

MILID Yearbook 2014

A Collaboration between UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue, and the International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media at NORDICOM

Global Citizenship in a Digital World

Edited by Sherri Hope Culver & Paulette Kerr

University Autonomous Barcelona, University of São Paulo, Tsinghua University, Cairo University, Temple University, University of the West Indies, Queensland University of Technology, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University



United Nations
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UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on
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The International
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Global Citizenship in a Digital World

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University of Gothenburg

Editors:

Sherri Hope Culver, Temple University, USA
Paulette A. Kerr, University of West Indies, Jamaica

Advisory Board:

Alton Grizzle
UNESCO

Jordi Torrent
UN Alliance of Civilizations

José Manuel Pérez
Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

Ulla Carlsson
NORDICOM/the International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth
and Media, University of Gothenburg

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Foreword

We are pleased to be sharing with you the second yearbook on media and information literacy and intercultural dialogue. The first *MILID Yearbook* was published in June 2013. Then, as now, the publication is the result of a collaboration between the UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue and Nordicom's International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media.

The theme of the 2014 Yearbook is *Global Citizenship in a Digital World*.

Global citizenship assumes ease of participation in global spaces in which persons are media and information literate and are equipped with competencies and attitudes to deal with the multi-faceted nature of a mediated world in which information is no longer bound by space or time. The unprecedented access to and use of media and Internet technologies for communication and collaboration especially among youth, suggest that effective strategies must be found to enable active critical inquiry and effective media production. The proliferation of mediated spaces throughout education environments, as well as personal and professional environments, does not in itself guarantee that citizens will consider their role as global citizens as they create and consume media. This awareness must be cultivated, encouraged and taught.

The UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID) is based on an initiative from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). This network was created in line with UNESCO's mission and objectives, as well as the mandate of the UNAOC, to serve as a catalyst and facilitator helping to give impetus to innovative projects aimed at reducing polarization among nations and cultures through mutual partnerships.

This UNITWIN network is composed of eight universities from different geographical areas, including: Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain; Cairo University, Egypt; the University of the West Indies, Jamaica; the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil; Temple University, USA; Tsinghua University, China; Queensland University of Technology, Australia; Sidi Mohamed Bin Abdellah University, Morocco. The agreement to create the MILID network was signed in Fez, Morocco in May 2011, in the presence of leaders from the above member universities. The MILID network also includes associate members and will be expanded gradually.

The main objectives of the UNITWIN network is to foster collaboration among member universities, to build capacity in each of the countries in order to empower them to advance media and information literacy and intercultural dialogue, and to promote freedom of speech, freedom of information and the free flow of ideas and knowledge. As part of its initiatives to foster collaboration among member universities, the network launched a Student Exchange Programme in February 2014 which saw student participation from 5 member universities.

Specific objectives of the MILID network also include acting as an observatory for the role of media and information literacy (MIL) in promoting civic participation, democracy and development as well as enhancing intercultural and cooperative research on MIL. The programme also aims to promote global actions related to MIL and intercultural dialogue. In such a context, a *MILID Yearbook series* is an important initiative.

The *2014 MILID Yearbook* brings together a range of reviewed articles, which articulate the theme of global citizenship from varied perspectives and regions of the world. The articles represent different expressions on media and information literacy from researchers and practitioners who offer bold new strategies, share research findings and best practices, and share musings and reflections.

The *2014 MILID Yearbook* has been organized around five sections, reflecting common themes and activities across the globe.

- Global citizenship
- New media, new approaches
- Youth engagement
- Education and educators changing role
- Media and Information Literacy:

A worldwide selection from the UNITWIN partners

The first section on **GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP** directly explores the value of seeing ourselves as individuals existing within a worldwide context and the challenges in advancing this concept within specific education environments, activities, and programs.

Ehab Goma's article "Video production as a Tool to Reinforce Media Literacy and Citizenship in Egypt" suggests that participatory video production is a proven tool for enabling and reinforcing media and information literacy and global citizenship among university students. The pointed research findings of a study in select Egyptian universities provides evidence for the provision of MIL programs.

Fatimata Ly-Fall writes about the self-awareness required to reflect upon the influence of personal frames in her article, "The Interaction between Framing

and Media Literacy: An Approach for Promoting Participatory Democracy in Africa”. She shares insights from a media literacy program implemented in Senegal.

The importance of online spaces and online communities for intercultural dialogue among women across the world is discussed by **Manisha Pathak-She-lat** in her article “Constructing online spaces for intercultural dialogue: Media literacy initiatives for global citizenship”. Findings from a multi-sited ethnographic study confirm the need for global citizenship in which there is “respect, empathy and tolerance for other cultures”.

Daniel Schofield discusses the challenges and insights borne from a media literacy activity in which students are asked to write their own media history in his article, “Reflexivity and global citizenship in high school students’ media-graphies”.

Chido Onumah explores the differences between in-school and out-of-school MIL programs in his article “Developing Media and Information Literacy: Case study of Nigeria”. The article considers the challenges brought on by a lack of teacher training and broadly adopted curriculum.

The second section, **NEW MEDIA, NEW APPROACHES**, provides several examples of scholars and researchers whose work seeks to go beyond the tried and true MIL activities and programs to discover and implement innovative new methods.

Carolyn Wilson and Matthew Johnson’s article, “Media Literacy, Digital Technologies and Civic Engagement: A Canadian Perspective” is two-fold as it discusses the pervasive implications of the Internet and digital technologies on the lives of children in Canada drawing from a detailed published study, as well as provides a range of examples of pedagogical strategies employed by Canadian teachers.

An interesting twist to the use of Facebook as a tool for education and its implications for intercultural dialogue is presented by **Catherine Bouko** in “Affinity spaces on Facebook: a quantitative discourse analysis towards intercultural dialogue”. The article details a museum’s experience of using historical archived images and a fictional storyline of World War I to stimulate intercultural dialogue among over 2000 fans on Facebook.

An innovative new digital platform is used to collect stories about the Holocaust and other genocides in the article “Fostering Intercultural Dialogue at the Intersection of Digital Media and Genocide Survivor Testimony”. Authors **Claudia R. Wiedeman, Amy M. Carnes, and Kori Street** used this method as a way to foster students’ capacity for intercultural dialogue.

In the article “Moving from ML to MIL: Comparison between the Hong Kong and Mainland China Experiences” **Alice Lee** considers the benefits and challenges of integrating the composite concept of media and information

literacy into primary school environments. She compares two MIL integration models (an autonomous model and an organized model) and assesses the success of each in enhancing digital literacy in China.

“Pop up Newsroom as New Literacy: Covering Poverty Through a Global Reporting Project”, by **Melissa Wall, David Baines and Devadas Rajaram** shares the remarkable story of how the use of Twitter by students in three universities across the globe lead to them becoming more critical reporters when the conventional newsroom was replaced with structures which brought students “closer to grassroots voices”.

The third section discusses **YOUTH ENGAGEMENT** and new ways in which youth are being provided opportunities to create, analyze and share their media experiences to deepen their media literacy learning.

The article “Migration and Reflexive Cosmopolitanism Among Singaporeans in Melbourne” makes the case that community is no longer simply a geographic reference, but constructed through “global fields” and mediated spaces. Authors **Esther Chin and Ingrid Volkmer** discuss the impact of these spaces on university students traveling abroad.

Collaboration and intercultural dialogue within a social justice framework is discussed in the article “Virtual Partnerships: Engaging Students in E-Service Learning at Macquarie University” by **Usha Harris** in which she shares her challenges and successes working with Australian students who developed virtual partnerships with an NGO in India via the use of online tools.

Reflections on themes of “empowerment, capacity building and citizenship engagement” by former youth journalists in Canada create an engaging article by **Naomi Lightman and Michael Hoeschmann** titled “I wouldn’t have had a clue how to start: Reflections on empowerment and social engagement by former youth journalists.” The article suggests that providing youth with avenues for their own voices may have residual effects for adult active media participation.

Ibrahim Saleh reports on the predicament of the digital divide in South Africa and its impact on youth knowledge of information communication and technology in his article “Whatever Happened to South African Youth? New Media & New Politics & New Activism”. The article suggests that an increase in information technology is not enough to create better citizenry and a more nuanced contextual approach is needed.

The impact of a study abroad program on university students is once again explored in the article, “Intercultural dialogue through immersive learning: Media internships in Ghana, West Africa.” Authors **Ed Madison and Leslie Steeves** share insights from students about their experience interning at a Ghana media company as they learn to balance community needs and the influence of editorial decision-making.

The fourth section, titled **EDUCATION AND EDUCATORS CHANGING ROLE**, explores the need for formal and informal professional development opportunities and the challenges when resources are not put toward this critical need.

A unique partnership between a broadcast regulator and an educational institution results in a different approach to media and information literacy education as explained in the article, “Promoting Media Literacy in Jamaican Schools: Broadcasting Regulator Embracing a New Role”. Authors **Hopeton S. Dunn, Richardo Williams, and Sheena Johnson-Brown** suggest that media literacy competencies are of paramount importance in enabling Jamaicans to appreciate difference and to negotiate and assimilate other cultural expressions within their environments without losing their own cultural national identities.

Helping teachers in Japan understand media and information literacy more clearly was one of the goals of the project discussed in “An Implementation and Evaluation of ‘Media and information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers’ in Japan”. Authors **Masato Wada and Yosuke Morimoto** provide a detailed overview of this effort and how they were able to encourage teachers to bring this new concept into their classrooms.

Melda Yildiz shares insights from her experience as a Fulbright Scholar in “Different cultures, similar challenges: Integrating multilingual multicultural multimedia in media literacy education in Turkmenistan”. Her participatory action research projects focused on the role of multiple literacies as a means of further developing pre-service teachers’ global competencies.

What challenges does MIL education face in Japan? Initially influenced by media literacy in North America, Japan now engages academics, broadcasting, NPO/NGO’s and media related individuals and groups in its MIL development.

Kyoko Murakami reflects on these partners and the development of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIAC) in her article, “A Brief Mapping of Media and Information Literacy in Japan.”

Anamaria Neag reflects on media literacy education programmes in Hungarian schools over the past twenty years in her article “From Schools to Startups? – A Report on Media Literacy Education in Hungary”. A rise in international start-ups in the Hungarian capital of Budapest is one of the contextual situations for sharing research findings on Hungarian schools and among media literacy activists and policy makers.

K.V. Nagaraj, Vedabhyas Kundu and Ashes Kr. Nayak bemoan the absence of media literacy among Indian citizens despite the phenomenal growth in electronic and social media in the country in their article, “Marginalization of media literacy in Indian Public Sphere: A Contextual Analysis”. The authors explore possible reasons for what they refer to as media marginalization and

suggest the need for media literacy interventions especially in light of India's cultural diversity.

The fifth section, **MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY: A WORLD-WIDE SELECTION** provides an overview of key activities from each university participating in the UNITWIN collaborative program. While the shape of each program and their specific structure may differ, the activities share a common goal to broaden the influence and integration of media and information literacy in education worldwide.

National events, key research projects and an international online course defined the ongoing development of "Media and Information Literacy at Queensland University of Technology and in Australia". Authors **Michael Dezuanni, Kelli McGraw and Christine Bruce** also discuss development of new "Living Labs", a digital citizenship initiative responding to citizen needs.

The economic crisis in Europe and its impact on media and media awareness is the context for the article, "How the Economic Crisis in Europe Promotes Media Literacy" by **José Manuel Pérez Tornero**. Research projects including EMEDUS, FilmEd and DINAMIC as well as other initiatives aimed at developing media literacy throughout Europe are discussed.

Patricia Moran, shares a novel approach to media literacy through poetry and technology in the article, "Poem Codes". Moran's paper describes the use of poem codes to enhance the use of open source software by a university professor and software developer, Jarbas Jácome.

"Towards an Increased Awareness about MIL in Egypt" shares highlights from the MILID activities organized by Cairo University in 2013. Author **Samy Tayie** reflects on the various activities and outputs, including development of an MIL "kit" and a young journalists workshop.

In China, scholars from Tsinghua University adapted the UNESCO modular teacher curricula based on extensive suggestions received from Chinese journalism educators and journalism professionals. In "Model Curricula for Chinese Journalism Education" authors **Li Ziguang and Guo Xiaoke** are encouraged that the deep feedback received over numerous sessions will encourage the more than 800 journalism schools around China to adopt the curriculum.

Sherri Hope Culver addresses the important issue of how schools of media and communication are adapting to changes and challenges in a globalized media environment and the need to equip students to be media and information literate with competencies for civic engagement in her article, "Adapting to Changes: Communication and Media in Higher Education". The author provides a detailed scan of innovative programmes and initiatives in various departments and schools at a large US university.

Paulette Kerr argues the need for drastic change to improve information literacy training and education in her article "Strategic Promotion and Expansi-

on of Information Literacy Education: Professional Development and Outreach Programmes”. Recognizing an absence of available structured training, the University of the West Indies creates new programmes in media and information literacy for librarians, teachers and students, as well as for policy makers in the Caribbean.

Abdelhamid Nfissi asks, what is the best way to shift from a non-information literate culture to one that understands the value of media and information literacy, in his article “Information Literacy in the Digital Age: Morocco as a case study”. The article discusses a forward-thinking plan called “Digital Morocco” and how academia, educators and government are working together to make it a success.

We understand that this assortment of articles, while impressive and numerous, cannot possibly capture the myriad of programs, workshops, curriculum, media industry partnerships and government support taking place throughout the world. This Yearbook is meant to provide an overview of the types of projects taking place and to shine a spotlight on the innovative work being done by media and information literacy collaborators.

MIL actions within a country or community are influenced by its cultural and political environments and the ingrained opinions held about media within that country. MIL programs by necessity must navigate those opinions and influences and still find a way to encourage the development of MIL education. For many working in this field, the need to develop these programs is a fervent mission; many hold strong beliefs that MIL education is critical for an engaged citizenry and to achieve global competitiveness. The authors of these articles have often traveled far distances, developed program concepts over years of work, and remain committed to finding new and better ways to bring MIL education to all.

We commend the scholars, educators, students, program leaders, government officials, administrators and others who support the work of MIL. We are encouraged by the powerful work being accomplished in all corners of the globe. We hope these articles will inspire others to propose a new MIL project or continue advocating for the projects already undertaken to enhance global citizenship in a digital world.

Sherri Hope Culver
Center for Media and
Information Literacy
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA

Paulette A. Kerr
University of the West Indies
Mona
Jamaica



Introduction

MIL, Intercultural Dialogue and Global Citizenship

Alton Grizzle

When Bob Marley, a global cultural icon, wrote,

*Could you be loved and be loved?
Could you be loved and be loved?*

*Don't let them fool ya,
Or even try to school ya! Oh, no!
We've got a mind of our own...
Love would never leave us alone,
A-yin the darkness there must come out to light!...*

One could argue that he was referring to **political systems, media systems, and information systems, technological systems or even education systems** – when he said; *don't let them fool you.*

But perhaps Bob Marley also addressed us as individuals and society to be active, critical and ethical persons or citizens – when he said; *we have got a mind of our own.* Often, it is not external systems or others who fool us, we too fool ourselves when we choose not to acquire or use our critical and creative capacities. In this digital age, sometimes we fool ourselves in thinking that media and technologies give rise to more challenges than opportunities when clearly the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

The theme for the Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID) Yearbook (2014), *Global Citizenship in a Digital World* draws attention to an important phenomenon. Technological developments are driving global citizenship, which is a prerequisite for cultural diversity and a coexistence of cultures. The world is witnessing a huge shift in media and knowledge repositories explosion. The emergence of new forms of communication technologies has disrupted the traditional role of mass media and information institutions within development issues. New challenges and opportunities arise for intercultural dialogue due to the evolving global media system². This shift does not imply a displacement of the so called *Fourth Estate* but rather an expansion of it into a *Fifth Estate*³ – giving greater agency and involvement to

ordinary citizens. Digital communications are new tools for cultural expression as they enable citizens to participate more to shape new forms of cultural ties. Jenkins (2011) calls it a *participatory culture*. He writes, “Our focus here is not [only] on individual accomplishment but rather the emergence of a cultural context that supports widespread participation in the production and distribution of media”⁴.

Intercultural dialogue and global citizenship: rethinking *constructs* and *messages*

Intercultural dialogue, premise on global citizenship in the digital age, calls for media and information literacy (MIL) for all. Achieving MIL for all then requires both individual and collective actions; enabling individuals and communities to capitalize on cultural and other opportunities and challenges provided by media and technology to transform their lives.

One such collective action which is absolutely necessary and urgent to give greater impetus to MIL in the digital age is for all stakeholders to recognize that media literacy, information literacy, digital literacy, and social media literacy etc. have converged. All actors: NGOs, media, information, technology and education and cultural experts need to work together to ensure that MIL programmes, and enlisting MIL as a tool for intercultural dialogue, include all relevant competencies.

In the context of global citizenship in a digital world as a basis for intercultural dialogue, there are two implications of this convergence. Firstly, it calls for a repositioning of the hackneyed and famous statement “all media are constructs”⁵ on which most MIL programmes are built. Employing the whole range of MIL competencies implies greater recognition that media and technology are more than only cultural constructs. They are cultural enablers. Furthermore, some research studies and findings are also cultural constructs and enablers, as are many books and accounts of history. In addition, one’s individual religious, cultural, political and scientific beliefs include biases and can both inhibit and facilitate intercultural dialogue. MIL when coupled with intercultural competencies can empower citizens to effectively interact with media and technology as enablers of intercultural dialogue, while challenging the individual or personal beliefs that may inhibit intercultural dialogue.

The second proposed implication of the convergence mentioned earlier relates to Marshall McLuhan who said the “medium is the message”⁶.

