thoughts with others, and the idea of culture involves understanding the context and link between 'real' life, art, and science (cf. Bruner 1996: 87, Brown 2004: 74). Bringing these ideas together with the focal things that generate media literacy as a focal practice is challenging, but hardly impossible.

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Constructing Media Literacy as a Civic Competence

Niina Uusitalo

Abstract

Media literacy has been designated an essential civic competence in recent years. Accordingly media education is hoped to educate active citizen-subjects. This article begins by exploring how traditional literacy and media literacy have been defined as civic competencies in various settings. Ultimately the aim is to show that defining civic competencies is always a discursive effort that is tied to cultural, political and educational power-struggles in society. Also the goal of active citizen-subjects is tied to specific cultural and educational knowledge.

Furthermore, the article offers a methodological standpoint for analyzing citizenship construction. Discourses of governance can be deconstructed by viewing the ideals they set: these are the attributes of citizenship, the subject positions of citizens and the societal problems citizenship is hoped to solve. The article points out that the results of governing citizens can never be predetermined, as life-stories, identities and social situations affect how individuals will make use of their skills.

Keywords: media literacy, media education, citizenship education, governance

Media literacy has emerged as an integral concept for citizenship education in the last decade. Media literacy has been designated an essential civic competence and media education is hoped to produce active citizen-subjects who will uphold democracy through their actions. The types of media literacy needed for citizenship in the information age have been defined in media education research, state politico-administrative texts, and school curricula (examples in Kellner & Share 2007, Masterman & Mariet 1994). Also the European Union and Unesco have been active agents in studying and defining media literacy in the information age (see Buckingham & Domaille 2003, Zacchetti 2003). Media literacy as a civic competence is defined not only as the ability to critically assess media contents but also the capability to take action and communicate effectively through media (Masterman & Mariet 1994). Other related multi-literacies have

been called information literacy, digital literacy, and visual literacy. Acquisition of digital skills and communicative competence are seen as part of the socialization process in contemporary society (Kalmus 2007: 157).

Partly, these progressions result from the obvious changes in society. Increasing mediatization has generated an intensified debate about the importance of media literacy, including ways to promote children's and young people's media competence through media education and media participation (von Feilitzen & Carlsson 2003: 9). In mediatized Western societies young people are involved with new media technologies more than ever before, producing content online, often out of the reach of parental guidance. The high rate of media consumption by individuals, the growth in the management and manufacture of information, and pressures to treat information as a commodity have enhanced claims for the importance of media education since the 1980's (Masterman & Mariet 1994). Also the general emphasis on individuality and activity has led to the inclusion of media literacy and active citizenship in educational goals. Media literacy is seen simultaneously as a prerequisite for democracy and as a building block of personal identity (Kotilainen & Kivikuru 1999: 27).

The aim of this article is not to deny that media literacy may boost an individual's confidence and competence as a citizen. However my wish is to point out that defining media literacy as a civic competence is very much a discursive effort. Media literacy is no more a 'natural' part of citizenship than any other competence or ideal attached to citizenship, such as social knowledge, political skills, or commitment to democratic principles (see Engle & Ochoa 1988). In fact, civic competencies are in themselves discursive constructs that have been formed and attached to citizenship over time. Furthermore, the emphasis on 'ability' and 'competence' in educational discourses can be seen as a neo-liberal trend, as pupils are given responsibility for the result of their learning (see for example B  th 2006). Emphasizing media literacy as an essential civic competence means participating in the construction of ideal citizenship. In this article I will examine the construction of media literacy as a civic competence from both a theoretical and a methodological point of view.

Learning media literacy is often connected to traditional literacy, thus media literacy is considered an expansion of traditional literacy. It is evident that information, visual, and media literacies have the potential to build on already familiar alphabetic literacy foundations in schooling (Tyner 1996: 92). Other scholars caution against using the term 'literacy' in this metaphorical sense as they find the analogy to written language misleading (Buckingham 2003: 36). In this article I concentrate on how literacy is perceived to construct citizenship, thus it is not of essence how different forms of literacy are related. I begin the article by looking at how traditional literacy and media literacy have been determined to be civic competencies. I proceed to analyze how media literacy is attached to the goal of an active citizen-subject. Finally I introduce a methodological approach for analyzing citizenship education from the point of view of governance.

Defining Literacies as Civic Competencies

The educational view on citizenship emphasizes that individuals become citizens by acquiring certain qualities and competencies (Nivala 2006: 27). Traditional literacy has regularly been considered an essential civic competence. In this setting literacy is not only seen as the ability to read and write texts, but literacy is also considered to give individuals the capacity to participate in society. For instance Kellner and Share (2005: 369) write that literacy involves gaining the skills and knowledge to read, interpret, and produce certain types of texts and artifacts and to gain the intellectual tools and capacities needed to fully participate in one's culture and society. Thus literacy supplies the competencies needed to effectively learn and use socially constructed forms of communication and representation. In this view literacy is not reduced to the treatment of letters and words as purely mechanical action, but it is seen as a set of practices that functions to either empower or disempower people (see Freire & Macedo 1987: viii).

When media literacy is viewed in the broad sense as the ability to participate in one's culture and society, media literacy and civic competence become almost synonymous concepts. Nonetheless, I wish to distinguish between the two, for attained media literacy does not always play out to be a civic competence. In my view the essence of civic competencies is the connection to public life. Citizenship is the membership of a public community, thus competencies become civic only when used in connection to public life. I see media literacy as having the potential to be a civic competence rather than considering it a locked-in certainty that it will be. In reality people don't necessarily want to utilize media literacy as a civic competence and they may concentrate on their private endeavors instead. Furthermore media literacy is not the only civic competence. The ability to work in groups, the ability to form an opinion, even compassion and a sense of humor could be considered civic competencies.

Regarding media literacy as a civic competence implies that the socially constructed forms of communication and representation are no longer transmitted merely via written language. Looking at the pulsing audiovisual media reality of today, one cannot disagree. The majority of the information people receive comes less often from print sources and more typically from highly constructed visual images, complex sound arrangements, and multiple media formats (Kellner & Share 2007: 3). The media are major industries, generating profit and employment; they provide us with information about the political process, they offer ideas, images, and representations that will shape our view of reality. Becoming an active participant in public life necessarily involves making use of the modern media. (Buckingham 2003: 5) Accordingly, the social and cultural expectations of literacy performance have changed or even increased over time (Welch & Freebody 1993: 11). For instance, the expectations of professional life have changed: more and more people are 'knowledge workers' who need information literacy, digital literacy, and media literacy in their day-

to-day activities (Bellamy & Taylor 1998: 1). Media literacy is also seen as an important competence for global citizens and a global workforce.

Although media literacy appears to be the most 'natural' civic competence in our age, one must highlight that there are also discursive reasons behind this nomination. Using the term 'media literacy' is actually based on an analogy between the competencies which apply in relatively new, controversial or low-status areas (in this case, media) and those which apply in the established, uncontroversial, high-status areas of reading and writing. The analogy is used to support claims for the importance and respectability of the new area of study (Buckingham 2003). Using the term 'media literacy' is especially understandable in the case of citizenship education, as traditional literacy is unquestionably seen as a basic civic competence (see Levine 1996). So taking part in defining civic competencies is actually taking part in a process of legitimating.

Viewing media literacy as an essential civic competence boosts the status of media education as a field of research and education. Enforcing new educational goals usually comes with claims for resources: teachers must be educated, classrooms equipped, and new research generated concerning the field in question. If state officials and politicians see media literacy as an important civic competence there are more chances that media education projects will sail before the wind. This point isn't aimed at the noble intentions of media educators. However, it is important to see that citizenship education is not neutral and independent of the power-struggles in society. Designating media literacy as a basic civic competence is part of an educational, political, and economic struggle.

In other words advocating literacy or media literacy is by no means automatically a democratic act with the noble cause of empowering citizens. For example Henry Giroux has criticized the language of literacy for being exclusively linked to popular forms of liberal and right-wing discourse. These approaches reduce literacy to either a functional perspective tied to narrowly conceived economic interests, or to a logic designed to initiate the poor, the underprivileged, and minorities into the ideology of a unitary, dominant cultural tradition. In the first instance, literacy is attached to the need to train more workers for occupational jobs that demand "functional" reading and writing skills. Corporate and other groups aim to influence schools to develop curricula more closely tuned to the job market, and this will consequently reduce the need for corporations to provide on-the-job training. In the second instance, literacy becomes the ideological vehicle for legitimating schooling as a site for character development (Giroux 1989: 149). Giroux's criticism was written twenty years ago, but it remains crucial to recognize the goals and interests that lie behind media literacy discourses and goals of educating citizens.

Active Subjects Wanted

How then is media literacy seen to produce citizenship and what kind of citizenship is emphasized? In my view, promoting media literacy as a civic com-

petence is invariably linked to the goal of creating active citizen-subjects, who will consequently use their skills to act for the good of themselves and society. The active subject has emerged as an educational goal in a variety of settings, also in media research. Up until 1970, there was a general assumption that mass media were very powerful and that their audiences were passive. Today the academic world favors the view of the active audience. This has produced different media education approaches that try to produce subjects who will be active, social, and creative (Martinez-de-Toda 2003: 153). The active subject refers to a person who does not passively accept everything from the media. He/she changes media messages many times and constructs a different meaning from the text according to his/her own identity, experience, subjectivity, and cultural context (*ibid.* 155). The media have become important factors in shaping our social, political, and cultural environment. Understandably, being aware of the organization of mass media industries, their workings, and commercial and political interests, as well as the ideologies behind messages, are seen as important competencies of citizens (see *ibid.* 165).

Advocates of critical literacy have also set the active subject as an educational goal. Perhaps one of the best known is Paulo Freire's 'pedagogy of the oppressed', which focuses on learning critical consciousness. In Freire's view, learners can liberate themselves from the oppression of ideology only by means of developing critical consciousness (see Freire & Macedo 1987). Also Henry Giroux has been an enthusiastic spokesman of critical media literacy (Giroux 1989). Critical media literacy can be seen to teach students to learn from media, to resist media manipulations, to use media materials in constructive ways, but it is also concerned with developing skills that help to create good citizens and that will make individuals more motivated and competent participants in social life (Kellner & Share 2005: 372). Empowered and critical individuals are consequently hoped to create a more just and democratic society. Critical literacy is thus tied to the project of radical democracy (Kellner & Share 2007: 17).

Critical media literacy is based on the understanding of the social construction of knowledge, which means that all messages are constructed (Kellner & Share 2007: 19). However, it is often left out that also the critical, conscious, and active subject is a discursive construct that has emerged at a specific historical point of time. For instance the broad trends of individualization and neo-liberalism can be seen as central explanations for the emergence of the conception of the active citizen-subject. Whilst the old certainties of industrial society have disintegrated, individuals have had to discover new certitudes for themselves. This has led to individuals having to plan, organize, patch up, and sew their own life histories (Beck 1995: 27-28). Perhaps emphasizing active subjects has become one type of certainty in the ever-evolving risk society. The trials and tribulations of social life may change constantly, but at least the flexible and active subject will be able to adjust to new circumstances without much effort. Neo-liberal tendencies in Western societies have also boosted the active subject as an objective. Welfare states have attempted to transfer their previous obligations to non-governmental organizations and

individual citizens, who are encouraged to take care of their own affairs more than ever before.

Furthermore, sociologists have suggested that the free, rational, conscious, choosing, autonomous self was a creation of western capitalist democracies only in the second half of the twentieth century (Rose 1990: xii). The view of the autonomous self is inextricably tied to new forms of knowledge. Psychological theories have played a key role in the birth of this new concept of the self, and psychological techniques have had a crucial role in the development of the practices and techniques through which modern selves are constructed, sustained, and remodeled (*ibid.* xii-xiii). Modern knowledge of the psyche has played a part in promoting self-inspection and self-consciousness, shaping desires, and seeking to maximize intellectual capacities. These are fundamental to the production of individuals who are 'free to choose' (*ibid.* 4). One can easily identify these psychological tendencies also in the media literacy discourses mentioned above. The idea of the active subject and the idea of the critical consciousness that liberates and motivates individuals are both tied to modern knowledge of the psyche.

Governing Citizens and Forming Ideals

We have established that educating citizen-subjects involves trying to mould individual subjectivities to a certain extent. This management of the self has always existed to some degree, but in modern times it has been incorporated into the scope and aspirations of public powers. Governments and parties of all political complexions have formulated policies, set up machinery, established bureaucracies and promoted initiatives to regulate the conduct of citizens by acting upon their mental capacities and propensities (Rose 1990: 1-2). This regulation of conduct can be called 'governance'. Moulding, educating, and developing individual subjectivities is seen as a step towards solving social problems such as unemployment, loneliness, and other forms of social exclusion.

Governance refers to forms of action and relations of power that aim to guide and shape (rather than force, control, or dominate) the actions of others or oneself (see Cruickshank 1999, Rose 1996). Forms of governance can be specific programs aimed at educating citizens or more non-specific discourses which define the goals and means of education. The common denominator is that governance always strives to reach social and political ends by acting in a calculated manner upon the forces, activities, and relations of individuals (Rose 1990: 4-5). This means that governance is not random control but rather involves specific goals and ways of reaching those goals. In this paper I concentrate on discursive modes of governance. In other words, I will not look at non-discursive forms of governance, which in an educational institution could involve techniques such as the timetable for organizing bodies in space and time or the architecture of buildings and playgrounds to allow for

the observation and moralization of children (Rose 1999). Furthermore, I shall illustrate how media literacy is associated to governing citizens.

Analyzing citizenship education from the point of view of governance means taking a look at how discourses define citizenship goals and the means of achieving those goals. According to Rose, governing individuals becomes possible only through discursive mechanisms that represent the domain to be governed as an intelligible field with specifiable limits and particular characteristics, and whose component parts are linked together in a systematic manner by forces, attractions, and coexistences (Rose 1999 draws on Miller and Rose 1990). Following Rose's thoughts, before one can seek to manage a domain like citizenship, one must first conceptualize citizenship as a set of bounded entities and relations that are amenable to management. This conceptualization is never neutral, as defining citizenship implies either implicitly or explicitly constructing ideals of citizenship.

In my understanding, governing individuals towards citizenship involves setting three kinds of ideals: a) defining the attributes of citizenship, b) defining the subjectivities and subject positions of citizens in society, and c) defining what societal problems or challenges citizenship could solve. I am interested in discourses which define media literacy as an attribute of citizenship. This means discourses that specify what kinds of media literacy citizens should ideally possess, and at the same time what kinds of media literacy some citizens are lacking. The media literacy definitions need not be rigid lists of competencies. As mentioned before, media literacy may be defined as critical consciousness or the ability to express oneself. Nevertheless, individuals lacking the desired skills are seen as somewhat inadequate citizens, who can be made 'full citizens' once they learn specific skills. Even a person who has 'adequate' media literacy skills is defined only in relation to a specific competence, forgetting other ways of being a citizen. Thus defining civic competencies leads to the definition of ideal citizenship as well as the reprehension of current modes of citizenship.

Secondly, media literate citizens are offered ways of being and acting as citizens: they may be expected to vote, to take part in public discussions, or to use media literacy in their careers. One can say that discourses formulate an array of subject-positions that are available to citizens. The positions of the subject are defined by the situation that it is possible for him to occupy in relation to various domains or groups of objects (Foucault 1989). Thus by acquiring media literacy an individual is hoped to take on the suggested subject positions in society. In addition to creating subject positions, discourses enforce subjectivities. This means that citizens are urged to become self-observing, self-governing, and self-learning subjects, which makes them adaptable to new social circumstances and subject positions.

Thirdly, the actions of media literate citizens are endorsed as solutions to the societal challenges of political apathy, unemployment, loneliness, or even globalization. Governments seek to use education as a means of improving economic productivity, as workforce training, and as a sorting and selection mechanism for distributing opportunities (Ozga 2000). Educating media literate

citizens is thus not only a goal in itself, but also a means of achieving societal objectives. The whole chain of thought goes as follows: a) attaining media literacy b) will enable people to take desired subject positions in society c) which in turn will solve societal problems. These statements may be expressed in discourses explicitly or implicitly.

It cannot be assumed that society will automatically reach the social goals that are set in discourses of governance. The image of literacy as producing certain social ends has been questioned for instance by Harvey Graff, whose numerous historical examples contradict the notion that literacy is directly tied to economic and social development, individual moral fortitude, citizenship, and other social responsibilities. Even when a causal connection does exist, literacy is only one of a confluence of intertwined factors (Tyner 1996: 31-32 draws on Graff 1995, also Graff 1973). One has to take into account the individual whose skills and subjectivity governance aims to shape. Different life-histories, identities, and social situations contribute to people's literacy and the utilization of their skills. People may for instance choose to resist the goals set for them and use media literacy for their own ends: for socializing, consumption, or even mischief. Even if media literate individuals are civic minded, there is an array of possibilities of how media literacy may be utilized as a civic competence. These possibilities are by no means predetermined, as some educational discourses imply. Therefore reaching the objectives of governance can never be certain.

Conclusions

It seems the most natural thing that citizenship education in Western mediatized societies should involve teaching media literacy. As an individual I may be all for media education's aims to empower citizens, I may also regard media literacy as an integral competence in the information age. But as a researcher, I aim to view all forms of citizenship education from a critical standpoint. In this article I have considered how media literacy is constructed as a civic competence, emphasizing that there is in fact nothing 'natural' about constructing citizens. Definitions vary on what kind of media literacy is pivotal for the construction of citizen-subjects and indeed what kinds of citizens are needed in society. These discursive constructions are shaped amid the political, economic, and educational power-struggles in society. As discussed in the article, the concept of the active subject has only come to life in the second half of the twentieth century. Trends of individualization and neo-liberalism have boosted claims for active and able citizen-subjects in society. Furthermore, media research has fortified the idea of media literacy as a basic civic competence. It can be fascinating and even taunting to think that even our most personal senses of identity and subjectivity as citizens are in fact tied to the broader processes of social meaning making. One must therefore be careful of naming any way of social existence as more free, natural, or real than another.

Becoming a citizen is never a 'natural' process, but rather a set of subjectifications one encounters. Individuals come across a variety of educational discourses and literacy practices during their lives, some being implicit and others explicit. Different literacy practices value some ways of behaving, using language, and knowing, and marginalize others through the psychological attributes and interpersonal relations they encourage. Thus one must ask what political, social, and economic agendas are pursued under the guise of literacy policies and whose interests are being served by particular literacy practices (Welch & Freebody 1993: 7). By looking at media education and media literacy from the point of view of governance, one takes distance from the power-struggles in society to see how discourses aim to educate citizens, what forms of citizenship are encouraged, and what societal problems citizenship is seen to solve. In my view, truly critically literate citizens should be able to dissect the processes of citizenship education. Furthermore, they could even analyze the ways their own citizenship has taken form.

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Part II

Media Literacy Education
Developments in the Nordic Countries

Civic Media Education Supports a Public Voice for Youths

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Abstract

Public space, especially online, is now being offered more than ever before. Still, the role of public media production in youth cultures has not been duly noted in civic pedagogic settings. This article provides insights into the relations between youth, civic participation, and media publicity in the contexts of youth work and school. It is based on two follow-up studies among youngsters aged between 13-17 in Finland: at the youth civic website, Vaikuttamo, and at the Youth Voice Editorial Board in Helsinki.

The results of the study show that youth citizenship can be strengthened with civic media education that consists of three elements related to each other: (1) youth civic participation including media production, (2) audiences through media publicity, and (3) pedagogy understood as a learning community.

Keywords: civic engagement, civic participation, media literacy education, media publicity, media production, audiences

Contemporary youths have often found participatory and interactive possibilities on the Internet, for example in discussion groups, digital photo galleries, and online game communities. Consequently, young people's citizenships are actualized through their practices, meaning-makings, and identity constructions within these mediated public youth cultures (cf. Hodkinson 2007). Media is one of the main empowering, civic technologies in contemporary societies alongside school and government, and public space, especially online, is now on offer more than ever before. Nevertheless, we argue that the role of *public* media in youth cultures has not been taken seriously enough in education.

The Internet's civic cultures have emerged as an interesting arena for researchers to look for new ways of participation and social empowerment of young citizens in (cf. Bennet 2008). However, there is a need for perspectives that go beyond the hype of empowering information and communication

technologies. Some youngsters engage actively, for example in politics via the Internet, while for others it is not an important media for political engagement at all (cf. Dahlgren & Olsson 2007, Livingstone, Couldry & Markham 2007). We have noticed these differences among the young previously, in our earlier study. For instance, in order to generate cross-generational discussions, the young 'activists' might select a variety of media, not only the Internet, for participation (Kotilainen & Rantala 2009). Therefore, we suggest, it is necessary to develop *civic media education* that takes all public media and the young as political as well as cultural actors into account.

This article introduces two case studies from civic media education in Finland: Vaikuttamo.net, which is mainly operated in school, and the Youth Voice Editorial Board (later YVEB), which is implemented in the form of voluntary, leisure-time activities in youth work. The participants of these media educational projects are young people aged between 13 and 18. They are a mix of junior and senior high school pupils and students receiving basic vocational education. We consider both of these cases examples of developing local youth civic cultures through the implementation of civic participation projects administered by the cities.

We have studied the local youth civic website Vaikuttamo¹ (<http://www.vaikuttamo.net>) in Hämeenlinna, a town of 60,000 in southern Finland. This case study focused on Vaikuttamo's users, that is: young people, teachers, and local journalists. The second case study, the YVEB (<http://nk.hel.fi/nuortenaanitoimitus/>) in Helsinki, consists of a group of young people and their supervising youth workers producing news for the mainstream media, e.g. for the main national newspaper. The aim of the article is to describe the pedagogical practices in these two projects and to discuss their implications for civic media education.

Youth Media Participation on Publicity

This article approaches media as embedded within the social relationships and possibilities to participate in societies and local communities, i.e. civic cultures (cf. Dahlgren 2006). Empirically, the case studies proceed from the view that the young make up active, participatory audiences, sharing and exchanging information, ideas, and experiences as media consumers and agents (cf. McQuail 2000: 120, Ridell 2006).

Audience activity, however, is not one single mode of participation. A Finnish media researcher, Seija Ridell (2006), suggests a variety of possible actor positions for audiences, such as: object of media, user satisfying own needs, 'experiencer' looking for high feelings, and some more public positions such as: interpreter, negotiator, visible expresser, and creative actor. Following Ridell's classification, media participation can be defined as active, at least as the subject's internal interaction with media, for example creating one's own opinion while watching reality television program so that some kind of action

is following: discussions with friends about the program or using the offered ways of communicating with the program, such as voting by means of mobile phone. Public media participation includes the more public positions mentioned above, such as being a member of a community that uses media publicity in order to move towards common goals (cf. Ridell 2006).

Earlier, we have suggested four types of civic identities for young people in relation to media participation on publicity: seekers, communalists, communicators, and activists (see more Kotilainen & Rantala 2009, cf. Livingstone, Bober & Helsper 2004). The seekers are those young people who are still looking for civic issues to engage in and communities to connect to. These young people could also be considered potential civic agents in their own terms when the issues, communities, and public spaces are discovered. The communalists refer to more traditional young citizens, those who feel that they have possibilities to have their say in their own life sphere, but do not consider it important to act more publicly. Instead, they prefer to act in peer and hobby communities. The communicators, in turn, are the young who are connected via media to multiple communities, but often do not see this interaction in political terms. And finally, the activists are the young who have common issues they want to make public and find public spaces to act in.

However, the multiple roles of the young as public agents seem often to only be visible in the lockers of youth publicity, for example in youth magazines and youth online communities. For the young, it is challenging to reach the cross-generational publicity, or to initiate discussions on political matters for example. In terms of societal themes, for instance, young people have seldom been interviewed in the mainstream news. They are more often presented as victims or top experts, for example, as winners of different competitions (cf. Raundalen & Steen 2002, Unga i media 2002).

Power in media culture is linked to the publicities that can be managed through media, for example in online communities. The publicity seems to be pluralistic (f.ex. Arendt 1958, cf. Habermas 1989), which means that people can be visible at the same time in full difference. Following this view, also marginalized groups, such as the young, should have a share of public space in which to have their say.

The starting point of the YVEB in 2005 was a youth initiative for changing the limited popular image of the young on the mainstream media. Additionally, the young wanted to provoke discussion with adults on civic matters related to young people. Cross-generational civic discussions on media publicity and enhancement of youth civic participation were also in the background for Vaikuttamo.net when it started as an EU project in the year 2000. The idea came from a single teacher and the local administrators started to advance the project. They see the website as providing a channel for youth to exert their influence in and as an interactive learning environment.

Media Literacy and Citizenship Education

Besides publicity, another side of media participation is media literacy. In policy terms, media literacy has been defined as accessing, analyzing, evaluating, and creating messages in a variety of forms and contexts (e.g. Kubey 1997). We approach media literacies not only as individual abilities, but as social practices embedded in certain cultural and political contexts (e.g. Lankshear & Knobel 2006). Accordingly, media literacies as social practices in the context of public media participation include media skills (such as analyzing and creating messages), ethics, as well as encouragement for civic participation in public spheres.

Recent Finnish national governments have even taken media literacy education on the public agenda in the cross-political programs. The Citizen Participation Policy Program (2003-2007) called for civic education reform in which media education was emphasized as a means of fostering active citizenship and information society skills, including media literacy (OM 5: 2005). In addition, the national Youth Law (Nuorisolaki 2006) aims to enhance 'active youth citizenship and social empowerment of young people'. This has served to motivate administrators to develop technology-based online initiative channels for young people more than the media pedagogic projects, such as YVEB, that enhance civic media production, have.

In practice, both citizenship and media education primarily tend to position the young as mere media consumers or receivers of information. In terms of British youth's civic websites, Livingstone et al. (2004) have noted that the young are positioned as citizens-in-waiting on these sites, not as real citizens having their say. According to their survey on young people's internet participation, the young are "interested and willing, ready to try things out" and a lack of motivation to participate only comes when young people cannot get respond to their initiatives.

Bennett (2008), among others, has criticized schools for focusing too much on educating dutiful citizens by transferring textbook knowledge, while pupils should appeal as actualizing citizens through actions and personal contact with real life problems. Stevenson (2003: 346), for instance, suggests that genuinely cosmopolitan and cultural citizenship "would depend upon the creative cultural productions of the subject and ethics of dialogue". Citizenship education could enable the young "to produce themselves as subjects" by using "a variety of cultural techniques from diary writing to poetry and from music making to video".