In a digital world, is the medium the messages? Or, as an Al Jazeera reporter recently said “the media are the message”. The crux of global citizenship in a digital world is that *the message* is all citizens - as individuals and community

people form or are able to form and disseminate *messages*. Citizens have and can have greater control over *the message* than they think or admit that they do. People all over the world are then challenged to send positive cultural or intercultural messages and to counter potentially fictitious messages.

Sir Edmund Hillary famously notes that, “It is not the mountain we conquer but ourselves.”⁷ Experiencing a world of intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and respect can be reached if individuals and communities are able to triumph over themselves.

Global citizenship in a digital age then moves the focus from media, technology, film etc. to a focus on individuals, communities and their interaction with information and knowledge. It is about how citizens effectively participate in development processes; engaging with media, information and technology to promote cultural exchange and tolerance, economic development, good governance, equality and peace.

As Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO said in her message on the occasion of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, May 21 “Culture is what we are. It embodies our identities and our dreams for the future. Cultures are mutually sustaining and contribute to the enhancement of humanity’s wealth and productivity. Such diversity is a well-spring for the renewal of ideas and societies. It holds great potential for growth, dialogue and social participation.”⁸

Culture diversity is also concerned with guaranteeing equal participation of women and men of all ages in cultural expressions and dialogue. Women still have less access to media and communications technology⁹. In a digital world, this invariably contributes to constraining their participation in cultural exchange¹⁰. MIL could be a potent tool to foster gender equality in all aspects of development, including intercultural dialogue¹¹.

Media (newspaper, radio, and television), libraries and new technology are a part of culture and society. It is widely accepted that these are transmitters of culture and engines behind globalising cultures¹². In countries of high media density, there is no aspect of society on which media and technology have not had an impact, albeit to varying degrees¹³. Media and other information providers can also be framed as social actors in and of themselves, with the power to motivate social development and social participation.

It is this interrelatedness of media, information and culture that makes more evident how interwoven media and information literacy and intercultural competencies are¹⁴. This is a core of the reflection in this publication, and relevant to the fundamental principles of UNESCO’s Constitution. In a globalized world with interconnected societies, intercultural dialogue is vital. Mutual understanding and full participation of everyone in the new global space must be considered as the basis of “Building peace in the minds of men and women”¹⁵.

Fostering freedom of expression to preserve intercultural dialogue and diversity

Another important core of the reflection in this publication is to envision intercultural dialogue and freedom of culture as freedom of expression (FOE). In the absence of FOE, intercultural dialogue and flows of cultures across borders can be curtailed. As is underscored in the UNESCO World Report on Cultural Diversity, “Cultural diversity... dictates a balanced representation of the different communities living together in a particular country, in accordance with the principles of the freedom of expression and the free flow of ideas”¹⁶. The digital world in which we live today favours content productions suitable for export thereby expanding markets and cultural industries. These industries are starting to balance more dominant flows that have challenged traditional cultural expressions (storytelling, dance, traditional games) and voices of marginalized populations. Illustratively, there is the flourishing and globalization of local cultural expressions such as the rise of the Latin American audiovisual sector (*telenovelas*), reggae music of Jamaica, the Nigeria audiovisual sector (Nollywood), the Indian cultural productions (Bollywood) and more recently the Chinese cinema (Chollywood).

In this sense, contrary to oft-held positions, globalization cannot be said to have had only a negative impact on the diversity of cultural content¹⁷. Therefore, it is not just globalization of culture but also globalization of cultures – in the plural sense – because many cultures have gone global. What is slowly evolving is a kaleidoscope of merging cultures; an intermingling of cultures enriching and strengthening each other; reinforced and kept afloat by the media, libraries and other information providers, including those on the Internet. MIL as a basis for FOE and freedom of culture can foster critical capacities and multiple perspectives of global citizens. MIL equips people to be more discerning and probing of the world around them, thereby becoming more self-aware and better able to appropriate the offerings of media and information for cultural exchange¹⁸.

Global citizenship requires a convergence of competencies

Global citizenship in the digital age calls for this marriage between intercultural, interreligious competencies (discussed further in the next section) and MIL competencies to realize intercultural and interreligious dialogue. The concept of “dialogue” assumes the participation of several players. It means that citizens have a key role in the reception of information, whether it is to critically evaluate the contents of information or to promote accountability. Dialogue is part

of the construction of self-identity and self-determination: it is by conversing with one another that we actualize our beliefs, that we reconsider our positions on tolerance and freedom¹⁹.

This merger of competencies opens up the opportunity for citizens, in a global and digital context, to consciously, actively, independently and collectively engage with technology, the media, libraries as well as information providers, including those on the Internet, through a three- stage process necessary to achieve intercultural dialogue:

1. Understanding the *ethos* of one's culture or religion and that of others.
This is the spirit or the character of cultures; the thinking of those practicing that culture.
2. Through self-introspection and communal exchanges, learn to appreciate differences. This does not imply a necessity to accept or to choose to practice the differences in another culture. But at least one should embrace *pathos* – to empathize with the differences. Stages 1 and 2 are a combination of reflexivity and what Leeds-Hurwitz (2013) calls “Seeing from other perspectives/ world views, both how [they] are similar and different”²⁰.
3. Then through true and open dialogue agree on the *logos* – a common word or understanding that can lead to cultural exchange and cooperation²¹.

This relates to what Frau-Meigs (2013), refers to as “self-management as well as engagement” (p. 183). She uses the term “civic agency, as the capacity of human groups to act cooperatively on common issues in spite of diverging views”²².

Information, media and technology, when combined with MIL, are introducing opportunities:

1. To reduce intolerance and increase understanding across political or cultural boundaries.
2. For citizens from all around the world to easily communicate thus enabling more cultural exchange.
3. To understand that defending freedom of the press also refers to the protection of freedom of culture and religion. In this sense, MIL encourages a diversity of opinions.
4. For social vigilance and critical faculties at a time when anyone can post anything on the Internet. Some challenges if not effectively remedied by MIL could undermine the freedom of expression in virtual spaces.
5. To help overcome disinformation but also stereotypes and intolerance conveyed through some media and in online spaces.
6. To empower citizens with competencies to hold media and other information professionals accountable.

Interreligious dialogue: a dimension of intercultural dialogue

Religion is a part of culture. Interreligious dialogue is therefore central to the discussion in future MILID Yearbooks. However, religion is so sacrosanct to those who believe, that the representation of religion in media and information becomes an extremely sensitive topic. Like culture, religious beliefs and practices transcend countries and borders. In many countries, citizens, whether through face-to-face encounters or mediated by technology and media, are challenged to respond to or tolerate religious beliefs and practices that they may consider as foreign or as an invasion.

With so many conflicts around the world that are underpinned by religious differences and atrocities carried out in the name of religion, public discourse on interreligious dialogues becomes an imperative.

The media and new technologies can become important channels for religious conversation. They become vectors of information to those who believe and those who do not. However, who should drive this public discourse? Should it be professional journalists, information specialists or researchers? Should it be dialogue only among those of a religious faith? Or should it be among those who believe and those who do not?

MIL challenges individuals and society to reflect on their own religious ideas and beliefs. It enables us to juxtapose our beliefs with that of others; to observe and respect differences and to find common grounds for tolerance.

Individuals and society must think about the authenticity and accuracy in which their religions are being represented, or perhaps not represented at all. Through a critical analysis of the representation, change can be effected and sensationalized misrepresentations can be corrected. Media and information literate individuals can identify whether only one aspect of an entire religion is being discussed continuously, thus not presenting a holistic image. They are able to recognize that basing knowledge or perceptions of a religion on only a small representation of the whole can be harmful – leading to misunderstanding, mistrust, and ultimately conflict.

MIL, by facilitating communications, presents new opportunities for the religious to make their faith understood to the general public.

Media and information literate citizens can advocate for equal treatment of the information for every religion in the media. They are aware that freedom of religion is synonymous to or is an extension of freedom of expression. In this context, they reflect on principles of liberty, of worship and tolerance and challenge stereotypes and hate speech transmitted online, in books or in the media. They are guarded against the fact that new and traditional media can be used as tools of radicalism and propaganda²³.

Finally, MIL should enable individual and societal reflection on situations where religious beliefs and practices contravene certain human rights.

UNESCO MIL and intercultural dialogue actions – some examples

UNESCO, in cooperation with UNAOC and many other partners, continues to champion MIL related intercultural activities. The MILID University Network is now firmly the research arm of the recently launched Global Alliance for Partnership on MIL (GAPMIL). GAPMIL is a global movement, a network or networks launched by UNESCO and other partners to drive MIL as tool for open and inclusive development, focusing on eight development areas. The GAPMIL Framework and Action Plan²⁴ describes its rationale, objectives and an exciting path for MIL as a catalyzing tool for change.

After three years, MILID Week, a joint initiative of the UNESCO-UNAOC MILID University Network is slowly taking traction. GAPMIL provides a huge platform for broadening of MILID Week activities across the world.

The UNESCO MILID Young Journalists/Information Specialists Exchange Programme is showing great promise. The programme is designed to enable contact with diverse cultures to foster broader international dialogue on MILID issues as well as the development of free independent and pluralistic media and universal access to information and knowledge.

As one student from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica whose brief fellowship was at the Sidi Mohamed Ben Adbullah University, Morocco wrote: “The intercultural dialogue session was definitely the highlight of my fellowship. This might be due to the fact that I was an active participant engaged in the process of sharing information about the Caribbean and also giving feedback to questions, assumptions and misconceptions that participants had about the region...”²⁵

A second online MIL course was recently launched in cooperation with an associate member of the MILID Network, Athabasca University. The Massive Open Education Online Course is designed for young people and is centered on two themes, intercultural dialogue and gender equality.

Recognizing that to achieve MIL for all will require national policies, UNESCO has published *Media and Information Literacy. Policy and Strategy Guidelines*. This comprehensive resource is the first of its kind to treat MIL as a composite concept, unifying information literacy and media literacy. These guidelines offer a harmonized approach, which in turn enables stakeholders to articulate more sustained national MIL policies strategies, describing both the process and content to be considered. Cultural diversity is one aspect of the theoretical/development framework for MIL policy and strategy formulation

described in this resource. Chapter 5 of the guidelines focuses on MIL as intercultural dialogue, and as Professor Ulla Carlsson, Director of the Nordicom, notes in her Preface, “this publication is of vital importance toward improving efforts to promote MIL on national and regional levels”.

A final example is the launch of a multimedia intercultural online MIL teaching resources tool. This will increase easy access for practitioners and teachers to OER and intercultural material, lesson plans etc., which are readily adaptable. This resource was realized through UNESCO’s partnership with the United Nations Alliance of Civilization and Filmpedagogerna.

Initiatives like these and many others around the world can marshal deep changes in dialogue and mutual understanding globally. MIL can contribute to open and inclusive development including intercultural dialogue. But it will only be accelerated if all stakeholders work together. The combined efforts of MIL practitioners in areas such as media, information, technology, education, and culture require a deeper “complementive”²⁶ rather than a competitive thrust. More research is needed and this MILID Yearbook of the MILID University Network offers a splendid opportunity. We hope to see more authors from the information and technological side of MIL in the future and more collaborative and trans-disciplinary research studies.

Conclusion

MIL for all is necessary to achieve intercultural dialogue and global citizenship in a digital world. MIL for all is possible. MIL for all is a must. We should reject the idea that it cannot be done. It is not too expensive. Literacy cannot be priced. The challenge before us is to keep pressing on and pushing until change comes.

It is true that many countries are still struggling to address basic literacy. However, basic literacy and MIL are not mutually exclusive. They are both necessary. One may even say that MIL is literacy.

Stakeholders, both rights holders and duty bearers²⁷, are challenged to help all citizens to recognize, as Benjamin Franklin writes, that “an investment in knowledge pays the best interest”²⁸.

Not that I can walk in his shoes but to paraphrase, we are challenged to help all citizens to pursue knowledge, truth, equality, justice, and mutual respect so that they can transform their minds and hearts and that of those around them. MIL and intercultural dialogue can help.

Notes

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MIL and the Web 3.0

Jordi Torrent

*Neither plentitude nor vacancy. Only a flicker
Over the strained time-ridden faces
Distracted from distraction by distraction
Filled with fancies and empty of meaning*

T.S. Eliot

One of the impulses of today's world, of our mindsets, is to believe that all that is happening around us is new, with scarce historical context precisely because of the newness of contemporary technological societies. In my opinion, this attitude is incorrect, opening perspectives to a poor and diminished understanding of our societies. It might be then relevant that when it comes to discussing today's media monopolies, we could recall that during the era of telegraphy the British dominated the world system. In 1896, there were thirty cable-laying ships in the world; twenty-four of them owned by British companies. Allowing British companies to set up a strategic "All Red Line" during World War I enabled Britain's telegraph communications to be almost completely uninterrupted, while Germany's worldwide cable systems were easily broken up. It could be argued that WWI outcomes might have been facilitated by Britain's superiority on global telegraphy.

Another framework that could help us to better understand the current Federal Communications Commission (FCC) hearings in the US regarding so-called "net neutrality" (an Internet providing same speed of access to all content, regardless of the political or economic power of the content provider) or the Open Internet Project (representatives of European digital industries concerned with Google's dominance as the hegemonic Internet search engine) a movement which is currently gaining momentum in Europe, is to put these concerns in a historical context. To this end, it would be useful to reminisce for a moment on the development of radio.

When about hundred years ago radio transmissions became truly available to open audiences, the new technology was celebrated as an opportunity to freely deliver communications from educational institutions, civic groups, religious groups, grass roots organizations, etc. to their communities. But the possibilities of the technology were quickly restrained by governmental policies,

setting up national radio broadcasting systems or, as in the US, by building narrowly regulated and sternly protected commercial broadcast networks. The hope for a network of radio waves open to all was swiftly curtailed. I remember very well how in the recent history of Spain so called “pirate radios” (operating without governmental licenses) were summarily shot down and prosecuted. And we know the potential power of radio as a social energizer; let’s remember Hitler’s use of the media, radio’s role in Rwanda’s genocide, or the public hysteria caused by Orson Welles’ radio broadcast of *The War of the Worlds*.

It could be argued that perhaps we are entering now a similar period of Internet regulation, echoing the policies that restrained radio technology less than 100 years ago. The Internet as we know it (at least in some parts of the world) is fast changing in front of our eyes. Internet censorship, political or economic, is becoming increasingly evident around the world.

The Russian government has recently passed a new regulation, which will force blogs with over 3,000 visitors to register with a government office; the European Union (in the name of privacy) has recently passed a new regulation that will require Google to filter information provided by their algorithms when searching for a particular individual; in the United States legislation such as PIPA (Protect Intellectual Property Act) and similar serve as legal frameworks to send to prison (perhaps for as much as 100 years) Barrett Brown, a man accused of publishing an Internet article containing a link to already publicly available information of credit cards used by Stratfor employees. Cuba is blocking access to Yoani Sanchez’s blog. Internet search providers configure their results according to the user’s digital profile. Internet censorship (political or economic) is spreading wide. Perhaps it can be said that we are now entering the Web 3.0 era, where economic and political frameworks will dominate the flow of information on the Internet, further diminishing our capacity to openly and critically reflect upon our actions and the world we inhabit.

The Web 3.0 is being deployed sometimes as policy approved legislation in parliamentary societies and sometimes as simply the rule of the autocratic system in charge of the nation.

All this is particularly unsettling because the Internet has become our main source of information, our main foundation for identity formation. This is particularly true for the younger generations. We have evolved from a society where the framework was “I think therefore I am” to one where the basis of self-identity is “I communicate therefore I exist”. The terrain of this identity formation is the Internet, in particular the social media platforms.

In his text *“The Present Age”* Soren Kierkegaard commented on the type of society that he witnessed developing during his times. Although he was writing about his world’s new media (the expansion of newspapers) his thoughts, I think, are very pertinent to contemporary society. “Ours,” he wrote, “is the age of advertisement and publicity. Nothing ever happens but there is immediate

publicity everywhere (...) our age has no passion, no values, and everything is transformed into representational ideas”¹. Kierkegaard wrote this over 160 years ago. But somehow it feels very close to us, very relevant to the era of the Facebook update, the re-tweet, the YouTube upload. The perceived lack of historical perspective of our digital world finds here again an occasion for revision and critical analysis.

In a world where the Internet of Things is rapidly becoming the framework of our life (private and public); where, in some areas of the world, access to mobile Internet is easier than access to clean water or sanitation facilities; where, in the industrialized societies, about 90% of the children are actively engaging in social media; where values, as Kierkegaard pointed, are transformed into representational ideas; in such a world, Media and Information Literacy (MIL) is fundamentally a matter of education, of citizenship education, of the necessary “literacy” that allows individuals to truly participate in society. We need strong education policies that include at its core MIL education.

In this pervasive and powerful era of the Web 3.0 that we are entering we need media literacy more than ever; as antidote as well as an energizer for reflection and action. Education is the area where humanistic considerations on media (not merely technological skills) should be brought about and discussed, where critical thinking skills applied to media messages should be encouraged and developed, where emotional attachments to particular media messages must be questioned. Where else do we have the possibility of obtaining about 5 hours of attention, each day, with the future leaders of our societies? These future leaders are waiting to hear from us, the adults; looking for our suggestions. Where else do we have that opportunity for reflection; that possibility of silence in this cacophonous digital world we call home?

We advocate for an education policy establishing that all future educators must receive mandatory Media and Information Literacy training. Media and Information Literacy Education should be included as part of the “language arts” curriculum throughout primary and secondary education. Media production and media analysis would also be embedded in all subject matters, particularly in social studies, citizenship education, history, and arts education. This MIL in-class education program should also include computer coding; but, paraphrasing Divina Frau-Meigs, “no coding without de-coding”².

Meaning that contemporary literacy must also include “code literacy” as well as “computational thinking”³. Taking into consideration that today’s technology allows us to effectively be media producers by just having a smart phone and the capacity to connect to the Internet; there is then no need to further stress educational budgets, the only need is to create a space within the educational curricula for applied reflection on media messages and creating media messages. This must be a part of the curriculum, not an after school program: within formal educational settings.

Let's turn the Web 3.0 into a humanistic creative period, not one dominated by commercial interests and/or politically exclusive and hegemonic ideologies, but a period of flourishing opportunities for all, culturally diverse and richer precisely for that diversity.

Notes

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Global Citizenship

Video Production as a Tool to Reinforce Media Literacy and Citizenship in Egypt

Ehab H. Gomaa

This study looks at the impact of using video production as an educational tool in media and information literacy programs (MIL) in Egyptian universities. The study evaluates the outcomes of two university level programs. Based on a survey of a sample of 200 participant and nonparticipant students at the college levels, the study found that participants scored higher in measures of MIL. The results suggest that participatory videos play a role in reinforcement of MIL and provide direction for NGOs in Egypt wanting to provide more effective programs for university students. Suggestions for future research are provided.

Keywords: video, media, literacy, citizenship, Egypt

Introduction

After the Egyptian revolution in 2011, experts emphasized that the change needed in Egypt requires not only new political structure but also a series of sustained changes to the country's educational systems (Faour, 2011). Educational reform efforts in Egypt heavily focused on "technical" aspects such as building more schools, introducing computers to schools, improving test scores in mathematics and sciences, and bridging the gender gap in education, while ignoring the human component which is the most important aspect of reform. Students need to be taught at a very early age critical thinking, creativity, and exercising one's duties and rights as an active citizen rather than be subjects of the state.

According to Qasim (2006), teachers, curriculum, activities, and administration in public schools have failed to promote or support democratic values and practices. Which is seen as a big gap between the concept of citizenship education espoused by the Ministry of Education in Egypt and the content of social studies textbooks. Baraka (2007) study indicated that tourist attractions rather

than citizenship are emphasized in school textbooks because tourism is a main source of national income.

The study also found that basic concepts in citizenship education such as rule of law, social justice, and political participation are rarely mentioned. Yet citizens' dependence on the government for the provision of goods and services is exaggerated. The term "authority" prevails in the social studies textbooks over the term "citizen" (by nearly two to one), which represent a clear indicator of state dominance of citizens (Baraka, 2007). As a result of this, many NGOs in Egypt have launched initiatives to promote citizenship education and media literacy through capacity building programs supported by international donors and volunteers.

One such is INTERNEWS, an international media development organization based in California, USA, whose mission is to empower local media worldwide to give people the news and information they need, the ability to connect, and the means to make their voices heard. INTERNEWS Cairo is one of the few NGOs registered in Egypt under Egyptian foreign ministry and Ministry of Social Solidarity. Through a grant from USAID-Egypt, INTERNEWS Network implemented an 18-month project called "Youth and media for community participation". The project started in May 2008 and was extended for 15 months from November 2010 to January 2012. The overall goal of the project was to strengthen citizenship education and media literacy in Egypt. This is to be achieved through developing understanding of citizenship and participation among students at 6 of the country's universities towards inspiring the next generation of Egyptian citizens about the power of democracy and media.

The Second program is "Active Citizens" program that aims to give participants the confidence to stand up, be heard and make a difference in their communities and included 4,000 leaders who are effecting change in Egyptian communities and working with other Active Citizens around the world to address issues of the 21st century. The program is supported by the British Council and works with a number of local partners and governmental organizations in Egypt.

Literature review

Media literacy can be simply defined as “The ability to understand, analyze, evaluate and create media messages in a wide variety of forms” (Edward, 2009). Media and Information Literacy (MIL) as a composite concept has now become mature enough to have its own legitimate presence in both informal and formal institutional contexts of education, despite the different concepts used including media education, media literacy, digital literacy, media literacy education (Cappello et al., 2011). The British Department for Culture, Media and Sport produced a Media Literacy Statement emphasizes on the ability to think critically and proposes a number of skills including the ability to:

- Distinguish fact from fiction
- Understand the mechanisms of production and distribution which result in propaganda
- Distinguish reportage from advocacy
- Recognize the economic, cultural and presentational imperatives in news management
- Explain and justify media choices in order to inform choice and sustain appropriate degrees of critical distance (Livingstone, 2003)

Jenkins et al. (2007) elaborate on these skills:

“Media literacy entails the skills for accessing, analyzing, evaluating, creating, and distributing messages as well as the “cultural competencies and social skills” associated with a growing participatory culture.”

There is a need however to introduce MIL and Citizenship programs with the use of current information technologies. Wood (2009) investigated how young people define and experience active citizenship in their everyday, real world settings. He conducted workshops and focus groups with 93 young people ages 14-16, and found that ‘active citizenship’ needs modern educational technology. Weber et al. (2003) examined whether the Internet mobilizes or demobilizes citizen participation in public affairs. The study provides a comprehensive literature review detailing the sociological research that has already been conducted on the ability of the Internet to enhance the efficacy of citizen participation. The author concludes that the Internet does have a positive impact on the political efficacy of citizens (Weber et al., 2003). Burd (2007) draws attention to the importance of fair distribution of technology since many initiatives end up privileging the community residents who were the most visible, literate or active, leaving behind those who would need additional support and reinforcing even more the status quo. Dougherty (2010) analyzed the content of 1,000 mo-

mobile videos on Qik.com, and investigated the motives and practices behind the production of civic content. Examining live streaming mobile video production as a social practice through the lens of civic engagement, The researcher analyzed how and why people are beginning to use this medium to become active citizens with the aim of educating or inspiring others. The research included mobile production by general users but focused specifically on activists, journalists, educators and community leaders. The study concluded that digital video production can be embraced as a means of enhancing civic participation. Davey (2007) in his work titled “Student Provocateurs: Empowering Student Voice and Democratic Participation through Film found that digital media, specifically video, needs to be prominent for the effective education of students.

Participatory video production can play a vital role as a modern educational technology tool used in MIL and citizenship programs due to the growth in popularity of digital video cameras and online video sharing sites such as YouTube which has made it very easy for young people to create and distribute their own videos. According to Kindon (2003), participatory video is perceived to be an effective way of reaching and including the most powerless – those traditionally lacking a voice in community development – as a means of increasing equitable outcomes.

Scholars suggest that the inclusion of digital media production support literacy, civic engagement, and an interest in news and current events (Hobbs et al., 2013). Video production activity put the teacher in the center of the action (Hobbs et al., 2011) and fostering filmmaking can play a strategic role in the consolidation of democracy and in developing inclusive forms of citizenship (Hamburger, 2011).

The concept of participatory cultures developed by Jenkins and others was a response to the emergence and popularity of Web 2.0. “Participatory culture” can be defined as “a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations” (Curry, 2010). The literature also indicates the importance of including practical training in the teaching and learning process even in a micro scale. Kahne and Westheimer examined ten educational programs within United States that were designed to develop democratically active citizens. The authors concluded that the best method to ensure a healthy and secure democracy is by exposing school students to direct community participation and by enhancing student knowledge, participation and conception of themselves as members of a community (Kahne & Westheimer, 2003).

Kerr and others examined the results of the participation of 14-year-old British school students in the IEA International Citizenship Education Study. The report which was prepared by the National Foundation for Educational Research detailed the performance and results of England’s students within the UK. The findings suggest that while the students have an understanding

of democratic values, the depth of understanding is limited. The findings also suggested that civic engagement is better promoted in schools that employ democratic practices (Kerr et al., 2002).

Menezes (2003) also investigated whether the participatory experiences of secondary school students affect their attitudes towards citizenship and the nature of their political engagement as adults, and considers implications for the development of citizenship education projects. The findings also found a positive impact in the frequency of participation on civic concepts and political engagement (Menezes, 2003).

Many researchers indicate the importance of citizenship education as a tool for democratizing the society. Lee (2009) found that the introduction of citizenship education in New Zealand increased the levels of active citizenship of young migrant New Zealanders. Similar findings by Fito (2009) in relation to citizenship education in the Social Studies Curriculum of the Solomon Islands, suggest that teaching appropriate values to develop good and active citizens will improve the chaotic situation of the Solomon Islands. Pogue (2004) also found that the way in which civics is taught to students may have an effect on whether they feel a duty or obligation to vote. Mutch (2002) summarized five ways to define and teach citizenship: citizenship as status (teaching responsibilities and rights); citizenship as identity (exploring membership in groups, cultures and individual beliefs); citizenship as a democratic ideal (modeling values for democratic leadership and social justice); citizenship as public practice (teaching rules, laws and organization procedures); and citizenship as participation (in making decisions, resolving differences and managing resources). Mutch also identifies how these components of citizenship education are currently embedded in the curriculum and details the possible ways for citizenship to be taught in primary schools. These include teachers and principal as role models, use of teaching devices such as classroom contracts and participation in education outside the classroom (e.g. group decision making and activity at school camps) (Mutch, 2002).

Aitken, argues that citizenship education should enable children to understand citizenship as: identity (belonging to groups and personal identity); virtue (valuing freedom, fairness, tolerance, truth and reasoning), civil and legal rights, a social concept (receiving welfare support) and a political concept (active participation in public debate). Aitken offers a definition of citizenship education which includes these skills and encourage student participation in political, economic and social decision making at local, regional, national and international levels (Aitken, 2005). Some argue that less structured type of citizenship education may be more effective; for example the citizenship education in New Zealand is less structured than in the United States, but according to Barr's 1998 study, it may be more effective at producing confident and informed citizens. Barr noted that children in New Zealand are given considerable

responsibility, including road patrol, library duties and group decision making at class camps. These informal opportunities provide a more holistic approach to citizenship education and the development of “confident, informed and responsible” citizens. (Barr, 1998)

A pilot study was conducted in Australia that investigates the nature of primary-level teachers’ knowledge in the area of civics and citizenship education. The authors developed an experimental unit of work in civics and citizenship education, and assessed how the knowledge and beliefs of teachers affected the implementation of the unit in the classroom. Findings were based on innovative methods: video-documentation of the lessons, in-depth interviews with the teachers involved in the study and focus groups with children from their classes. The authors conclude that there are seven major themes of knowledge and thought that occupy teachers’ minds when teaching civics and citizenship: (1) knowledge of content and resources; (2) knowledge of pupils; (3) pedagogical knowledge; (4) knowledge of community context; (5) management of time; (6) affective outcomes; and (7) control and discipline. They argue that these findings have important implications for teacher education and the development of teaching resources. (Dunkin et al., 1998)

In his extensive article, Murphy (2004) challenges the universal practice of teaching civic education within the school system, and describes the practice as both ineffective and a violation of the civic trust that underpins the public school system in the USA. Murphy’s article begins by discussing the educational response to the September 11 terror attacks, and the political conflict that developed between Liberals and Conservatives in response to the content of the civics lessons that were being taught to American students. While Murphy acknowledges the significant role that the school system has in teaching civic knowledge and promoting civic participation, he argues against the use of the school system to foster civic motivation. (Murphy, 2004). While, Levinson concluded that democracies should embrace liberal political education despite the impact on other social, cultural and political structures (Levinson, 1999).

The Study

Research questions

1. How did participant students hear about the programs?
2. What were the reasons behind the student's decision to participate in the programs?
3. What the participants think that would improve future MIL workshops?
4. What are the participant students' recommendations to get more students to participate in future programs?

Hypotheses

- H1: Current and past participants of the program will score higher on MIL measure than non-participants.
- H2: Current and past participants of the program will score higher on Active citizenship measure than non-participants.

Research methodology

Two-Group posttest-only randomized experimental design was used to assess the MIL of students who participated in the programs and those students who did not participate.

Students of all categories were selected randomly and the total sample size was 200 student distributed as follows:

- 100 program participants (50 participated in Internews program and 50 participated in Active citizen program)
- 100 non participant students

The study measured the groups on two measures (MIL measurement and Active Citizenship measurement) and compared them by testing for the differences between the means using a t-test. The questionnaire included 4 parts as follows:

- Part one (demographics)
- Part two: MIL measure
- Part three: Active citizenship measure
- Part four: for workshop participants only and consisted of 11 questions concerning recommendations for future workshops.

Findings

Q1: How did participant students hear about the programs?

(10%) of the sample knew from an instructor announced it in class, (20%) from ads in the university campus, (30%) through a friend, (40%) from groups and Facebook. The data suggest that using social networks seems to be the best way to get information about the workshops to students and it is also a simple way to better distribute information about MIL education programs. NGOs in Egypt may want to consider starting a campaign to encourage current participants to tell more of their friends about the program through the use of Facebook.

Q2: What were the reasons behind the student's decision to participate in the programs?

Answers to the question about the reasons behind the student's decision to participate in the program: (5%) of the sample said frankly to get a day off, while (45%) participated to be able to list it on their CV/resumes while (20%) to network and meet people, (15%) To get leadership experience, (10%) To become more involved in their community, (5%) to work to solve problems in community. Number one reason was to list their participation on their CVs and I believe that NGOs should highlight what the skills learned in the program will benefit students in other areas of life, such as work. The other top two reasons current participants said they participated was for leadership experience and to become more involved in their community. These would be two great aspects of the program to emphasize when talking about the benefits of participation.

Q3: What the participants think that would improve future MIL workshops?

Answers to the question about what the participants think that would improve future workshops: (45%)of the sample responded that the Internews workshop was too structured and making it less structured will improve it more, while (35%) of the sample mentioned that there aren't enough preparation meetings before the workshops. NGOs in Egypt may want to consider organizing more preparation meetings before the workshops in future programs.

Q4: What are the participant students' recommendations to get more students to participate in future programs?

Participants made recommendations concerning what the organizers of workshops could do to get more persons to participate: holding the session at a different time of the year (5%), providing transportation to the preparation meetings (10%); having the preparation meetings at different times (10%), better explain the benefits of participation (40%); have instructors offer extra

credit for participation (35%). Since so many participants said that a better explanation of the benefits of participation was the most effective way to encourage other students to participate, it should be a priority of NGOs to focus more on these benefits in their ads and publications (posters and flyers), and train student leaders to explain these benefits to their classmates.

H1: Independent sample t-tests were used to analyze the data for Hypothesis 1, Results partially support the hypothesis. Participants scored significantly higher than non-participants on measures of Media and Information Literacy.

H2: Independent samples t-tests were used to analyze the data for Hypothesis 2, Results partially support the hypothesis which stated that participants of the two programs will score higher on Active citizenship measure than non-participants.

Limitations and future research

The most significant limitation to this study was the sample, the researcher tried to achieve the similarity between the members of each of the four groups of the students, but the researcher cannot claim causal effect of the programs (the intervention) on the target population. Quasi-experimental research designs share many similarities with the traditional experimental design, but they specifically lack the element of random assignment to treatment or control. Instead, quasi-experimental designs typically allow the researcher to control the assignment to the treatment condition, by using some criteria other than random assignment. For future research it is highly recommended to get a more complete dataset of the participants and non-participants in each university and the data collection tools should include more important questions about family structure, and demographics in order to achieve the ideal experimental comparison.

A second limitation that arose from working with the university students during the administration of the survey was the challenges of having students take a 40-minute survey. Some students discussed the survey and the responses they were making with each other, and a number of surveys were rushed through or left incomplete as students wanted to finish more quickly and continue socializing with friends. Future research should put this in consideration. Participant groups take more efforts since group members already know each other; while working with the non-participants was much easier since many of the selected students saw the others for the first time. With these limitations in mind, there are many things that can be done for future research however the researcher encourages NGOs to continue to keep thorough records of partici-

pant contact information in the event that additional research opportunities come up and need access to that information. Additionally, a longitudinal study should be conducted to see if the effects of participation persist over time. Further research is needed to continue to find ways to strengthen and expand civic education programs across the country.

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The Interaction Between Framing and Media Literacy

An approach for promoting participatory democracy in Africa

Fatimata Ly-Fall

The concept of framing was introduced by the anthropologist Gregory Bateson in 1955 and extended with the writings of the sociologist Erving Goffman. Framing provides an insightful perspective for the understanding of media literacy, which focuses on the need for a better knowledge of mass media. Their analysis of framing emphasized the necessity for interpretation of frames according to the particularity of the situation.

This article examines how an awareness of the relationship between framing and media literacy can broaden one's understanding of the interaction between citizens, public policy makers and media producers for effective participatory democracy in Africa.

A case study of a media literacy program that is being implemented in Senegal, contributes to illustrate the need to promote and strengthen the concept in Africa for more dialogic communication in the public sphere.

Keywords: information and media literacy, framing, participatory democracy, Senegal

Introduction

The concept of framing introduced by the anthropologist Gregory Bateson in 1955 and extended with the writings of the sociologist Erving Goffman provides an insightful perspective for the understanding of media literacy, which focuses on the need for a better knowledge of mass media. Their analysis of framing emphasized the need for an interpretation of frames according to the particularity of the situation.

In this article, I examine how an awareness of the relationship between framing and media literacy can broaden one's understanding of the interaction between citizens, public policy makers and media producers for effective participatory democracy in Africa.

A case study of a media literacy program that is being implemented in Senegal, contributes to illustrate the interest of promoting and strengthening the concept in Africa for more dialogic communication in public sphere.

Defining Framing

A large body of research has focused on the concept of framing. Bateson (1955) was the first to use “frame of interpretation” or “metamessage” when referring to the meaning in a particular situation. However, Goffman (1974) carried the concept of framing into a deeper level of analysis. He defined a frame as “schemata of interpretation” that allow individuals or groups “to locate, perceive, identify, and label events and occurrences” (p.21). In this definition, he explained how frames allow individuals or groups to make sense of their everyday life. For Myers (2004), it is important to understand how these frames work. He defined schemas as “mental templates by which we organize our worlds”. He stated that they “influence how we perceive, remember and evaluate others and ourselves.” Analyzing Goffman’s definition of framing, Reese, Gandy and Grant (2003) explained that schemata of interpretation are “acted out” through our common sense knowledge, performing “its constructive role in our everyday life”.