Loader (2007) states that although digital youth culture is global, young people would particularly need local network spaces because international and national civic affairs are too remote for them. According to Loader, out-of-school local network spaces could offer a positive survival link to the young people who have been culturally displaced from formal political spheres. This kind of civic media education should draw on local knowledge and the technological practices of young people. Following Selwyn (2007: 140), "citi-

zenship education inside the school would be enhanced by recognizing and drawing upon outside-school knowledge and practices instead of resisting or denying them.”

Our case studies on Vaikuttamo.net and the YVEB could be seen as critical pedagogic practices which emphasize a sense of civic agency, collective, dialogical learning practices, and action in public spheres. The aim of these projects i.e. ensuring that the voice of the youth is heard via the media, addresses the questions of communication for social change with a Freirian spirit of empowerment (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte 2006, c.f. Freire 2001, cf. Kotilainen & Suoranta 2007). But what kinds of pedagogical practices are actualized in these projects? How is media publicity linked to pedagogical practices? What challenges are arising?

Vaikuttamo and Youth Voice Editorial Board Offering Public Participation

After seven years of operation, Vaikuttamo has become a firm part of municipal activities in Hämeenlinna within both youth work and schools. The local junior and senior high school students, that participate in the running of the site, produce flash polls and an Active Person of the Week interview on the website, in addition to hosting discussions in the Speaker's Corner, the interactive forum of Vaikuttamo. Beyond this, students also introduce school projects on the site, and local teachers use the website's materials for teaching their own subjects, such as Civic Studies. So far, Vaikuttamo has retained its unique position as a stabilized local youth site that integrates civic and cultural participation via media, i.e. the website itself and sometimes also local newspapers and radio when local journalists pick up an idea from the Vaikuttamo discussion panel.

In the YVEB, 20–40 young people have been regularly committed to news production for the mainstream media, but the project's reach extended to up to 120 young people during its second operational year in 2007. The project has also involved local youth workers, and several professionals from Helsingin Sanomat, the biggest newspaper in Finland, YLE, the Finnish Broadcasting Company, and IRC-Gallery, the biggest online picture gallery in Finland. As a local youth project in the capital of Finland, the YVEB has many more resources for being active in media publicity than youth projects in rural areas, such as Vaikuttamo.net do. The Helsinki City Youth Department, for example, already had a well-equipped editorial office with audiovisual technology and ongoing youth media production before this project originated.

We have evaluated the Vaikuttamo case using different methods, for example a survey among young users (N=521), life stories on individual media and civic engagement written by 14 to 16 year-old students, and interviews with seven teachers and local journalists (Kotilainen & Rantala 2008). Since this article focuses on pedagogical practices, we will only introduce the results from the teacher interviews here. The study of the YVEB was carried out as a

piece of participatory action research (cf. Reason & Bradbury 2006), in which questionnaires were issued to young people, and participant observation in addition to several rounds of interviews among the young and youth workers took place. In this article, we will focus on the material gathered from youth workers and media producers during 2006-2008.

Vaikuttamo in School Practices from Teachers Perspectives

The teachers have integrated Vaikuttamo into their teaching, much like media is integrated into schoolwork in Finnish media education in general (cf. Kotilainen 2000). All of the teachers involved have organized the production of journalistic stories for the Vaikuttamo site in their schools. This media production has been organized in variety of ways: students have written stories within the parameters of 'normal' classroom work, the writing of stories has been set as a task in optional media courses, or stories have been produced totally outside of schoolwork as special assignments. In addition, the teachers have also used Vaikuttamo in the teaching of their own subject matter, for example in Finnish language and affective writing courses for publishing texts, or in civic studies courses in order to look for information related to local municipal democracy.

In the interviews the teachers doubted that engaging with Vaikuttamo could create immediate active citizenship, but they strongly felt that Vaikuttamo's activities encouraged young people to at least 'think about civic matters'. Teachers also believed that Vaikuttamo offers possibilities for students to learn about local decision making procedures and different ways of having a say in local youth affairs. Moreover, they felt that students learn how to formulate and express their opinions better by writing stories for the site and commenting on online discussions. The teachers held that Vaikuttamo has also enhanced students' media skills, for instance in terms of using digital cameras. Learning to go beyond selfish worldviews and being able to look at the world from other people's perspectives was an important step from the teachers' points of view:

I think that this is a step from a student's individual perspective towards understanding this world from other people's perspectives as well. (T4)

How have the teachers organized pedagogic activities around the Vaikuttamo site? The teachers' answers relate more to the organizing of the young peoples' learning environments than to technological facilitating. In practice they have organized the writing of journalistic stories, participated in choosing the themes of these stories, and taken care of writing schedules. On the one hand, the teachers seemed to feel like supervisors of Vaikuttamo activities, in terms of controlling the topics chosen, being in charge of the quality standards of stories, and dealing with questions related to things such as ethics in publishing. On the other hand, the teachers described themselves as mere facilitators who only stimulated the students' own active working.

For the teachers Vaikuttamo appeared to be a tool for differentiating their teaching in the classroom: while some students have written stories for the Vaikuttamo site others have accomplished normal school tasks. The teachers highlighted challenges related to motivating all students. They mentioned that it was at times difficult to motivate youngsters to engage with Vaikuttamo activities, or as one teacher put it: “I do not know how I can bewitch them to join; it is always only a certain group of students that is interested”. On the other hand, the teachers explained that the Vaikuttamo site itself has at times motivated young people to participate. In these cases teachers have not needed to “bewitch” or force students to work with the site.

When encouraged to divulge problems related to Vaikuttamo activities, the teachers tended to refer to issues related to the school context, such as time schedules, integrating the website into ‘normal’ classroom work, technological difficulties, and difficulties in co-operating with other teachers in the school community (c.f. Kotilainen 2000). In addition, there were some challenges related to the role of local municipals in Vaikuttamo. The teachers explained that despite the projects’ attempts to engage the local municipals with the project, the municipals are not participating very actively on the site.

Vaikuttamo’s activities have supported young people as citizens in three dimensions: pedagogy, civic engagement, and media. From a pedagogical perspective, Vaikuttamo has engaged the young in school contexts with civic affairs that they experience as meaningful, because they are real-life problems related to their everyday lives and local life-spheres. This learning has occurred through both ‘doing’ (e.g. writing one’s opinions and producing journalistic stories) and ‘interacting in peer-groups’ (e.g. discussing with other students both on the site and in classrooms). In terms of civic engagement, the website has offered a new channel in which the young can participate in local civic affairs. With the support of the site, active teachers, and other stakeholders, the young have been able to have their say in the local public sphere.

Media, in this case the Internet, has on the one hand been an attractive tool for the young to deal with the civic matters, and has on the other hand offered publicity for young people’s opinions and productions. In terms of writing skills, for instance, publishing stories on the net has created a kind of natural need for the young people to write correct language, and from a teacher’s perspective, to learn grammar. Moreover, producing stories for publicity seems to be more meaningful than discussing opinions and presenting school projects inside the classroom:

It definitely provides a different forum than simply reading one’s opinions inside a classroom. Opinions stay inside classroom walls, we can discuss them for a while, maybe debate, but it does not go any further. (T1)

Youth Voice Editorial Board Integrates Media Publicity and Youth Work

After three years of operation the YVEB continues to work as a news agency delivering material to different media. Young people produce the media content, for example, public discussions and debates with experts and politicians on topical issues important to them. The young journalists are trained to write articles and produce TV programs with the help of media professionals and youth workers. From the beginning of this project, four people have been involved in the services of Civil Society Support in the Helsinki Youth Department: two youth workers, a media producer, and a journalist. These media experts were hired for this particular project.

YVEB can be classified as a critical media pedagogic project that integrates public journalism with youth work. As in public journalism, these young people, for example, as readers of the *Helsingin Sanomat* newspaper, are acting as reporters, and professional journalists work as providers and guardians of access to publicity. In the Vaikuttamo case, youths are producing more like people's journalism, which provides the youths, in their capacity as citizens, with a possibility to function both as providers of and gatekeepers to publicity (cf. Martikainen 2005; Rosen 1999; Rodrigues 2001). YVEB has produced discussion programs for national television and articles for national newspapers, for example on youth's mental health and depression, the lack of politics in the Finnish education system, and Internet advertising of parliamentary election candidates rated by the council of the young.

Youth workers have created the structures for the work. Since the beginning, the young have democratically elected a special YVEB Board with four chairmen, selected two times a year. This board makes decisions about the project and negotiates about the space and forms of youth media production with representatives from the mainstream media. Youth workers organize these cross-generational, official negotiations, prepare young people for discussing and presenting their ideas, and reflect on the effects with the young afterwards.

The YVEB has been organized into different editorial working groups by media experts. Young people can choose the group in which they prefer to participate: a) television group, including shooting and set decoration, b) newspaper editor group, or c) online group, including the planning and implementation of, for example, societal polls and discussions in youth picture galleries. The production of a theme starts with the presentation and generation of ideas together, for example in weekly meetings. After an idea has been approved by the media professionals, the youngsters concentrate on information retrieval and making a manuscript before the production takes place.

The media experts and youth workers have together developed several pedagogic practices to educate the young. For example, the meetings of the newspaper editor group always begin with "the observation of the week", which serves to stimulate ideas for news. All of the participants have to come up with at least one observation of a societal phenomenon like "the recycle

bins are always full”. Another example of a pedagogic practice is “the three-question interview”, which is an interview technique exercise done in pairs. In the exercise one can pose only three questions on any given issue: the first is general, the second more in-depth, and the third is future-oriented or personal (cf. Martikainen 2004).

The main challenges brought up by the leading youth worker are linked to coping as a new project that requires new modes of cooperation in the Youth Department. For example, it has been challenging to organize the cooperation between the more culturally oriented Youth Media Hat Factory, which serves as the production environment, and the Services of Civil Society Support. Moreover, the nature of this kind of youth public journalism has been strange for most of adults because they have been under the impression that the Internet is the only agreeable participation forum for young people.

The youth worker makes a distinction between this project and others in a youth work context. She thinks that YVEB is on a different level. When normally the focus is mostly on using media as a tool for youth work, this project concentrates on media content and aims at changing media:

Good youth workers handle their own district, including perhaps some stories from youth happenings for local newspaper or radio... We argue that the content in the mainstream media should be different from the viewpoint of the young. In discussions with YLE (Finnish Broadcasting Company), our youngsters argued for more young people in professional program production. (Interview 21.03.2006)

The media producer talks about a certain participation ideology that distinguishes this project from other youth media projects:

The participation ideology is so visible in our project... Young people are making decisions, planning, and acting themselves... Additionally, our starting point is that everybody can participate and influence everything, and simply trying to have your say is valuable. (Interview 28.01.2008)

Towards Civic Media Education

Both Vaikuttamo and the Youth Voice Editorial Board have created media educational practices related to pedagogy, civic engagement, and media. We consider these practices as implementations of civic media education, as they are presented in table 1 below.

In a school context, Vaikuttamo has created meaningful matters and activities for the young to engage in collaborative ways in. The website has also served as a new tool through which the young can have their say in local publicity. Media, in this case the Internet, has been an interesting new tool to work with. It has offered a public space for young people's productions and opinions,

Table 1. Dimensions of Civic Media Education in the Case Examples (Kotilainen & Rantala 2008)

Pedagogy	Civic Engagement	Media
• meaningful issues for the young to deal with (BOTH) • learning by doing and experiencing (BOTH) • interaction with peers (BOTH) • interaction with media professionals and administrators (YVEB)	• real experiences of influencing (BOTH) • new, alternative ways to participate in local civic affairs (BOTH) • formal participatory processes of civic engagement (e.g. meeting techniques and argumentation) (YVEB)	• the internet as an interesting and easy tool (VAIKUTTAMO) • newspaper, television and internet (mixed media) for alternative content production (YVEB) • publicity for the youngster's opinions and productions (BOTH) • cross-generational publicity for the young having their say (YVEB)

mainly as youth publicity. Sometimes this interaction has broadened to include cross-generational publicity, when local journalists have picked up themes from the discussion forum and discussed them in the newspapers. This way some of the youth initiatives, for example a skating hall, have become reality.

In the case of the Youth Voice Editorial Board, media publicity has been not only a channel for civic engagement for the young on the youth publicity, but has also been an environment in which to engage on the cross-generational publicity reaching adult audiences. This has happened, for example, through youth made programs on prime time television. YVEB has produced alternative societal content for an online youth picture gallery, therein reaching youth publicity. YVEB can therefore be regarded as a youth news agency producing public journalism for several media. As in the Vaikuttamo case, interaction with peers in YVEB has happened mainly in real life face-to-face meetings and in the making of collaborative media productions. Besides peer interaction, pedagogic practices in YVEB have included interaction with media professionals and administrators as well, for example in the form of negotiations, presentations, and the preparation of funding applications with youth workers. In addition to learning media production, the youngsters have learned the communication processes of more traditional civic engagement as well, for example meeting techniques and argumentation (cf. Kotilainen 2009).

Based on our studies we think that the most important aim for civic media education is to generate feelings of societal influence among young people for the construction of identities in civic cultures, as Dahlgren (e.g. 2005, 2006) has also formulated. What then is civic media education? First, with regard to pedagogic practices, we think that it is important to create communities of learners that include possibilities for interaction and reflection with peers and teachers or youth workers, i.e. adults as co-learners. Additionally, the civic themes should

arise from the young people's, and not the adults', ideas. Second, with regard to enhancing civic engagement, participatory action integrated with media production should be enabled in order for the young to gain real experiences of having a say. Third, it is important to provide public space, online and/or offline, for young people's opinions and productions. All media forms and mixed media – youth publicity and cross-generational publicity – can be used, including weblogs, online communities, and school-based platforms.

A key way to enhance youth civic engagement and political participation is to deal with 'the audience question'. Levine (2008) suggests that schools and youth workers should work towards cross-generational interaction in which adults form the audiences for youth media productions, and 'youth voices' are thus made audible to adults as well. Following Levine, we would say that the forming of "strategies for building audiences" is the main task in civic media education today: young people need audiences in order to generate public discussions and get their voices heard.

The audience question is also a challenge with respect to media literacies. Traditionally 'audience' in media education has referred to an individual's conceptual understanding of oneself as 'the audience', that is, as a target of media industries and as a receiver of media messages (e.g. Buckingham 2003). Civic media education, however, requires an understanding of the audience in which the young are seen as public agents who take several positions in relation to media. Therefore, media literacies in the context of civic media education should be seen as social practices in which young people are 'doing media literacies' (c.f. Lankshear & Knobel 2006), for instance negotiating their positions as publics in a certain online platform or local newspaper. Similarly learning media literacies, in our case studies, is about participating in the social practices of communities that produce media and discuss societal matters.

One of the challenges we want to point to here has to do with what educators think about the content and practices of civic media education with regard to 'the cultural turn of citizenship'. Vaikuttamo teachers have been forced to think about what kind of matters really are 'civic'. For example, one of the teachers interviewed discussed whether it is appropriate to publish a story about Japanese comics (manga) on the youth civic site. We think that the first step towards constructing an identity as a public agent is making yourself visible within familiar, communal matters – like the young communicators and communalists in our study did (Kotilainen & Rantala 2009, cf. Rheingold 2008). So, how to create such multiple civic media education that connects with the multiple cultural experiences of the young people?

When considering media and civic education, should cultural or artistic methods of having one's say be regarded as civic and political engagement? Being in the media publicity, and maybe getting some feedback from the audience, appears to be significant enough as civic action, at least for the young participants of our study. This kind of media education focuses on supporting not only media skills, but also senses of societal engagement, citizenship, and courage for public participation.

Note

1. The Finnish word 'Vaikuttamo' refers to a repair shop, where one can influence civic issues, i.e. renew things.

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Mapping Filmmaking across Contexts

Portraits of Four Young Filmmakers in Scandinavia

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Abstract

In this chapter, the authors present concepts for the ‘mapping’ of young filmmakers in Scandinavia and present four exemplary portraits of youngsters. The data stems from the collaborative Scandinavian research project “Making a Filmmaker” about how young filmmakers learn to make film. The authors aim at understanding *how*, *why*, and *where* young filmmakers in Scandinavia find resources for filmmaking, with a consideration of the young filmmakers’ view on material and human *resources* across learning contexts. While all of the young filmmakers appear to use different learning contexts for filmmaking, whether formal, non-formal, or informal contexts, they position themselves differently. The findings indicate four different types of filmmakers in Scandinavia, in the sense of varying priorities when finding their own, individual ‘learning path’ as filmmakers. Issues of gender as an important difference are discussed as regards to the fact that the findings indicate that young female filmmakers appreciate the institutionalized aspects of contexts more than young male filmmakers. The conclusion includes a model for mapping young filmmakers’ learning styles, paths and positions.

Keywords: filmmaking, learning styles, semiotic resources and learning contexts

This chapter covers our attempt at mapping patterns with regard to how young filmmakers (aged 15-20) in the Scandinavian countries learn about filmmaking. To uncover the patterns, we present portraits of the four young filmmakers who participated in our Scandinavian research project: *Making a filmmaker*.¹ The study explores how young filmmakers in Scandinavia use different resources across diverse contexts for developing as filmmakers. When making our map, which we present as a model, we are considering the young filmmakers’ views on *resources* across contexts. We are particularly interested in the young filmmakers’ perspectives on their learning practices and in how they create ‘learning paths’ in relation to resources in diverse contexts, whether these be formal, non-formal, or informal. We see media education in schools

as a typically formal context for filmmaking, while after-school programs and film festivals are non-formal contexts for learning about filmmaking outside of school. Self-teaching and participation in groups with peers are informal contexts for filmmaking. Informal or non-formal learning contexts relate to participation that falls outside of school and organized filmmaking events. The boundaries between these diverse contexts are of course blurry in practice. For instance, the emergence of the web site *dvoted.net*, launched by the Nordic film institutes, is a new arena for presenting films that refers to and overlaps somewhat with non-formal as well as formal contexts for film production.

The process of making and editing moving images has been quite affordable and accessible since the mid 1990s. Cheap digital camcorders and editing software have contributed with new opportunities for youngsters who take an interest in filmmaking. The practices in filmmaking have their own audience, rationale, and cultural values, which is important to acknowledge when conducting research in this domain. Compared to most countries around the world, the majority of young people in Scandinavia have good access to digital camcorders, computers, and the Internet. In Scandinavia, one third of the households have digital camcorders, and over 95 % have Internet access at home (Erstad & Gilje 2008). Due to the high penetration of digital technologies in Scandinavia, the high level of education and film industry, it is an interesting region for conducting studies on learning practices across contexts among young filmmakers.

Digital production practices have been researched in an array of case studies throughout the last two decades. We review this literature herein, but also explore some studies on how musicians learn to play popular music. We relate the reviewed research on these two domains to a model, which contains two continuums that visualize to what degree the learning is organized and in what kind of context the learning take place. By using these continuums, we map out a conceptual terrain in order to understand diverse production practices – and diverse types – of young Scandinavian filmmakers. In other words we aim to understand *how*, *why*, and *where* young filmmakers in Scandinavia find resources for filmmaking.

First we provide an overview of these diverse contexts for production of moving image in Scandinavia. After that we present excerpts of data from interviews with four young filmmakers from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. These excerpts help us to understand how these filmmakers position themselves in diverse contexts while learning about and making films.

Research on Moving Images in Diverse Contexts

In the last two decades a growing body of empirical research on young people and moving images has emerged within the fields of educational- and media studies. Most of the selected studies have been conducted in a formal educational context. Inspired by cultural studies, social semiotics, and socio-cultural

perspectives, a wide range of studies have explored digital production practices in media education (Buckingham & Sefton-Green 1994, Buckingham et al. 1995, Buckingham 2007, Burn & Durran 2006, 2007, Buckingham et al. 1999, Sefton-Green 1998). These perspectives are also dominant in Scandinavian research on youngsters and moving images, both in a formal (Danielsson 1998, Erstad et al. 2007a, 2007b, Erstad & Silseth 2008, Erstad & Gilje 2008, Öhman-Gullberg 2008, Frølund 2009) and a non-formal context (Drotner 1991, Nyboe & Drotner 2008, Lindstrand 2006, Hertzberg Kaare & Lundby 2008). Case studies on digital storytelling in the U.S., which have been conducted in after-school programs, have been an inspiration for some of the latter studies (Hull 2003, Hull & Nelson 2005, Nelson 2006). In addition, an emerging “camcorder culture” has recently been explored by researchers in the *camcorder culture study* (Buckingham & Willett, forthcoming) and in some evaluations of digital resources for young filmmakers in Scandinavia (Gilje 2005, 2008).

These reviewed studies explore young people producing moving images in *one* particular context. We value these studies as important for understanding production practices, but find them rather restricted when we are interested in ‘learning paths’ for young filmmakers *across* contexts. However, the view across contexts is stressed in two larger ethnographical studies on young musicians playing popular music, which we explore here for the purpose of understanding our data.

The British anthropologist, Lucy Green (2001) has investigated what she terms as ‘informal music learning practices’ among young musicians who play popular music. In her study she emphasizes how: “young musicians largely teach themselves or ‘pick up’ skills and knowledge, usually with the help or encouragement of their family and peers, by watching and imitating musicians around them and by making reference to recordings or performances and other live events involving their chosen music” (Green 2001: 5). Green also discusses how the advent of new technology enables young musicians to constitute practices, which we find applicable to our study. It seems that the digitization of moving images, resources on the Internet and the emergence of film festivals and media education have given young filmmakers access and opportunities to work with moving images in the same ways that musicians did 20-25 years ago. To make an analytical framework for these learning paths with regard to our empirical material, we present three concepts with reference to another ethnographical study, *In Garageland*, which focuses on the playing of rock music in three Swedish bands or peer groups (Fornäs et al. 1995). This study suggests that learning processes may be (1) *obligatory* or *voluntary*, which relates to an individual choice, (2) *institutionalized* or *spontaneous*, which addresses the formal and informal context, and (3) *closed* or *open*, which refers to whether the process is goal-oriented or not: “In peer-group learning, however, no actor usually believes such fixed goals exist; it is an open learning” (Fornäs et al. 1995: 230). We find these concepts useful in the ways in which they describe the learning process, and we want to integrate them into the model we present below.

Formal and Informal Learning – Blurring Boundaries?

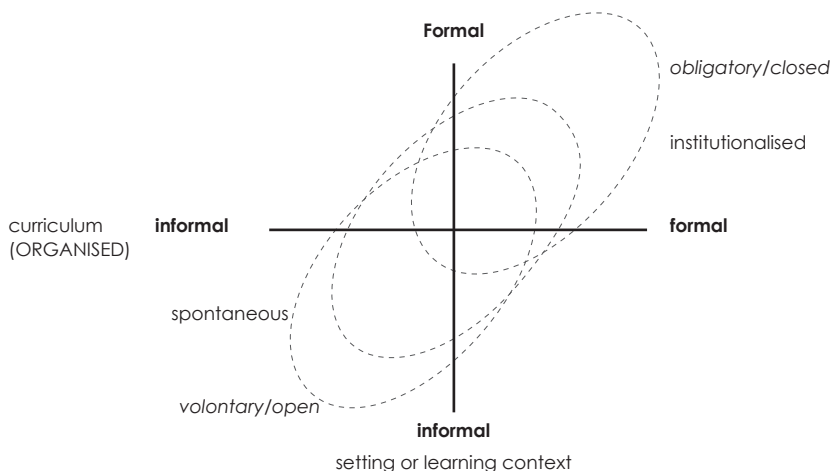
The relationship between formal and informal learning has been termed as not just being about the setting or context, but also involving “mapping out a conceptual terrain” (Colley et al. 2003). Colley and colleagues suggest that formal and informal learning should be seen as overlapping rather than distinct and point out that the relationships between contexts can only be understood by exploring *how* the learning aspects of the particular contexts may “overlap”. This point is important in regard to how we can explore young filmmakers’ learning paths. Following the writings of Colley and colleagues, Sefton-Green present four key axes, in very general terms, to underpin questions of *where*, *how*, *why*, and *what* (2008). Even though all of these strands are central to our project as a whole, we would like to stress the issues of *where* (1) and *how* (2) in this chapter.

1. *Location*. Where the learning takes place – how and if context is a determinant of processes.
2. *Processes*. How the learning is organized, whether there are forms of accreditation and assessment. How the learning is supported and whether it is collective, collaborative, or individual
3. *Purposes*. Why the learning occurs, in whose interests?
4. *Content*. Whether the knowledge has disciplinary provenance, how it is applied theoretically and in practice. (Sefton-Green 2008: 243)

Location (1) and *Process* (2) are somewhat related to two kinds of continuums suggested by Sefton-Green in his literature review on informal learning (2004). The first continuum contrasts where the learning takes place to the setting. In this case we use these continuums to pinpoint three Scandinavian contexts for filmmaking. Formal contexts, or media education (first and foremost), non-formal setting, such as film festivals and after-school programs, and informal contexts, including leisure time activities and work with moving images at home in a private setting. The second continuum addresses how the learning is organized; to what degree there is an established ‘curriculum’. These two continuums suggest that we could have both informal and formal learning taking place in informal and formal contexts (Sefton-Green 2004: 6). The three concepts introduced by Fornäs et al (1995) provide us with ‘mid-range’ terms in our analysis. These three pairs relate primarily to the process of learning and may be applied to the two continuums in the following way (Model 1).

This figure visualizes the different contexts that seem to function as continuums for mapping out “terrains” for different filmmakers. Note the oval circles drawn in Model 1 to indicate terrains. We find that our different types of filmmakers seem to prefer or prioritize learning within a terrain along the range of contexts. We return to this point again in the conclusions after we present four portraits based upon our study, and map them (see Model 2 below). The

Model 1. Mapping Young Scandinavian Filmmakers – Conceptual Terrain



portraits we discuss here are based on real filmmakers, a method also used in other studies on young people and media production (Abbott 1999). We have chosen to present real portraits instead of types of filmmakers, nevertheless we think other informants in our material are similar to the four filmmakers presented in this chapter.

Methodology and Description of Data

The research reported here is based on different methods for collecting data. The data stems from an online survey with 64 young filmmakers, followed by online interviews with 29 of the 64 young filmmakers and short films submitted from each of these 29 young filmmakers, along with a written description of one particular film scene. We used the web-based survey in two different ways in our study. On the one hand, it offered a possibility to see general patterns in relation to our sample, including: participation in diverse learning contexts, such as available media education courses and after school programs in various countries. On the other hand, we applied a qualitative approach by interviewing the 29 young filmmakers, who gave us permission to conduct such an online interview in the survey. The interviews were conducted using MSN, inspired by studies on young people's media production on the Internet (Markham 1998, Lüders 2007). The answers given by the informants in the survey were used as 'background' information when conducting these MSN-interviews. What characterizes the method is the view of the informants as agents; this position displaces some of the asymmetry in a traditional interview situation (Kvale 1996). The young filmmaker becomes more of an expert while the researcher is the one who read the answer and wrote questions by using MSN (see Frølund

et al. 2009 for more details). In particular we wanted to know more about the young filmmakers' orientations towards diverse film genres, their technical skills, and factors of interest and motivation. In addition to these MSN interviews, submitted films, and the online survey, we have looked into quantitative data on participation in film festivals, statistics on media education courses at upper secondary school, after-school programs, and user data on websites.