Throughout the decades, Goffman’s contribution on framing research from a linguistic perspective has opened up a passionate debate among scholars that have provided different conceptual and operational definitions of the term. Scheufele (1997) provided insightful explanations regarding this matter. She stated, “framing has been used repeatedly to label similar but distinctly different approaches. At the same time, studies have operationalized framing in combination with other concepts such as agenda setting, or priming”.

The lack of a unique theoretical model for framing has led Entman (1993) to call for “a common understanding that might help constitute framing as research paradigm” (p.56). His definition of framing emphasized the fact that framing involves selecting some aspects of a reality and presenting them as the most important to the public. Indeed, he stated, “Frames select and call attention to particular aspects of the reality described, which logically means that frames simultaneously direct attention away from other aspects” (p.54).

The idea of selection is very important to understanding the concept of frame because it suggests that frames constitute only part of the discourse, which can stipulate a power of the message framer over the message receiver. Indeed, the thought raised by this point is that the message sender has the ability to focus the attention of the people on what they should emphasize and how they should think about issues, thus to limit the debate. This idea originates from the behavioral analysis of mass media, which posits that people are programmed to respond to environmental stimuli (Pavlov, 1927; Staats, 1967). In such a

perspective, the messagee is viewed as a passive agent in the communication process. However, more recent research reveals a big shift from the behavioral model to a cognitive model of mass media, which stipulates that people are rational beings that call for an active participation in the communication process (Beniger & Gusek, 1995; Reardon, 1991). One of the reasons for this big shift is the democratization of media, which brought to the public easy access to different kinds of media, thus more possibilities for media consumption analysis. This stage has been achieved in part through a growing popular mass consciousness about media literacy. (This statement is not referring to Africa.)

Defining Media Literacy

Media literacy focuses on the need for a better understanding of the role and functions of media in democratic societies (UNESCO, 2011). Developing critical thinking has been one of the major educational goals for media literacy; indeed, media literacy has been largely influenced by the larger critical movement begun with the Frankfurt School. In critical literacy, people are asked to take into account the social, cultural, political and historical contexts within which the process of meaning-making is embedded and thus influenced. The emphasis is placed on the necessity to think of how media work: how they produce meaning and construct reality. According to Hobbs (2006) media literacy helps one analyze media texts by focusing on key questions such as: who is sending the message and what is the author's purpose? What techniques are used to attract and hold attention? What lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in this message? How might different people interpret this message differently, and what is omitted from the message. These questions can be linked with the concepts drawn by the Center for Media Literacy in Santa Monica, California: All media are constructed; media messages are constructed using creative languages with its own rules; different people experience the same media messages differently; media have embedded values and points of view; and finally, most media messages are constructed to gain profit and or power. (Thoman & Jolls, 2005) From these major concepts, one can say that media literacy allows multiple perspectives for mindful and critical media consumption. Thoman and Jolls (2005) stated "Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy". The question raised by the idea that media literacy transforms the process of media consumption into an active and critical process is "how would media framing work in such an environment?"

Interaction between Framing and Media Literacy

Through media literacy people gain greater awareness of the potential for misrepresentation and manipulation of mass media. Therefore, the way events and issues are framed becomes a function of both the intent of the media messages' producers and the audiences' interpretation. Indeed, beneath this idea lies the concept of "social constructivism". Media message senders try to construct social reality by "framing images of reality... in a predictable way" (McQuail, 1994). However, because the recipients of media messages are active participants in the communication process, they have the ability to construct their own meaning, thus to limit the effect of mass media. Gamson & Modigliani (1989) showed that media discourse is part of the process by which individuals construct meaning. They described a frame as the "central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning" (p. 143); they continued stating that a frame is "a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue" (p. 57). Botan & Hazleton (2006) corroborated when they stated, "Frames or schemata of interpretation are present in both the communicator and the receiver from which they either build the message or the interpretation of the message". Lakoff (2004) went even further; for him every word evoked a frame; he stated, "Every word is defined with respect to what cognitive scientists call a frame. A frame is a conceptual structure of a certain form." Following his logic, one can say communication comes with a frame and framing is an inseparable part of human communication. Therefore the question is not whether professionals of media draw the public attention to certain topics (framing), rather, the question one should ask is: do audiences have enough media literacy to understand both the writing (construction, production) and the reading (analysis and deconstruction) of media messages? This question points out the necessity for publics to be media literate for the sake of public democracy.

When one analyzes framing and media literacy as necessary devices for more dialogic communication, it is possible to say that they are essential parts for organizational effectiveness and of "public deliberation" (Pan & Kosicki, 1997). As stated by Snow & Benford (1992) "a frame also functions as a key idea to animate and sustain individual participation in collective actions, a necessary part of the policy-making process". Reese, Gandy, & Grant (2003) corroborated this point; for them "Framing an issue is to participate in public deliberation strategically both for one's sense making and for contesting the frames of others, thus limiting ourselves to the effects paradigm prevents us from analyzing the strategic contests in framing processes."

Framing, Media Literacy and Participatory Democracy

The construction and deconstruction of media texts made possible in part by media literacy have given to publics the ability to participate more actively in communication processes. This has led to more complex interactions between media producers and their various audiences; indeed, for producers developing media messages has become more challenging. On the one hand, professionals in the media industry have to organize and present their media messages in a way to influence their audiences. On another hand, if publics are more media literate, they interpret messages according to their own meaning. From this perspective, a frame would refer to both the way media practitioners organize and present issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided. According to Ryan (1991), “which frame to sponsor and how to sponsor it, and how to expand its appeal are strategic issues to participants.” Reese, Gandy & Grant (2003) responded by stating “each actor needs to take strategic steps to get messages across and win arguments”. In this sense, one can say that framing becomes a strategic means for all actors that search to expand their realm of influences because both the message producer and the message recipient have the means to construct and deconstruct the message for their benefits.

Gamson & Modigliani (1987) explained that, “a step toward framing is strategic if it makes one’s message meet the epistemic standards of good arguments and achieve cultural resonance”. This could lead one to state that framing is influenced by a multitude of factors; among them, the individuals’ socio-cultural background, and the public and organizational setting within which it occurs.

Conceptualizing framing from the social constructivist standpoint provides an interesting approach for understanding the interactions in public sphere. Indeed, from this perspective, one can see that media producers do not necessarily control the communication process involved within their interaction with their various audiences. While, they have the ability to develop strategic media messages by drawing attention away from one frame in order to focus on another, they cannot control the way these frames will be deconstructed by their audiences. In addition, they might not even be aware of the processes involved when they frame messages. As Gamson (1989) explained, “the concept of framing can include the intent of the sender but the motives can also be unconscious ones”.

Participatory experience. The case of a Media Literacy program in an urban village in Senegal

As stated throughout the analysis above, educating various actors in public arenas about the nature of media texts becomes a necessity to promote and strengthen democracy. From this perspective, a media literacy program has been designed in Senegal, West Africa to improve people's understanding of the role of media literacy in public deliberation.

Indeed, besides the democratization of media in Africa, media literacy is not a well-known concept in this region, especially in West Africa. In an effort to remedy this situation, the Center for Democracy, Media literacy, and Multilingualism (CEDEM) has drawn a program entitled "Building a society of information and media literate citizens" that started in an urban village called Ouakam, located in Dakar, the capital of Senegal.

The rationale for the case of Ouakam

The village of Ouakam was chosen for many reasons. First, this is an area that deals with great poverty. The population relies especially on fishing and arts and crafts, two business sectors that face many problems. The education system is also confronted with tremendous challenges, including an increasing number of students, lack of infrastructures, and lack of pedagogic material.

From a demographical standpoint, the population has increased enormously with a strong presence of persons who came from adjacent regions like Mauritania, Guinea, and Mali.

In addition, these past years Ouakam has experienced violence between the city hall and the population due to estate access. Much of the violence has been generated by a lack of community members' participation in municipal policies. In addition, research has shown a deficit in education in various fields, such as public lands property laws, or municipality budgeting. These facts, combined with the media coverage that has focused especially on the sensational aspect of the problem, have aroused an eagerness to implement programs to strengthen citizens' participation in public affairs through the introduction of information and media literacy.

Besides all the problems cited above, Ouakam has a good potential for development because of the existence of many community development organizations, many centers, such as the youth Center, and cultural places.

Purpose of the program

The programs' primary goal was to promote information and media literacy as a means to strengthen participatory democracy in Africa, by starting a pilot in

Senegal that could be replicated in other localities of the continent.

The program was divided into two sections: 1) Enabling critical information and media consumption to citizens and 2) On becoming information and media 'producers'.

The objectives of the program were:

For section 1:

Objective 1.1: Stimulate public discussion on the issue of information and media literacy

Objective 1.2: Increase the capacity of citizens to decode information and media content

For section 2:

Objective 2.1: Enable the transition from critical information and media consumers to independent information and media producers

Objective 2.2: Improve access to the media industry for minorities, particularly, women, young citizens and minority ethnic groups

Design of the program: Participatory approaches were used at different stages of the program:

Methodological framework

Stage 1: Involving key community leaders

A close collaboration with community leaders in Ouakam, especially women, was used as the main strategy. The program began by preparing community leaders to be key partners of the program; they have been considered as the junction between the center (CEDEM) and the population of Ouakam.

During one week, focus groups were organized with a reduced group of 15 women leaders, ages 35 to 55, on the strategic stakes of information and media literacy in democratic societies. These sessions were also used for brainstorming to identify all the potential barriers to the success of the program. From the discussions emerged the need to involve other women, local decision-makers, such as the mayor and his team, religious and traditional leaders who are well respected in the locality, and the representatives of the government, such as the prefect. Finally, a decision to engage younger generations who are often less interested in community development was taken. The women leaders of Ouakam, who are well known in the community, visited the personalities in the locality to convince them about the pertinence of the program. This was done to get their approval and prevent conflict between people of the village. Indeed, their involvement encouraged other people of the locality to participate more actively in the program.

Stage 2: Training sessions for women leaders

Training sessions with the first group of women were held in native languages to allow the majority of people who are French illiterate to get involved. An evaluation of the learning through debate between trainers from the CEDEM and trainees on the subject of information and media literacy was made. After this step, a community workshop (2 days) was organized by the trained women to expand the learning process. These were collaborative training sessions led by women leaders with the supervision of media specialists from the CEDEM.

Stage 3: Engaging younger community members to democratic information and media production

After the first two stages, each of the women leaders was asked to discuss in their respective organization about the program. In an inclusive approach, they had to choose one younger member ages 20 to 35 to represent them during longer training sessions on information and communication technologies, and information production. The decisions about whom to choose to be part of the training were made by the women leaders in coordination with the president and the executive secretary of the CEDEM who interviewed the selected participants. Much precaution was taken to have a representative sample.

These twenty younger women were designated to be part of the more intense and in depth training because it required a long duration and a minimum level of computer literacy. Strong involvement of these young adults was promoted because it was thought that by enabling access to media field for this category through a solid training at the center, they could expand the learning process especially among their peers; thus contribute to promoting media literacy in community's settings. They could, by this means, enhance participatory democracy. They seemed to be valuable contacts that could encourage the dialogue between information and media specialists and citizens, through the production of audience generated material.

The first trained women leaders were not left aside. They worked closely with the team of CEDEM during the whole process. Besides their involvement in the selection process, they were also given the responsibility to choose the venue and the menus; they were also in charge of the invitations.

Indeed, because of their involvement, multicultural and intergenerational interactions were obtained, which contributed to bring together Ouakam members around the program.

Training of the young women

Phase 1: One month: Initiation

- Initiation to the concept of information and media literacy, and participatory democracy
- Initiation on information and communication technologies
- Initiation on media texts analysis

Phase 2: Seven months: In depth training

- Organization of training sessions in media production, reports on subjects related to citizens' participation
- Critical analysis of media texts, followed by debates
- Decoding information published in new media

Phase 3: Two months: Evaluation

- Conception of reports and/or documentary films by the trainees on information and media literacy, and citizen's participation under the supervision of professionals from CEDEM,
- Conception of newsletters, blogs, and websites by the trainees
- Animation of discussions and bulletin boards
- Presentation of the trainee's achievements to the public during workshops

Conclusion

Understanding the importance of information and media literacy will help transform the process of media consumption into an active and critical process for this community; indeed, through information and media literacy people gain greater awareness of the potential for misrepresentation and manipulation of mass media. Throughout this program, the Center for Democracy has contributed an holistic approach to help participants of the program to move from being only recipients of media messages to become active participants in public debate; having the ability to construct their own meaning, thus to limit the effect of mass media.

Even though the program is still in process, some encouraging signs have been noticed. Trainees have participated in an awareness campaign for voter

registration and learning about candidates programs for the coming municipal elections. Education sessions on budgeting, and property laws have been included in the program.

The trainees have created Facebook pages and blogs to better communicate about the importance of community member's involvement in policy-making for more dialogic communication in the public sphere.

In addition, some of the trainees have already showed a willingness to work in the information and media field. It is hoped that throughout the implementation of the program, they will have a great opportunity to make productive partnerships and build their network because of their interaction with media producers who are involved in the process. It is hoped that this will contribute to reduce unemployment in Ouakam. Finally, in the future the trainees will be mentored to become trainers of younger children of Ouakam ages 6 to 12 (during week-ends and holidays), in order to familiarize them with information and media tools and techniques at an early age. The goal is to help develop their critical thinking skills and stimulate their desire to expand their knowledge on this subject later in their lives.

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Constructing Online Spaces for Intercultural Dialogue

Media literacy initiatives for global citizenship

Manisha Pathak-Shelat

Global citizenship has once again caught the attention of researchers and educators alike because people are increasingly interconnected in the globalized world and global challenges need global responses. In addition, this is probably the first time in history that large scale citizen-to-citizen interactions have been made possible at the global level as a result of the new media and information technologies. This article is based on a multi-sited ethnographic study on women's transnational and digital civic participation and their experiences of global citizenship. The article argues that online spaces and communities have an important contribution to make in developing women's civic self-image as global citizens through facilitating intercultural dialogue. Online dialogue with self and within issue based communities can shape and reinforce global civic identities while dialogue with "others" with different cultures, ideologies, and practices can promote respect, empathy, and tolerance for other cultures. The article concludes with suggestions for media and information literacy initiatives to contribute to global citizenship by designing spaces, communities, and practices that invite young people to engage in intercultural dialogue.

Keywords: global citizenship, transcultural citizenship, media and information literacy, intercultural dialogue, cultural studies, online civic engagement

Introduction

Global citizenship has captured the attention of scholars, politicians, educators, and citizens once again. Global citizenship, however, is not a new concept; far from it. The notion of KosmouPolites or cosmo-polities: a citizen of the universe goes back to the ancient Graeco-Roman world, particularly to the thought of the Stoics and Cynics (Heater, 1996). These ancient philosophers were not rejecting local and national political communities but they recognized and often valorized allegiance to the moral community made up of all human beings.

Global citizenship has caught our imagination once again willingly or unwillingly as we are all increasingly interconnected in the globalized world. Never before have we seen the kind and scale of exchanges among people, money, ideas, and information than what we see in today's networked society. Even though yet nascent and lacking much in the form of governance, we see a global civil society emerging. As Dower (2003) points out we have realized that global problems require common solutions. Threats to democracy, increasing inequalities, and global environmental issues are some global problems that require the collective attention of the global civil society. At the same time the Internet has played a significant role in the way people experience and participate in globalization. New media technologies, in fact, have contributed to the acceleration in the exchange of ideas and information at the global level (despite the continuing struggles over digital and cognitive divides) that have changed the way people go about their daily lives, including the way they experience and enact citizenship.

This article makes three arguments: First, the research shows that all over the world there are young women questioning the rigid boundaries of nation-states and wanting to be part of the global civil society, however nascent and problem-ridden it is at present. Second, that the Internet and social media are immensely valuable in their civic participation and that intercultural dialogue online has great potential, albeit with some challenges, in furthering the experience of global citizenship. Third, media and information literacy (MIL) programs can play a significant role in facilitating intercultural dialogue online and contribute to the development of positive civic identities.

The researcher's study on global citizenship resulted from years of observation of youth participation on global civic websites. These websites like *TakingITGlobal*, *Avaaz*, *UNOY Peacebuilders*, and *Global Voices Online* address issues that are relevant globally and attract participation from several different parts of the world. The question that intrigued me was how the participation on such websites would influence civic identities? Would the participants develop strong global civic identities based on the transnational connections and experiences these communities offered? And what would happen to local or national identities in the process? The researcher was especially interested in studying women who were civically active and digitally fluent because the female gender has been used in the traditional societies as the basis to exclude women from citizenship and public participation. Even today the female gender has implications for lower access to new media technologies. Besides, few popular media messages encourage girls to be civically and politically active. The participants in this study were women who had not only demonstrated civic interest and digital fluency to participate in an online civic sphere, they used the Internet to carve out positive identities for themselves.

The study

The study on women's participation in transnational civic websites and their experience of global citizenship is the result of the thought process outlined above. The multi-sited study was carried out using ethnographic methods from 2011-2014. The findings are drawn from in-depth interviews with 23 women in 15 different countries and textual analysis of their online participation. The women volunteered to participate in the study through an online survey posted on selected global civic websites (the survey link was shared on Facebook and Twitter by several participants) that drew responses from 136 women from 42 different countries. Out of 136 respondents in the survey, 55 women showed willingness to participate in the further research but eventually 23 women were interviewed from 15 different countries. The interviews were mostly conducted through Skype (except in three instances where Instant Messaging (IM) and email communications were used and lasted between one and two hours. All participants were available throughout the study for follow up and clarifications even after the interviews were complete. For textual analysis, all possible samples of their online participation for a minimum of one month inclusive of Facebook pages, Twitter comments, posts on other social media, blogs and articles they wrote were recorded. The textual analysis was used as a supplementary method to the interviews to examine whether the claims the participants had made in the interviews were evident in their online participation. It also helped identify some unique features that characterize online civic participation. The study was conducted with a strict adherence to the ethical guidelines of the Institutional Review Board of the University.

The Cultural Studies approach to citizenship

A crucial step in the study was to determine the parameters of global citizenship and global civic identity. What makes us conclude that a person has strong or weak global civic identity? What qualities or characteristics should a person possess to be identified as a global citizen? There is substantial literature by scholars (Dower, 2003; Dower & Williams, 2002; Held, 2002; Kung 2002) that normatively defines what attributes a "global citizen" would possess and what kind of activities he/she would be engaging in to qualify as a global citizen. There have been attempts (e.g. by Oxfam) to develop a set of criteria to assess if a person has developed global civic identity. This research was not comfortable with imposing such normative frameworks on the women in the study who were situated in vastly different socio-cultural and geopolitical locations. The aim was to understand how ordinary citizens perceived their civic identity

and evaluated their own lived citizenship experience. The research, therefore, adopted the cultural studies approach to citizenship.

The cultural studies approach is a theoretical and methodological approach for studying citizenship and civic engagement that takes individual day-to-day experiences of civic life and its meanings into consideration. Hermese & Dahlgren (2006) and Couldry (2006) are among its leading proponents. Dahlgren has proposed the concept of “civic culture” that takes into account “those features of the socio-cultural world- dispositions, practices, processes that constitute pre-conditions for people’s actual participation in the public sphere, in civil and political society (also who do they include and exclude)... civic culture is an analytic construct that seeks to identify the possibilities of people acting in the role of citizens” (Dahlgren 2003, p.154-5). In line with this approach Asen (2004) proposed a discourse theory of citizenship that conceives citizenship as a mode of public engagement and recognizes citizenship as a process. While this research values scholarly contributions in conceptualizing global citizenship there was also recognition of the need to take into account the inputs from the civic actors themselves.

Studying a global and digital civic culture

The study focused on women who despite their cultural and geo-politically diverse locations and life worlds believe in defining citizenship in relational terms, make connections online with diverse others, and come together around issues and civic interests rather than national, ethnic, or religious identities. In this sense, this is an emerging global civic subculture that is based on shared core values amidst differences and a shared relational articulation of citizenship, that is (at least partially) shaped and sustained by online discursive practices. This kind of citizenship is experienced more culturally than through legal-political governance. Therefore, the term “transcultural citizenship” is preferred when studying this subculture. The research required a framework that would allow an in depth study of the role the Internet plays in shaping this civic subculture.

The framework of transcultural citizenship that was developed for the study draws from Dahlgren (2011)’s framework of civic cultures and also from frameworks developed by Bennett et al. (2010) and Plummer (2003). Dahlgren’s framework addresses the broader concept of civic culture; Bennett et al.’s framework for analyzing civic websites is built around civic competencies required for effective online civic participation while Plummer’s framework examines processes that generate new public spheres based on intimate concerns like gender, sexuality, and parenting. This research modified the frameworks of Bennett et al. and Dahlgren based on the inductive primary analysis of the

data. This framework for examining transcultural citizenship goes beyond competencies and aims at examining dimensions that influence the quality of online enactment of global citizenship. Most relevant to this paper is a separate category of dialogue/deliberation in this framework which the other frameworks do not include, even when they do include expression. Providing spaces for different voices is an important requirement for democratic participation and hence expression is certainly one of the important dimensions of civic culture. Opportunities for expression, however, do not equate with opportunities for dialogue and do not guarantee serious deliberation. Plummer (2003, p.87) argues that “a good citizen does not speak in monologues but inhabits a world where people are interrelated and able to communicate with one another”. Dialogue with diverse others is a crucial element in transcultural citizenship, especially so when citizenship practices are defined as predominantly discursive and relational as in this research.

Keeping the online and global aspects of citizenship in focus, the following framework was proposed for studying online enactment of citizenship that can be applied to individual engagement as well as performance of websites/online civic communities in facilitating engagement.

The framework being proposed includes seven dimensions:

1. Identities/Affinities
2. Values
3. Knowledge/Information
4. Connection/Communities/Networks
5. Expression/Voice
6. Dialogue/Deliberation
7. Action (includes also a sense of efficacy)

There is, of course, frequent overlap among these dimensions when one observes online civic participation. For example, sharing information can be part of expression, dialogue, and also action.

Dialogue online

Participants reported with examples that the Internet provides many opportunities to engage in spontaneous, DIY (Do-it-yourself) dialogue especially through social media and at times through civic websites. Some participants were engaged in formal attempts to generate dialogue between diverse groups through strategic online spaces and some online civic organizations like TakingItGlobal, Soliya, and Peace X Peace. These also encourage moderated intercultural dialogue.

Women in the study engaged in three types of dialogue online that facilitate their experience of transcultural citizenship: 1, dialogue with “self” when they are engaging with online content; 2, dialogue with “us” or with people who share similar ideas, worldviews, and civic interests; and 3, dialogue with “them”, with people who think differently, are from cultures vastly different from theirs, or who have opposing ideological or political ideas. Several participants said that they consciously sought out opportunities for dialogue with those who are from different cultures and who think differently, though in practice this was not always easy. There are several challenges involved in each kind of dialogue but dialogue with “them” is the most challenging of the three. This is one area with tremendous potential for media and information literacy programs to contribute by educating citizens in using approaches that make online dialogue a positive experience and to also envision online spaces that enhance the experience of global citizenship.

Dialogue with “self”

It is somewhat tricky to label dialogue with “self” as online as although the individual is responding to online content the dialogue actually takes place within an embodied person. Dialogue with “self” is, however, very important from the point of view of citizenship. Dialogue with “self” is invisible to the onlooker and therefore to the researcher but most women in the study reported having a constant dialogue with self as they read online messages, stories, and comments, or viewed pictures and videos. The participants showed that whenever one uses a critical approach, many activities relevant to citizenship, mostly invisible to an onlooker, can take place during the dialogue with “self”: Deciding affinities, correcting positions, refreshing opinions, making decisions about extending solidarity and support, and in the long term may be changing attitudes that may lead to civic action. How to have constructive dialogue with self while engaging with online content is, therefore, an important media literacy competency.

Dialogue with “us”

There are many opportunities through social media and civic websites devoted to specific issues to have a dialogue with like-minded people. Almost every participant in the study gave examples of this kind of dialogue with friends in social media networks, professional colleagues, supporters, and people who were interested in the same civic issues. Gender justice, women’s health, LGBT rights, climate change, and animal rights are some such issues around which strong global online communities have emerged. During the dialogue with “us” participants talked about issues, shared achievements and setbacks, engaged in

collective problem solving, collaborated on projects, shared strategies, planned events and action, shared information, and showed solidarity. Dialogue with “us” in online spaces has several benefits, psycho-social as well as civic. The participants echo the feelings of activists worldwide that it is difficult to sustain long term activism and struggle for social justice whether at the personal DIY level or at a more formal level. Several participants also complained about not having found a supportive community in their geographic proximity. Dialogues with “us” across the geographical boundaries help keep the morale for activism high and isolation at bay, facilitate action that is well-informed, rejuvenate feeling of agency, and reinforce the civic and global identities of women. There is, however, often a feeling of “preaching to the choir” in issue based communities and therefore some of the participants make conscious efforts to engage in dialogue with “them” - with those who are culturally different and do not think like themselves.

Dialogue with “them”

Some participants spoke at length about looking for opportunities or creating opportunities where they could get into a discussion or even a heated debate with “different others” over issues they are passionate about. These dialogues over social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr or through civic websites like TakingITGlobal and UNOY Peacebuilders can create empathy, intercultural understanding, and opportunities for marginalized voices to represent their points of view. All participants in the study recognized the immense and unprecedented potential of the Internet for bringing diverse groups together on a common platform. They don’t claim, however, that bringing people together will always result in meaningful dialogue or the enhancement of understanding. Several women argue that even if all the “talk” online does not immediately result in direct action, it contributes to building awareness about issues and getting important, but often ignored, issues on public agendas.

Formal strategies for online dialogue

What has been discussed so far is mostly with reference to spontaneous DIY dialogue in social media spaces and online networks. Three participants in the study were engaged in formal strategic projects to generate online dialogue between diverse groups. One participant, Nadia initiated a project in Morocco that facilitates dialogue between youth and politicians and members of the parliament using social media. She explained that the real attraction of the Internet for her is the opportunities to get those groups that normally do not get to talk to each other in dialogue.

The second such project is the Global Partners in Education project being coordinated by the East Carolina University in which Shahla participates as a lead teacher of her university in Pakistan. The initiative was launched in 2003 to provide opportunities for university students to connect and collaborate with students around the world. Over 40 universities and over 1500 students annually participate in the project (<http://thegpe.org/about-gpe/>). The participating students connect and engage in dialogue with their counterparts from universities around the world through Internet based chat, video conferencing, and email.

The third example is shared by Aya who is based in the US. She is engaged in intercultural dialogue through Soliya.net and Connection Point on Peace X Peace which is committed to building a global network of peacebuilders in 128 countries (peacexpeace.org). Aya directs a program on Connection Point that focuses on creating platforms for dialogue between women of Arab Muslim and Western backgrounds. She is also a volunteer on soliya.net. that facilitates dialogue through video conferencing between college students from Western societies and Arab Muslim societies. Aya claims long term benefits to participants in these dialogues and the Soliya website displays data from their qualitative and quantitative evaluations on changing perceptions of their participants a nutshell. The program leaders argue that these initiatives help participants recognize their common human bond and respect cultural differences. They also teach the participants how to effectively communicate across cultures; these are important competencies of being a citizen in our globalized world.

Challenges of dialogue online and the role of MIL programs

Participants see immense benefits of all three types of dialogue- with “self”, with “us”, and with “them” but also admit that despite the ease of reaching a large number of people at the click of one’s mouse, dialogue online is fraught with challenges.

Participants argue that dialogue with self has many civic benefits but without highly developed critical thinking skills and constant reflection it is not uncommon for people to respond to oppositional or uncomfortable content with dissonance. Personalizing one’s content and communities is becoming easier online and people may choose to restrict their information diet to include only the content they ideologically support. Developing critical thinking skills has, fortunately, been one of the key objectives of MIL programs (Frau-Meigs, 2013; Nfissi, 2013; Orozco et al., 2013). Exposure to multiple viewpoints online and the open mindedness and reflection to engage with them, then, should continue to be crucial components of MIL programs.

Dialogue with “us” seem to pose a different set of challenges for participants. Young people may need support in navigating the online communities, finding the right communities and networks, presenting and expressing themselves online, and understanding the issues of privacy, ethics, safety and security while they engage in dialogue with “us”. These are all areas where MIL programs have much to contribute. It is the dialogue with “them” that brings the most challenge. These dialogues often bring unpleasant experiences. Very often online conversations become debates where each side is preoccupied with arguing one’s own stance rather than listening to the other’s point of view and under such circumstances a positive outcome remains questionable. Two negative qualities of online dialogue with “different others” make participation especially frustrating for the participants in this study: incivility and cognitive dissonance, even though these cannot be labeled as online-only behaviors. Participants frequently mentioned Incivility in online spaces as something that troubled them. Persons lashing out at others for their beliefs can be traumatizing for young women and some of these outbursts are downright misogynist in nature. A frequent outcome of such traumatic experience is that some of my participants avoid interacting with people with whom they might face conflict or whose style of interaction they find disrespectful. Shying away from uncomfortable spaces and hostile people can be a major block for women wanting to have dialogue with diverse others.

Howard (2011) argues that because of personalization of communication and the ability to individualize media content online it is easy for people to exclude those who did not share their ideology. This may increasingly turn people towards those who are geographically distant but ideologically close. In such cases the potential of the Internet for putting different people on the same platform is realized geographically but not ideologically. This can be a major drawback with reference to contribution of online spaces in intercultural dialogue and global citizenship. Therefore, educating people in respectfully and open mindedly engaging in dialogue with people who are different becomes the key component of MIL programs striving for intercultural understanding.

Slimbach (2005) offers six broad categories of competencies that a journey towards transcultural citizenship would require. Among these four are especially relevant to MIL programs: Perspective consciousness or seeing things through the hearts and minds of others; global awareness of transnational conditions; world learning or immersive learning in real life transcultural environments; and affective development. These competencies can be interwoven in MIL programs and are already a part of several existing initiatives. The MILID Yearbook 2013 contains several examples of such initiatives from various parts of the world (Fuglesang & Thulstrup, 2013; Nagaraj & Kundu, 2013). In addition, the UNESCO MIL Curriculum for Teachers addresses some of these issues.

There is another challenge- Anonymity of participants- that is a uniquely online phenomenon which can both positively or negatively influence the dialogue. According to some participants anonymity was a problem as they find it difficult to interact with people without knowing their background, where they are coming from geographically and culturally. Online anonymity, however, has its positive side that makes online spaces especially attractive to those who expect marginalization or harsh consequences if their identities get revealed. It also helps when the subject under discussion is taboo and some people may still want to talk about it without revealing their identities. New media literacy based on how to handle online anonymity would be helpful to many participants.

Moderated formal dialogue may control incivility and bullying online, and mostly have participants who reveal their full identities but that does not mean it is without challenge. When we advocate for equally respecting all cultural practices there is the risk of extreme cultural relativism that might lead to apathy towards victims of human rights abuse in various cultures. Harris (2004) points out another problem with the managed forums of political participation for youth that under supervision and sanctions their participation may become “the performance of engagement rather than engagement itself” (p. 137). Harris questions whether such managed programs hijack the agenda from young people and make them mouthpieces of the organization that conducts the dialogue. Can young people really say what they want on these platforms or are they forced to only voice certain acceptable ideas in acceptable language? This is a good question to ask while evaluating and designing formal initiatives for dialogue.

Coleman & Blumler (2009) point out that the Internet has the potential for democratic participation but it cannot be realized without proper infrastructure. They propose online civic commons where citizens can have dialogue among themselves and also with institutions of governance at all levels. Designing interactive online spaces and managing them, however, need skills and resources that most MIL educators are not likely to possess. Besides, designing great online spaces certainly does not make them democratic. The researcher’s observation of managed online initiatives by global institutions like the UNICEF and the World Bank has also alluded to fact that though these platforms open opportunities for participation to countries from global North as well as global South, it is predominantly the privileged English educated and urban youth from countries in the Global South who use these opportunities. Others either do not know these opportunities exist, or when they do, have no money, access to technology, training, or language to participate in these global public spaces.

With commercial interests dominating the digital space, public policies about net neutrality and surveillance also play an important role in designating affordable safe spaces for intercultural dialogue. To strengthen their role in

this area MIL experts will have to enter in collaborations with colleagues from technology and public policy, give young people a leading role in design and development, and spread their initiatives to the marginalized populations.

Conclusion

This empirical study shows that the Internet offers possibilities, albeit no guarantees, for dialogue that can contribute to intercultural understanding and shaping of strong global civic identities. Dialogues with “self”, “us” and “them- all have personal, social, and civic benefits whether they are carried out as spontaneous engagement through social media or through strategically designed and managed spaces. Both kinds of opportunities, however, also pose certain challenges that MIL programs can help address. The article suggests three distinct areas where MIL programs can play a significant role. 1, in developing reflective and critical thinking skills; 2, in developing communication competencies, civility, and open mindedness to other cultures that are the prerequisites for engaging in meaningful online DIY dialogue; and 3, ensuring that managed spaces- whether they are youth-led or adult led- remain safe and democratic.

Giroux (1998) argues that we need to do more than let kids have the opportunity to voice their concerns. “It means providing the conditions- institutional, economic, spiritual, and cultural- that allow them to re-conceptualize themselves as citizens”(p. 48). This goal can only be achieved through interdisciplinary and inter-sector collaborations, but the rewards it can bring in the forms of strong civic identities and intercultural understanding make the effort worthwhile.

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Reflexivity and Global Citizenship in High School Students' Mediagraphies

Daniel Schofield

The article explores mediagraphy as a learning activity in a high school class in Norway. The students explored aspects of globalization in four generations of their own families, with media use and experiences as the starting point. The student product is a "mediagraphy essay" – a written reflection on differences and similarities across generations. The essays and interviews with key informants are analyzed here using an interpretative, hermeneutic approach. The mediagraphy essays indicate that the youngest generation has access to, interacts with, and experiences a wider world than the world in which they physically operate. More than the older generations, the youth therefore have the opportunity to gain insights into global cultures and issues. Mediagraphy is found to be a learning activity that mediates an awareness of the multicultural society. Conclusively, the article argues that mediagraphy is an example of a reflexive exercise that can contribute to an understanding of one's position in the world, and the responsibility that comes with that, which is an important characteristic of both mediated cosmopolitanism and global citizenship.

Keywords: mediagraphy, cosmopolitanism, global citizenship, media literacy, high school

Introduction

People today are continuously connected to the global flow of information. As such, a global, complex mix of cultures is constantly present in our practices and thus in our worldview (Beck & Sznaider, 2006). The global media's logic has become increasingly substantial for society and culture (Hjarvard, 2008) and for how we communicate and engage in social practice (Castells, 2010). In line with this, new social practices have gradually become well established, but the digital era is still novel; young people today are the first generation to grow up with digital media as part of everyday life since birth. If these young people are to become active participants in tomorrow's democracy, they need to develop a literacy that includes the ability to reflect critically on the media-saturated

society and on their own media use. Such competencies are included in the terms *media literacy* (Buckingham, 2003; Erstad & Amdam, 2013) and *media and information literacy* (Kotilainen & Suoninen, 2013). There is nonetheless still a need for research on learning activities that link the analysis of contemporary culture with young people's media experiences. However, *mediagraphy* is emerging as a teaching method that enables students to understand both the global context and their media experiences in everyday life.