Four Young Scandinavian Filmmakers Across Learning Contexts

We have presented two continuums in this article and included three mid-range concepts to characterize the learning process in relation to context and curriculum. This section presents portraits of four young filmmakers, who have approaches and identities similar to other informants in the empirical data. Despite the fact that we have more young men than young women among our informants (20/9), we have chosen to present two young men and two young women in this chapter, two from Norway, one from Denmark, and one from Sweden.

Ragnhild – Appreciating a Formal Learning Context

Ragnhild is a 20 year-old woman from the northern part of Norway. She doesn't have her own video camera, but she has made films since she joined a course arranged by '*den kulturelle skolesekken*' [the cultural school bag] when she was at secondary school (14 years old). In other words, she tried-out filmmaking for the first time as a result of a course in a formal context. After this experience, she became very interested in making films and applied for a 'media and communication' course at upper secondary school. In 2008/09 she joined a Norwegian film school on a one-year program and she wants to apply for another film school in Norway or Poland next year (2009/10). Ragnhild has made several films, mostly as school assignments. Most of her films are therefore part of an organized 'curriculum' and occur in a more or less formal setting. She has shown these films to an audience in school, and participated at film festivals where she has received prizes and uploaded films on the Nordic website for young filmmakers, *dvoted.net*. In this interview excerpt, she describes how she values this formal learning context for filmmaking:

Ragnhild: Education is somewhat 'safe' for me, and has always been important, thus I know that others work their 'way up' in the business, for me it is easier to join schools that [offer this subject].

Interviewer: Why do you think 'education' [in this field] works best for you?

Ragnhild: Maybe it is because my Mom is a teacher; I have always been good in school and I have always heard that education is

important. And I felt that I was not qualified in any way after upper secondary school to work on film productions. (...) more education was safer for me, I felt it was safer.

This indicates how Ragnhild relates her filmmaking to a formal structure and context, and considers these her point of departure for learning about film. She started out making films in school, and her progress is somewhat connected to the formal learning contexts and assignments in school. At the time being, she is quite experienced and skilled as a filmmaker, but she has decided to restrict herself when it comes to work in the film business for now.

David – Networking Across Contexts

David is an experienced 20 year-old filmmaker, living near Copenhagen, Denmark. He has been using a camcorder for more than six years and has his own digital video camera, which is worth between 500 and 1000 Euro. Getting a new camcorder at 14, he started experimenting with making short films as an autodidact. He has a personal computer with simple editing software. In the course of the last 6 years, he has gained filmmaking experience through a wide network of film-interested friends that he meets in different film and media courses at school, after school programs, festivals and through odd jobs in the film industry. Schooling includes attending a year at a 'film production high school', with a focus on film history and filmmaking, but he currently attends an upper secondary school that does not offer film or media education. Like Ragnhild, he appreciates working with film in an organized and formal way. In the interview, David emphasizes the importance of the after school program Station Next, which he attended for 3 years, and the NUFF film festival:

David: It all started when I got a camcorder, I was fascinated by looking at the world through a camera lens. I started out making some short films and one day, in 2003, I saw an advertisement for Station Next, a film school for youth outside of Copenhagen. I applied and went there for three years – during the second year there I attended a film/television program at a production school. I also made films on my own as well.

Ragnhild also works with films in non-formal and informal contexts, but she finds the formal context most important. David, on the other hand, while he appreciates the 'production high school', he finds that most of the other students are not as devoted to filmmaking as he is. David actively seeks others who share his interest in making films and he initiates film groups:

David: I found other filmmakers via Station Next and one classmate from the production high school. Together we made some sur-

realistic films. But it wasn't until 2006 that I found people who were as devoted to filmmaking as I am.

Interviewer: What happened in 2006?

David: Station Next arranged a trip to Tromsø [northern Norway] and the NUFF film festival. Two of us from Station Next joined NUFF and we met another person, who also wanted to make film. (...) Since meeting at NUFF, we have met a lot of other people that are really interested in filmmaking.

David enjoys experimenting with filmmaking in a group, so building a network of like-minded filmmakers across various contexts appears important. David also mentions the value of working on a film crew, including as runner and set assistant, on professional film productions. He appreciates all of these experiences as relevant for developing as a filmmaker.

Caroline – Moving Towards Non-formal Contexts

Caroline is an 18 year-old filmmaker, who lives in Stockholm, Sweden. She has made films in her leisure time for more than four years, and has her own video camera, which is worth less than 500 euro. She edits her films on simple editing software and has got her own computer for these purposes. She has made more than five films, which she labels as experimental and short fiction films. Only a few of these are school assignments, when she has been allowed to make films instead of writing a piece about a particular topic in a school subject such as history or languages. She is on a social science course, but has a few hours of media education as 'individual choice' in her last year at upper secondary school. Her father is very significant for her with regard to developing as a filmmaker, and he helps her with technical equipment and so on:

Interviewer: Is it any particular situation, relationship, or event that influences your development into a filmmaker?

Caroline: There are many. First and foremost – my dad who is interested in technology. He has helped me with transferring files, burning DVDs, and so on. YouTube has also been important for me. I started out by watching some of the videos there, mostly vlogs [videoblogs], and wanted to make something myself (...) I also made some stuff using a digital camera (but I don't count that as part of my filmmaking history)

Interviewer: OK

Caroline: Later I joined Popkollo Film in the summer of 2007! At that place I got more hands on experience and I met professional [filmmakers].

Interviewer: Exciting!

Caroline: Before I started with Popkollo [film], I joined a workshop in scriptwriting at the media library punkMedis – and I have made another film at upper secondary school.

Like David and Ragnhild, Caroline has been working across contexts, with experience of some formal education in filmmaking at school. Caroline finds her resources at home, in different after-school programs, and film festivals rather than at school. Filmmaking for her is not about being educated in a formal context, with assignments at school. She relates to filmmaking primarily in a non-formal and informal context, driven by her curiosity and interest for film festivals and filmmaking events.

Anders – Exploring Filmmaking in a Non-formal Context

Our last portrait is Anders, who is an autodidactic filmmaker from a town in southern Norway. He participates minimally in a formal context with regard to his filmmaking. He has made films for more than six years, he owns a digital camcorder (worth between 500-1000 Euros) and a computer on which he edits films and makes animations using the *Flash* software. He joined a short course (less than 4 hours) in media education at secondary school, but now attends the natural sciences program at upper secondary school. He has learned to use editing software and *Flash* animation on his own, primarily by using the Internet as a resource:

Anders: I began to learn Flash in the last two years of secondary school [age 15-16]. I spent a lot of time playing computer games before, but realized that time was flying when I played, and I felt that I didn't use my time well. So I decided to spend the time I usually wasted on silly war games learning animation by using Flash.

Interviewer: OK. Did you explore this on your own, or together with friends who shared this interest?

Anders: I did not really have any others who I shared this interest with, but I used the Internet, where you can find everything (and that is positive and negative).

Interviewer: How did you conduct your search?

Anders: I tried to search on google, I think. I found some sites that described some procedures on how to do things, and then I found a site that showed some basic principals for making videos, [the site] showed short movies made by a guy who produced nice animations. At that point, I really got into it and learned the technique.

Interviewer: Do you remember the name of the site?

Anders: Here: <http://freeflashtutorials.com/>, it has changed a bit since I started.

Anders' interest in *Flash* and animation stems from what he calls his 'creative approach' to making things. For him, filmmaking is one of his activities as a creative person. In addition to his own experiences with moving images in an informal context at home, he also joins a 'media group' at the local church. In this non-formal context, he creatively uses stills and moving images to tell stories in his Christian community.

Discussion on Contexts, Process, and Learning

The four portraits highlight diverse perspectives about filmmaking across contexts. At first glance, it might seem that the four filmmakers address different themes and issues. We would like to reflect upon this in the discussion below by re-visiting the three mid-range terms that stem from the work by Fornäs et al. (1995) and Sefton-Green's model of contexts presented previously integrated in our Model 1. The three terms are (1) *obligatory* or *voluntary*, which relates to an individual choice, (2) *institutionalized* or *spontaneous*, which addresses the formal and informal context, and (3) *closed* or *open*, regarding learning process.

Let us explain this by looking into the similarities and differences between Ragnhild and David, who both join media education at school. David is quite typical for the semi-professional male in our material. Like many others he started out on his own by making small movies, spoofs, and playing around with the camcorder. When he joined a formal educational context these activities became more like school assignments. In the formal context he found a few other people who shared his interest, and this took him even further into a non-formal school context; *Station Next*. David therefore seems goal-oriented toward finding contexts with good resources for filmmaking – both people and equipment. Although David finds the media 'production school' OK, he seeks out people like him who choose filmmaking out of a burning interest or more *voluntarily*, and finds them in a non-formal context outside of school. We might say that David finds this context for learning about film *institutionalized*, and perhaps he appreciates a non-formal context, because it is not *obligatory*, like school. However, *Station Next* is also institutionalized and has a set of standards for participation. Ragnhild on the other hand finds formal education important *per se*. She has also joined an after-school program occasionally, but she finds it important to document her learning process as a formal educational program. She appreciates every moment of her learning at school and finds the formal context very stimulating for her to get training as a young filmmaker.

Ragnhild and David differ from the approach to filmmaking adopted by Caroline and Anders, who are primarily auto-didactic filmmakers and use film as a medium to express something. We speculate that Caroline and Anders could express this by using film or some other form of communication. Their learning processes seem quite *open*. But there are also differences in their relation

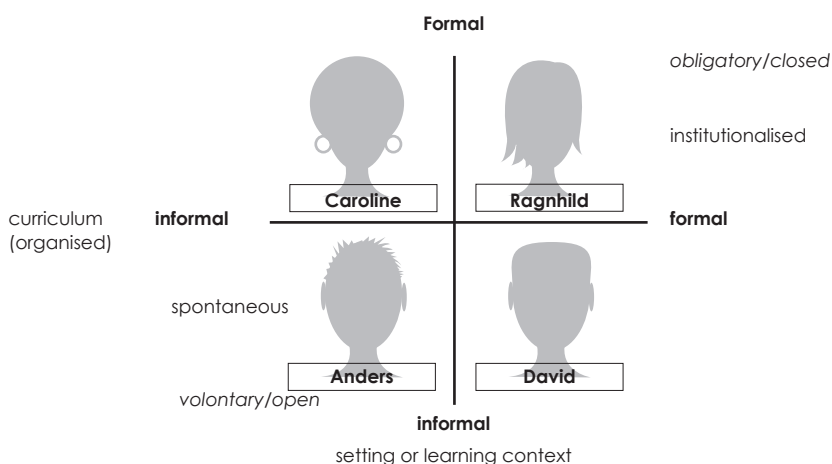
to filmmaking. Anders has spent many hours on his own to learn about *Flash* animation in a *spontaneous* and *voluntary* way. On the other hand, as a leader for the ‘media group’ in the local church, he works with moving images as a way of expressing a message in that particular context. Caroline’s approach is somewhat similar, but connected to school. She chooses to solve assignments in subjects like history and languages by making films. They both use the film medium as a way of expressing themselves in relation to specific, more closed themes and tasks, in a non-formal and formal learning context.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter we have presented four portraits of young Scandinavian filmmakers in an attempt to map out patterns with regard to how young filmmakers (aged 15-20) learn about filmmaking. We have tried to illustrate the diverse processes involved in making a film, and the different approaches youngsters have to filmmaking as a practice in diverse learning contexts, by presenting four portraits of young filmmakers. We do not intend to say that these four filmmakers are very different in their approach to filmmaking, but in Model 2 below we tease out differences. The Model 2 refers to Model 1, but hereunder we visualize the different approaches to learning filmmaking by locating the four portraits in diverse positions.

We would like to emphasize two points with regard to Model 2. First, the different positions suggest that different types of filmmakers in Scandinavia may have different references and different priorities when finding their individual path. Their patterns are alike in that all of our filmmakers cross the range of contexts, but their positions are mainly located in a “terrain” of mainly the for-

Model 2. Mapping Young Scandinavian Filmmakers – Paths and Positions



mal, non-formal, or informal context. Secondly, gender is an important topic with regard to how the filmmakers position themselves. One of the findings suggests that young female filmmakers appreciate the institutionalized aspects of contexts more than young male filmmakers, note that both Caroline and Ragnhild are located toward the more formal end of the learning context.

We find it interesting, but not surprising, that our investigation into the learning practices and contexts of young filmmakers have affinities with similar studies of young musicians. We hope that this presentation contributes to discussions about how young people today move across learning contexts to develop and get experience as young filmmakers. As pointed out in the introduction, we think these “paths” are typical for a Scandinavian context that offers different resources for young filmmakers across contexts. Further research is needed to explore these filmmaking practices in diverse ways. First and foremost it could be interesting to return to the same informants who participated in this case study to inquire into *how* and *why* they make films in two or three years time. The advantages of a longitudinal study would be that we could see how different young filmmakers with diverse approaches to filmmaking develop and gain knowledge about filmmaking over time. A wider international study would also be of great interest. As digital technology and practices for filmmaking vary to a great extent across different regions in the world, a comparative study could explore *how* and *why* young filmmakers across the world find resources for making moving images in their local learning contexts.

Notes

1. The *Making a filmmaker* project is a collaboration between four researchers in Sweden, Denmark and Norway who work together on gathering data, conducting analysis and writing articles. We thank the Norwegian Media Authority for funding the project (see www.ram.no for more details). We also thank Julian Sefton-Green for comments on earlier drafts of this paper. For further information about the research group and the project *Making a filmmaker*, see: www.multimodalfilmmaking.tk.
2. Popkollo Film is part of a non-formal project for girls (age 14-18) with an aim to teach them to make films in a semi-professional environment with guidance from professional scriptwriters and editors.

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Media Education – Between Theory and Practice

Ole Christensen & Birgitte Tufte

Abstract

Today we have some interesting perspectives in relation to children and media. The media technology is changing rapidly and so is children's media usage, whereas the older generations do not have the skills that the children and adolescents have. This is a challenge to the form and content of media education – and to the curricula of schools. The article tries to shed light on this challenge by discussing the concept of a broad media- and information education approach. Two models are presented, the first as it has been used for many years in relation to traditional media such as print, TV, and video i.e. the so-called 'zigzag model', and the second based on teaching within the new multimedia, the 'typhoon model'. The practical examples include descriptions of projects by teachers who have completed a film- and media education course at the University College of Copenhagen. The article ends with a discussion about the future of media education.

Keywords: media education, generational gap, Web 2.0, a broad media education, Zigzag model, Typhoon model

Media technology is changing rapidly as is children's media usage, while older generations do not have the skills that the children and adolescents possess. This is a challenge with regard to the form and content of media education – and the curricula of schools worldwide. At the International Association of Mass Communication Researchers (IAMCR) World Congress in July 2008 in Stockholm, the definition of media education was discussed in the Media Education Section. As in previous years, the discussion regarding media education focused on the importance of access to the media, a critical perspective, evaluation, and analysis in relation to the teaching of the subject.

Some years ago an important term, when discussing "media education", was "media production" i.e. that the pupils should learn to produce themselves – to work together on production processes with the aim of making a good production based on insight into the production processes, the language of the media,

and cooperation. Today the term “media production” has been replaced by the term “creation” – especially in reference to “digital content creation”.

This may be explained in relation to the fact that media technology, media patterns, and media political approaches have changed. Creating your own blog, entering the MySpace community, and presenting yourself on Facebook are all individual creative actions i.e. content creations, whereas the production of media signifies cooperation with the aim of gaining a profound knowledge of how to communicate in various media – how to present a message – and include a democratic perspective. In the light of this, media education in schools has a special problem to solve: to develop education that takes a commercial and individualized media culture as its starting point and evolve binding media practice communities where the key words would be: critical perspective, analysis, evaluation, creativity, and creation.

This article tries to shed light on this challenge by discussing the concept of a broad media- and information education approach. This is done through theoretical reflection and is based on the experiences of the two authors in cooperation with teachers in the Danish school system. Two models are presented: the first, as it has been used for many years in relation to traditional media such as print, TV, and video, the so-called “Zigzag model”, and the second, based on teaching within digital multimedia, titled the “Typhoon-model” of media education.

Media Usage: Witnessing a Generational Gap

The media¹ occupy a lot of time in children’s, as well as adults’, everyday lives. In many families the living room has become an activity room where children and young people seem able to co-exist without trouble so long as each is using their own medium – creating what many adults would consider an inferno of sound and images. However, in schools the digital media have not yet really gained a foothold.

Media patterns are currently changing. Children and young people ‘click’ from one media to another in a search for whatever they are interested in, and for this purpose they use the media close at hand; print media, TV, the Internet, or their mobile phone. If we look at children’s and young people’s media use today, we find a complex and intensive media usage that is particularly digitalized and Internet-based. Children and young people use media in a converging way, i.e. interactively. For example, the child might simultaneously be listening to a music channel on TV and playing a computer game, gathering information for school-work on the Internet, communicating with friends on messenger or be logged in on Facebook or MySpace (cf. Tufte et al. 2005, Hagen in this volume).

Apart from the fact that children and young people use the media in a converging way and that the media are melting together, another interesting aspect is that Web 2.0 has entered the scene. Web 2.0 is the common name for user-created content and web technologies such as podcasts, vodcasts,

weblogs, wikis, RSS-feeds, etc. This means that the content on Web 2.0 is to a great extent user-generated and gives the users the opportunity to interact. Web 2.0 is described as a social network and a collection of information that is both dynamic and complex. (Buckingham et al. 2006)

We think that today we are witnessing a generational gap in media usage and media skills. This is especially prevalent when it comes to "button-skills", i.e. children and young people are ahead when it comes to experimenting and using mobile phones and computers, especially in relation to communication. Children and young people are frontrunners, and parents and teachers are often left watching the children and young people "run" through the new media landscape – trying to catch up (Tufte et al. 2005).

However, often when children and young people collect information from e.g. the Internet, they have difficulties ascertaining the credibility and origin of the information; in other words, it is important to note the pedagogical point that they often lack a critical perspective on information sources. They are not conscious of the need of obtaining practical skills in using the media, and often they do not have analytical competences (Tufte et al. 2005).

Today, many adults feel that the digital and international media culture interferes with traditional family time and cultures, and thus challenges existing values. At the same time, many adults feel that children and young people grasp new technology very quickly and achieve a media competence that is far from what adults have. The contrast between children and adults when it comes to media competence is becoming increasingly marked for several reasons. Firstly, as previously mentioned, media convergence is taking place with Web 2.0 posing a challenge to education. And secondly, market forces and the globalization of media control media content to an increasing degree. (Ekström et al. 2007)

A discrepancy between school curricula and everyday media usage can be detected. Children, young people, and adults have developed different skills and competences. Children's and young people's media cultural competences are primarily obtained during their free time, but an absent critical approach in connection with media usage, as well as lack of critical competences, e.g. when surfing the Internet, are obvious (Christensen & Tufte 2005).

Coping with Two Different Cultures in School

As described, there are two types of culture: a free time culture where the converging media usage plays a still larger role, and a school culture primarily attached to documentation in writing. During everyday life the two cultures influence each other in the culture of socialization and the identity creation process. It is in this area of tension that media education ought to be developed – in relation to both research and teaching.

Media education is defined as a scientific field of research and lies in the tension area between media research and educational research. The research

and development work within media education concentrates on studying the relation between children, young people, and media in connection to their socialization. Moreover, it concentrates on studying and evaluating media education from a media didactic point of view in relation to objectives, content, and working area, i.e. analysis and estimations containing theoretical, methodological, and practical perspectives in relation to media educational development work (see f. ex. Vettenranta 2007).

With regards to the content of media education as an educational field, it is common to distinguish between teaching media and teaching by using media. When teachers teach by using media they need a certain “hands-on knowledge” combined with analytical insight and knowledge about the language of the media. However, it can be difficult to distinguish between the two. As a teacher you should, ideally, relate to both aspects when using media. If you, for instance, show a movie in a foreign language lecture it should be natural to work with the linguistic, the cultural, and the media perspective.

Much of the recent media education that has taken place in Denmark has been based on chaos, obstinacy, and determination – all of which are good examples of the Danish grassroots’ tradition of rising from below. From the experiences made so far it is not possible to point at one specific approach to media didactic. There is a need, however, to develop didactic approaches in a cross-disciplinary way in order to create new ways of teaching media. (Qvortrup 2006)

About the Framework of Media Education

Inspired by The Great Danish Encyclopaedia (where education is defined as: “the teachings about theory and practice dealing with objectives, means, relations, and obstacles in the development of values, knowledge, and individual competences”) we choose to define media education as a dynamic concept which constantly reflects upon the connection between children, young people, and media, during free time and in educational institutions, and which is developed in the tension area between media educational practice, empirical knowledge, and theory. We are dealing with a concept not yet determined by a certain methodology, but which is developed in an educational correlation and aims at developing a comprehensive view within the field.

The dilemma – when looking at the history of media education with a special focus on the media landscape, children, and schools today – is that the schools rely on a literary cultural basis, where the target is to raise the children to be good critical citizens in a democratic society. But the “parallel” media school addresses children and adults as consumers in a global society with a market economy. The task of media educational work is to have the parties enter into a dialogue in order to qualify the children to live in a market-oriented society with democratic objectives (Tuft 2007).

Overall, and in relation to all media and their aesthetics and idioms, principles and methods that focus on how work with the media can be scheduled as a

learning process in school must be developed. A media educational concept instrument in relation to all media must be developed.

In connection to this, we have been inspired by the English research project UK Children Go Online (Livingstone & Bovill 2005), which studies children's and young people's Internet usage. In a report titled "Internet Literacy among Children and Young People" focus is set on the "media literacy" and "internet literacy" concepts. "Internet literacy" is defined as (1) *access*: to both hardware and online content and services, and to regulate the conditions of access, (2) *understanding*: critical evaluation of information and opportunities online, and (3) *creation*: for the user to become an active producer as well as a receiver of content, enabling interactivity and participation online.

We agree that the three perspectives are central if you want to develop a media education platform that embraces the free time media culture, including children's and young people's use of the media in general, including the Internet, and aims at developing a connection between media usage during free time and in schools. In a continuation of the above, the overall objective of media education could thus be summarized in the following elements: communication, information searching, perception, analysis, and evaluation of professional media production, and production, analysis, and evaluation of students' media production.

Continuing the discussion regarding a proper definition of media education we would like to emphasize the importance of a broad *media and information education approach* that would give the children and young people competences that enable them to communicate, search for information, and use different media in different contexts. This kind of media and information education should be developed as a cross-disciplinary dimension in the educational system, and ought to be considered a dynamic concept that constantly reflects correlations where media are included, i.e. knowledge about 1) media socialization (informal teaching), 2) media teaching i.e. about and with media (formal teaching), and 3) use of educational media (tools, programs, and platforms).

The development of media- and information competences is central for enabling people to communicate, search for information, share knowledge, and use media in several ways. The media and information education must be implemented in the overall educational system as a cross-disciplinary dimension in the training (Buckingham 2003, Erstad 2005, Vettenranta 2007).

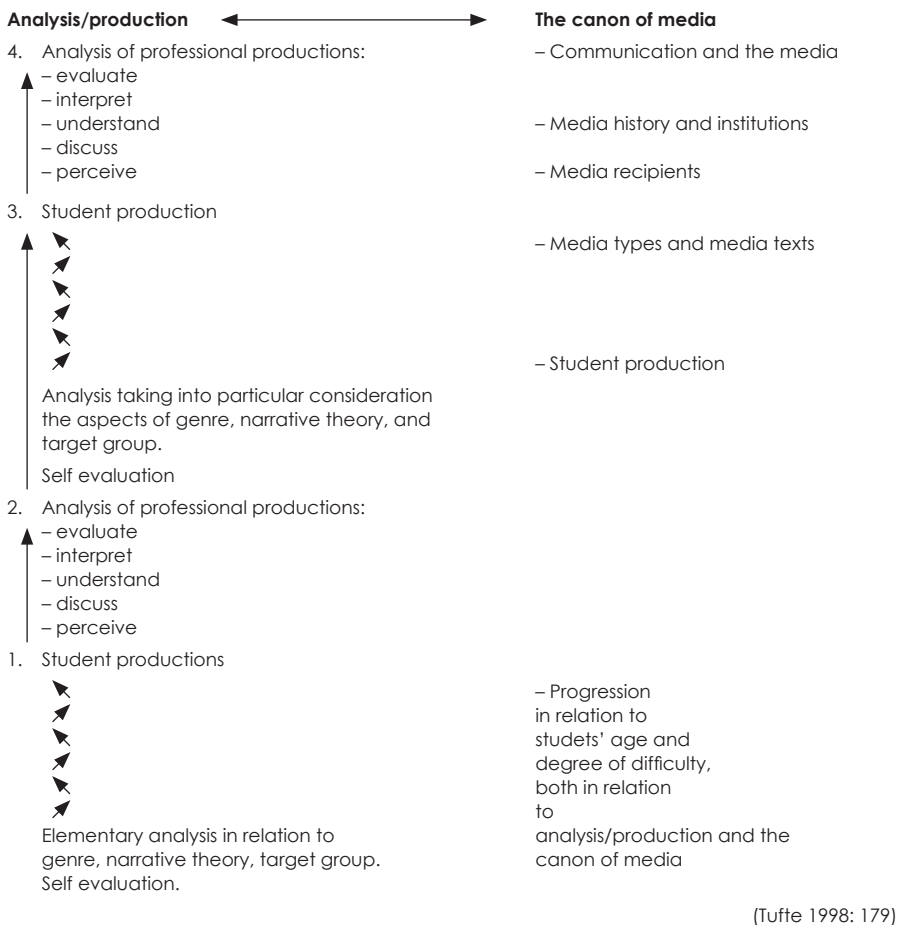
Zigzag Model for Media Education

We have been engaged in the education of teachers within the field of media education for Danish primary and secondary education for many years (Christensen & Tufte 2005). The purpose of our projects has been to investigate pupils' media perception and their understanding of media, and to increase their media literacy by means of a combined method of media production and media analysis.

With today's rapid developments within media, and the continuous blurring of borders between traditional media and new media, it has become necessary for media education to work with new approaches. Nevertheless, we think combining production and analysis in the, if somewhat traditional, Zigzag model is an indispensable principle.

Production and analysis must be developed as far as possible through a relationship of interaction. We find the Zigzag model to be an essential source of inspiration in terms of developing the connections between media use, media production, and media analysis. The basics of the Zigzag model are provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1. The Zigzag Model of Media Education



The model should be read from the bottom up, and is based on a progression principle and the assumption that production and analysis are central

elements in reciprocal action. In addition, what is called a “media canon” is in operation within it, whereby pupils assimilate knowledge concerning media’s societal and cultural importance. The model was originally developed in an era and a media culture where there were fewer media accessible than there are today, and where it was possible to work intensively with just one medium at a time.

Examples from Practice

The examples from practice consist of projects as described by four teachers who have completed a film- and media education course as a part of continuing- and further education at the University College of Copenhagen. The first practical project describes how to teach films in 1st-3rd grade classes, and the second describes the development of a film tool for teachers, including what the teachers call a “Version 2” or “Typhoon model”, based on the “Zigzag model” described in the Table 1 above.

Film Production in 1st-3rd Grade Classes

Gitte Kokborg is a teacher and a school librarian who sees that film production is practically absent in 1st-3rd grade classes (or among children aged 6 to 9). Teaching in these grades is still, to a great extent, based on literary text and the use of films in classrooms is primarily limited to filmed literature, which is studied on the premise of literature. In relation to her education, Kokborg has worked with film production, and she has developed lesson plans and taught 1st-3rd grade classes.

About the background, she says (Kokborg 2008):

6-9-year-old children like to talk frequently, and for a long time, about which films they see, and what they think is the best and the worst...My point is that it is the film which makes the largest impression on the children, and it is the film they remember best and refer to most often. The same tendency is seen when film elements are used as a source of inspiration in written work. This means that something is different in the relation between child and film as compared to written texts.

Kokborg (2008) works with the hypothesis of the active child, i.e. that children can and want to work with media at an early age, and that they possess a great deal of competences within the subject. Moreover, teachers have to recognize children’s knowledge and supplement this knowledge, and in order to evolve media education and give it a high priority in school culture, the board of governors should also be involved and should have overall responsibility for schools.

Kokborg's lesson plans deal with animation production, where there is alternation between the pupils' own production and simple teaching resources including web pages and films. The pupils are divided into small production groups and the children's own experiences with cartoons and films serve as the starting point for all activities. The course in the 2nd grade is described as follows (Kokborg 2008):

Stop-motion" films of concrete things, filmed with a video camera, with a duration of thirty seconds to one minute. E.g. "The living pencil case", "The pencil that writes on its own", "The lunch pack that disappears bite by bite", "The clock that goes really fast" etc.

Focus is placed on technology, "button competences", method (cutting film etc.), the "aha experience" when making things that are not possible in real life happen (time, place, physical ability, etc.), picture cropping, as well as on experiences from films in general.

The film is cut and sound is not applied. The pupils will later choose a piece of music which they will play at the showing, either on a stereo system or on instruments (e.g. as sound effects). Through this, the pupils are introduced to some film history – that is silent film, where sound was played "live" during the showing. The children work in groups of three, and the duration of the course is approximately twelve lessons.

In conclusion, Kokborg states that children in the 1st-3rd grades are not capable of producing long films, and this cannot be the objective. This age group often works with concrete material as their abstract thinking ability is not yet fully developed. Furthermore, they find it difficult to sit still and focus for a long time, which does not mean, however, that they are not able to become absorbed in an assignment. In her opinion, a given material is best assimilated if it is presented in various ways, with visual, tactile, theoretical, and practical aspects implemented when possible. Kokborg (2008) also believes that the final products are an important part of the process:

I see the production part in two ways with a different content. However, both are necessary to obtain an optimal media education: Partly in a way where it is the aesthetic learning processes, such as opportunity of expression and understanding of cultural codes connected with the media, that are in play – and partly in a way where it is the actual production process which is learned. The most important thing in media education is that the pupils are acknowledged and see themselves as active, creating, and meaning forming users of media who have the possibility of gaining influence on their own lives via reflection, community, cultural understanding, critical insight, knowledge sharing, and collaboration. (Kokborg 2008)

A Film Tool Kit and the Typhoon Model

Working with digital media platforms and focusing on the possibilities for education offered by Web 2.0, the “Zigzag model” could be further developed into a “Typhoon model” – described as “Zigzag 2.0”. The model has been developed by three teachers: Andreas Binggeli, Christina Blomquist Jørgensen, and Lasse Remmer (2008), in relation to media and film studies at the University College of Copenhagen. Together they have developed a “film tool kit” which is based on their own teaching experiences with children of different ages. Connected key terms are: progression, “re-mediation”, and media integration.

The three teachers think that progression is always desirable in a learning situation. The pupils should acquire new skills and be challenged in a way that allows for opportunities for development to be constantly created. They wonder if it is possible to utilize the competences that pupils acquire from “the media’s parallel school” and combine these with the teachers’ media knowledge and pedagogical competences. They believe this would provide a breeding ground for progression. They consider the term “re-mediation” as a key concept that is closely related to the term “media convergence”. For them “re-mediation” describes the aesthetics and mode of expression which are developed when media converge: “the media player on Apple’s iPhone looks like a DVD player with a brushed aluminum appearance and with a triangle as a play button – just like on an iMac. “Re-mediation” occurs when one medium picks up another medium’s form and aesthetics and creates new communication” (Binggeli et al. 2008, cf. Erstad in this volume).

The teachers think that the possibility of creating progression in media education is an important element in their film tool-box. They believe that Tufte and Christensen’s “Zigzag model” is suitable for progression when focus is set on analysis and production, but that public schools lack production parts, and this is a central point for us. However, they want to rethink the model – and come up with a “Version 2.0” or “Typhoon model”. The original “Zigzag model” is all about varying one’s own production and analysis with others’/ professional production. Their model is circular and always has the children’s own production as a starting point, see figures A and B below (Binggeli et al. 2008, cf. Tufte 1995).

In the model there is alternation between formal learning in the classroom and the use of informal learning during leisure time. It could also be a question of alternation between teacher-guided education in very specific subject knowledge with regards to film, and a non-managed but experimental education where the pupil makes the rules and conditions him/herself. Teachers think that the linear progression that states that you can only move on to B when you master A is one of the weaknesses of the original “Zigzag model”. They think one’s progression is more circular, thus you are able to return to previous creations and further develop subject knowledge you have engaged in earlier on (Binggeli, Jørgensen & Remer 2008).

The Typhoon Model

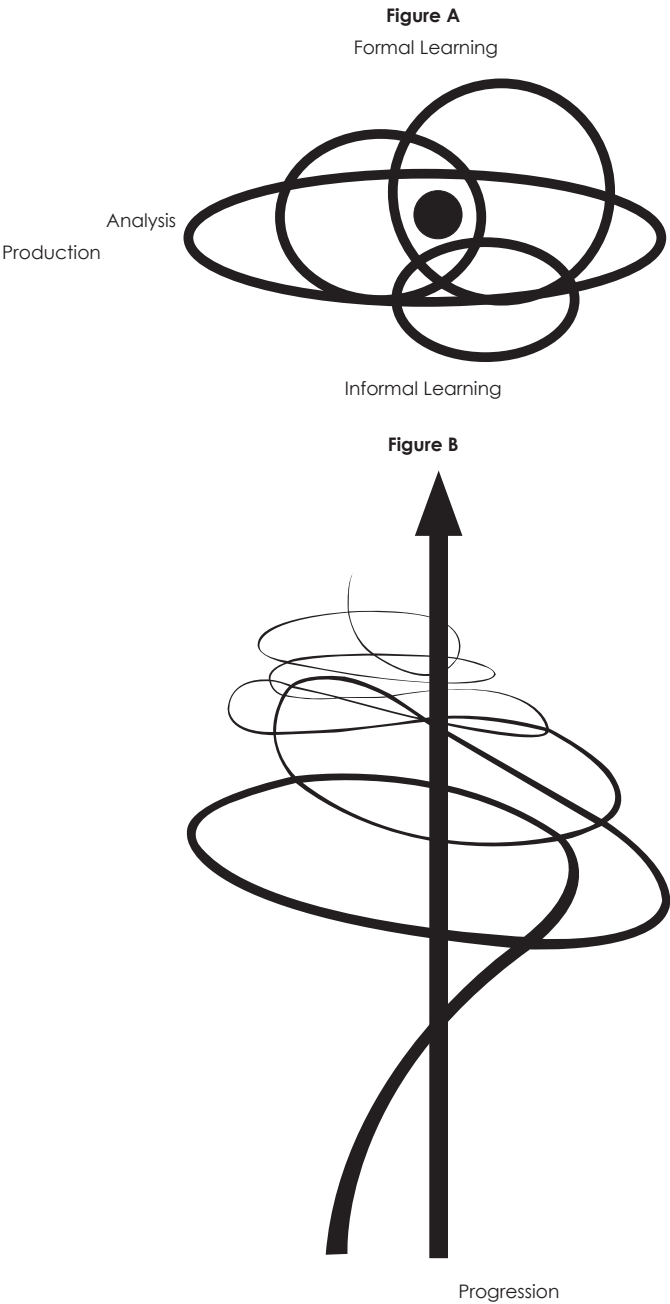


Figure A: The model from above – Figure B: the model from the side

Progressive Media Literacy Education Needed

Media education has been moving back and forth during recent years, but if we compare the present situation with the situation ten years ago, there are a number of differences. The media landscape today consists of increased media use, and an increasing globalization and commercialization of the media has taken place. The technological and media-related development flies with the increasing speed of change. Today it is called Web 2.0, but soon it will be Web 3.0 with new communication and media platforms available. Subsequently, what the dissemination and accessibility will look like is a great question. Will there be an ever-larger disparity when it comes to children's and adolescents' media-related conditions in the future? In this context, critical ability and participation/commitment will be important parameters.

Today's children have been called innovators in relation to the new media. To a large extent, we agree with this view, as they are 'keyboard experts' and competent media users. However, they still lack the deep cultural insight into media, and the interpretation tools for the international, commercial media landscape and everyday media culture, that the teacher is responsible for communicating, and this is where the need for media education becomes real, not least the need for teachers to have the relevant competences (Tufté et al. 2005).

Progression is a central concept in relation to media education. A new model for media integration should be developed so that the media can both support and develop academic activities, but at the same time also challenge the academic agenda. Media integration demands a linkage between academic progression and media progression. So we need to ensure that media and education are developed in a related progression perspective, and that media and academic didactics are redefined. Moreover, we must ensure that digital media challenges the educational agenda.

Media culture of everyday life needs to be implemented into the school's curriculum and support the development of a media-pedagogical practice, because media culture plays a very important role in children's everyday life today. In addition to the mentioned terms; "critical perspective", "analysis" and "practice", important terms to be taught to the pupils are "production" and "creativity".

As far as the two models are concerned, the first model could be used when it is a question of working with "traditional" media, whereas the Typhoon model is important in relation to the digital media. It is suggested that the teachers start with the first zig-zag model and then continue with the Typhoon model.

As emphasized, it is task for adults – especially in schools – to accept and explore the media usage among children and qualify the pupils to be insightful when using media. At the same time, as adults, we ought to have an eye for how media usage during free time can contribute to challenging the educational program and break down traditions on what learning is. This should take place in relation to academic as well as cross-disciplinary project activities, and it should be an obvious objective for schools to work deeper with media and to train children's professional skills and strengthen their analytical competences.

In short, this means that the launch pad for attaching more priority to media education relies on teachers to qualifying their pupils to an optimum utilization of the possibilities that lie within the media, in order to develop them into true democratic citizens in a society dominated by a market economy. However, this raises several questions, for example: how do we bring children's and young people's media experiences into the classroom? What media educational processes should be developed in schools in the future? Which teacher competences are to be developed in order to integrate media as a part of the teaching? In this article we have put focus on and tried to answer these questions.

Due to the fact that marketing strategies play an important role in relation to new media – the media that children are users of – it has been argued that children ought also to know something about the economy, consumption, marketing, etc., so that they can grow up to become competent citizens and consumers. (Tufte 2007)

So, should we call this important pedagogical area Media Education, Media Literacy, Digital Literacy, Internet Literacy, Media and Consumer Education, Media and Economic Literacy, or, with reference to the discussions in the Media Education Section of IAMCR, Media Literacy Education?

Note

1. When stating "media" the whole range of media is included: print media, electronic media – sound and images –, movies, and interactive media (multi media).

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Creativity in Media Education

Merging Different Mindsets

Stefán Jökulsson

Abstract

In the article I show how Eastern philosophy can shed light on a) creativity in general, and b) students' media production as part of media education. Have we overestimated the importance of concepts in media education? Have we underestimated the power of our students' intuitive actions, the natural flow of "letting something happen" as opposed to "making it happen"?

Two Western mini-stories – told by a media educator and a visual artist – are put up against the ideas of three Taoist or Buddhist writers: a Zen master, a mystic, and a philosopher. The merging of the different mindsets is presented as a middle way where no-action is considered as important as action, no-thinking as important as thinking, and intuitive insights as valuable as logical reasoning.

Keywords: creativity, media-production, intuition, non-conceptual awareness

When astronauts circled around the moon's surface in 1968, they focused a TV camera on the earth. "All of us who were watching had an enormous reflexive response. We 'outered' and 'innered' at the same time. We were on the earth and the moon simultaneously" (McLuhan & Powers 1989: 4). A resonating interval had been set up – a space enabling us to see things in a new way. The resonating interval put forward in this article is not of astronomical proportions but entails, nevertheless, two large parts of our planet, the West and the East.

The West is presented by two sketches, outlining how two Icelandic men – i.e. myself as a media educator and Sigurður Guðmundsson, a visual artist and writer – approach their work. My own account speaks for itself, as it were, but the mini-story I tell about Guðmundsson is based on an interview with him (Blöndal & Ingvarsson 2007: 163-180). The interval comes into being when some of our thoughts, presented in the sketches, resonate with the Taoist and Buddhist perspectives of the mystic Osho, philosopher Allan Watts and Zen Master John Daido Looi. The resonance emerges as a dialogue between these

three men – a dialogue which I have formed and staged, even though it is based on their texts. By setting up this play of perspectives, I hope that some of the creative or content-making parts of media education, which may have been out of sight, will become visible.

The Media Educator: Jökulsson's Sketch

The other day I bought the book *How to get ideas* by Jack Foster (1996) because I am really interested in the question mentioned on the back cover: "Where do ideas come from?" It also says on the cover that Foster tells you how to condition your mind in order to become more idea-prone, visualize your goals and rethink your thinking.

"What is an idea?" is the key question in chapter one. Foster asks his co-workers and students about their ideas about ideas and there are some interesting answers. One person says that an idea encompasses all aspects of a situation and makes it simple. Another describes it as a representation of something universally known or accepted, but conveyed in a quite new way. A third thinks about it as a flash of insight that allows us to unite two disparate thoughts into one new concept.

The definition of "an idea" which Foster likes best comes from James Webb Young (2003) and goes like this: "An idea is nothing more nor less than a new combination of old elements." Inferring from this, Foster explains that bringing an idea about is like creating a recipe for a new dish. You take some ingredients you are already familiar with and combine them in a new way.

Foster also reminds us that the Latin word *cogito* means "to shake together" and he quotes Arthur Koestler (1989) who said: "The creative act uncovers, selects, reshuffles, combines, and synthesizes already existing facts, ideas, faculties and skills." Foster's general approach corresponds with this line of thinking as the reader can see by looking at the names of some of the chapters in his book: Set your mind on goals, Get more inputs, Learn how to combine, Define the problem, Gather the information, Search for the idea, Forget about it, Put the idea into action.

Am I being sarcastic? Well, yes, a bit. Somehow it seems too neat, but yet I seem to subscribe to similar ideas. Let me give you some examples.

Media production is my cup of tea. I teach the course *Media production=learning*, meant for prospective teachers, and I also research my students' media production. My point of departure is that technical media are not only tools of transmission but also instruments of understanding. My first research findings indicate that we internalize material, make it our own, by externalizing it as stories. As I see it now, learning should not only involve students trying to adopt their teachers' stories – meaning: their teachers' understandings. They should make their own, as it is hard to misunderstand a story one has made oneself (Schank 1990). I want to help my students to learn in this way: Fitting new experiences to former ones through production. I want them to realize

that they are the makers of their meaning and help them to make it. Doing and making, the two magic words.

How do I do it? Well, of course I want my students to be analytical as well as creative, and I want them to link theory to praxis. I tell them that there are many ways of knowing which have to do with specific media, particular purposes of communication and their preferred ways of learning and presenting.

I go on about the importance of imagination, and spell out how it enables us to make sense of our experiences. I point out that it makes possible all our thinking about what is, what has been, and, perhaps most importantly, what might be (Thomas 2009). My bottom line is that people will not discover any meanings; they will have to create them.

I also explain, with an ambivalent smile on my face, what I call the *new curriculum of awareness*. Contrary to common claims, I say, it will not be increasingly difficult to decide what students should learn: They should learn processes. Schools, I explain, must develop a new type of curriculum in which *processes as a content of learning* should become more important than the traditional learning of subjects. Through authentic inquiry, students must become aware of their thinking, learning and communicating. When they have this awareness, I maintain, they will understand understanding better.

Like Foster, I cherish the idea of rethinking thinking.

Still with the ambivalent smile on my face, but now with a trace of mysticism added to it, I tell my students that meanings are not in the messages but in the *message users* (Berlo 1963). This means, I say, that teachers and learners have to talk about what a message might mean. They must form a joint sense of new ideas or information through dialogue and decide what to do with it. Learning, therefore, is like dancing. Here, I hasten to add that we experience and interpret the world through our ideas and preconceptions. Remember, representation?

And then there are the practical tools I use in teaching creative and critical thinking: my schemas and sets of questions and concepts. One of my favorite schemas is meant to help my students to understand the nature of creative work. It has three phases. You record an interview with a digital recorder, edit it using a sound editing program and finally you broadcast it on the net. Or: You go to Prague, write a poem in the plane on your way home and, when the time is ripe, you read it for Rebecca. Bingo!

My practical guidelines for media production always come in handy, providing the essential questions about aims, audience, context, content, media and effects. My students like it. Then there is my inevitable lecture about important concepts of media production, featuring bait and balance, frame and flow, absence and presence, and the rest of them, not to mention my frequent and pervasive references to the core concepts of media literacy – highlighting authorship, format, audience, content and purpose – and the key questions attached to them. These are extremely important questions as students can use them to deconstruct any kind of media material; these are supposedly “the five questions that can change the world” (Jolls & Thoman 2008).

So, in theory, it is all a matter of what we do, what tools we use and how we use them: how we do our shaking. When it comes to my own work, however, it is different. Even if I use concepts and schemas in my teaching, I hardly ever use them to think about my thinking while making radio programs. And I have made hundreds of them. It's a bit odd, isn't it? It is like when I play the piano the only way I know how – by ear. People have asked me how I do it. I really don't know; I just do it.

The Visual Artist: Guðmundsson's Sketch

As a young man he hoped that faith would turn away from religion and become art, but as this did not happen he chose to try to come closer to the spiritual and the divine through art instead of religion. Making art helped him to enter a new space of reality, which inevitably happened if he did something that really mattered to him. It moved him. Making art brought him to a new place, into a space which he had not entered before. "In the period preceding such moving", he says, "most artists feel an urge, often some kind of nostalgic or sexual longing. Each of us has to find out what we really long for."

He used to perform a sort of ritual. Each day he went into a room, with only a table, a chair and a record player in it. There was a notebook and a pen on the table. He drank coffee and cognac, and listened to classical music. It was a kind of meditation; he wanted the body to forget itself for a while. He tried to think neither in words nor pictures, knowing that there would be an abundance of exquisite stuff in there which was not a matter of hearing or seeing. "In this way, I entered the 'hard drive' and found a key element which was not a picture, word or a sound, but love or lust without a name – a nameless potential or longing for life which defies explanation. Often I did this several times, until I had become well acquainted with a strong, clear and unique feeling."

The next step was searching for ideas which matched this precise feeling, writing down everything that came to mind. Some of it he found silly or embarrassing and he could hardly believe that some of the most disgusting ideas were his offspring. But he kept doing this, as he hoped that somewhere in the rubbish, he would find a single word resonating with him, half a sentence which would turn into an idea for a painting or a sculpture.

Guðmundsson wanted to move towards a situation he did not approve of. That is why he did not use artistic tools like a pencil or a sketchbook, but a biro and an arithmetic book. He also tried to lengthen the part of the creative process which was without words and pictures. Once, when preparing the writing of a book, he spent quite a long time feeling it, without knowing anything about the content or the method of writing. He felt it even if it did not exist. "This kind of feeling makes the actual act of creating easier and at times I am flabbergasted at the surprises it brings, for example when I am writing a dialogue and an unexpected answer emerges out of the blue."

He believes that artists find ways of moving themselves and others. To him life is a journey but an artist might not move in the typical way as he is both the traveler and the vehicle, the tool of moving. Art, he claims, seems to move artists into a timeless space or a dimension where time disperses as light or sound. Then there is the possibility of going beside time, under it and above it; not only back to the past or forward into the future.

Many years ago he presented a theory to his friends which, in modern terms, might be called an ecological theory of art. At the time, however, he labeled it as the bird droppings theory of creativity, the reason being that he had noticed that birds seemed to become lighter if they defecated while flying. According to the theory, the mental moving of an artist has to do with food. Being hungry he seeks food which he prepares and eats. After digesting, there is the dropping, the waste being the work of art. Partly, it becomes a kind of landmark – Kilroy was here – but mainly it serves as food for other travelers passing by.

As a young man, however, Guðmundsson feared the emptiness that followed this kind of parting. Sometimes he felt that everything was over and he could never again create something that he found worthwhile, that he would never again feel alive, feel that he could love. But by and by he made friends with emptiness. When he had experienced it often enough it made way for his work and stopped being an enemy.

He once gave a lecture which was meant to show that the journey of the human spirit through life was a journey of love, and that art and love were two sides of the same coin. There were no questions at the end so he gathered that he had not succeeded in delivering this message. But it remains his point of view: “Creating is looking for something to love. It also means learning everything from scratch many times in your life.”

If you can go deep enough, Guðmundsson remarks, the thoroughway opens up on the other side of the hourglass, into a common space. “That is why an Icelandic artist can make a piece of art which moves people in China. Yet you cannot finish it. Unfortunately, I have occasionally managed to finish something but it has not lasted. A real piece of art is an open question, a type of vision. It does not close like a clog but becomes an open window.” Finished things harden and close and sink, he says. Art wants to be a fertile ground for all kinds of opinions rather than the one and only tree.

Dialogue in a Resonating Interval

In this section, the two Western sketches above are placed in an interval where they are remediated through Taoist and Buddhist ideas about the nature of being and creativity. Some of these ideas are ancient but I will rely on the versions of them presented in the works of Alan Watts (1957), Osho (1999, 2001) and John Daido Looi (2005). In the interval these ideas emerge as a staged dialogue between the three writers, a dialogue which is my re-contextualization

of their texts as I have used them to understand my own and Guðmundsson's ways of thinking and working.

Alan Watts (1915-1973) was a British philosopher, who wrote and lectured extensively about Eastern philosophies, reputed in his time as having been among the foremost interpreters of Taoism and Zen Buddhism for a Western audience. "Rajneesh" Chandra Mohan Jain (1931-1990) was an Indian philosopher and mystic, taking the name Osho in 1989. He had considerable influence in India as a provocative spiritual teacher and his books have also been widely read in the West. John Daido Looi is a distinguished American Zen master and abbot at one of America's major Zen training monasteries. He is also an award-winning photographer.

As the dialogue between the three writers emerges in an anachronistic interval, the deceased – Watts and Osho – readily comment on matters portrayed in Jökulsson's and Guðmundsson's sketches.

Trusting the Creative Process

Watts

Hmm, yes, well, even if I like the ideals of media education, it seems to adopt a rather restricted view of human knowledge. The problem with us in the West is that we do not feel that we really know anything unless we can represent it to ourselves in some system of conventional signs. We use simple one-at-a-time abstractions to interpret a world in which all things are in fact happening at once. Logic prevails.

Osho

And that is why Jökulsson, the media educator, experiences himself a stranger in his scholarly life, and I suspect this also applies to many of his colleagues. His professional life is confined to a world of logic that depends on traditions and knowledge borrowed from others. He presents his rather rigid ideas and prepared answers to his students, but life constantly brings new questions and new dilemmas. But Jökulsson's interest in people who can "feel things" and "move themselves" into timeless creative spaces, indicates that he may be "moving himself" into the paradoxical and mysterious spheres of life. He feels that something is wrong and he is therefore trying to balance his head with his heart.

Watts

But this kind of balancing is not an easy task for academics, whose main expertise is putting experience in order. They tend to resist aspects of life where logic and definition are not applicable – areas where their kind of "knowledge" does not work. If they keep avoiding phenomena which cannot

be ordered, they can continue to see their minds as sharp and competent. But for the man who is more than a computer, the unknowable and unruly is also beautiful.

Loori

As Master Dogen said, the limits of the knowable are unknowable. We must trust the process, especially in creative endeavors. When we take the next step we must trust that the foot will find solid ground. We cannot see all of the way, as it is endless, and new perspectives constantly appear. The unknowable is pregnant with possibilities.

Watts

Similarly, scholars should not waste their time thinking about peoples' thinking about their thinking or their knowledge about their knowing. Trying to know what one knows is like trying to bite one's teeth. Shankara pointed this out: The knower cannot make himself the object of his own knowledge just as fire cannot burn itself.

Osho

Here we must distinguish between intellect and intelligence. On the one hand there is the intellect – the media educator and his students, for example – operating through plans, methods and meticulous thinking. But on the other hand, there is their intuition, their true intelligence, which is a function of their heart. Intellect is a matter of learning; it has to do with tuition, the things others have taught us. Intelligence is our inborn capacity to see and perceive; it is intuition, not tuition. Guðmundsson is doing his type of meditation, and is taken aback by the creative yield it brings. But that is exactly what meditation does: it opens the door for intuition; but the answers don't come out of the blue, as he puts it, but from his being. Intuition is his own consciousness.

Connecting to Our Intuition

Watts

Then there is the question of how we connect to our being, our intuition.