Mediagraphy was established as a learning activity through Vettenranta's (2010) application of Rantanen's (2005) methodology. The basic feature of mediagraphy is that the students themselves explore globalization through interviewing members of three previous generations of their own families, with media developments and their own media experiences as a focal point. In this article, a high school class in Norway participated in a project where mediagraphy was carried out for the first time at this educational level. The key empirical data analyzed here are the student products, "mediagraphy essays," and interviews conducted with key participants eight weeks after the project was completed.

Aim and research question

The aim of this article is to explore how high school students conducting mediagraphies perceive and make meaning of their global and local relationships, in comparison with previous generations of their family. The main research question that follows from this is: *how do high school students who conduct mediagraphies express their sense of belonging to – and position in – the global community?*

Mediagraphy as learning activity

Vettenranta (2010) applied mediagraphy as a learning exercise with Master's degree students. The students studied the process of globalization in four generations of their own families, including themselves. Based on qualitative interviews and theory studies, the students wrote *mediagraphy essays* based on Rantanen's (2005) *mediagraphy table*. This table was used to assemble key data from the interviews, and consisted of the following key factors for each generation:

Work, home country, place, sense of time, changes in lifestyle, education, changes in class, family, travel, language skills, media use, experiences of media events, interests, ideology, expressed attitudes, and identity.

The findings in Vettenranta's (2010) study suggest that the students live their lives glocally; i.e. they have a sense of belonging to both local and global communities. They also gained insight into aspects of their own identity and their

standpoint in the globalization process. Vettenranta argues that this insight is an essential feature of what she termed global media literacy, a literacy that contributes to an understanding of our multicultural, media-saturated world. In Ponte and Aroldi's (2013) Master's degree project "Digital Inclusion and Participation", which was inspired by mediagraphy, the students enhanced their theoretical understanding of media science. Moreover, the students became aware of generational differences, and with that, they developed self-reflexivity and sociological imagination. Thus, it seems that students who have conducted mediagraphies have expressed both a sense of belonging to a global community and a self-reflexive approach to their own media practices. This is in accordance with scholars such as Martin (2011), Delanty (2012), and Beck and Sznaider (2006), who maintain that digital and social media enables young people to orient themselves toward the world and act as global citizens, take global responsibility, and assume a cosmopolitan identity. However, other studies (Olausson, 2011; Rye, 2013) suggest that, in spite of young people's extensive connections to the wider world, they do not necessarily develop a global identity or identify with distant people and cultures.

Key concepts and theoretical perspectives

Globalization is not a 21st-century process; it has been ongoing for as long as we know (Waters, 1995). Nevertheless, it can safely be argued that globalization takes place at a different rate today than in earlier times. With the introduction of electronic communication and even more with digital media, globalization has accelerated (Rantanen, 2005), moving society toward a true "world society" (Giddens, 1990). In spite of the axiomatic aspects of globalization, there is no consensus on the meaning of the concept or which sides of the phenomenon should be emphasized (Beck, 2000). This article primarily applies Rantanen's (2005) understanding of globalization. She (Rantanen, 2005, p. 8) defines globalization as "a process in which worldwide economic, political, and social relations have become increasingly mediated across time and space". In other words, Rantanen draws attention to mediated globalization, arguing that what characterizes globalization in the modern world is that it increasingly takes place in and through media and communication.

Cosmopolitanism and citizenship

Globalization has often been studied as a macro phenomenon. However, as the globalization process obviously affects individuals' lives, a need for alternative concepts has emerged. Concepts such as *cosmopolitanism* and *global citizenship* have therefore frequently been used to capture how globalization

is experienced "from below", with individuals as the object of analysis. Here, cosmopolitanism is interpreted as having many similarities to global citizenship. For instance, Tomlinson (1999) claims that being a cosmopolitan means that one has an active experience of "belonging to the wider world". As such, cosmopolitanism is closely connected to identity; a cosmopolitan obtains a reflexive awareness of the features that unite us as human beings. This entails the ability to question one's own assumptions and prejudices. Identity is in this context not essentialist or stable; rather, it is fragmented and constructed and reconstructed across the different practices and positions in which one participates (Hall, 1996).

As with globalization, cosmopolitanism is a concept with a long history, which has been applied to tentatively describe the ongoing development in which people in the world gradually are becoming more closely connected to each other (Robertson, 2010). Beck and Sznaider (2006, p. 9) argue that cosmopolitanism is a defining feature of modern culture, as people all over the world are and have been living in "really-existing relations of interdependence". They view cosmopolitanization as unintended side effects of the actions taking place in global public spheres, such as discussion forums and social networks. Although media use in itself does not lead to a cosmopolitan identity, Rantanen (2005) emphasizes how the media offers global dimensions that can contribute to a cosmopolitan consciousness. In this way, it is in reality a question of *mediated* cosmopolitanism (Rantanen, 2005; Robertson, 2010). Rantanen (2005) argues that it is not possible fully to become a cosmopolitan; rather, cosmopolitanism is a reflexive project as a part of identity. In light of this study's approach, Beck's (2006) emphasis on *perspective-taking* as a constitutive principle of cosmopolitanism is interesting. Perspective-taking is about having the ability and willingness to assume the position of "the other". Another point that is essential in the following analysis is how cosmopolitanism is not an innate ability but a matter of competence (Hannerz, 1996). Hence, it can be viewed as a "mode of managing meaning" (Hannerz, 1996, p. 102) and something that is possible to learn and develop.

Research design and methodology

The article is based on an exploratory case study where a contemporary phenomenon is broadly studied in its real-life context (Yin, 2014), a classroom setting. The study was conducted in the autumn of 2011 at a high school in Norway in a class of 27 students in Vg3 General Studies in Media and Communication.¹ The class included 14 girls and 13 boys of Norwegian citizenship and ethnicity. After the project, in January/February 2012, 13 students were selected for qualitative interviews by the standards of *purposeful sampling* (Patton,

1990). The goal was to illustrate a variety among students with regard to essay thematics, work effort, and gender. At the same time, the sample size allows for an in-depth exploration of key aspects related to the purpose of the research.

Data collection and analysis

The students' mediagraphy essays and interviews are the main sources for data collection. In addition, participatory observation and an interview with the teacher serve as background for the analysis. The interviews were semi-structured and "focused" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), which implies that an interview guide with a narrowed focus was developed based on a tentative analysis of the mediagraphy essays. The students' essays are interpretations of experiences in the students' and family members' lives. As such, they resemble life stories, which are advocated by several scholars as important data to better understand the reciprocal relationship between the self and the world (Harrison, 2009). In the analysis, I was required to interpret the students' interpretation of reality. Moreover, the students interpreted their family members' interpretations of their lives. This kind of analysis can be referred to as double hermeneutics (Giddens, 1984) or as reflexive interpretation, as the analysis in reality involves multiple layers (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2008). The analysis process was characterized by an ongoing interdependence between theory and data as a process of analytical induction (Erickson, 2012). First, I coded the material thematically and proposed preliminary assertions and interpretations. Gradually, I formulated relevant research questions. Subsequently, common themes emerged that were later developed into analytical categories. The coding was partly done using the software NVivo 9/10.

Unit of analysis

Mediated action constitutes the unit of analysis. Human action is, according to Wertsch (1998), mediated through *mediational means*, such as language, everyday technologies, and social institutions. Mediated actions are real-time actions where actors, mediational means, and the context intersect. As such, mediated actions are at the core of human activity and thus the most informative unit of analysis in sociocultural research (Wertsch, 1998). In the following, mediagraphy is analyzed as a mediational means that mediates actions such as writing mediagraphy essays and participating in the interviews.

The classroom project

The classroom project lasted for five weeks, with five to ten lessons per week. This included an introductory phase of teaching on the topic of "media and

globalization”, where key concepts such as globalization, identity, and mediation were discussed. The student assignment was to explore their own families by gathering information from family members in three generations, which they compared to information about themselves. A completed mediagraphy table was the basis for the students’ work and allowed for an analysis of each individual and a comparison between generations. The students analyzed their data in light of their experiences of media in everyday life. Hence, media use and media development became the crucial factors for further analysis. The final student product was a written essay containing brief biographies of each family member and a discussion and reflection on the topic. The practical work was carried out in collaboration with peers and with guidance from the teacher. Thus, the meaning-making and potential learning that took place is seen as a sociocultural accomplishment (Wertsch, 1998). In the upcoming sections, examples are drawn from student essays and interviews to illuminate the research question.

Findings

As the project’s main topic was globalization and media, the students’ essays were concerned with issues related to the increasing global flow of information and the extensive media use among young people. However, the students were free to choose their approach and on which factors to focus. As such, it is interesting to see what types of issues were raised by the students in the essays. A salient finding is that most of the students expressed that they primarily use social media, which all reported using on a daily basis, to establish and maintain local relations. To a lesser extent, the students expressed that the media mediate actual relations on a global level.

The possibility of global social practice

The students’ essays illustrate that how people relate to the global and the local has changed rapidly. Several of these changes have been and are experienced as dramatic. However, in the students’ eyes, the most important changes are perhaps those experienced on a more symbolic or *mediated* level. It is relatively clear in this data material that the students have developed an understanding of the *possibility* to communicate across borders through social media. An excerpt from Inga’s essay illustrates how many of the students viewed social media as a means that *enables* contact with the “outside world”. However, she did not express having gained any close relationships to people in distant or unfamiliar cultures through the media.

You can contact anyone as long as they have access to one or more media and then, most importantly, the Internet. [...] Now, communication con-

tributes to pushing globalization even more. The world becomes smaller and smaller for each year. National borders are not that strict anymore; people all over the world can communicate and develop links between people.

Inga's reflections are of a quite universal, abstract character, but they are nevertheless based on her own inquiries and use of literature from the syllabus and Internet searches. In general, the students emphasized the increased access to information and digital social arenas when attempting to describe today's culture. In their eyes, this leads to increased knowledge and thus tolerance and empathy. Martha, for example, wrote in her essay that, though she views herself as less social in a physical sense than the other generations, she is more enlightened and informed. In other words, she argued that certain forms of information and knowledge are mediated through the increased use of global media.

A positive side of the media development is that society has never been more enlightened than we are today. Through journalists in television, radio, and newspapers, we can see everything that goes on in the world. We can follow the development of the riots in Egypt, and we can follow the U.S. election, and we know the exact number of Norwegians who are affected in accidents happening all over the world. We have contact with people on the other side of the globe [...] I cannot deny that this development is enormously positive for the world community. Knowledge is, after all, the key to success, and if we ever are going to achieve a peaceful world society, we must first and foremost be able to control each other.

Martha was here concerned with the general aspects of knowledge and the role that knowledge plays in the development of society and the world community, which e.g. Beck (2006) points to as an important feature of cosmopolitanism.

Identifying with the world and the local

A common feature in the essays is that the students referred to development where the most important values for the oldest generation were primarily related to local communities: the farm, the family, the village, or the town. Gradually, most families have come to travel more, and media use has become more incorporated in the daily pursuits. In addition, it appears that national identity is not a particularly central part of the youngest generation's consciousness. Historically, the nation has been an important part of identity, especially during dramatic periods such as World War I and II (see e.g. Rantanen, 2005; Vetenranta, 2010). In some respects, the findings here are consistent with those of previous research implying that globalization challenges the importance of the nation (de Block & Buckingham, 2010; Rantanen, 2005). This does not imply that national states are no longer essential for a number of aspects in people's

lives, but in the mediagraphy essays, it is primarily the local and the global that emerge as the key zones for connectivity. Christina is one of the students who described a development in her family with clear changes in what and with whom the generations identified themselves.

Another thing I found out is that, when it comes to feeling like a part of the world and not just as a part of Norway, is that it is only I who feel that I am. The previous generations are very attached to the place where they grew up. And I can well imagine that I can live anywhere. While they would prefer to live exactly where they are for the rest of their lives. I believe this may have something to do with the fact that I have experienced more of the world and have been in contact with people from other cultures than my own. And through TV and the Internet, you can be fed with information about cultures other than your own, even though you might not even think about it. I feel that I know a lot about different cultures because I like to watch documentaries about other countries.

Christina here wrote that she actually has “experienced more of the world”. This can be interpreted as primarily something that has been mediated through media such as TV and the Internet. However, Christina considers information and experiences mediated through contemporary media to be real sources of knowledge, the development of values, and as concretely expressed here, a sense of belonging. Lars also touched upon this topic in his essay. His main theme was how media development and media use play into people’s education and work. In the essay, he described his great grandfather as a Christian conservative focusing on family values. He wrote about his grandmother that she was a local patriot, a “woman of her village” and a family person. His mother became an academic and gradually more accustomed to everyday media use. In the interview, he reflected on how the family members viewed their relationship with the local and national community and with the outside world. His points are quite representative of the participants’ expressed reflections about the sense of local and global belonging:

Well, one thing is other people in Norway, in a way you have a lot more contact with... the Norwegian society, you might say. Much more insight into it. That is, my grandfather was probably quite isolated and knew little about how it was in Oslo [...] while I am able to know a lot about how it is in Bømlo, if I go in for it. But not least about how the rest of the world is doing. And I think maybe this is something that has influenced me more than the others in their childhood.

Lars here claimed that values have changed over time in his family; they have become more universal. He wrote about himself that he has grown up in a “media world” and is politically and culturally engaged. However, to an even

greater extent, he is concerned about his place in the world. He expresses a willingness to take the perspective of others (cf. Beck, 2006), as he claimed to have the ability to know “how the rest of the world is doing.”

Expressions about mediagraphy as a learning activity

In the interviews the students could reflect retrospectively on the project. In addition, the interview’s open form mediated meta-reflections concerning the significance of the mediagraphy as a learning activity. Most of the students emphasized general learning outcomes associated with values, self-reflection, and insight into society more than they claimed having reached any concrete, specific knowledge goals. Many reflected on prospects for their own future and opportunities in society that they had become aware of during or after the project. It seems that this applies both to students who can be called “high-achievers” and those who submitted products that were considered weak by the teacher. When asked to summarize his project period, Lars, a student that the teacher termed a “high-achiever”, stated:

During the process, I have – and with the assignment [...] learned a lot more about... about the Norwegian society, about the development, about how lucky ... many people in Norway are – or we all are, relatively speaking. [...] Now, maybe I am in the upper half, so to speak, of those who are doing well. I am extraordinarily lucky, but... there has been a positive development. And I think that is important to remember, as I said, and – and to reflect on. Not that I should have this in the back of my mind all the time, like “oh my god how lucky I am”, and I should think more about how lucky I am, sort of. But it is important to remember [...] the opportunities you have, that... that I take for granted, that ... my grandmother only could dream about.

This excerpt can be interpreted that Lars recognizes the privileged position he is in as a citizen of the Norwegian society through being exposed to media impressions from different parts of the world since early childhood. Anna expressed something of the same, albeit with a more “personal” choice of words. Anna’s essay was shorter than what was recommended in the task description and contained a very brief theoretical background. Nonetheless, the interview with her was one of the lengthiest, and Anna had many reflections on the meta-level, especially about her own learning.

I don’t know, like, what have I really learned from this project? Well, I have... I have in a way considered it a bit more... I am sort of able to put myself in a broader perspective [...] things that I take for granted... [...] a lot of things haven’t always been a matter of course for everybody. So I think – it’s very – I think it’s very interesting in a way, to imagine myself in a [...] time period and see what is the difference... and things like that.

In an indirect way, these excerpts from Lars' and Anna's interviews have to do with global citizenship as a part of identity. Neither Lars nor Anna mentioned the concept of citizenship, but as Beck (2006) argues, comprehending – and being aware of – one's own position in the world is a prerequisite to feel or experience solidarity and thus global citizenship.

Discussion

These particular students are global citizens in the sense that they are almost constantly connected to a global culture in and through participation in social media. They are also connected to the media during the majority of the school day, as they are studying practical media education. However, the findings show that they primarily are locally oriented in terms of who and what they relate to through their media use. The infinite potential of social media to enable global relations is as such not to any great degree achieved in this group of students. However, the media culture contributes to the students seeing themselves as part of the world. They also mirror their own situation against others in other situations.

In other words, the students are able to take the perspective of others (cf. Beck, 2006) and are aware of themselves as participants in something beyond the local arena, as global citizens. As Beck (2006) reasons, being aware of the global context that one is part of is in itself an important part of global citizenship. However, if global citizenship is defined also to include actual interaction with a wider world, the findings are more uncertain. Only a few of the students expressed having used modern media to actually establish and maintain global relationships over time. The participants expressed that they alternate between feeling like a part of the world and the local but also that different global and local connections exist simultaneously. This corresponds to Vettenranta's (2010) findings concerning young people living their lives *glocally*, as well as Rantanen's (2005) argument that mediated cosmopolitanism becomes part of our identity. In this way, the present study at least to some extent supports Delanty (2012) and Martin (2011) in that the new media mediates a lot of opportunities for people to act as global citizens.

According to the data from this project, it is not possible to claim that mediagraphy in itself builds global citizenship. However, what emerged in the data, particularly in the retrospective interviews, is that mediagraphy mediates certain concretizations of the different relationships that the students navigate in their everyday lives. In these concretizations, there is learning potential through listening to, interpreting, and retelling the experiences of individual family members, as well as through sharing stories and knowledge with other students in the class. Although there was variation in the level of nuance with

which the students expressed themselves, they all reflected on their place in the world and on the responsibility that comes with being part of a wider world. Mediagraphy seems to be a mediational means (cf. Wertsch, 1998) that mediates reflections on issues such as solidarity, empathy, and seeing one's own position in the world in a way that was not illuminated by e.g. Olausson (2011) and Rye (2013). As such, mediagraphy can be an example of a learning activity that that actually challenges and "stretches" the students' ways of thinking.