Osho

That is where energy comes in. We are all waves in the ocean and waves cannot exist without an ocean. We are the ocean's movement. If a wave wants to connect to the enormous energy it potentially has, it must realize that it is a part of the ocean. Whether we like it or not, we are processes in a whirling

whole. As in breathing, we flow into the whole and it flows into us. But we are preoccupied with our small minds, our egos, ourselves as particular waves. When the egos of students or artists disappear, they start flowing with the immense flow of existence.

So, a good teacher in this version of reception studies helps his students to get rid of their egos so that they can absorb the universe in great receptivity and then pour what they have absorbed into their creative spaces: the dimensions of poetry, imagination, dreams, intuition, innocence and open-mindedness, in which the elements of their mental play turn into reality. But, as Guðmundsson points out, if they seek to do the perfect thing, it will remain imperfect. And, yes, too perfect a piece of art will die. God never finishes anything.

Loori

We strive for perfection as we believe we know exactly how things are or should be, believing we can express them fully or capture them in our fixed words and stories, our frozen concepts and representations. As we feel we know things, it becomes difficult for us to absorb the universe in great receptivity. We constantly get caught up in our own ideas. Without realizing it, we live out the script that others have written for us. Our minds are filled with internal dialogue, classification, analysis and evaluation, key questions and concepts. We choose knowing over direct experience; we intellectualize our experience, put things in their “right” categories. But intellectualization closes many doors. As soon as we have put something in a category, once we have a name for it, we feel that we know it. We stop noticing its qualities and how it constantly changes. But putting things into their “proper” boxes makes us feel secure. We keep living and creating out of our ideas because of the comfort they offer.

As many Buddhist writers have pointed out, *prajna* is the wisdom that cuts through the immense suffering that comes from trying to keep things in some fixed way. *Prajna* makes us see that we cannot, however hard we try, become secure, and it contributes to an open state of mind that makes peace with paradox and ambiguity. As Chödrön points out (2002), we simply have to learn to pause for a moment instead of doing the same thing again and again out of impulse – instead of immediately filling up the space that surrounds us. By waiting we begin to connect with spaciousness. We recognize our capacity to relax with clarity in the open-ended awareness that already exists in our minds. This happens in the now.

Chödrön also points out that everyone who stands at the edge of the unknown – fully in the present, without a point of reference – experiences groundlessness. Fear, disappointment and anxiety are messages signaling to us that we are about to enter into unknown territory. And if we really want to learn and live, we must go there.

Osho

And, perhaps paradoxically, this egoless groundlessness becomes the basis for creativity, for the kind of “feeling” or receptivity and not-knowing which Guðmundsson talks about. He really puts his finger on the pulse: creativity is a matter of space and emptiness. It is a kind of action through inaction. Become a hollow bamboo and something will start happening because God is hidden behind you. You become a passage enabling the whole to flow through you. Creativity is a religious state; it allows God to happen. The more you think, the more the ego is present, and when the ego is not, God will be – and that is creativity. An idea is more than a new combination of old elements.

Tapping into Creative Energy

Osho

In order to understand inaction, we must distinguish between action and activity. Action comes out of a silent mind while activity comes out of a restless one. Action is relevant; it is your creation from moment to moment. Your activity, however, is irrelevant and even obsessive, just like when you carry on eating even though you are full.

What is Jesus really saying when he asks us to look at the lilies in the field? They are not toiling and yet their splendor is greater than King Solomon's. He is saying – and Guðmundsson is echoing it – Relax! He is talking about the kind of energy which has no goal. Or, to put it another way, the goal is not somewhere else, or in the future, but in the present moment. Being there, you will relax and become a placid pool of your own energy, which can in turn lead to meaningful action. In activity we never reach a goal as we waste the energy needed trying to turn each moment into means for the future. The goal remains on the horizon and we keep on running even if the distance remains the same.

Loori

I agree: energy is the essence of creativity. It has to do with the energy emanating from the stillness – you can call it God, or Tao, the ocean, the whole, if you like – which is the basis of our existence. The still point, which is like the eye of a hurricane, is at the heart of the creative process. By emptying ourselves from the running commentary in our heads, we start fostering a whole mind. We go beyond an ordinary way of being and seeing and make direct contact with reality. We not only see what we think we see, but what actually is.

But how do we tap into this energy in our creative work as artists or learners? First there is the element of inspiration, initiating the process of creation: attention draws us into something and we feel “inspired by it”. It is the vital energy of a being or an object – *chi* – which attracts our attention, *chi* being the breath or living force that produces and permeates all life and activity. We can, exactly as Guðmundsson describes, get in touch with a feeling inside of

us and then let resonance guide us to our subject. By cultivating a quiet place within ourselves, for example by meditating, we allow inspiration to clarify itself and develop into creative work. *Chi* becomes the communicative link between the artist and the subject, and its energy can flow in both directions: from subject to artist, and vice versa.

Once we have located something that reflects our feelings, we must not rush into the process of expression; we must wait until a bond has been created. Subjects change with time and “reveal” different aspects of themselves, if we are patient and allow the revelation to unfold. Furthermore, the *chi* of the subject and its resonance with the creator will rise and fall. Therefore, he must use his intuition and create when the resonance is peaking.

If energy is flowing freely, the camera photographs, the words write, and the dance dances. The creator of the art, the subject of the art, and the expression itself merge into a single process in which there is no reflection or evaluation, just art manifesting itself. As long as you feel the *chi* peaking and flowing, let it run its course without attempting to edit what is happening – without trying to analyze or understand it. In the process of editing, which comes later, we reconnect with the original resonance and remove the unnecessary elements. Diminishing resonance means that we have edited too much.

This is the functioning of no-mind, the falling away of body and mind, which can be brought about by meditation and harnessed in creative work. The art slips through the intellectual filters without conscious effort and planning. This functioning of no-mind is sometimes called the action of no-action. This is the Taoist concept of *wu-wei*: a continuous stream of spontaneity that emerges from the rhythm of circumstances.

Media Literacy: Using Conventions Instead of Being Used by Them

Watts

Yes, a Taoist would prefer to understand life in this direct way, and not by thinking about it in the abstract, linear terms of representational thinking, and Taoism seeks to develop the original spontaneity that is termed *tzu-jan* or “self-so-ness”. We must admit that we “know” how to move our hands, or how to breathe, although we might not be able to explain in words how we do it. Like Jökulsson, we *know how to* do something because we *can* do it. Scientific methods have their uses but a far greater part of our important decisions depend on “hunch”. But to be free from convention does not mean that we cannot use it; freedom means that we can use it as an instrument instead of being used by it. That is the crux of media literacy, isn’t it?

You see, God produces the world by making, but the Tao produces it by “not making”, which is similar to growing. In the case of things like machines, separate parts must be put together or built, while some things grow from within outwards by themselves. The Tao does not “know” how it produces the

universe because it operates according to spontaneity, not according to plan. Education seems to love plans more than spontaneity.

So, a Taoist leaves the mind alone, trusts it to work by itself. The perfect mind, the old Zen and Taoist masters say, is a mirror. It grasps nothing; it refuses nothing. It receives, but it does not keep. One might ask whether concepts – like the key concepts of media literacy – are glasses rather than mirrors, and wonder if they are fit for all users in all circumstances.

But an empty mind is not a coma but *wu-hsin*, literally “no-mind” which is to say un-self-consciousness. It is a state of wholeness in which the mind functions freely and easily, without the sensation of a second mind or ego standing over it with a club. Educators are pretty occupied with second minds, aren’t they? If the ordinary man is one who has to walk by lifting his legs with his hands, the Taoists and Buddhists are the ones who have learned to let their legs walk by themselves.

A Hunch or Two about Media, Meaning and Movement

I feel that Eastern philosophy, as described by the Taoist and Zen Buddhist writers featured in this article, may help educators in general to rethink their ideas about education, and by extension, may help media educators to modify their work with students. On the one hand, there is the typical conceptual and analytical character of education in the West, but on the other hand, there is the Eastern strand of non-conceptual awareness. To put it crudely, the Westerner, preoccupied with the past or the future, uses his logical mind in making his decisions and plans. The Easterner, in contrast, wants to get rid of his local mind of thoughts. He wants to connect to his big mind – to be a part of the ocean, as Osho puts it – and sense, through stillness and intuition, the creative potentials of the present, moment by moment.

In a broad sense, this dichotomy seems to represent order versus chaos, form versus flow. But as my Buddhist appropriation has it, the word “versus” is redundant here, as order does not exist without chaos, and similarly, we understand form in terms of flow and vice versa. My hunch is that we need both poles simultaneously and one does not seem exclude the other.

Concepts can be useful when students analyze media material but methods of research that are too rigid, that focus on form, might make students approach texts primarily as frozen forms or fixed identities carrying certain meanings. To a certain degree texts do have meaning, i.e. they are a certain form of a social agreement which often seems to serve its purpose, and yet they are abstractions which we choose to focus on in the never ending flow of communication.

A *vortex*, a term denoting a swirling fluid, might help us to understand the being and non-being of meanings. Even though a vortex can be seen to exist and have particular characteristics, it is constantly changing due to the constant flow of water and the countless factors affecting its constant remaking. Akin to this, texts are in essence contexts. This is in line with Buddhist epistemology,

which holds that the world is an infinite network of conditions and everything that exists – including forms of meaning, I would add – is the temporary manifestation of that whole network. Nothing is fixed and everything is in a constant process of change.

But even if I have advocated Eastern ideas about the importance of “nothing” in understanding or expressing “something”, my hunch is that we have to find a middle way where teachers as well as students can achieve a balance in the interplay of form and flow, action and no-action, thinking and no-thinking. Maybe “knowledge becomes alive where the ocean meets land” (Ragnarsson 2008), with a splash as it hits a steep cliff or gently as it caresses the sand on a flat shore.

Guðmundsson found a way of moving himself into creative space. In media education, an idea of communication media as “movers” could put their function as tools of creativity and understanding (as compared to their part in delivering knowledge or information) in the foreground. Students would make sense of the symbolic content they are dealing with by moving it around within a medium, i.e. different students would use different media in order to “move themselves” to different points of view where they would look at themselves, or the phenomena they are trying to understand, from different angles. The resonance or understanding arises when the medium enables them to “see” the seemingly separate aspects of something simultaneously. One thing does not lead to another in the Cartesian sense. Learning or understanding arises as the learner realizes the inter-being of the elements in question; his understanding emerges – as Buddhists might put it – as he experiences their wholeness, their symphony and synergic swinging.

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Media Literacy in the Estonian National Curriculum

Kadri Ugur & Halliki Harro-Loit

Abstract

The implementation of media literacy into national education policy is a multi-dimensional process that includes the development of the national curriculum, teacher education with reference to in-service training, and various projects that support adult-education. The aim of this article is to provide a critical analysis of the Estonian national curriculum from the perspective of media literacy and to discuss the possibilities for implementing components of media literacy into the curriculum. The structure of the Estonian national curriculum provides wide-ranging possibilities for teachers and schools that are motivated with regard to media education and that actively seek in-service training. For the less-motivated, the curriculum leaves the possibility of not dealing with media literacy at all open.

Keywords: media literacy, media education, national curriculum, Estonia, cross-curricular theme

With the growing importance of media, information, and communications in society, media literacy has become an increasingly important scholarship and policy tool in European policy documents. The term is widely incorporated into processes of governance, being built into educational curricula, and co-opted as part of the legitimization of neoliberal market deregulation (Livingstone 2008: 56). Knowledge-based economy, critical audience, empowered consumers, participatory online media, active citizenship etc. are all different approaches to contemporary society that presume that the individual is 'media literate'. In the context of the exponential emergence of many different 'literacies' (health, consumer, functional, mathematical, environmental, financial, scientific, emotional etc.), researchers need to ask first what the term 'literacy' means, and second what the role and what a reasonable amount of media education in a *national curriculum of formal education* is.

On the one hand, literacy has historically represented a focus for many of society's ambitions regarding people's opportunities for learning, expression,

creativity, public connection, civic participation, and critical judgment (Livingstone 2008: 56). (Media) literacy, specifically, is a “perspective from which we expose ourselves to the media and interpret the meanings of the messages we encounter... it is a continuum, not a category” (Potter 1998: 5, 6).

On the other hand, a comparison of at least three EU policy documents, the Audiovisual Media Service Directive (AVMSD, Directive 2007/65/EC), the White Paper on a European Communication Policy, and the Implementation of “Education and training 2010” work program (2004), reveals that ‘media literacy’ is an important element of citizen- as well as consumer education but is also linked with the neoliberal shift from direct governmental control to governance. Media literacy is a practical solution for regulating a rapidly diversifying media and communications environment. Namely, it is central to deregulatory policies in the media and communications sector (Livingstone 2008: 58, 60).

The aforementioned policy documents gain a responsibility to promote media literacy at the national level. In order to implement this goal the concept of media literacy should be translated into the concept of *media education*. Media literacy is the outcome of a learning (and teaching) process in any given context, but particularly in formal, informal, social, family, and media settings. This multi-contextual process leads to the acquisition of specific abilities and competences, in addition to attitudes and values. The process is termed *media education* (Tornero 2008: 105). With regards to the role of formal education, one should ask ‘*how*’ and ‘*what*’ to teach in classes and school organizations so the students, citizens, consumers, will become *media literate* (see more about these concepts in Arnolds-Granlund in this volume).

In public debate about media literacy in Estonia, it is hard to define how this term is understood or interpreted. In some cases ‘media literacy’ is understood as a continuously developing perspective we expose ourselves to media; in other cases ‘media literacy’ stands for a tool of policy and media education – a strong argument for competences that should be developed in a formal school system.

In 2005-2006 an interdisciplinary group of researchers at the University of Tartu proposed the idea of developing and communicating the concept of cross-curricularity, as an opportunity for training key competences and developing integration between separate subjects. The concepts of media literacy and communication competences were integrated and contextualized as a substantive part of citizen education. Due to national level political upheaval, the new curriculum was not implemented (Arenev Õppekava 2006). The biggest barrier to the implementation of the ‘advanced media literacy and communications skills’ concept was the lack of political decisions concerning citizen education in the information society.

We argue for the crucial role of national curriculum in creating ‘gateways’ or ‘key competences’ for further development. Moreover, media literacy as a political solution to a neoliberal market economy means that the ‘key competences’ should incorporate knowledge, practical skill, and values. The national

curriculum should be re-written so that classes could not retain their traditional top-down (teacher-pupil) way of teaching about media. Herein lays a challenge for qualitative change in didactics, as students, in their capacity as everyday users of mediums, should be involved in course development. The aim of this article is to provide a critical analysis of the media education concept in the Estonian national curriculum and discuss possibilities of further development.

Key Competences of Media Literacy

Most definitions of media literacy include the ability to access, understand, analyze, evaluate, create, and communicate information in variety of forms, from print to video (Media Literacy Information in New Zealand: a comparative assessment of current data in relation to adults 2007: BSA). This means that a person should act as an information receiver, creator, and distributor. This concept describes a list of communication skills that are not concerned with knowledge and competences that are related to one specific field, but with more general competences (Reid & Scott 2005: 183). Hence it is not clear whether media literacy includes communicative skills that empower individuals to seek, choose, analyze, evaluate and create information (different types of texts) or whether 'media literacy' is a part of communication ability.

The definition of media literacy on the EU Commission's webpage is as follows:

Media literacy can be defined as the *ability to access, analyze and evaluate the power of images, sounds and messages* which are now being confronted with on a daily basis and are an important part of our contemporary culture, as well as communicating completely in media available on a personal basis... *The aim of media literacy is to increase awareness of the many forms of media messages* encountered in their everyday lives. It should *help citizens to recognize how the media filter their perceptions and beliefs*, shape popular culture and influence personal choices. It should *empower them with critical thinking* and creative problem-solving skills to *make them judicious consumers and producers of information*. Media Education is part of the basic entitlement of every citizen ... Today Media Literacy is one of the *key pre-requisites* for active and full citizenship. (Our italics)

The last definition adds critical thinking ability as a basic entitlement of every citizen and consumer.

A recent document from the Commission of the European Communities defines the EU's approach to media literacy in the digital environment in a broader context. The Media Literacy Expert Group claims that media literacy has various levels and deals with all kinds of media messages, emphasizing the aspects of interactivity, participation, and creativity. Media literacy also includes an awareness of the legal aspects of media and media economics.

The directive of the audiovisual media services refers to media literacy as a set of “skills, knowledge, and understanding that allow consumers to use media effectively and safely.” Media literate people are “better able to protect themselves /.../ from harmful or offensive material”. The directive claims that the promotion of media literacy through the continuing education of teachers and trainers and other activities is necessary in order to “protect minors and human dignity” (Directive 2007: 65 & EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007: 5).

Through the use of these definitions we have created a possible matrix of media education components that could provide ‘gateways’ for becoming ‘media literate’. The vertical column issues from the basic definition of media literacy while the horizontal dimension is designed to mark the areas of education where these competences could be developed with regard to specific knowledge structures. ‘Evaluation’ (as an umbrella term) is the result of the development of self-reflection and partly reflects the individual’s ability to analyze personal experience. We argue that it is important to divide certain types of knowledge into specific ‘areas’ in formal education, as this enables individuals to relate certain learning outcomes (basic skills, knowledge, vocabulary etc.) to certain subjects.

We will employ this matrix as a tool for analyzing the Estonian national curriculum, one that handles only the formal education field. Possibilities of citizen organizations are endless but we are not going to analyze these in the current paper.

The Formal Education System and the Role of National Curriculum in Estonia

The formal education system in Estonia is divided into pre-school education and four school levels. At the age of 7 all children must start their formal education, unless they are medically unable to do so. All children must attend school at least until graduating from the 9th grade or until they reach the age of 17 years old. Upper secondary school is not mandatory, but it is the traditional choice for students who wish to go to university. In recent years there has been a tendency to close smaller high schools, and 9th grade graduates have been encouraged to continue their education at vocational schools instead.

The national curriculum must be approved by the Estonian government, and it forms the basis for every school’s own curriculum. The element of the national curriculum that describes the content of formal education is formulated as a list of themes, implying that the level of achieved competency is rarely clear. The number of themes is high and the learning outcomes described in the national curriculum barely cover all of them.

The first national curriculum of an independent Estonia (1996) mentioned media or media literacy explicitly in three places: first as a vocabulary theme in foreign languages (television, radio, and writing press), secondly as a learning

Table 1. Media Literacy Components

Key competences for different phases of information processing	Knowledge structures			
	Aesthetical education Arts	Communication education Language education	Civic education	Technological education
Access Understanding and analysing	The ability and motivation to use traditional and new media.	Functional reading skills in mother tongue. Knowledge of foreign languages that enables individuals to seek information globally.	Motivation to seek information. Knowledge about risks and challenges of new media.	Student should be able to find information by using different IT possibilities + different technology.
	The ability to understand and evaluate images, words and sounds, and their combinations.	Student should be able to deconstruct text (e.g. perspective of the author and outside sources; time categories used for constructing a story etc.)	Student should be able to distinguish between different discourses (e.g. news, advertisements, infotainment etc.), and pick out different techniques employed in media messages etc.	Student is able to analyze sources of information.
Evaluating	Value clarification and self-reflection abilities according to age and life experience.			
Creating	Student is able to produce audiovisual content. Student is able to express own ideas and messages in different forms and with different purposes: orally, in writing, visually, directly and indirectly using different media; political and artistic self expression.		Student is familiar with laws and norms of public communication, and is able to form valid and well-grounded opinions.	Student is able to use technology for content production.
Distributing	Student is able to distribute either, or both, verbal and audiovisual content to the desired audience.		Students are aware of the responsibility of the distributor; they consider social consequences of publishing and distributing.	Student is able to use technology for distribution of own messages.

outcome in high school history classes (in which students analyze information from the media), and thirdly in social studies, media is mentioned under the sub-theme of “Human being and information carriers”. In the curriculum for social studies *journalism* is mentioned as the 4th power in democratic society. The tradition of using newspaper articles in classrooms is a fairly extensive practice. The 1996 Curriculum did not refer to school newspapers and school radios. However, the objectives in Estonian language and social studies include the phrases “texts of mass communication” and “mass communication as a source of information”.

The next version of the curriculum brought about qualitative change. The Estonian national curriculum that came into force in 2002 had three parts: general demands, descriptions of subjects, and cross-curricular themes. In order to filter out the concept of media literacy we need to describe briefly how communicative competences and *media education* are described throughout the national curriculum.

First, the general part of the curriculum defines the levels of competences: general competences (like the ability to learn), field competences (like communication competence; usually relevant subjects and cross-curricular themes are mentioned), and special competences (which are defined within different subjects, e.g. the ability to add in mathematics). The general part of the curriculum manifests that all the competences will be achieved through learning outcomes, and that only learning outcomes (not competences) will be assessed.

The second part – descriptions of subjects – is often criticized for being too extensively a list of themes. Although schools are encouraged not to teach all of the themes but to make their own selection, this is often not the case as schools are (even financially) interested in achieving better results in state examinations and make a great effort to cover as many of the themes as possible.

The third part of the curriculum describes cross-curricular themes (ICT, environment and sustainable development, media education, safety, career planning, etc.) and their desired learning outcomes. However, some of the cross-curricular themes merely repeat the content of existing subjects, some are too specific for teachers without special education, and some are just too loosely defined to be combined with any part of school activity. The application of cross-curricular themes is one of the current national curriculum's unsolved problems.

Though the national curriculum does not clearly point at ways of promoting pupils' media literacy within the framework of formal education, it provides some possibilities for schools and teachers that are individually motivated and prepared to make use of them. Media education could, for example, be a special subject within a school or even a school's specialization. To some extent, this serves to demonstrate the confusion concerning media education and explains the difficulties one is confronted with when trying to depict the current situation of media education in Estonia.

Media Education

– A Cross-curricular Theme or a Separate Subject?

Media education could be applied as a cross-curricular theme or a special course. The cross-curricular approach was introduced in the 2002 Curriculum and it currently makes media education compulsory in all schools. There is a considerable gap between the 'media literacy' concept as a cross-curricular theme and components of 'media literacy' in the mother tongue program, with the latter concentrating on production and genre specific teaching.

Media education can also be promoted through the use of optional courses (one course is at least 35 hours); media education elements could find a place, for example, in health and consumer education frameworks.

We argue in favor of a cross-curricularity approach for the following reasons:

1. Media education needs elastic means.

2. Cross-curricularity has the potential to function as an instrument providing links between disciplines as well as learning in and out of the classroom (media culture).
3. Subjects in the Estonian national curriculum are overloaded and there is practically no room for cross-curricular themes. However, there is some space for media education as a special subject, since the upper limit of weekly lessons in high schools is not defined.
4. Media education as a cross-curricular theme provides many excellent opportunities for co-operation between people from different generations, with different levels of media experience.

The implementation of media education as a cross-curricular theme within other academic subjects could perform well, but only in the following circumstances: First, cross-curricular objectives need special events or blocks of activity (e.g. modules), meaning separately timetabled themes, specific subjects or approaches to learning (Reid & Scott 2005: 199). A number of objectives cannot be acquired without certain auditorial lessons.

Secondly, cross-curricularity in a subject-based curriculum also depends on the individual competences and beliefs of the subject teacher, who is not necessarily a media specialist. In the Estonian curriculum the objectives are formulated in a way that requires excellent and up-to-date knowledge on the performance of the media system from the teachers in question (see Appendix 2; cross-curricular themes). One of the six 'teaching purposes', for example, outlines the aim that a "*student learns how to orient in the media... sees people's positions and roles in today's media world*". On one hand, information concerning the 'behind the scenes' activity of the media industry or the performance of the media market is not easily accessible for the public in Estonia. In order to interpret current events a teacher must acquire basic knowledge and vocabulary on ownership, legislation, and media structure. On the other hand, students' media usage is different from the media consumption habits of their teachers, with some students managing to orient media better than the teachers. As a result the role of the teacher would become ambivalent if they did not update their media-specific knowledge.

Media Literacy Components and Competences in the National Curriculum

At school level I (grades 1-3) the curriculum does not define any general competencies beyond the need for children to become acquainted with different types of discourses and genres within mother tongue classes. According to the national curriculum children should be able to "*work with text if getting appropriate guidance*" by age 9. The types of texts they need to recognize and create are: *invitation, congratulation, announcement, story, retelling, and description*. Children

should also be able to define *announcement, invitation, letter, congratulation, newspaper, story, vocabulary, and index*. However, there are signs of randomness in the curriculum: some text types are listed only in the section of themes, some only in learning outcomes. Teachers of grades 1-3 are usually not prepared to work with media texts and this leads to one of the main problems in Estonian media education: it is hard to fulfill the requirements of national curriculum if teacher's pre-service education does not include media didactics.

As aforementioned, media education is mainly carried out at school levels III and IV. Estonian national curriculum describes separately general competencies and field competencies – both lists include “*key competencies for different phases of information processing*”. The difference between the “field competencies” and our matrix is that the national curriculum includes the ability to “remember” and “exchange” and the ability to use different sign systems for achieving, remembering, interpreting, passing, and creating information while the other does not. A possible interpretation of a “different sign system” is that it includes audiovisual and image education.

In summary, the Estonian national curriculum *provides the possibility* for educating a critical information seeker, an interpreter, a creator (e.g. citizen journalist), and a distributor. The curriculum does not say anything about evaluation abilities, and that is the second general weakness of the national curricula. The competences are not clearly divided into skills, knowledge, and attitudes.

A close reading of the national curriculum reveals inconsistencies and a lack of integration between different knowledge structures. For example, beyond the general competencies, the list includes the following skill: that a student “*can differentiate between fact and opinion*”. This skill is particularly peculiar as it is not contextualized with regard to any competences concerning text analysis or logic. The same skill is repeated in the list of topics for social studies and it is likewise present in the list of competences and learning outcomes that should be acquired in the mother tongue subject in grades 4-6 and 7-9. The ironic aspect of this repeatedly mentioned learning outcome is that the “fact and opinion” topic constitutes a comprehensive part of the legal discourse concerning freedom of expression. The Estonian Supreme Court has been discussing the difference between fact and opinion through several cases and the legal interpretation of “fact and opinion” could therefore be integrated into classroom discussions. This legal dimension would be invaluable as a part of civic education (empowerment of citizens). Since legal education is even weaker than media education in Estonian schools, these examples do not reach the classrooms often enough.

Another general problem of media education in Estonia is that the vast majority of the learning outcomes are unrealistic if one takes the fact that contemporary communication policy assumes consumers and citizens are media literate into consideration. For example, by the end of the 9th grade (which is also the end of compulsory education in Estonia) students should be able to distinguish between advertising and news, reality and fantasy, and should also be able to “write a story, description, simple discussion, news story, applica-

tion, CV, review". We consider these learning outcomes unattainable by means of the current teaching methods whereby the teacher often 'owns' the class and sees him/herself as the only source of knowledge. If students' own life and media experiences are not taken into account, then the learning outcome cannot be achieved.

According to an experiment carried out by Hindrikson (2007), high school students (one class of 24 students) who had previously passed the optional course on news journalism (35 lessons) were unable to write a proper news story about their own life. Hindrikson pointed out that as the students only listened to lectures about the news genre they were not really being trained to give news value to selected events. The students could not write a news story as they had no cognitive tools for specific information processing.

The third problem is that within the mother tongue subject media education is based entirely on a traditional understanding of genres (news, interview, editorial, etc.), even though contemporary media studies (see e.g. Erjavec et al. 2005) reveals that hybrid discourses (infotainment, edutainment, promotion news, etc.) and mixed formats are spreading and genre conventions are undergoing a process of change. In addition to this, a curriculum that prescribes a detailed list of genres diminishes the classroom time devoted to reflecting on students' media habits or experiences with particular media formats.

The fourth general problem is connected to the knowledge-centred learning process and the assessment that supports this approach. It is easier for a teacher to give grades if a student can recall a definition. The fact that many textbook definitions are outdated or oversimplified is often overlooked. An example from a 4th grade social sciences textbook: Definition: *The purpose of advertisements is to inform us about the new items that are available in stores.* This is easily transformed into the test question: *What is the purpose of advertisements?* – without ever asking if the given definition was adequate.

The comparison of themes and learning outcomes reveals that the list of topics is longer than the list of learning outcomes. The list of topics includes knowledge that is designed to support citizen education but in practice does not help individuals to act as media literate persons. For example the theme "The right to public information" (Social Sciences, Grades 7-9) supposedly incorporates a wide range of knowledge and skills, but the curriculum does not contextualize this theme within legal discourse or data processing skills. In 2007 Harro-Loit asked some high school graduates (20 representatives from 2 high school classes) whether they knew which law defines public information and how citizens could make a request for public information (of which the Public Information Act provides detailed instructions). None of the students were able to find the instructions from this legal text.

In summary, we can say that media education in the Estonian national curriculum corresponds to the general 'media literacy' definition with regards to the different roles an individual can have within the communications process. It also supports technological education. Audio-visual education is given an opportunity but it is not granted any learning outcomes. Communication education

and civic education have several weaknesses. In this aspect the curriculum does fulfill the expectations of media literacy as a policy tool, but the unsatisfactory level of readiness on the side of teachers remains an issue.

Media Education as a Special Subject

The list of elective courses for school levels III and IV is not defined in the Estonian curriculum, and since there is no upper limit of weekly lessons in high school, any given schools' possibilities are legally unlimited. Every school can make its own choices, and often a school decides to choose some of the cross-curricular themes for elective courses (35 hours each). Media education could also be a special subject in itself, including one or more courses. A graduating student in Estonia even has the option of taking 'Media' as a final exam – after completion of three courses or 105 hours. The content of these media courses is not regulated and is created by the individual teachers (as are the school exams).

The substantial freedom provided by the national curriculum allows schools to find their own 'face' through different approaches to cross-curricular themes and elective courses. Some very interesting media courses are taught in different schools in Estonia, but getting an overview of these is difficult for many reasons. Competition between schools is one of them, but often teachers who are in a state of "exploring the field and themselves" are not very keen to talk about their principles in developing the media course or their actual experiences. The main reason for the deficient overview of media courses is the absence of any kind of forum – there are still no resources for proper cooperation and exchange between media teachers in Estonia. This causes isolation and sometimes even professional loneliness amongst teachers, not to mention the unfortunate situation where every teacher is trying to invent the bicycle by themselves.

Currently we do not need to have more schools with more media education courses. In some cases the problems lie in cooperation and integration, which are still very weak at all school levels. Teachers tend to master their courses without asking where the meeting points with other subjects are. The lack of communication between teachers (Reiska 2008, Õpetajate suhtlustavad 2008) has an influence on whether communication skills amongst students are achieved or not, and the problem is not yet highlighted in a proper manner.

Discussion

In summary, we can say that the Estonian national curriculum is quite ambitious when describing media literacy as a cross-curricular theme. Traditions and pre-service training programs for teachers do not support the demanding needs of a cross-curricular approach. Reality does not meet the high standards

of the normative document and there is no sign of improvement as of yet. In other words, the concept of media education (or communication competence) as a cross-curricular theme is vague and unfeasible, unless the schools are specifically motivated to develop that approach.

In Estonia, as well as in many other countries, there has been a lack of a clear implementation strategy that would support the schools in actualizing the different functions of media education. Communication competence is defined as a key competence: "Ability to understand, memorize, spread, interpret, and create texts via language. Generally it is the ability to communicate in different situations in writing and orally" (RÕK 2002). This definition partly overlaps with the internationally accepted (EU Commission) definition of media literacy, except with regard to the critical thinking and reading abilities aspects. There is very little documented material on how these competences should be taught in the classroom (methodologically) and what resources would be needed.

The components of media literacy (table 1) are defined through two dimensions with the vertical dimension potentially being carried out via a cross-curricular theme. The learning outcome depends mostly on the teachers' own media literacy and communication competencies. The horizontal dimension provides an opportunity to approach media education through different subjects. The meeting points of both approaches remain unclear in the Estonian curriculum. In reality, the components of media literacy should be a basis for curriculum development. Then the competencies described in the national curriculum could shape the teachers' pre-service training programs as well their in-service training.

The "literacy components approach", on the one hand provides a basis for integration between subjects. On the other hand, every subject could have their own media literacy components to cover, allowing subjects to support, and not merely copy, each other's approaches. For example, if the methods of critical text analysis are taught in mother tongue classes, the social science teacher could use this particular skill as a tool while adding some knowledge about media marketing. As media literacy is a multidimensional concept, the media education concept does not fit well into a subject-based curriculum model.

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Teachers Using an Expanded Text Concept and Media Pedagogy for Children with Dyslexia

Karin Forsling

Abstract

This article describes some of the results of a project, the KOM-M/IT-project, in a Swedish school for children with diagnosed Dyslexia. The Swedish curriculum for the Swedish language subject defines text not only as *written text* but also as music, drama, art, films, theatre, and so on. The term for this is *an expanded text concept*. The KOM-M/IT- project was a collaboration between a College of Arts (Dramatiska Institutet) in Stockholm, the University of Karlstad, and a private secondary school situated in a suburb to Stockholm.

The aim of this project was to encourage the pupils to use a new toolkit for communication and narrative skills. The adult participants (the staff) were supposed to perform the same tasks as their pupils were performing. The teachers had to, through working *with* media, aesthetics and ICT, develop a capacity for telling and above all; *digital telling*. The dyslexic children were given a second chance to become members of the society of readers and writers.

This text focuses on the adult participants of the project. I interviewed two of the teachers, in 2004. Angelica, teacher in History and Civics, and Henrik, the ICT-teacher, describe their meeting with the expanded text concept as a *pedagogical awakening*.

Keywords: dyslexia, an expanded text concept, collaborative processes, literacy, media pedagogy, ICT

Today's society demands communicative skills, and the act of arranging meaningful communicative meetings could be one of education's most important responsibilities. We, as citizens in a global society, have to be given (and to take) opportunities to develop and train our individual narrative capacities and recognize the value in using different ways of expressing ourselves. Reading and writing are not the only competences you have to consider and develop in a media-imbued reality.

There are a number of adequate concepts referring to different kinds of competences or literacies today. Apart from the etymological, basic meaning

of literacy – the ability to read and write – we can talk about *media literacy*, *digital literacy*, *information literacy*, *cultural literacy*, *critical literacy*, and so on. Media literacy, for example, is multidimensional, including dimensions of cognitive, emotional and aesthetic arts, and terms of values. The degree of being aware of the interaction between these dimensions could be a measure of how literate you are in the media society (Potter 2006, cf. Arnolds-Granlund in this volume).

An attempt at using other media together with writing, a united multimodal effort, including the complete creative resources of a given school, can be more effective than any subject working in segregation. A group of researchers, The New London Group, have discussed such a perspective. Instead of using *literacy* when talking about the ability to read and write, they use the concept *multiliteracy*. The processes that create meaningfulness do not only concern linguistic processes, but visual, auditive, and spatial processes as well; processes interacting multimodally with one another (Cope, Bill, Kalantzis, May 2002).

There are an amount of new social and cultural gaps in our modern society with regard to literacies and learning. Fear of the digital gap, or divide, is confirmed by researchers such as Buckingham (2000, 2004), Tapscott (2004) and Kress (2003) when they point out the risk of constructing a *digital divide*. Briefly, if one doesn't possess digital literacy, the risk of society establishing divides is impending. This could be built on factors such as gender, ethnicity, class, generation (Tapscott 2004; *the net generation versus the television generation*), and geographical divides, but also about dichotomies in the capacity of learning in a digitalized milieu.

This article describes some of the results of a project, the KOM-M/IT-project in Stockholm, in which teachers in a school for children with special needs worked with expanded text concepts and media pedagogy. The Swedish curriculum for the Swedish Language subject defines text as not only written text, but also as music, drama, art, films, theater, and so on. The term for this is an *expanded text concept* (LPO-94).

The KOM-M/IT- project was a collaboration between Dramatiska Institutet (a College of Arts) in Stockholm, the University of Karlstad, and a private secondary school with a specific pedagogical profile. The secondary school is situated in a suburb of Stockholm and all of the pupils attending this school have been diagnosed with dyslexia¹. At the time the project was conducted there were about 100 pupils between the ages of nine and seventeen attending the school. From 2000 onwards I worked at the school as a teacher, and later I was also the project- leader.

The aim of this article is to present a few illustrative examples of what impact the work with aesthetics, media literacy and ICT, had among some of the teachers in the school, and how these teachers describe and reflect upon their progress. Before that, I will shortly focus on expanded text and media literacy.

An Expanded Text as Media Literacy

In the initial texts of the Swedish curriculum for compulsory school and upper secondary school (which in Sweden is voluntary), *an expanded text concept* and an *expanded language concept*, are used, side by side, to allude to an expanded language concept when referring to young children's communicative environments and an expanded text concept when referring to older children's education. The concepts have emerged from the revision of the curriculum (Lpo-94) that gained legal force in July 2000.

The syllabus for Swedish language points to the importance of letting the pupils develop literacy, with the capacity to interpret, review, and analyze all kinds of texts (whether these be based on writing, on pictures and/or on audiovisual material) as a response to the demands a society full of complicated information can set, as follows:

To acquire and to work with texts, doesn't necessarily involve reading, but can also be done through listening, dramatizing, role-play, film, video and pictures.... An expanded text concept includes, beside written and spoken texts, pictures. (My translation LPO-94)

There is ample research that supports these recommendations. Looking at it from a Swedish point of view one could consider Liberg (2008), for example, who's research often focuses on the creation of meaning in different kinds of communications or Fast (2007), whose doctoral thesis dealt with the growth of young children's language in informal learning settings. From the time of the birth of the curriculum, LPO-94, one can find Ljunggren (1996), with his influences from Habermas' theories, discuss communicative competence as a civil right.

The handling of and training in the multimodalities of media, i.e. several modes of media, creates a challenge for education to develop communicative competencies among children and young people with the use of media pedagogy. In this text, media pedagogy is understood as a pedagogy that is aimed at processes where the questions of the participants, as well as their abilities for manifestations about media culture, are put into the centre. In the process of learning, the construction of meaning is made visible in the participants' acts of concrete communication. The ability to construct meaning is obvious to each person participating in the creative contexts of media pedagogy among children with special needs. Challenges will be conquered by using concrete tools, in this case media, in all kinds of linguistic activities (Koppfeldt 2002, cf. Forsling 2004).

Moreover, we have had to look upon learning and teaching in the light of *who's teaching whom in the project*. Learning in both a prefigurative and a cfigurative way (Nissen 1993) are looked at. The prefigurative way of learning involves the younger generation teaching the older generation. The cfigurative way of learning is more reminiscent of peer-to-peer learning. The

KOM-M/IT project showed that media pedagogy among children with special needs is a collaborative process in many ways (cf. Kupiainen and Sintonen in this volume).

The KOM-M/IT project in a School for Children with Dyslexia

Man is trying to make sense of the world by telling stories, Bruner writes (2002), and this narrative aspect helps us construct and interpret the reality. And, as Lieblich (et al. 1998) write, "People are storytellers by nature". But how does a person with specific difficulties with writing, memory, and sequences tell a story? This was one of the big challenges faced during the KOM-M/IT- project. The project was supposed to be the start of a long-term work with aesthetics, media pedagogy, and an expanded text concept in this particular school in Stockholm².

The adult participants of the project were mainly teachers, but also teachers' assistants and pupils' assistants. Even the headmaster and a caretaker participated in the project. It became essential that the participants improved their ability to tell stories, over time, in digital form. I will in this part of the article only briefly describe the drafts of the project. The effects of the work with the pupils are described in more detail in a number of (Swedish) research reports, papers, and articles (e.g. Forsling, Högborg & Johansson 2004, Forsling 2004).

The staff had the opportunity to use in-service training time on the project during one term. During the next term the adult participants were supposed to plan and carry out media pedagogical activities together with the pupils. The adults were, besides acting as tutors, supposed to study the development of their pupils in different areas, and the school was supposed to network with other schools around the world. An overall organizational aim was to make a media pedagogical curriculum for the school.

Young people with dyslexia often have to, beyond struggling with the written word, also struggle with the lack of understanding from the world around them, as well as a lack of self-esteem. We assumed that the inclination toward a lust for using media would develop the children's language, structures, and self-esteem, through developing new ways of expression, as well as a new way of looking at, using, and producing text.

The aim of the KOM-M/IT-project (KOM is for competence development, M for media and IT for information technology) was to restore some of the pupils' "lost languages" and to explore possibilities of using a new toolkit for communication and narrative skills. The first part of the project took place between 2002 and 2003 and focused on increasing the media competence of the staff. Twenty-three of the twenty-seven employees took part in the introductory phase of the project. The adult participants were supposed to perform the same tasks that their pupils would be performing later on, with positions as role models in the later parts of the project. One of the goals for the first

part of the project was for the staff to be able to use a camera, a video camera, and a simple editing program by the end of it. They had to, through working *with* media, aesthetics, and ICT, develop a capacity for telling and, above all, digital telling, that is telling with digital media.

The research of, and the work with, an expanded text repertoire gave the children with specific reading and writing difficulties a second chance at being *members of the society of readers and writers*. One could say that during the project we found and formed a venue, a meeting-place, for pupils and teachers in a melting-pot of literacy and media literacy. In addition, the project opened up formal and informal meeting-places, both inside and outside of the project school.

In this text I am placing focus on some of the adult participants of the KOM-M/IT-project. Three of the teachers who attended the project went on to pursue advanced studies at the Dramatiska Institutet, eventually obtaining Masters Degrees in Media Pedagogy. Two of the teachers were teaching History, Civics, and Swedish language at the project school, and the third teacher taught ICT (information and communication technology). I conducted interviews with two of these teachers, Angelica and Henrik, in 2004³.

Teachers' Pedagogical Awakening with Expanded Text

Angelica, a 30-year-old teacher in History and Civics, describes her meeting with the expanded text concept as a pedagogical awakening. Her traditional way of teaching was called into question by herself. "I wasn't the only one who lacked knowledge – we had to collaborate, the children and I", she says. Sometimes, her new insights became revolutionary to herself: "...you realize that you have been a lousy teacher!"

Henrik, a 30-year old ICT-teacher, expresses himself in a similar way: "You can't be that same teacher that you just take out of the closet after the summer vacation and dust off, anymore!" For Henrik the expanded text concept is very down-to-earth in one way, and in another way it is all about "...courses of events, occurrences, and narratives". Henrik speaks a lot about using all of our senses and reclaiming lost languages:

...but you mustn't forget the written word – that's the bonus! And you need it all ...all ingredients... to construct the story about yourself. Everything is about stories, the story of me, the story of you...and we tell them by using different kinds of media...

Angelica had, at the time of the interview, been employed as a teacher in Civics and History for two years. She had, before this, no earlier experience as a teacher for children with dyslexia. After finishing her degree at the Journalisthögskolan (journalism college), she worked at a Swedish TV company for a few years. Angelica seemed to be an inspired teacher. She describes the KOM-M/IT-project

as an awakening: "...so many things to use in my teaching...!" Working with sound, pictures, and film can make you recognize your true capacities. To share the control and learn from each other, you have to dare to pass your own limits. As I see it, education and learning are dependent on *collaborative processes*. Media pedagogy and aesthetics demand collaboration. It is not an easy way of learning, but it is perhaps the most effective way. Angelica knows the difficulties involved in working in different kinds of groups:

...it's really interesting to recognize your own way of putting pupils together in impossible groups...from your position of being a student yourself at the same time in another educational milieu...!! And you see it clearly – you can't collaborate with everybody, no matter how old you are....

Angelica has been questioning herself as a person and a teacher. "Working with media made me work more actively with the pupil in the centre!" Angelica says. She describes her way of confronting her profession as revolutionary.

She describes a situation in one of the classes where some girls went on producing their movie despite the fact that they were fighting (literally and metaphorically) the rest of the time. According to Angelica this is an example where the subject, the goal, was stronger than any other element in their lives in that moment. "And that's what the expanded text concept is all about", she says as a conclusion.

Henrik had, at the time of my interview, been working as a pedagogue during the pupils' leisure hours at the school for children with dyslexia for a couple of years. He had also previously been working with ICT solutions and as a teacher in media pedagogy. Henrik considers his background as a photographer an important influence on the person he is today. In the interview he often relates to a newly gained understanding that "everything is a narrative".

When Henrik explains *an expanded text concept*, from his point of view, he says:

It's a way of proceeding from the individual...to describe something...a course of events, a story, a narrative...but not only by writing, but with help of other...tools, other possibilities, ways of expression, through all the senses, through all modalities...

By using all senses, there are richer possibilities for reaching further in expressing yourself than with only writing. But writing is necessary, as well, according to Henrik. Young people with reading and writing disabilities need a variety of forms of expression. If one begins the work with pictures, sounds, or film, then the children will automatically need the literacy competence to fulfill their projects. This was one of Henrik's most astonishing insights during the KOM-M/IT-project.

His use of an expanded text concept, choosing modes of expression that suit one the best, could lead to a more accurate understanding of oneself as

a person. Through these movements one can find new pathways of learning. One will get a new tool kit for communication, a new way to find, or create, a practicable structure. "Working with digital media opens up the possibility to tell one's stories", Henrik says. "Especially for these kids with reading and writing difficulties". You are seen and listened to, and that's your democratic privilege. You are a member of the community.

Henrik describes film and media production as something that craves collaboration. Working with film in secondary grades was like: "...being in the middle of a melting pot, everyone was inspired and engaged". He also relates to the importance of play, a perfect chance to let go of old relation patterns and getting to know each other in different, and in some ways more relaxed, ways. The children discovered they suddenly knew the teachers and trusted them, and the teachers said the same thing, according to their pupils. The teacher became an authority, not an authoritarian. There was "bigger room" for different opinions, which led to frustration and a bit of chaos, but the frustration forced the adults and children to talk to each other. "Chaos made another kind of structure", as Henrik puts it.

So, could media pedagogy be a kind of special pedagogy? "Absolutely!" Henrik exclaims.

You can find new ways of expression, a kind of short cut to writing. Writing usually makes our pupils frustrated and paralyzed. Through the use of plural modalities they get the chance to free their minds and their expressions.

When Henrik sums up his reflections, he returns to basic needs: *to be seen, to work together with others, better self-consciousness, and better self-esteem*. If you are feeling good, it is easier to deal with the "hard stuff", for example writing for dyslexic children.

According to Henrik and Angelica, working with an expanded text concept is not an easy pedagogical method. You have to make yourself visible, which makes you more aware of yourself. This could be a challenge whether you are an adult or a child. "It's tough but necessary", Henrik says. You have to reassess your professional role and the changes could be both radical and revolutionary. "You can't just stand there", Angelica says and Henrik continues: "You are no longer the teacher you take out from the closet when term begins, dust off, and start to teach!" Every teacher today has to be a Text teacher or a Media teacher. We have to meet and guide the pupils in processes where media is used to give form to knowledge and competence.

Teachers' learning is a process of mastering different tools

Today's teachers are supposed to educate children who are going to be adult citizens around the year 2020. In order to provide insight on the future, considering some of the subjects brought up in this article, it could be interesting

to stop and look back in time. "In a rapidly changing world, one of the most crucial outcomes one expects of education is students' ability to handle new situations and meet new intellectual challenges" (Salomon 1993: 128). We have to make processes, results, and movements visible for the future. This is closely connected to the idea of school being a public arena, an important part of an official conversation (Ljunggren 1996, Thavenius 2001).

The dialogical classroom, or better, the dialogical room for learning, can emerge with time and with the help that comes from working with an expanded text concept. It is within the subject. Democracy, however, is not an easy philosophy and it is even harder in reality. The KOM-M/IT-project increased staff involvement in more of the various processes in the school. In the process, something close to *negotiation* arose. You had to bring out your ideas and plans in front of a lot of people: peers, teachers, and tutors. You had to listen to others, compromise with your ideas and standpoints, and make decisions based upon a majority decision.

Today's children are the first generation to grow up in a society characterized by digital media. They are born into the Internet, cell phones, and ipods. They are, in author/game designer Marc Prensky's words: the *Digital Natives* and they take the new technology for granted (Prensky 2001). The rest of us are *Digital Immigrants* and we try to adapt to the new society. Prensky highlights the possibilities of changes in young persons' brains, or at least in their thinking, as a result of their nursery in the digital world. Where does that leave the teachers of the pre-digital age? The true risk of a digital divide is between the natives and the immigrants. Schools have to find and develop ways of learning that are adequate for our society and they have to be able to meet our pupils where they stand with regard to their language and socialization skills (see also Koppfeldt 1996: 168).

Competences like leadership, co-working, visionary thinking, and the ability to aim high will be needed. A decisive factor is the teachers' capabilities for being leaders rather than mere transmitters of knowledge. This need is becoming increasingly real in a time of an emerging digital society. "Reform the school!" my respondent Henrik exclaims. Working with aesthetics and media leads to processes where the participants experience, interpret, and create meaning (ideas, senses, and intentions). The learning is embedded in a context and it is negotiable and subjectively interpretable. Already in 1989, Ziehe described how the aesthetic subject plays a specific role, concerning the ability to interpret the world in new and different ways. An aesthetic form makes knowledge and learning more vivid. And now, twenty years on, what is there to be said about the form of digital aesthetic expressions?

A central idea, based on the theories of Vygotskij, is that *learning is a process of mastering different tools*. These tools can be physical and/or psychological, and they can mediate thinking, acting, and communicating. These tools are, according to Vygotskij, not biological but cultural (Vygotskij 1999, Säljö 2000, Wertsch 1998). The cultural tools have *affordances* that make it possible for different tasks to be performed. Affordances could be defined as *possible rela-*

tionships among actors and objects (Säljö 2000). This type of affordance could be witnessed during the KOM-M/IT-project. The participants developed new pathways for learning, in interaction with peers and tutors, choosing modes of expression and tools for communication. The children with dyslexia, as well as their teachers, found a new tool kit for communication, a new way to find or create a practicable structure, new ways of learning. Learning was not only the result of education and instruction. Learning was something that occurred in everyday activities. This is what is known as *situated learning*. Learning is the ability to see something new as compared to what you already know or are able to know, and to combine your earlier experiences with something new (Säljö 2000, Alexandersson & Limberg 2004).

Prensky writes: "Smart adult immigrants accept that they don't know about this new world and take advantage of their kids to help them learn and integrate" (Prensky 2001). The children with dyslexia, the young participants of the KOM-M/IT-project, did not only have to handle the gap between the world of literacy and illiteracy, but another one as well. Due to their reading and writing disabilities they were close to being Digital Immigrants themselves, even though they were born in the nineties. Nevertheless, Angelica came to the following conclusion while working with the idea and the tools of an expanded text concept: "I wasn't the only one to lack knowledge – we had to collaborate, the children and I", she says. "...you realize that you have been a lousy teacher." This may be one of the keys to the success of the KOM-M/IT-project, regarding the adults: the pedagogical awakening.

In the end, democracy is about *questions of value* and *freedom of speech*, but it is also a right in terms of *freedom of expression* and *a right to information*. It is a venue between different voices or pitches. I think it is important to gain and train your communicative repertoire, a repertoire where all kinds of modes of expression are allowed to act and interact. This is possible in a learning setting where the teachers go through the same challenges the pupils do. A place where the capability for communication is an important driving force behind the gaining of knowledge.

Notes

1. The primary symptoms of dyslexia include problems with coding and spelling. There could be difficulties with sequences, semantics, syntax and morphology. Secondary symptoms include bad reading comprehension and difficulties with mathematics. Problems with low self-esteem and socio-emotional and/or behavior problems can arouse as a consequence. Closely related basic problems are often shown as cognitive, motor, articulator difficulties or sometimes memory dysfunctions. (Höien & Lundberg 2002: 20-21)
2. An entire description of the KOM-M/IT-project is to be found in the research report *KOM-M/IT-projektet. Det vidgade textbegreppet i ett specialpedagogiskt sammanhang* (Forsling, Högberg & Johansson 2004).
3. The interviews can be found in their entirety in my thesis (Forsling 2004).

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Finnish Media Education and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

What Did We Learn on the Crossing Borders Project?

Mari Maasilta

Abstract

The article evaluates the *Crossing Borders* media education project implemented by the Departments of Teacher Education and Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Tampere in 2006-2007. The evaluation is based on the learning diaries and feedback of the student participants as well as on the author's experiences as the teacher on the project.

The project aimed to develop cooperation between teacher students and future journalists, and to acquaint students with the opportunities provided by media education and global education as a part of formal school education. The project offered tools for the analysis of international journalism and the teaching of media education. The participants prepared education material and media education lessons for upper secondary schools, related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Special attention is paid to the concept of *crossing borders*, which had several meanings in the project. Borders were crossed between academic disciplines and professional roles, the academic world and working life, as well as between school subjects.

Keywords: global education, international journalism, Israel-Palestine conflict, crossing borders

The study of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most difficult issues in school curricula in Finnish secondary and upper secondary schools. The conflict emerges not only in history lessons but also in religion, geography, and even philosophy lessons, and still many young people have only a vague idea what the conflict is really about. The long history, several wars, *intifadas*, and complexities behind the conflict make it difficult for teachers to handle, and still more difficult for adolescent students to digest. The conflict has continued for decades, and all major events – whether bomb attacks, peace negotiations, or demonstrations – are still constantly being reported on in news broadcasts and newspapers. In order to understand the news one must know the history,

but the reverse is also true; in order to understand the conflict, one has to follow current events.