How we relate to and interact with other people is crucial to who we are and what kind of society we live in (Castells, 2010; Giddens, 1990). The relations in the students' families are examples of how modern people have a reflexive way of connecting to and disconnecting from other people in physical proximity and at a distance. As already indicated, the mediagraphy essays illustrate how young people perceive themselves and take the perspective of others (cf. Beck, 2006). As such, mediagraphy serves a double purpose: First, "outsiders" can gain insight into young people's mindsets through the stories being told – in a historical and comparative light. The students' stories have learning potential within the classroom when students share stories as well as outside school – as snapshots of young people's experiences of being global citizens in the constant navigation between global and local impulses. Second, the mediagraphies can be a means for those producing them to gain insight into globalization and the media world and to understand how this is or is *not* significant for their lives and conduct.

The project was not completed in a socio-cultural vacuum but in a complex classroom, which involved various forms of cooperation, discussion, and knowledge sharing. The students' individual stories became parts of a collective knowledge building. Thus, together, many different issues became objects of reflection for the students in this class. In this way, mediagraphy holds the potential to contribute to awareness of the multicultural society, including for those who do not themselves have a multicultural background, as de Block and Buckingham (2010) emphasize as an important aspect of media literacy for the future.

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Note

- 1 Vg3 is the final year in upper secondary school and qualifies students for further education.

Developing Media and Information Literacy

A case study of Nigeria

Chido Onumah

The explosion of new media tools around the world, and specifically in Nigeria in the last five years, has altered the media landscape and the way citizens respond to the media and relate to one another. New media such as the Internet (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Podcasts, etc) and mobile phones are gradually replacing “old media” tools for social interaction and democratic development.

This article focuses on the various efforts to develop media and information literacy (MIL) in Nigeria, the state of MIL, what has been done so far, the challenges and opportunities. It will explore the benefits of MIL as the country searches for religious, ethnic and cultural balance.

The article ends by looking at the future of MIL in Nigeria and the strategies that are needed to accomplish the goals of MIL in the country.

Keywords: Nigeria, media, information, literacy, youth, technology

Introduction

Media and information literacy empowers citizens to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of content using a variety of platforms. Media and information literacy (MIL) has become a vital life skill in many developed countries where young people are learning to become critical thinkers and creative producers of media messages and, therefore, active participants in their societies. Around the world, children and youth are also learning to use these new media technologies to address issues that affect them. Because of the role media and information play in the lives of young people, there is an urgent need for countries around the world to develop national policies or frameworks of action on media and information literacy (Grizzle, Moore, Dezuanni, Asthana, Wilson, Banda & Onumah, 2013).

Media and communication in Nigeria

With a population of 160 million, Nigeria is Africa's most populated country. It has one of the most vibrant media on the continent. Since 1960, when there were just a few newspapers, the media in Nigeria has blossomed and today, there are hundreds of newspapers and magazines in circulation (both private and public) and dozens of television and radio stations, thanks to the regulation of the broadcast sector in 1994. While public TV stations are still dominant, the majority of the radio stations are privately owned (Dare, 2011).

After almost two decades of intense advocacy and mobilization, Nigeria enacted the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) in May 2011. The FOIA is expected to open up government more to public scrutiny, reinforce the fundamental right of access to information and provide a framework for managing and disseminating information by public institutions.

The role of government in ICT

In March 2001, the federal government approved a National Information Technology policy. The implementation started a month later with the establishment of the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), charged with the implementation responsibility. A few years later, because of changes and advances in ICT globally and in Nigeria, the government set up the Nigerian National ICT For Development (ICT4D) Strategic Action Plan committee to develop a new ICT policy for development as the ICT action plan/roadmap for the nation. In May 2010, Nigeria's Information and Communications Technology for Development, ICT4D plan document was launched.

The objectives of the document include:

- To ensure that Information Technology resources are readily available to promote efficient national development.
- To guarantee that the country benefits maximally, and contributes meaningfully by providing the global solutions to the challenges of the Information Age.
- To empower Nigerians to participate in software and IT development.
- To establish and develop IT infrastructure and maximize its use nationwide.
- To empower the youth with IT skills and prepare them for global competitiveness.
- To integrate IT into the mainstream of education and training.
- To create IT awareness and ensure universal access in order to promote IT diffusion in all sectors of our national life.

- To develop human capital with emphasis on creating and supporting a knowledge-based society.

In August 2011 the Minister of Communications Technology set up an ad hoc committee to develop a national ICT policy for the country. The vision and mission of the new ICT policy is to make Nigeria a knowledge-based and globally competitive society, to fully integrate information and communication technology into the socio-economic development and to transform Nigeria into a knowledge-based economy. The main objective of the national ICT policy is to create a conducive environment for the rapid expansion of ICT networks and services that are accessible to all at reasonable costs, and to transform Nigeria into a knowledge-based economy (Draft National ICT Information Communication Technology Policy, Nigeria. Retrieved February 15, 2014 from <http://www.ebusinessnigeria.com/ebusiness/draft-national-ICT-policy-nigeria.html>).

Theoretical framework for MIL in Nigeria

In a fast expanding media and technology world, media and information literacy can be an instrument for knowledge, tolerance and cross-cultural understanding in societies characterized by heterogeneous values and centrifugal forces (Grizzle, Moore, Dezuanni, Asthana, Wilson, Banda & Onumah, 2013).

The concept of media and information literacy is relatively new in the context of a developing state like Nigeria. Apart from the slow pace in technological development, the socio-political environment creates some challenges to the growth of media and information and literacy. This does not mean Nigeria represents a completely sad case in this regard. It is, however, instructive to state that a lot needs to be done in the development of media and information literacy in the country, many years after UNESCO embraced the concept.

Some factors relating to the socio-political development of the country seem to account for the poor score in media and information literacy. For example, military rule contributed to the weak framework of access to media and information and the poor skills of self-expression among the citizenry. This hinders their capacity to distill and process information. Up until 1999, Nigeria was under different military regimes that muzzled the development of freedom of expression and created a hostile environment that stifled the development of media and exchange of information – since this was seen to be antithetical to the ethos of military rule.

In the last decade, NGOs in many countries in Africa, such as Nigeria, the Gambia, South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Egypt, and Zambia, amongst others, have set up projects to help young people on the continent not only to produce their own media, but to understand the impact of media and information on their lives. These youth media organisations serve young people through

programmes that offer a wide range of media arts tools, services, and resources and create opportunities for community participation.

While young people in Nigeria are involved in media activities and production, there is no formal process that involves teaching and training them on the effect and impact of media and information on their lives as media and information literacy seeks to address.

Developing MIL in Nigeria

Though there hasn't been any significant effort on the part of the government to create the conditions for media and information literacy to thrive, a few initiatives have sprung up to address the challenge of media and information literacy in Nigeria. One such initiative is the Youth Media & Communication Initiative (YMCI). Set up in 2004, YMCI was the result of years of intense reflection on media and youth in Nigeria and sought to make Nigerian children subjects rather than objects in the media (Onumah, 2004).

YMCI's focus was on training children and youth to develop media literacy skills to evaluate and respond to the media for a more informed and empowered citizenry. By adding children and youth voices to the regular mix of mainstream media, YMCI sought to ensure accurate, relevant and fair representation of issues that affect young people and their communities (Onumah, 2004).

In September 2007, three years after it was established, YMCI in partnership with the Nigerian-Turkish International College, Abuja, hosted about 250 students at the kick off of the National Media Literacy Campaign (NMLC) as part of activities to mark 2007 International Literacy Day. In October 2007, the campaign was launched in Owerri, Imo State, in south-eastern Nigeria. This campaign was meant to feed into a National Media Literacy Coalition which was planned in conjunction with the National Film & Video Censors Board. This coalition was envisioned as a network of educators, students, youth, health professionals, journalists, media-makers, parents, activists, and other citizens working together to inspire active civic participation in media education.

School media clubs

The launch of the NMLC marked the beginning efforts to create awareness about children and media in Nigeria and to help young people understand and access the media. Subsequently, YMCI inaugurated a media club at Prince Alex Royal Academy, a nursery, primary and secondary school located in Kabayi/Mararaba area, a boundary between Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory Capital (FCT), Abuja, and Nasarawa State, in north-central Nigeria.

Youth media training workshop

The following year, in April 2008, YMCI with the support of UNICEF held a Young Reporters' Workshop which involved a week of training for students and youth on various aspects of media: print, photography, video production, television, radio, and Internet. The workshop involved about thirty (30) students and teachers from private and public schools in the capital city of Abuja. It was meant to get students better acquainted with media and reporting to enhance child rights and youth participation in society. At the end of the workshop, participants formed the Young Reporters Network (YOREN) for easy coordination of activities. This network was tasked with writing stories and articles for *Youth Link* magazine, the official journal of YMCI and contributing to other media activities, including radio, TV and online productions of YMCI.

With the support of the Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF), which celebrated its fifth anniversary in December 2008, about twenty Nigerian students in Abuja, the Nigerian capital city, had the opportunity to attend a one week documentary-making workshop from November 13-17, 2008. The theme of the workshop, which was organised by YMCI, UNICEF and the One Minutes Foundation, was "Daily Life and Dreams". Participants had the chance to express themselves and create their own video based on this theme. The finished documentaries were shown at a large screening to family and friends at the end of the workshop and also shown at the Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF), which was held from December 11-18, 2008.

A few other initiatives have also attempted to address the challenges of media and information literacy in Nigeria. In Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital, the Teens Resource Centre, set up a year after YMCI was launched, has also been working with schools and children on media literacy by producing an educational TV programme, "TEENSWORLD" and organizing workshops and seminars for students on media literacy.

In March 2005, the centre organised a conference on the "Role of Media in the Development of Education". The guest speaker was Dr Lee Rother, co-founder and President of the Association for Media Education in Quebec and co-founder and Board member of the Canadian Association of Media Education Organisations.

In 2006, the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB), a regulatory body set up by Act No.85 of 1993 to regulate films and video in Nigeria, started a media literacy programme. The Board is empowered by law to classify all films and videos, whether imported or produced locally.

The objectives of the media literacy programme are:

- To promote awareness of the impact of media in child and youth development amongst stakeholders.

- To promote awareness and confidence in the utilization of NFVCB's classification symbols.
- To raise critical questions about the impact of media and technology that will eventually lead to a realization of a balance of meanings.
- To empower the child and the young adult to be able to make informed decisions and independently negotiate meanings intelligently with the media content.
- To further increase appreciation and passion for the art of film and the creative arts in general.

The implementation of the media literacy programme currently being carried out by the Licensing and Documentation Department of the NFVCB, has taken the campaign on media literacy to schools where both pupils and teachers are informed on the objectives of the campaign and how they stand to benefit from the media literacy programme (National Film and Video Censors Board, 2006).

These examples above are perhaps the earliest attempts to introduce media literacy in Nigeria. The first serious attempt to develop a national framework on media literacy in Nigeria took place in 2008, when the Youth Media & Communication Initiative (YMCI), British Council, Nigeria, and the National Film & Video Censors Board (NFVCB), three organisations whose activities focus on empowering children and youth and advancing the benefits of information and communication technologies, came together to organise the 1st Africa Media Literacy Conference in July 2008 in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city.

The first Africa Media Literacy Conference was of great and timely interest to governments, teachers, parents, counselors, educators, schools, journalists, media institutions, and others who work directly or indirectly with young people and the media. The conference featured an unusually diverse group of innovative leaders and topics in the study of the mass media and its great impact upon today's young people.

The focus of this historic conference was on the importance of media education for children and youth in Africa. The conference explored the roles of young people in a world of rapidly changing communication and information technologies and what they can do to put youth issues on the continental agenda using the media. After that conference which had participants from across the continent and beyond and experts from Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, the U.S., and France (World Association of Newspapers), YMCI started to vigorously promote the concept of Media and Information Literacy through the launch of the African Centre for Media & Information Literacy.

Challenges in developing MIL in Nigeria

Media and information literacy is a new field of engagement in Nigeria and there has been no official attempt to explore, develop, and monitor the complex relationship between young people and the media or put in place MIL policies and guidelines to guide the development of MIL initiatives. Nigeria still has a long way to go in the development of MIL to enhance active understanding and engagement of citizens, particularly young people, with media and ICT.

Table 1. Challenges

Teachers/students/parents	Civil society/media professionals	Government
Lack of services or programmes to assist young people in developing MIL skills.	Lack of research on the benefits of MIL	There are no policies that specifically address media and information literacy.
No in-school or out-of-school MIL programs for students and youth to appreciate the importance of media and information literacy to the learning process.	Young people and youth organizations are not involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of ICT policies/ programs.	There are no programs that teach MIL skills to young people.
There is no sustained process of (re) training teachers in ICTs to appreciate the importance of MIL to the process of knowledge production.	Lack of private sector involvement in MIL programs.	Public libraries are not equipped with MIL materials; staff have no training on MIL.
No established link with teachers/ students/parents/caregivers on the importance of MIL, as well as strategies for its implementation.	No sustained MIL campaign and no systematic effort at ensuring that citizens buy in to the MIL campaign	Lack of institutional support for agencies, programmes and initiatives that enhance MIL.
No MIL curriculum that will enhance the teaching of the subject.	Inadequate training for media practitioners in the construction and dissemination of information.	Budgetary allocation to education not in line with the benchmark provided by UNESCO.
No infrastructure for schools to create an enabling environment for learning MIL.	Lack of support and engagement by media owners/ media and information industry towards MIL.	No universities, media or journalism training institutes that offer courses or programmes on media and information literacy.

Partnerships on MIL

The first serious attempt to launch a coalition of media literacy enthusiasts in Nigeria, the National Media Literacy Coalition (NMLC), was initiated by the Youth Media & Communication Initiative in 2007. It was supported by the National Film & Video Censors Board (NFVCB). Its aim was to bring together organisations, groups and stakeholders working with children on media, education, information, communications and literacy to create the conditions that would promote media and information literacy in Nigeria.

The coalition with YMCI, NFVCB, and Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) as major partners had the following as its focus:

1. Create a platform for all media and information literacy activists/enthusiasts;
2. Develop a national policy on media and information literacy as a way of educating and enlightening citizens about the role media plays in national development;
3. Integrate media and information literacy into the school curriculum;
4. Give voice to young people through the development, implementation and support of national youth media and information programmes.
5. Through media and information literacy workshops/seminars, encourage the sharing of “best practices” – knowledge, skills, and activism - among media educators.
6. Develop and distribute media and information literacy tools that actively encourage critical thinking and free expression, and inspire civic participation in a democratic society.
7. Support local, state, national, and global MIL reforms and media justice efforts.
8. Research and document the impact of media and information literacy

Unfortunately, the initiative did not really take off. After about two meetings to review the aims and objectives of the coalition, members failed to show up for meetings. An assessment determined that if a government institution, like the ministry of information, had spearheaded the process, it would have been sustained. The coalition lacked funds to take care of certain basic needs like paying for a meeting place and provision of stationeries.

What does the future hold for MIL in Nigeria?

In the absence of MIL policy and guidelines, what prevails is the widening of the digital and information divide between developed and developing countries. Countries with well defined MIL policies and strategies and who apply MIL in a widespread and inclusive manner are able to benefit from the advantages of media and ICT (Grizzle, Moore, Dezuanni, Asthana, Wilson, Banda & Onumah, 2013).

While there is no official policy on MIL and no universities, media or journalism training institutes in Nigeria that offer courses or programmes on media and information literacy, non-governmental organizations conscious of the immense benefits of MIL have been working to develop MIL in Nigeria.

African Centre for Media & Information Literacy (AFRICMIL)

The African Centre for Media & Information Literacy (AFRICMIL) is one of the bold steps to mainstream MIL in Nigeria. The Centre (coordinated by the author of this paper) is the outcome of the 1st Africa Media Literacy Conference held in Nigeria in July 2008. Through the support of UNESCO, AFRICMIL has been in the forefront of advancing MIL in Nigeria. The Centre seeks to raise awareness among children, teachers, adults, parents, and policy makers on the challenges and benefits of MIL.

The aim of AFRICMIL is to train children and youth, using media and information literacy, as agents for social mobilization and social change; to develop their capacity for effective communication and self-expression so that they can positively impact their schools, communities, and society. It seeks to teach young people the impact of media and information on their lives not only to enable them to produce their own media to give themselves a voice, but to be critical and active citizens.

With training manuals developed by the Centre as guide, teachers will be empowered to help their students to understand and use media and information. The Centre hopes to train participating teachers in basic media and information literacy concepts. It will also help them develop lesson plans to introduce media and information literacy into some of their core subjects.

Global Forum for Partnerships on MIL, incorporating the International Conference on MIL and Intercultural Dialogue

AFRICMIL was one the key partners of UNESCO and the UNAOC in the launch of the Global Forum for Partnership on MIL (GFPMIL), June 26-28, 2013, in Nigeria. A joint initiative of UNESCO, UNAOC and other key stakeholders, GFPMIL is a permanent mechanism that seeks to globally reposition MIL through the setting up of a Global Alliance for Partnerships on MIL (GAPMIL) and regional alliances.

Within the context of GFPMIL, AFRICMIL coordinated a meeting of experts, organizations and institutions in Africa working on MIL. The result was the formation of the Pan-African Alliance on Media and Information Literacy (PAMIL). PAMIL, an independent alliance of the different organizations and individuals working on MIL in Africa, was created to promote and strengthen MIL in Africa through advocacy, research, consultation, training, building capacity and solidarity and sharing experiences. AFRICMIL currently hosts the provisional secretariat of PAMIL and is working with other stakeholders to host the 2nd African Media and Information Literacy Conference in November 2014.

The Media, Information and Digital Literacy (MIDLO) Project

Building on the objectives of GAPMIL and PAMIL, AFRICMIL plans to translate media and information literacy research and theory into practical information, training and educational tools for teachers, students, youth, parents and caregivers. Working with other stakeholders, within Nigeria and outside, the Centre has developed a Media, Information and Digital Literacy (MIDLO) project that is scheduled to take off in June 2014.

Taking into consideration the role media, information and digital literacy, media education as well as intercultural dialogue play in the promotion of participatory democracy and pluralism, freedom of expression, open society, social and economic development, intercultural dialogue and active global citizenship, AFRICMIL entered into an agreement in February 2014 with Mentor Association and Gabinete de Comunicación y Educación (Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona), Barcelona, Spain, acting as member of UNITWIN Cooperation Programme between the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to develop the MIDLO project.