According to a recent study¹ Finnish teacher education students do not know much about the conflicts in the Middle East in general, and still less about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. Stereotyping occurs in the conceptions of the parties to the conflict, with negative stereotypes being especially prominent in the conceptions of Islam and Muslims and in the one-sided conceptions of Arabs. The study shows that student teachers' intercultural competences are very limited and that skills in critical media literacy vary widely. Some students also uncritically trust the objectivity of media texts and images (Riitaoja 2005).

The importance of media in understanding global political conflicts and the need to integrate media education into global education in Finnish schools were the two points of departure for starting the *Crossing Borders – Project Studies on Media Education* at the University of Tampere in the academic year 2006-2007. The project was implemented by two teachers and seven students from the Teacher Education and Journalism and Mass Communication departments. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was chosen as a special case study due to co-operation with the international *Crossing Borders Dialogue Among Teachers* project, which aims to promote active dialogue between cultures around the Mediterranean.² The project involved Danish, Israeli, Palestinian, and Finnish teachers and one of its specific objectives was to develop together media and global education materials and share them between all the schools involved in the project. Despite the international context of the project, each school or institution developed its own programs and methods. The purpose of this article is to describe and evaluate the Crossing Borders Project as it was implemented in Tampere.

The evaluation is based on the analysis of the learning diaries and feedback from the student teachers and journalism students who participated in the project and my own experiences as a teacher. Special attention is paid to the learning experiences of the students: Did they develop a critical attitude with regard to media and their own professional roles during the project, and how do they describe these learning experiences?

Crossing Different Borders

According to the course description, the three aims of the project were: (1) to become acquainted with the opportunities of media education and global education as a part of formal school education, (2) to provide tools for the analysis of international journalism and the teaching of media education, and (3) to develop professional and theoretical cooperation between teachers and journalists.

The name "Crossing Borders" originates from a project of the same name supporting dialogue among young people in the Middle East, which started in 1999 at the International People's College (IPC) in Denmark, and was the

initiator of the international Dialogue Among Teachers project (see more at the Crossing Borders website). In this context *crossing borders* refers to the crossing of both geographical and mental borders between Israeli, Palestinian, and other Arab actors in the Middle Eastern region. Besides these borders, we in Tampere had several smaller borders to cross.

Firstly, the project had to cross the, often too rigid, borders between school subjects in upper secondary schools. According to the National Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2003) media and global education are not to be taught as separate school subjects, but should be integrated into other subjects.³ This is a challenge due to the already over-crowded, subject-based curriculum and the inadequate media skills and interest of some teachers. Most often media analysis is taught in conjunction with the teaching of mother tongue, media images are left to art teachers, while global education is often realized as a part of international days or other multicultural events. With better planning and some imagination, they could, however, be integrated into almost all school subjects (Herkman 2007: 52-56).

The second border we had to cross lay between professional roles. To learn to analyze media content more profoundly and to develop professional and theoretical cooperation between teachers and journalists meant in practice that, during the project, the journalism students were to act as teachers in upper secondary schools, while student teachers had to act as journalists. The two teachers on the project, moreover, often had to act as students as well. The idea behind the shifting of roles was to demonstrate that there are several similarities between these professions.

Thirdly, as the project was implemented by two collaborating university faculties, there was another border we had to cross: between the disciplines of education and communication with their differing theoretical and practical traditions. The message that the two teachers involved in the project wanted to get across was that there is too little co-operation between teacher education and journalism education at the University of Tampere. Media education is a field that obliges future teachers to step out of the Faculty of Education and into the Faculty of Social Sciences if they want to specialize in media education, as the University of Tampere has established a cross-disciplinary study unit for media education which is optional, for instance, for prospective teachers, nursery school teachers, youth workers and other educators (see more at the Tampere University Centre for Media Education (TUCME) website).

Journalism students rarely choose studies from the Faculty of Education or expose themselves to the theories and practical skills of education. They also have the option of choosing media education courses, but as this would not prepare them for a clearly defined profession there has been more interest in studies in media culture. Nevertheless, media education courses might provide a new angle for journalists and make them understand their crucial role as informal educators, as will be discussed later in the article.

In the Crossing Borders Project the students of the two departments and faculties studied and worked together. The course was offered as an option

for student teachers as a part of their bachelor's studies and for journalism students as a part of their master's studies. The students participating in the project formed an interesting combination, as the main subjects of the student teachers varied from languages to mathematics. One of them had completed her internship as a journalist but continued her studies in teacher education. All three journalism students had worked as journalists but also had some experience of media education within NGOs.

In the Crossing Borders Project media education was defined both as teaching *through* media and as teaching *about* media (Buckingham 2004). Media was thus used as a source of information when studying the conflict and preparing media education material for the teaching of different school subjects, but it was still more important to learn to analyze how media works when reporting international conflicts. The project also used active learning-by-doing methods when the university students had to prepare teaching material and teach media education lessons related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to upper secondary school pupils.

Language Lessons Teaching Linguistic Sensitivity

In the project media and global education lessons were fused with the main subjects of each student teacher. When preparing their lessons they were paired with journalism students in such a way that every student could profit from his or her professional knowledge but also complement each other's skills and learn from each other. The result was that English lessons were used to study how war correspondents work in conflict areas, German lessons to practice how to interview local policemen and activists, art lessons to analyze war images of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and philosophy lessons to debate Palestinians' and Israelis' ownership rights to "their" land by using news as source material. The lesson plans and teaching material were developed and tested in the Tampere Teacher Training School and in some other upper secondary schools in the Finnish cities of Helsinki and Tampere.

In one class of 16 to 18 year-old secondary school pupils, 'subjectivity in the press' was the topic of a German lesson. To prepare for the lesson, the pupils had read newspaper stories from German newspapers about the construction works around the Al Aksa mosque in Jerusalem, which was a topical news issue in February 2007. The media educational objective of the lesson was to learn how the questions formulated by journalists build premises and can lead to biased reporting. The objective related to language learning was to practice how to form interrogatives in German. During the lesson, the pupils were asked to compare the different terms used to describe the people involved in the construction works or demonstrations ("terrorist", "freedom fighter", "martyr"), and to reflect on what impact the chosen words had on the message conveyed by the news. They were also encouraged to discuss the stereotypes they had about Israelis and/or Palestinians. After the exercises, the

journalism student gave feedback on the pupils' propositions by pointing out the kinds of assumptions their questions included, while the German student teacher concentrated on correcting the grammar of the interrogative sentences formulated by the pupils.

Another topical news issue in the Middle East during the project was the building of a barrier between Israeli and Palestinian settlements. Newspaper stories about this issue were used as material in an English lesson for upper secondary school pupils. When analyzing the material, the pupils found out how the words "barrier", "wall", or "security-fence" indicated how the correspondents positioned themselves on either the Palestinian or the Israeli side.

It was interesting in these media education lessons that it was not only the upper secondary school pupils who learned linguistic sensitivity, but that also some of the student teachers confessed that they had never before thought about how significant the issue was in journalism. An important learning experience, reported by both student teachers and journalism students in their evaluation, was that they started to pay more attention to the words and the language they use. This was expressed in one evaluation as follows:

The course made me think that one must be extremely cautious when teaching or writing about an unfamiliar issue. All expressions, even individual words, must be considered separately. (A student teacher)

Journalists Acting as Teachers and Teachers as Journalists

One aim of the project was to develop co-operation between student teachers and prospective journalists and to make them understand how their professional roles intersect. This was practiced by trying to increase the journalists' understanding of the teachers' work and *vice versa*. The idea was that if the students had already learned to understand each other's work during their studies, it would also be easier for schools and media institutions to co-operate later on in working life. This idea was commented on in the feedback as follows:

Above all, the idea of this course convinced me never to hesitate about contacting experts from other professional fields. In addition, I now see schoolwork as a comprehensive entity. (A student teacher)

An active exchange in the cross-professional working groups made students see that there are several similarities in these two professions, and the role of the journalist is not so far removed from the role of the teacher. This was also a hidden agenda in the project, as we had wanted to highlight the role of journalists as informal media and global educators. In the modern world, media and popular culture are ubiquitous in the everyday lives of children and youngsters in such a way that their role as informal educators cannot be ignored. Television, films, computer games, and other cultural products dis-

seminate knowledge but also values and attitudes. Many youngsters who do not have everyday knowledge about other cultures are in contact with them through different media every day. The role models provided by media thus have an important role in intercultural education and in creating new attitudes (Herkman 2007: 39, Kaivola & Melén-Paaso 2007: 112, Kiilakoski 2008).

When preparing their lessons, the journalism students were encouraged to take a critical and analytical approach to their work and to explain to upper secondary school pupils how, and on what premises, journalists work, rather than describe the adventures of war correspondents in troubled areas.

The students' understanding of each other's work seemed to increase during the project. Several students also referred to the similarities of the professions in their evaluations:

In a sense, every journalist is a media educator. Every published article has an effect on the media as a single entity. (A journalism student)

It had never occurred to me previously how closely teachers' and journalists' roles resemble one another. Planning a joint lesson was extremely interesting. Journalists have ample knowledge and perspectives that teachers cannot have. This is an excellent example of tearing down walls and eliminating the myth of schools being in a world of their own. A jointly conducted lesson was also a new experience for the pupils present. (A student teacher)

In the quote above the student makes an important remark about tearing down walls in everyday life. As Herkman (2007) also points out, too often schools continue to work as if the children and youngsters that attend them had no life outside of the institution.

One journalism student also found similarities in the working methods of teachers and journalists, something that had not even been realized by the teachers on the project. According to the student, teachers and journalists both do a lot of invisible background work that is not realized by their classes and audiences:

During the course there were interesting indications of two similarities between the two jobs: in a pupil-oriented school, teachers do a massive amount of background work but play a bystander role during lessons, much like journalists do in radio and TV discussion programs. Similarly, lesson plans are comparable, for example, to radio program scripts, which I am personally familiar with. (A journalism student)

Even if the project succeeded in acquainting prospective journalists with the work of teachers, the student teachers felt they had not learned as much about the work of journalists. Many teachers avoid practical learning-by-doing methods in media education since they feel uncomfortable with technical skills like editing newsreels or making newspaper layouts. As we were so eager to develop the skills for critical media analysis, we apparently paid too little at-

tention to developing teachers' skills in practical journalism, as noted by one student teacher in her feedback:

It still bothers me slightly that I missed the opportunity of seeing how a reporter writes an article. It would have been nice if we had been required to write a newspaper article as a second assignment. I would have liked to participate in such a process so as to learn from it for my future work, and otherwise. (A student teacher)

In future inter-disciplinary projects one should ensure that both groups have the opportunity to practice the role of the other. The student teachers did write some articles about the project, for example for the teachers' professional journal (Kammonen & Koivuniemi 2007), but when working in pairs sufficient attention was not paid to training student teachers in journalistic reporting. The journalism students could easily have taken on the role of tutor and left the writing of the article to the less experienced partner, if this had been better planned beforehand.

Moving Beyond the Borders Changes the Perspective

As explained at the beginning of the article, the specific objective of the international Crossing Borders Dialogue Among Teachers project was to develop together and share media and global education materials. For this, the participants of the project met four times in the workshops organized in Istanbul and Jerusalem. An important moment was when two of the Finnish students had an opportunity to cross the Israeli-Palestinian border during the workshop in Jerusalem and to see how this changes one's perspective.

In the Jerusalem seminar, the two Finnish students presented the media education lesson they had planned for Finnish upper secondary schools to the Danish, Finnish, Israeli, and Palestinian teachers participating in the project. The aim of the lesson, tested earlier in two Finnish schools, was to study multiculturalism and the situation in the Middle East from different angles and, simultaneously, to learn new English vocabulary related to conflict news. As a part of the lesson there was a quiz about Israel, and in it the question: "Is Jerusalem the capital of Israel, of Palestine, of both, or of neither of them?" From the perspective of Finnish schools and the newspapers used as source material, it appears that Tel Aviv is the capital of Israel, and thus the correct answer is that Jerusalem is the capital of neither Israel nor Palestine. Nevertheless, the question raised a heated debate between the Israeli and Palestinian teachers. From a Middle Eastern perspective, the answer was far too simple, as the ownership of Jerusalem is one of the main reasons for the ongoing conflict. Both groups of teachers claimed Jerusalem as their capital, and it did not help much that the Finnish students appealed to Finnish schoolbooks and the ruling of the United Nations.

An important learning experience mentioned by the students was that, through this effort, they had learned through experience how “the objective truth” might look different when the geographical and political perspective is altered. The experience also demonstrated how important it is to learn to take a critical approach not only towards the knowledge offered by the media and entertainment, but also towards school textbooks. This can be practiced with critical media education tools that make it possible to change an angle and see the world through new lenses (Herkman 2007: 35).

Crossing Cultural Borders

Cultural borders were not so easy to cross, as was discovered when trying to realize the initial idea that the media education material developed by the Finnish students could also be used in Palestinian and Israeli schools through the use of the Internet. This appeared to be difficult due to different understandings of words such as “critical” and “normative”.

According to Len Masterman (2001: 41) media education should primarily be investigative and critical, not normative. This means that teachers should not provide pupils with readymade answers, but should rather offer them an opportunity to form their own opinions. In the discussion about this principle, the Palestinian and Israeli teachers opposed the idea because they considered this to be contrary to the idea that school is expected to teach children and youngsters certain morals and norms as well as to respect authority; if a teacher is not able to judge what is “good” or “bad” he/she would lose his/her authority.

The same school-mediated idea of “right” and “wrong” answers was analyzed by one of the Finnish student teachers in her feedback on the project. She, however, came to another conclusion:

These (=media education and global education) are both themes to which there are no “right” answers. I believe this is why pupils, among other people, find them very sensible. People have to genuinely reflect upon these themes, and teachers will never have the right answers to offer.

All teachers certainly agree that the role of school is to socialize children and youngsters into the society they live in. The differences, however, are due to the limits each individual society sets for freedom of speech and criticism. The Israeli and Palestinian teachers were familiar, for example, with media education methods in which pupils practice communicating their own ideas through the production of newspaper stories. The idea of analyzing and criticizing local media content in school was, however, received hesitantly. According to the teachers, analyzing local and national media content in the context of the territorial conflict is very different from doing so in the context of peaceful Scandinavian countries. If in the Palestinian or Israeli schools the pupils

or – even worse – the teachers were to challenge the content of the government controlled media, this could be interpreted as opposition to the ideas of government and this could in turn lead to difficulties, at least in government-owned schools. Parents could also accuse teachers of political manipulation for or against certain ideologies.

Such an exchange of ideas was an important part of the Crossing Borders Project. Through the misunderstandings and heated debates we learned an important lesson about international cooperation: one should not go abroad to teach others how to act, but rather to listen to them and learn. The implementation of media education demands cultural literacy and intercultural competence, but this cannot be achieved without being in close contact with the Other.

Critical Attitudes Were Developed During the Project

The Crossing Borders Project was a rewarding lesson on cultural differences and the importance of global and media education as a part of school education. The students had an opportunity to test their skills as teachers of media and global education in practice, and also to challenge their prior conceptions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Everyone – both students and teachers – admitted that at the end of the project they knew much more about the Middle East than they had known at the beginning.

Developing professional and theoretical co-operation between teachers and journalists was also challenging for the teachers. The aims we had formulated in the autumn of 2006 acquired several new meanings and interpretations by the end of the spring term in 2007. Even if the formulations had been made together, because of the different theoretical backgrounds and professional cultures of the participants they would have been understood in different ways, which led to long reflections during the course. This gave the students an example of a critical attitude towards teaching content, as they had to constantly reflect upon what the real aims of the project were.

As a positive conclusion for the whole project, I want to quote a student teacher who seems to have understood something important about her role as a cultural mediator and global media educator. Teaching languages for her does not only mean teaching grammar and vocabulary, but also cultural literacy:

In my capacity as a foreign language teacher, I consider myself also a cultural mediator, not only a language teacher. In my opinion, a culture refers to something more than the culture of a specific country where the language I teach is spoken. If the pupils are to be educated towards adopting an international identity, we must be able to see beyond the borders of our own country, and those of Europe. One of the preconditions for successful global citizenship is constituted by extensive skills in media literacy. Instead of using mere media content items, we can exploit small things to draw people's attention to issues that promote media reading skills. (A student teacher)

Notes

1. The target group consisted of 75 student teachers at the University of Helsinki, most of them prospective class teachers and nursery school teachers.
2. The international project was funded by the Anna Lind Foundation.
3. According to the national curriculum, the contents that should be addressed in all upper secondary schools as part of other subjects are: active citizenship and entrepreneurship, well-being and safety, *sustainable development*, *cultural identity and intercultural competences*, technology and society, and *communication and media competence*. (Lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteet, 2003). The Crossing Borders project focused on the subjects in Italics.

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Global Mediagraphy

A Teaching Method in Media Education

Soilikki Vettenranta

Abstract

Even though the globalization of media and communications is an important subject matter at universities, the teaching methods are not well developed. As a teacher in media education, I tested Rantanen's (2005) method, *global mediagraphy*, with my Masters' students. The goal was to make a connection between abstract globalization theories and concrete societal, historical, and cultural experiences in their own families, and to measure these experiences against the backdrop of contemporary media development over four generations. In this way the students would gain insight into the globalization process by writing their own family chronicles in the light of contemporary epoch-making events. In this article I present an example from my student "Lise".

Keywords: media education, mediagraphy, globalization, didactics

Media education has to respond with innovative and creative approaches to new challenges in the global communicative environment. The importance of teaching media from a global perspective is so evident that I tested Finnish media researcher Terhi Rantanen's (2005) new method, *global mediagraphy*, with my Master's degree students at the university in an attempt to bring the scientific theories down to the practical field. The goal was to connect globalization theories to societal, historical, and cultural experiences in the students' own families. This kind of didactic approach can contribute to an analysis of how the life of a person within different *scapes* coheres with the simultaneous development of media and communications. These experiences were examined against the backdrop of contemporary media development over four generations. In this way the students gained insight into the globalization process by writing their own family chronicles in the light of contemporary epoch-making events.

The new media technology has apparently eliminated geographical distance, and some researchers claim that the Internet and communication satellites have

erased the significance of geography. The elimination of the distance in space has created a virtual common space, *cyberspace*. This post-modern condition is characterized as the compression or shrinking of time and space and gives a sense of experiencing the world as a unity (Giddens 1990, Østerud 2004). Even though the early globalization theoretician McLuhan launched his well-known concept of “the global village” already in the 1960s, theories on globalization of media and communications have been overshadowed by economic, ecological, and technological globalization theories. Rantanen (2005: 8) defines globalization as “a process in which worldwide economic, political, cultural, and social relations have become increasingly mediated across time and space”. She emphasizes the close relationship between the media and the escalation of the globalization process during the last century.

Theorists such as Giddens (1990, 1991), Thompson (1995), and Waters (1995) have discussed the consequences of globalization from economic, geographical, and cultural points of view but have not looked closer at the individual role of media and communications in the globalization process. Even though media has clearly played an implicit part in globalization, it has not been visible (Rantanen 2005). There are some exceptions, such as Tomlinson (1999), who have emphasized the media aspect in the globalization process, especially in changing forms of interaction. Rantanen (2005) claims that it is too restricting to concentrate solely on theories of cultural globalization, since the media is a forceful factor behind social, political, and economic changes. Especially the role of the individuals’ media activities in the globalization process is in need of closer attention.

In this article I will present some results based on the mediagraphies of 20 Master’s students studying media education at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. I will portray one of the female students, who is married to the son of a Chilean refugee, as an example. Personal names and many of the places have been made anonymous. Before presenting Lisa’s case I will describe the mediagraphy method.

Mediagraphy as a Teaching Method

In order to provide insight into social media practices from a globalization perspective, a new methodology is needed to study mediated globalization. Media literature offers little support in this respect. Rantanen (2005) has developed a new method, called *global mediagraphy*, which can be used to approach globalization from a wider perspective of media and communications and to examine the role of individuals in this process. Empirical research can contribute to an analysis of how the life of a person within different *scapes* fits with the simultaneous development of media and communications, and how this person’s life has changed over the course of time. Rantanen’s scapes are based on Appadurai’s (2003) concepts of *ethnoscape* (experience of one’s native country, localization, emigration due to conflicts, war, or occupation),

technoscape (the Internet), *financescape* (profession, class, lifestyle), *mediascape* (access to media, use of media), and *ideoscape* (ideology, religion, political opinions). Rantanen has also added *languagescape* (education, knowledge of languages) and *timescape* (age, generation, calendar, personal perception of time) to the list.

Rantanen's mediagraphies illustrate globalization tendencies in three families and four generations simultaneously, in a number of countries around the globe. They offer an overview of how the people in these countries have been exposed to aspects of globalization over different generations. Societal, historical, and cultural factors play a key role in this respect. It is the media and communications that bind the scapes together. Rantanen's approach involves grasping a phenomenon that Beck (2000) calls the *globalization of biography*, where the life and living of an individual are seen in comparison to contemporary historical, social, political, and cultural developments.

Mediagraphy as a method takes us further than an ethnographic approach could, as it goes beyond generations and compares globalization processes simultaneously in several places around the world. It resembles methodological studies of life histories (cf. Goodson 2000). Parts of the mediagraphies in this study are based on autobiographical stories and interviews of primary sources, while other parts are based on secondary sources, for example, children's narratives about their parents or grandparents. The students have also collected documentary material and historical data from various sources, including newspaper articles, history books on the residents of rural districts, and parish registers about great-grandparents. Mediagraphies also resemble life histories in that the students have attempted to capture critical events in the informants' lives and work, events that have had a decisive influence on their opinions and ideology. It has been important to see the key intersections between the informants' life histories and social history in the light of media development.

The teaching method can be anchored in Vygotsky's (2000) socio-cultural perspective that focuses on how development can be created, not only through interaction with other people, but also through the use of tools or artefacts – in this case media (Buckingham 2003). Cultural knowledge is created through a dialectic relationship, together with more experienced persons who can impart values and traditions, combined with artefacts from the society the persons are living in. Vygotsky differentiates between spontaneous and scientific concepts. Spontaneous concepts are developed through everyday media use; they are non-systematic and connected to the practical use situation, while the scientific concepts are developed through structural education in schools and universities. The students' thinking is on the one hand dependent on concrete experiences and knowledge in everyday life, and on the other hand on systematic, abstract, and theoretical knowledge.

In a learning situation it is important to merge scientific knowledge and scientific concepts into spontaneous and non-scientific experiences. A new understanding is created when students' spontaneous concepts develop towards

higher abstractions, thus helping to fill the scientific concepts with more concrete content. This also gives them a better basis for their self-understanding, an ability to understand their own point of view and identity in a broader social, cultural, and global media context (Vettenranta 2004). Media education seeks to develop understanding among the media culture in modern society in a global perspective. Therefore, new artefacts are needed to enlighten the media problems in a global framework; to lift the discussion from the university classroom to the “global village”.

The method was presented during the first seminar, while the following seminars were used to generate new ideas, make sketches, and discuss how the various societal, cultural, and historical factors interact with globalization theories. At the same time, the students tried to recognize how this was connected to the parallel media development. The student exercises resulted in mediagraphies of their own families. The data were collected according to a schedule with a sample of thematic globalization factors. By interviewing their parents and grandparents the students composed a mediagraphy for each generation, and by comparing the generations in relation to a number of categories, the students could discuss differences and joint features (cf. Appendix). This sheds light on the connection between media and globalization on the societal macro level, and on the individual experience of identity on the micro level. To begin with, the social and historical backgrounds of the family members were presented, and this was followed by an analysis of the kind of significance the access to different media, the media content, and media use might have had for their experienced identity and cultural belonging.

Lise's Family Chronicle: The Global Journey and the Class Journey

The example of Lise's mediagraphy (presented comprehensively in Appendix 1) is seen in the light of transnational identity and how media influence and media use are reflected in her family chronicle. The mediagraphy consists of four generations, from the great-grandmother, who grew up a Catholic, illiterate girl in a village near the capital of Chile, down to her son who is growing up as a global “cyberkid” in a university city in Norway.

Great-grandmother Maria in Chile

Lise starts by introducing the first generation, great-grandmother *Maria*, born in 1937, who grew up in a village in southern Chile with her ten siblings. The family lived a life of hardship in a Catholic community. At that time it was considered immoral for girls to attend school in the rural areas, so when Maria was twelve years old she began to work as a maid for a German family that had immigrated to Chile, as many families from both Germany and Italy had done after World War II. In accordance with agreements reached by the respective

nations, these families acquired properties and became the new upper class in the country. When Maria was a little older she got a job as a waitress in the city. There she met her husband and the father of eight of her nine children, Pedro, who was a sailor in the navy. Maria taught herself to read. Later on her husband obtained a well paying job as a captain, and Maria became a housewife and member of the new upper-middle class. When her husband died at only 42 years old, Maria became a widow with eight children. Thanks to her husband's pension, she was able to keep her house.

Globalization is a nonlinear, dialectic process in which the local and the global are not polarities but mutually implicating factors (Beck 2000). Maria's life is connected to global, historical, and political events, such as European immigration to Chile after the Second World War, something that resulted in economic prosperity for the elite in Chile. Her life is also connected to economic and political movements at that time, and as a young girl Maria met people from Europe. Emigration from Germany and Italy to Chile was a consequence of political alliances that crossed over not only national borders but also continents.

Grandmother Gabriela in Chile and in Norway

The mediagraphy of Maria's daughter, grandmother *Gabriela*, demonstrates important globalizing factors, such as emigration, education, and class. Born in 1954 and growing up in a privileged environment in a city in southern Chile, she was only 16 years old when her father died. She attended primary and secondary school for nine years, and continued her education at a commercial college. When she was 16 years old she married Juan, who was sixteen years her senior. Their son Robert was born in 1973, three months after the coup d'état, where General Pinochet took over the presidential palace and killed President Allende. Juan worked as a car mechanic, and due to his violent behaviour and alcohol abuse the couple were soon divorced. Gabriela and her children lived in Argentina for two years, but returned to southern Chile in 1977. Six years later, in 1983, after nine months in hiding in the northern part of Chile, Gabriela and her children fled to Norway. Gabriela first lived in a city in western Norway, where she established her first contacts with Chilean refugees. She continued her nomadic way of life for a while, but eventually settled down in northern Norway. She today she works as careworker. Contemporary global and historical media events frame Gabriela's life by forcing her to involuntarily emigrate over national borders.

Father Robert and Son Mikael in Chile and in Norway

The third generation, Gabriela's son and Lise's husband, *Robert*, was born in 1973. He spent most of his childhood in a city in southern Chile, with a two-year stay in Argentina in between. He grew up in the lower-middle class and attended school before fleeing to the north. In Norway he continued to attend

school but had problems adapting and moved to a special school in a city in western Norway. His mother sent him to live with her sister in northern Norway where he started upper secondary school. At around the same time he obtained a cleaning job and chose to quit school. He then worked at a restaurant in northern Norway for a few years before starting his own restaurant and discothèque. Today he owns a boutique in a city in central Norway. Robert illustrates the consequences of emigration and globalization – the exodus with adaptation problems, truancy and rootlessness while shuttling between hybrid identities. The fourth generation is represented by Robert's son, *Mikael*, born in 1999. He is seven years old and has two older half-siblings. Mikael initially lived in a city in northern Norway, but now resides in a city in central Norway.

The Media as a Globalization Factor

The great-grandmother, Maria, who was illiterate as a child, acquired her cultural capital by learning how to read, and thus gained access to the media. After moving to a city in southern Chile she gained limited access to the radio at her workplace. She could listen to the radio in the 1950s, and after she became literate she read both newspapers and novels. Maria's family bought a TV in 1969, something that was uncommon at the time. After four of her children immigrated to Norway, the only way to maintain contact was through letters. The situation changed when she obtained her own phone in 1989. The new media technology gradually helped Maria to facilitate the contact with her relatives on the other side of the globe.

In Chile Gabriela had access to books, magazines, newspapers, and radio as a child, and she could watch TV from the age of fourteen. The television content was limited to programmes and news from the USA and nationalistic programmes. After Allende came to power in 1970, socialistic ideology appeared in television programming until the coup d'état in 1973. After that, cultural programmes and entertainment vanished from the screen entirely and were replaced by military parades, speeches, and directives. Propaganda and false news were disseminated and opposition representatives were killed in great numbers. Chile was divided into two realities: Santiago, where people knew what was happening, and southern Chile, where the people believed to a great extent in what they learned through the media. However, the resistance movement could disseminate information by publishing illegal leaflets and magazines.

Propaganda, censorship, and the resistance movement filled Gabriela's everyday media use in Chile. Letters between Chile and Norway were censored by the police and the military. The Chilean refugees in Norway worked politically to inform about the conditions in their home country through "Chilean Action" and by cooperating with the Norwegian "Latin American Group". Gabriela participated in both political meetings and cultural activities. Norwegian news coverage of what was happening in Chile was inadequate and this made

the Chileans in Norway eager to obtain and disseminate proper information. Through a local radio station they were able to transmit their own radio programme entitled *Radio Voz Latina*. They received faxes from the news agency *ITS* and from *Radio Moscow* where the Chileans in the Soviet Union had their own broadcasts. Music and literature from both Chile and other countrymen in exile played an important role in this. Pirate copies of cassettes and music videos from the resistance movement were distributed. They ran a popular book café where the visitors could borrow Chilean literature. Gabriela was also a member of a folklore group that performed Chilean songs and folk dances.

Gabriela learnt Norwegian while she worked as a nursing assistant and had an extra job as a waitress. This enabled her to buy a video player, a stereo system, and a Walkman. The communication breakthrough, for both the Chilean and the Norwegian parts of the family, came after the turn of the millennium with the explosion of the World Wide Web. Contact between the family members has increased dramatically, thanks to the Internet, e-mail, MSN chat, and IP-Telephony. Since Gabriela purchased a personal computer in 2004, she is in touch with her family in Chile almost every day.

Cosmopolitans between Two Cultures

The concept of cosmopolitanism is often regarded as a kind of awareness or attitude, a state of mind (Rantanen 2005). For Tomlinson (1999), a cosmopolitan has an active sense of belonging to “a wider world”. She or he has an ability to experience a “distanced identity”, a reflexive awareness of other cultural worlds and an ability to live at the same time both globally and locally. Robertson (1992) emphasizes the consciousness of the world as a whole. Cosmopolitans are willing to engage with other people. Gabriela is a good example of cosmopolitanism. The relatives in Norway and Chile keep in touch over continents by combining both personal communication and mass media. The term “connectivity” describes the characteristics of the new media technology. Rantanen (2005: 124) describes five zones of everyday cosmopolitanism: interaction with media and communications, learning other languages, living or working abroad, and having a family member abroad. Engaging with foreigners locally or across frontiers can also contribute to transforming a person into a cosmopolitan. Viewed in this perspective Gabriela is a genuine cosmopolitan, a global citizen of the world. So is her son Robert.

Robert was influenced by the Chilean environment in Norway, had a strong sentimental reaction to cultural texts from his home country or his countrymen in exile, and he participated in cultural activities together with other Chileans. His nationalist feelings about Chile are strong, both as a geographical place and as a source of culture and history. The media played an important role in his integration into Norwegian society. The children's TV programmes, the popular cultural music, and the films he watched throughout his adolescence were joint reference points with his Norwegian peers. Nevertheless, he regards

himself as a Chilean and he has not applied for Norwegian citizenship. Today he uses the Internet as a source of information about his home country, for access to Chilean music, and as a communication tool for keeping in touch with his family in Chile.

Robert and Gabriela represent *long-distance nationalism* (Hylland Eriksen & Tretvoll 2006) that demonstrates how individuals and groups who are living abroad can influence the politics in their original home country. Gabriela has also developed a *transnationality* that transcends the border of nation-states. Lull's (2000) concept of *transculturation* describes a process whereby cultural forms move through time and space and interact with other cultural forms, and in this way new cultural settings and cultural hybrids are produced. A "natural" relation between culture and a particular geographic and social territory no longer exists and cultural symbols are no longer tied to certain places in time and space. Robert illustrates this process. Beck (2000) argues that in a globalized world several persons experience *place polygamy*; they have access to several places, languages, and cultures at the same time. Living in two countries can exemplify this kind of relationship. In these terms Gabriela and Robert are experiencing both transculturation and place polygamy.

Globalization, the Media, and Identity

During the globalization process identities are continuously on the move, for instance due to changing national borders as a result of wars and conflicts. Through mediagraphy we can see how political and economic globalization influenced the world already when Maria was young, as European immigrants came to settle in her home district and created a new ruling class there. Media literacy and media competence were important factors in changing her class belongingness. She learnt how to read, and the new media, radio and television, became important status symbols for her. These media represented the ideology of the ruling class, and the contents of media programmes were changed in step with the amendments to power structures in society. Maria's identity is characterized firstly by a local connection to a place, and secondly by a national connection. She is also influenced by her four "Norwegian" children, who have brought elements of the Norwegian culture and way of life to Chile.

The media's role in creating national identities is important. In Norway, the media played an essential role for Gabriela in this process. The lack of relevant media content inspired her to acquire necessary information and transmit it to other countrymen. The free access to Norwegian media impulses through news, culture, and entertainment gradually integrated her into the Norwegian society. At the same time Gabriela was seeking to strengthen her Chilean identity. Gabriela's commitment to her Chilean cultural heritage can be considered an example of the consequence of globalization that Lull (2000) calls *re-territorialization*; a situation wherein people try to establish a new cultural

“home”. When immigrating to a new country, they take a piece of their home with them and create new versions of distant cultures in the new country. These aspects also apply to Gabriela’s son Robert, who experiences the strongest nationalist feelings in the family. The media does not only provide him with news from the home country, but also geographic, historical, cultural, political, and economic knowledge. Robert thus develops a national feeling towards Chile, even though he also accepts Norwegian culture as a part of his identity, combined with the Americanized popular culture.

For Mikael the media is an important factor in forming his identity. The commercialization present in the media leads to an identity that is, to an increasing extent, connected to products and brands that are marketed globally with children as the main consumers. By consuming the American children’s television channels he has joint reference points with children all over the world. Mikael mainly watches commercial channels, such as *Cartoon Network*, *Fox Kids*, and *Disney Channel*, not the children’s programmes on the Norwegian broadcast channels. The cultural influence from the USA is obvious and his identity is attached to American products and brands. Due to language problems (the great-grandmother only speaks Spanish and Mikael only speaks Norwegian) he has some difficulty in communicating with family in Chile. However, the relatives wave to each other through the web camera and exchange photos. Mikael’s identity is first and foremost local, but through American programme concepts he has reference points with children all over the world. His living radius covers not only his home street in the local environment but also the virtual global village through media and communications. New types of social connections come to life when the children’s social fields are expanded globally and social bonds are more loosely connected to home as a physical and geographical place. Mikael is a global child.

Scapes Revisited

If we consider this family’s history in the light of Rantanen’s (2005) scapes, we can see that changes appear in all the main persons, albeit to differing extents within the various scapes. Maria’s life illustrates a change in financescape, how a financially solid marriage lifted her out of poverty and illiteracy into becoming an enlightened representative of the upper-middle class in Chile. A development in ethnoscape is seen most clearly in Gabriela, who was forced to leave Chile on account of Pinochet’s coup d’état, and create a new home on another continent in a country with different traditions. Her relocation has primarily influenced her lifestyle, whereby she has maintained Chilean traditions and linked them to Norwegian customs. The most dramatic change in ideoscape can be seen in great-grandmother Maria, who moved from being a rightist-oriented adherent of Pinochet to becoming a supporter of democracy after the coup. In Grandmother Gabriela we can also see an ideological change, even if this is not as pronounced, from Communism to social democracy.

Mediascape and technoscape overlap, and Robert is the primary exponent in this field. Particularly the new communication technologies have played a decisive role in the construction of his identity. Timescape links all the generations together: media time is common to all of them. Media, such as news broadcasts, have created a sense of belonging in global time. The Chilean and Norwegian branches of the family are able to share important events in real time on both sides of the globe. Languagescape both connects and separates the relatives. Gabriela has taught Spanish to Robert, so they are both bilingual. Language continues to be an impediment in the communication between great-grandmother Maria and great-grandchild Mikael; Maria only speaks Spanish and Mikael only Norwegian. However, the changes in mediascape intervene, enabling the two to communicate via non-verbal language through the new media. This is also an example of the fact that scapes cannot be considered exhaustive categories, as they overlap and mutually influence each other in a complex network where personal communication interacts with mass-mediated presentation, and where local elements merge with global ones. Nevertheless, media play a decisive role in connecting the scapes, as Rantanen (2005) has also shown in her study.

Concluding Remarks

Most students chose to write about issues within mediascape, technoscape, languagescape, and ideoscape. Almost every student analyzed how media and globalization had influenced the identity of four generations in their families. Even though the family backgrounds varied, we can still find some common features. Those with Norwegian backgrounds could present gateways to social mobility and economic prosperity. While the great-grandmother was strictly Christian, her great-grandchild could be atheist, agnostic, Taoist, Mormon, or Buddhist. Generally, the ideology was radicalized from the great-grandparents' time to the present, with a few exceptions. World War II, the Vietnam War, and the fall of the Berlin Wall were named as epoch-making events influencing ideology.

A feature common to all was the lack of education among earlier generations; many in the great-grandparents' and grandparents' generations had only participated in a short-term ambulatory school. Some of the great-grandparents had never travelled outside the county. This was especially the case with regard to female family members, as many of the males had been forced to travel around looking for work in fishing, whaling, factories, mines, or forests. The students themselves have travelled around the globe, from Australia, Mexico, Cambodia, and Malaysia to Brazil.

Languagescape was the field with the most significant difference between generations. While a great-grandmother might only speak her local dialect, her great-granddaughter can articulate in Norwegian, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, or Armenian. The most prevalent change had occurred within

mediascape and technoscape. While a great-grandmother, on an outlying, isolated island in western Norway with no access to radio or newspapers, only obtained news through visitors or fisherman, her great-grandson possesses all imaginable media technological equipment. The writing of letters has been replaced by messaging on *Facebook*, *YouTube*, and other social networking sites. The convergence culture is capturing the networked world.

The students found global mediagraphy to be an exciting, interesting, and instructive approach since they could acquire knowledge about their family from an original global perspective. They had obtained thought-provoking experiences about the insufficient education of previous generations, the large numbers of children, the changing ideologies, and the lack of access to media. However, it seemed to be a bit challenging to maintain an objective distance from one's own family. For some students the method had ethical implications. Mediagraphy consists of questions about religion and ideology, and the students might have touched upon sensitive religious and political issues in their families. Some students encountered problems in collecting data about deceased relatives, and others had difficulties collecting data about elderly relatives from abroad. Students with exclusively Norwegian backgrounds were uncertain as to whether their family chronicle had sufficient "global dimensions". This anxiety turned out to be unfounded. By far most of the students had relatives who had taken part in the migration wave to the US, or who had been sailors, whalers, or had otherwise been stationed abroad.

Mediagraphic exercises are appropriate in teaching media education that emphasizes problem-based learning and the using of methods across discipline borders. Traditional lectures can be complemented with didactic methods that create student activity. Mediagraphies should preferably be combined with oral sources, diaries, historical sources, newspaper clippings, and photographs. The aim of the teaching method, which is to develop the student's ability to link abstract globalization theories to concrete social, historical, and cultural experiences in the student's own family in light of contemporary media developments, was satisfied to a great extent. Media education should foster innovative educational practices, such as project-oriented exercises, in order to develop new skills for understanding the role of the individual in the global, multicultural world.

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Appendix 1: “Lise’s” family mediagraphy 2006 based on Rantanen (2005)

	Great-grandmother Maria (1937 –)	Grandmother Gabriela (1954 –)	Father Robert (1973 –)	Son Mikael (1999 –)
Occupation	Housewife	Careworker	Boutique owner	Pupil
Home Country	Chile	Chile. Moved to Norway in '83	Chile. Moved to Norway in '83	Norway
Place	A city in southern Chile	A city in southern Chile, a town in Argentina, a city south of Santiago, a city in western Norway, a town in western Norway, Spain, a city in northern Norway	A city in southern Chile, a town in Argentina, a city south of Santiago, a city in western Norway, a city in northern Norway	A town in northern Norway, a city in northern Norway
Time	Gregorian calendar	Gregorian calendar	Gregorian calendar	Gregorian calendar
Lifestyle	From country village to city (From rural to urban setting)	Urban	Urban	Urban
Education	Never attended school; forbidden for women Autodidact	16 years of schooling in Chile (primary school, secondary school, commercial college) + two years in Norway	Nine-year primary and secondary school (three years in Chile) + one year upper secondary education + one year vocational studies	One year primary school so far
Class	From peasantry via working class to upper-middle class	Middle class	Middle class	Middle class
Family	10 siblings	8 siblings Argentina	One brother in Norway, four half-siblings on father's side in Chile	One half-brother and one half-sister from father's previous relationship
Travels	Norway Denmark Argentina Peru	(Norway) (Chile) Spain	(Norway) Sweden (Chile) Argentina	Chile Argentina
First travel abroad	From Chile to Norway in '92 (55 years of age)	From Chile to Argentina in '75 (19 years of age)	From Chile to Argentina in '75 (two years of age)	From Norway to Chile in '03 (three years of age)
Language skills	Spanish (mother tongue)	Spanish (mother tongue) speaks Norwegian fluently, some English	Spanish and Norwegian (mother tongues), and speaks English fluently	Norwegian (mother tongue) has started to learn some Spanish and English

	Great-grandmother Maria (1937 –)	Grandmother Gabriela (1954 –)	Father Robert (1973 –)	Son Mikael (1999 –)
Media	Radio? TV from '69 Books after learning how to read	Books, magazines and radio from birth, TV from '69 PC from '04 Mobile phone from the end of the 90s, Parabola since '03	Books, magazines and radio from birth, video player from '84, mobile from '95, PC from '05	Books, magazines, radio, TV, video player and mobile phone from birth TV games from four years of age PC from six years of age
Interests	Cooking, knitting, gardening, TV and reading	Exercise, cooking, Latin-American music, reading, films, TV (Chilean TV via parabola)	Surfing on the inter- net, studying new brands Salmon fishing	TV games TV viewing Football Jiu-jitsu Lego building
Ideology	From pro-Pinochet to democrat Catholicism	From communist to social democrat Baptized catholic (non-practising)	More interested in foreign than Norwe- gian domestic news Non-voter, politically closer to the right than to the left, baptized Mormon (non-practising), believes in karma	Too young to have an ideology Not baptized, but believes in God
In opposition to	War, violence Child abuse	Coup d'état in Chile Military occupation Racism War in Iraq Israel's treatment of the Palestinians Oppression of women, drugs	Low work ethic Religion and ideol- ogy that oppress the individual	Bullying
Identity	Local and national	Transnational (mainly Chilean, a little Norwegian) and cosmopolitan	Transnational (Chile- an and Norwegian) and cosmopolitan	Local (northern Norway), national (Norwegian, and cosmopolitan

(Presented in Norwegian in Vettenranta, S. (2008) Global mediegrafi – en aktuell metode i medi-
epedagogikk. *Norsk medietidsskrift* 1: 4-21.)

Final Words

Future Sights: International Media Literacy Education *A Nordic Viewpoint*

Per Lundgren

Abstract

The fundamental question is, how can the recent international Media Literacy Education policy breakthrough contribute to strengthen pedagogical praxis with geopolitical relevance in a cultural context? The text suggests that the Nordic countries should make continual cooperation in developing Media and Information Literacy Education in the Nordic community and in more local, national policies as well. Moreover, the text introduces the World Summit on Media for Children and Youth in Karlstad, Sweden in 2010 as a platform for continuing international development.

Keywords: media and information literacy, promoting creativity

During the last decade, a particular set of terms have been used that take the new cultures emerging from the Information Society into consideration; Media Education, Digital Literacy, Information Literacy or 21st Century Literacy, Media Studies, and Media Ecology. The term Media Literacy Education is used in this text as the bridge-building element between cultures in school, leisure time, and daily life and the development of the information society (see also Christensen & Tufte in this volume).

Media literacy education has been discussed under the auspices of the Council of Europe (for example in Strasbourg “Human Rights in the Information Society”, yearly since 2005), UNESCO (for example in Paris France September 2009, the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Curriculum Expert Conference), and by the United Nations at the “Alliance of Civilizations” World Forum in Madrid, Spain, in January 2008. An overview of media education policies world wide can be found in the book “Mapping Media Education Policies in the World”, edited by Divina Frau-Meigs and Jordi Torrent in 2009.

The Clearinghouse for Children, Young People and Media at NORDICOM, Sweden, has been putting forward initiatives on children and media, and media

literacy education for several years and has published global insights on these subject areas. For example, an overview on media literacy education across continents is titled as “Empowerment through Media Education: Intercultural Dialogue”, edited by Ulla Carlsson, Samy Tayie, Genevieve Jacquinot-Delaunay and José Manuel Pérez Tornero in 2008.

One important example, of great interest for this bridge-building, is the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Media Literacy Education Clearinghouse which brings together content from organizations, university departments, associations, groups, and individuals who are developing new pedagogical tools, strategies, and theories that take the challenges of the information society into consideration.

This book can be considered as one effort for putting forward media literacy education internationally, as Sirkku Kotilainen and Sol-Britt Arnolds-Granlund state in the Introduction. Written in English, all the articles participate in international discussion on developing media literacy education.

Although there are certain Nordic perspectives, we are all influenced and inspired by world developments and often face similar problems when making efforts to develop media education. Media education as a research field is defined as the cross-point of educational and media studies.

The media education thinking here is based on the concept of media in which media is seen as a tool in relation to media content and culture. The idea of media as factors that constitute culture, places the teacher in the position of a cultural worker. Media education is then the way in which society renovates: it strengthens students’ cultural competence and future orientation.

So, how can the recent international Media Literacy Education policy breakthrough contribute to strengthening pedagogical praxis with geopolitical relevance in a cultural context? I suggest that the Nordic countries should continue their cooperation in developing Media Literacy Education in the Nordic community as a whole and in more local, national policies as well.

Bringing the Nordic Perspectives Together

Media education represents a critical filter against the technological and cultural changes brought by the swift transnational development of information technology and the globalization of media content. The requirements in the 21st century for a broader concept of literacy that encompasses lifelong learning must be set against the fact that the area of Media Literacy is currently drowning as it is being integrated into other subjects. In order to promote a creative generation and to create a balance between political goals and professional conduct, between local and central levels, and in order to increase co-operation between researchers and practitioners, between the public and the private sector, it is therefore proposed that a National Center for Media and Information Literacy Education (NCMILE) is formed in each of the Nordic countries: Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Estonia.

Compared with other European countries the education systems in the Nordic region are highly decentralized, which partly explains the need for co-ordination within this specialized area. The proposed centers would provide, among other things, each national Agency for Education, Education Board, and Education Ministry with specialist competence and would act as the body to which course proposals (such as the recent UNESCO media and information literacy curriculum) are referred for consideration, while also providing each government with information on which development decisions could be based.

Each center would co-ordinate, support, develop, perform and follow up on efforts that encourage national educational endeavors in pre-schools, schools, and centers for adult education, as well as activities outside the educational system that support education in the intended areas.

The Nordic countries have a unique and comparatively strong position in terms of the broad use of information technology and existing newspaper, film, and other media education resources available. By gathering these resources and traditions at the national centers, the cultural, media educational, research, and information technological capital that already exists will be made the best use of. It can form the basis for a democratic distribution of the co-ordination benefits that have been forecast. It would also be of benefit to other countries. The goals of and reasons for the distribution of responsibility are described below together with further details about the centers and their organizational location.

The overall goal for the centers is to improve education in this area in pre-schools, schools, and adult education for all students. The target group is primarily the people who train teachers and student teachers at all levels of education, as well as professional teachers, politicians, professionals, and administrators who have responsibility for the competence development of teachers at various levels of the educational establishment. Positive social attitudes towards media studies and communication training are important preconditions for learning in school. Parents, the mass media, and the general public are therefore also important target groups for activities.

The National Centre for Media and Information Literacy Education (NCMILE) will have the task of coordinating, supporting, developing, and implementing measures that promote this education generally. This is also relevant between teachers that teach different subjects such as mother tongue, social science, history, or art, and between teachers, those who train teachers, and researchers in media and media didactics, as well as between pre-schools, schools, and secondary schools.

A development such as the one described above, would create a Nordic networking platform that would make use of the international policies that we are witnessing today. In the spirit of UNESCO – UNESCO sees media and information literacy as necessary to the teaching and learning process to empower citizens with essential knowledge about media functions, the role media play in democratic societies and how citizens can evaluate the performance of their media systems in light of the expected roles.

The ultimate goal would then be to make wise choices possible, promote creativity, and develop communication skills with respect for human rights.

World Summit on Media for Children and Youth

In order to move forward, how can we strategically work together in the international media literacy education community? The acknowledgement of the Nordic region, and Sweden in particular, as the host for the World Summit on Media for Children and Youth, in Karlstad in 2010, offers ample opportunities to embrace culture by organizing an international stage for best practice and inviting all the international regions to share experience and expertise between researchers, media educators, media professionals, youth and international organizations working for children's well-being. The summit will be attended by a wide range of significant players in the world of media production, media education, media research, policy-making and active youth participation. A global youth council actively reflects on and contributes to the dialogue with international adult expertise.

When we in the Nordic region take on the task of bringing the world together for the summit, we realize that the challenges in the world of young people's communication do not only concern raising quality in children's media, but also developing media literacy education, and embracing culture. Media Literacy Education is a growing movement around the world.

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Publications on children, youth and media

Clearinghouse Yearbooks

Ulla Carlsson (Ed.): *Children and Youth in the Digital Media Culture. From a Nordic Horizon. Yearbook 2010.*

Thomas Tufte & Florencia Enghel (Eds): *Youth Engaging With the World. Media, Communication and Social Change. Yearbook 2009.*

Norma Pecora, Enyonam Osei-Hwere & Ulla Carlsson (Eds): *African Media, African Children. Yearbook 2008.*

Karin M. Ekström & Birgitte Tufte (Eds): *Children, Media and Consumption. On the Front Edge. Yearbook 2007.*

Ulla Carlsson & Cecilia von Feilitzen (Eds): *In the Service of Young People? Studies and Reflections on Media in the Digital Age. Yearbook 2005/2006.*

Cecilia von Feilitzen (Ed.): *Young People, Soap Operas and Reality TV. Yearbook 2004.*

Cecilia von Feilitzen & Ulla Carlsson (Eds): *Promote or Protect? Perspectives on Media Literacy and Media Regulations. Yearbook 2003.*

Cecilia von Feilitzen & Ulla Carlsson (Eds): *Children, Young People and Media Globalisation. Yearbook 2002.*

Cecilia von Feilitzen & Catharina Bucht: *Outlooks on Children and Media. Child Rights, Media Trends, Media Research, Media Literacy, Child Participation, Declarations. Yearbook 2001.*

Cecilia von Feilitzen & Ulla Carlsson (Eds): *Children in the New Media Landscape. Games, Pornography, Perceptions. Yearbook 2000.*

Cecilia von Feilitzen & Ulla Carlsson (Eds): *Children and Media. Image, Education, Participation. Yearbook 1999.*

Ulla Carlsson & Cecilia von Feilitzen (Eds): *Children and Media Violence. Yearbook 1998.*

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International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, 2010.

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International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media in co-operation with UNESCO, 2009.

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Maria Jacobson: *Young People and Gendered Media Messages.* International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, 2005.

Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen & Jonas Heide Smith: *Playing with Fire. How do Computer Games Influence the Player?* International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, 2004.

Inggerd Rydin (Ed.): *Media Fascinations. Perspectives on Young People's Meaning Making.* Nordicom, Göteborg University, 2003.

Digital culture offers different relationships with media to the ones that have existed earlier. Globally, enhancing media literacy is related to aspects of Human Rights, especially to the Rights of the Child. During recent years, there have been important policy efforts for developing media literacy education around the world.

This publication belongs to an effort bringing the Nordic studies on media literacy education in a global sight. Current definitions of media literacy and evaluations of educational case studies are presented in the form of thirteen articles written by Nordic academic experts. The articles present, for example, discussions on media literacies in a historical and cultural context and the construction of media literacy as a civic competence. Moreover, texts on educational case studies discuss instructional issues but deal with classroom research and curricular issues as well.

The Nordic Ministers of Culture have made globalization as one of their top priorities, unified in the strategy: "Creativity – the Nordic response to globalization". The aim is to create *a more visible Nordic Region, a more knowledge-based Nordic Region and a more prosperous Nordic Region*. This publication is part of "Creativity – the Nordic response to globalization".

The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media

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ISBN 978-91-86523-00-8



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