MIDLO will build on the broad objectives of Gabinete which include the promotion of media, information, digital and film literacy, media education, inter-

cultural dialogue and young journalists and global young reporters projects, but specifically it is a digital hub and observatory for civic participation and intercultural dialogue for teachers, students, social media activists, bloggers, young journalists and reporters and all those interested in understanding the use and impact of media, information, as well as social and digital media in Africa.

MIDLO's core area of focus include: research, advocacy and publications on MIL, media, information and digital literacy training for teachers, students and youth; monitoring and providing data related to MIL in Nigeria; and acting as a clearing house for young journalists on MIL and intercultural dialogue.

Conclusion

Media and information literacy enhances active citizen participation and is an effective tool for social, political and economic development. Research has shown that “integrating MIL in all aspects of society, including in formal and non-formal education and engendering MIL as an engaging civic education movement have clear benefits for the citizen, for the government, for the quality of media and information systems and research institutions” (Grizzle, Moore, Dezuanni, Asthana, Wilson, Banda & Onumah, 2013).

The growing democratization process in Africa calls for a platform to mobilize citizens at the grassroots level to promote religious tolerance and intercultural dialogue, educational development and hold leadership at all levels accountable. MIL is that platform. The immediate step in Nigeria, therefore, is to create the enabling environment for MIL to thrive by developing national MIL policy and guidelines. “MIL policy and strategy are crucial for the survival of modern governance and global citizenship in the digital world. Without a MIL policy and strategy, disparities are likely to increase between those who have and those who do not have access to information and media, and enjoy or not freedom of expression. Additional disparities will emerge between those who are able and unable to find, analyse and critically evaluate and apply information and media content for decision-making” (Grizzle, Moore, Dezuanni, Asthana, Wilson, Banda & Onumah, 2013).

What the African Centre for Media and Information Literacy hopes to achieve in the short-term as part of its MIDLO project is to facilitate a meeting of stakeholders both within civil society and government to promote awareness and understanding of the need for a national MIL policy and strategy to define the parameters of engagement and explore the benefits and opportunities of MIL

In a country like Nigeria with many flashpoints, MIL offers opportunities for young people, and citizens in general, to overcome apathy and ignorance; to appreciate diversity as well as conflicts and their impact; and to be agents of social change.

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New Media,
New
Approaches

Media Literacy, Digital Technologies and Civic Engagement

A Canadian perspective

Carolyn Wilson & Matthew Johnson

*Today, the need for a “global consciousness” in education seems to have gained a new urgency, caused, at least in part, by the unprecedented access to media and digital technologies that young people have today, and which allow for collaboration, communication, and participation on a scale that we have never seen before. Using current research and relevant examples from the classroom, this article will explore the implications of media and digital technologies for global citizenship and civic engagement. The article includes a discussion of a new report, *Young Canadians in a Wired World*, which is the most comprehensive investigation into the role of the Internet in the lives of Canadian children. The article also includes an exploration of the pedagogical strategies that are being used by teachers to emphasize active involvement with the media, connecting it to democratic rights, active citizenship, and technological literacy.*

Keywords: media literacy, digital technology, Internet, citizenship, civic engagement, social media, Canada

Introduction

For many years, educators in Ontario have talked about the importance of global education and global citizenship. The notions of literacy, civic engagement, community and responsibility have long been part of these conversations. Today, the need for a “global consciousness” in education seems to have gained a new urgency, caused, at least in part, by the unprecedented access to media and digital technologies that young people have today and which allow for collaboration, communication, and participation on a scale that we have never seen before.

In the 1940s through the 1960s, Canadian communications expert Marshall McLuhan developed many of the ideas which would have a significant influence on the way we define this “global consciousness”. McLuhan was aware of the profound impact of technology on our identity, our relationships, and our communities, including the ways in which we could participate in them. Long before the use of the Internet and social media, he coined the phrase “the global village” to describe the ways in which media and technology would connect audiences and users. Indeed, he believed that media and technology would influence our actions, attitudes and behaviours, including the way we think about the world and ourselves. McLuhan (1964) said, “We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us.”

Decades later, the Ontario Teachers’ Federation (1992) defined their goals for global education this way: “A global perspective in education is defined as an approach or framework for education which will help our young people gain the knowledge and develop the values, attitudes and skills to be effective participants in a world rapidly becoming more interdependent and interconnected”.

In 2005, the Ontario Ministry of Education made an important link between a global perspective and literacy, calling for an expanded definition of literacy that places learning in a contemporary, “global” context. The following statement from UNESCO is included in curriculum documents at the elementary and secondary levels:

Literacy is about more than reading or writing – it is about how we communicate in society. It is about social practices and relationships, about knowledge, language and culture. Those who use literacy take it for granted – but those who cannot use it are excluded from much communication in today’s world. Indeed, it is the excluded who can best appreciate the notion of ‘literacy as freedom’

(Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 3).

What does this mean for educators and students today? How are these notions of literacy, citizenship, and communication becoming part of curriculum, pedagogy and students’ experiences in schools? In what ways are new technologies providing young people with the opportunity to become effective participants in our world?

Media Literacy and Civic Engagement: Making the connections

There is a great deal of speculation among media scholars about the possibility that through digital media we could be experiencing a major resurgence in “civic engagement”, which many say has been on the decline in western democracies (Bennett, 2008). In this model, online social networks could become the new civic organizations of the 21st century – new arenas where political and social change can take place. To date, however, the evidence that this is happening is equivocal at best, and some critics have argued that young people’s absorption with digital media – particularly games and social networks – are actually making them less engaged with their communities and the wider world (Gladwell, 2010). MediaSmarts’ 2011 discussion paper *From Consumer to Citizen: Digital Media and Youth Civic Engagement* concluded that “the good news is that digital media are not obstacles which must be overcome to enable engagement with one’s larger community. The bad news is that they do not necessarily activate passive members of a community and transform them into engaged digital citizens” (Van Hamel, 2011, p. 14).

Even if they’re not necessarily making youth more politically active, digital media offer many opportunities for young people to engage with their communities, including consumer activism, online petitions, organized protests, production of online content, and volunteer work. Moreover, the interaction between digital media and civic engagement works both ways. In *From Consumer to Citizen*, Van Hamel (2011) concluded that “taking an active role in civic activity nowadays is highly likely to require skills like coordinating efforts in networked environments, producing multimedia texts for an invisible audience, and exerting ‘virtual’ but very real pressure on leaders” (p. 14); even “games which ostensibly have no curricular content to teach may serve as good training ground for skills to act in a civic environment” (p. 16).

A strong example of the ways in which digital media are changing civic engagement is citizen journalism. Today almost everybody – or at least almost every young person – has a video camera with them at all times, and that video camera is constantly connected to the Internet. This is a development that makes it possible for every citizen to assume the role of journalist in some capacity. Given the central role of journalism and news in producing well-informed citizens, we may be moving towards journalism being part of our definition of being a citizen, which will come to include being a journalist – *being a witness* – as one of its basic elements.

The other side of citizen journalism is that now we can *choose* our news. Moving from the passive model of being an audience where you choose to watch the news that broadcasters show you, to an active model that involves

seeking out the news that interests you, places a greater burden on the audience. It forces each individual citizen to take on a role that a journalist traditionally has had: deciding what is relevant or newsworthy, and what is not. It is, of course, possible to be either optimistic or pessimistic about this, imagining that youth will either take up the challenge to become citizen journalists or reject it as being too difficult and avoid this kind of civic engagement altogether – or choose to only expose themselves to news and opinions that reinforce how they already see the world.

Both of these views underscore the continuing need for media literacy education, because the more that a journalist's role is assumed by individual citizens, the more there is a need for a burden of skepticism: to decide what is news, citizens need to have some basis to understand where the messages are coming from, how commercial and political factors influence news gathering and reporting, and to evaluate the reasons why some things become news and some things do not.

Len Masterman, a U.K. academic whose work has had a significant influence on media literacy in Canada, reminds educators of the importance of media analysis, and recognizing all media – including news media – as representational systems:

...If we are looking at [media] as representational system[s], then the questions inevitably arise as to who is creating these representations. Who is doing the representing? Who is telling us that this is the way the world is? That their way of seeing is simply natural? Other questions emerge. What is the nature of the world that is being represented? What are its values and dominant assumptions? What are the techniques that are used to create the [its] 'authenticity'...? How are [the media's] representations read and how are they understood by its audiences? How are we, as an audience, positioned by the text? What divergent interpretations exist...?

(Masterman, 2010)

Influenced by Masterman's ideas, the Association for Media Literacy (AML) in Ontario developed a definition for media literacy which underpins curriculum expectations in Media Literacy at the elementary and secondary levels: media literacy is defined as "an informed and critical understanding of the nature of the mass media, the techniques used by them, and the impact of these techniques" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006, p.156). The AML also developed the Key Concepts for Media Literacy which provide a common language and framework for media analysis and production. These concepts are based on the following statements: all media are constructions; the media construct versions of reality; the media convey ideology and value messages; the media have social and political implications; each medium has its own bias or language, and codifies reality in a certain way; audiences negotiate the meaning they take from the

media; form and content are closely related in media; media have commercial implications (Wilson & Duncan, 2008).

In exploring these concepts, it is possible to see that media and information technologies present themselves *to* us in ways that we can analyze and evaluate, that they convey messages and values that can be *about* us, and that they can also be used by us for such purposes as information and entertainment. However, a central question remains: to what extent are the media *for* us? Is this a matter of opinion and personal judgment? (Golay, as cited in Jolls and Wilson, 2014). In terms of developing a global consciousness, to what extent are Canadian youth actually using media and technology in ways that are *for* them? Does the ubiquitous presence of media and digital technologies encourage Canadian youth to take advantage of these tools for civic engagement, and if so, in what ways?

Civic Engagement and digital media: What the research says

According to MediaSmarts' 2013 study *Young Canadians in a Wired World, Phase III: Life Online*, which surveyed more than 5,000 students across every province and territory, a significant number are using media and technology for civic engagement – but not surprisingly, how many engage in different activities depends on the level of engagement required. Half of the students in grades 7-11 search for news or information online, a number which rises to two-thirds by Grade 11 (the last grade represented in the survey); similarly, half share links to news or current events with others. Just a third have joined or supported an activist group online (examples given were Greenpeace, Students Against Bullying, and Free the Children) but this number, too, rises as youth get older, to 45% in Grade 11 (Steeves, 2013). Since these rates are lower than the best available data on youth volunteering, which shows a volunteering rate of 58 percent of Canadians aged 15 to 24 (Vézina, 2011), it may be that Canadian youth are actually volunteering less online than offline.

One reason for the difference in offline and online engagement may be in the definitions of these terms: *Young Canadians in a Wired World* asked specifically about news or current events and supporting activist groups, while *Volunteering in Canada* asked respondents if they had given any "unpaid help ... to schools, religious organizations, sports or community associations" (Vézina, 2011, p. 38). As well, all of the measures of engagement in *Young Canadians in a Wired World* rise as youth get older, so the fact that *Volunteering in Canada's* sample starts four years later and ends seven years later may explain the discrepancy. Finally, students in Ontario are required to complete forty hours of community service in order to graduate from secondary school, hours which

would certainly be reflected in the Statistics Canada data but most likely not in the MediaSmarts data (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2011). Since both studies measure how often young people are participating in formal organizations, neither study reflects youth-led engagement: while it is certainly a very small number of youth who start campaigns such as Martha Payne's *Never Seconds* blog, which critiqued the quality and quantity of her school's government-funded lunches, these examples may have an outsized influence in inspiring broader youth civic engagement.

This suggests another reason why we may not be seeing the full picture of youth online civic engagement: we may be looking in the wrong places. When we look at those media tools that were employed effectively by social movements – for instance, the *samizdat* of the Soviet period and/or the *zines* published in the 1970s-1980s by North American activist and counterculture groups – we find they were similar in a number of significant ways. First, they published content that was difficult or impossible to find in mainstream media (such as sex and gender issues, the peace movement, and social justice issues in the case of zines, and nearly anything not approved by the state in the case of samizdat) and as a result stayed as far as possible from the attentions of both the mainstream media and the state (Gunderloy, 1990). Second, print runs and readership were small, cheap and close to the ground: the zine movement owes its existence to the appearance of affordable photocopying in the early 1970s, while many samizdat publications were created on typewriters or even by hand (Eichweide, 2006). Third, they had low barriers to participation: zines would typically publish almost anything submitted to them, and many zine founders cited reading other zines as their inspiration for getting involved. The parallels to online media are obvious. Like the above examples, online media have low barriers to participation, a limited audience that's generally far from mainstream or state eyes, and often publish content that is hard to find anywhere else. While digital networks such as Facebook and Twitter were heavily used in the early days of digital civic engagement, as those have become more mainstream – and dominated by adult voices – youth civic engagement has moved to less visible platforms, often ones that were created specifically to enable youth activism: UpWorthy (<http://www.upworthy.com>), a content curation site that lets users share and promote "meaningful content" (often relating to or promoting civic engagement); Global Voices (<http://globalvoicesonline.org>), a citizen journalism site that allows bloggers to share underreported news from around the world; and TakingITGlobal (<https://www.tigweb.org>), a social network that promotes youth engagement and also organizes offline meetings and projects.

The biggest mistake may be to consider online and offline civic engagement separately, when – like youth's social lives – they overlap a great deal (Zamaria 2008). In fact, most engaged citizens choose to mix online and offline enga-

gement (Smith 2009). As Van Hamel (2011) notes, “new media have not fully replaced older, more traditional forms of engagement but most civic engagement is now a blend of electronic and face-to-face interactions which exploits the strengths of each” (p. 14).

Social media and digital technologies: Connecting the classroom to the world

To seize these “teachable moments” and to explore the possibilities for civic engagement, many teachers are using young people’s involvement with media and digital technologies to connect their classrooms to the world and to provide opportunities for collaborative learning. These teachers see the ability to connect with the outside world in real time as the single most powerful benefit of technology-enhanced learning.

Students who discuss issues and share their knowledge with others online are able to learn from each other and participate in the kinds of public debates that are central to lifelong learning and the exercise of democratic citizenship. The technology also makes that collaboration visible, so students can see their own contribution to the group. This enhances their sense of connectedness, which deepens and enriches their learning by making it both more personal and more social.

(Steeves, 2012, p. 5)

Other teachers emphasize the opportunity for intercultural dialogue: “collaborating with students from different cultural backgrounds helps students develop compassion, understanding and appreciation for different cultures” (Steeves, 2012, p. 5).

In the report *Young Canadians in a Wired World*, there are several examples which illustrate these practices. Teachers describe using technology to hold conversations with members of a First Nations community living on the other side of the country, an activity which steered students’ learning in a completely new direction. Others describe access to a live feed of citizens from Cairo during the Arab Spring; still others organized online conversations with people with real world experience to deepen students’ understanding of topics as varied as the Holocaust and Afghani literature (Steeves, 2012).

Networked technologies make this kind of communication and collaboration more convenient, but they can also make the results of collaboration and student contribution visible. A secondary school teacher explained that his students liked working on shared projects on Wiki or Google Docs “because they got to see...’this is my contribution. Here it is’ ...It’s a belonging; I think

that's why Facebook is so popular. That need to be connected. 'I see it. There it is, right there'" (Steeves, 2012, p. 18).

In exploring possibilities for civic engagement, many teachers and students become involved in a process of inquiry where they analyze social networks and the ways in which they can be used for social action. They discuss the ways in which digital media create online spaces where people who share an interest in a similar issue or "affinity" can come together, and where information can be easily obtained and widely distributed through existing social networks (Jones & Hafner, 2012).

These classroom experiences highlight the need for critical pedagogy based on technology and its use. The pedagogy implicit in media literacy invites teachers to not only use new technologies to explore topics and issues relevant to their classrooms, i.e., to teach *through* technology, but to also use these opportunities to teach *about* technology – especially as it relates to the social networking sites and practices used by students today. This involves providing students with the opportunity to think critically about online spaces, on-line content, their own online behaviour, and key aspects of the engagement process. The analysis and evaluation of an online space, including its social and political implications, are based on 3 key areas: identifying the purpose for the space itself, and examining the ideology and values that underpin and are represented in the space; identifying who created and controls the space, and analyzing why it is designed in a particular way; identifying who the target audience is for the space, how people use it, and who benefits as a result.

The following questions can be used by teachers and students to further this line of inquiry:

- How do these spaces bring people together? Are these different from the ways in which you could come together off-line? What kinds of social relationships are created through the site?
- What kind of communication or interaction is possible? One-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many? What is the effect of this communication? What are the rules or norms for interaction? How do you learn these rules?
- What do you know about people in the network? What do they know about you? What information is revealed and what is hidden? Why is this the case?
- What values are promoted in this space? How are these values made visible? Is the space owned and controlled by an individual, institution, or corporation? How do you know?
- Who has access to the site? What is the "cost" or the method for becoming part of, or communicating in this space? What other opportunities for participation exist? How effective/accessible are these?
- What tools does the site make use of for attracting the attention of others, or

for sharing information? What strategies are used for involving participants and engaging them in some kind of action?

- How does the space use text and visual elements to create and convey meaning? What are the key elements or ingredients that define or construct the space? What kind of “reality” or community is created as a result? (Jones & Hafner, 2012)

Questions such as these can help to develop a framework for critically analyzing and understanding social media as constructed “spaces” which represent certain ideologies and values, and which can be used in different ways by different audiences. It is clear from this kind of inquiry that in today’s classrooms, meaningful pedagogy is based on an understanding of literacy that involves more than merely “how to” use media and digital technologies.

Unfortunately, it is still common for some school boards and teachers to spend a lot of time on “how to” training, without placing the use of technology into any kind of meaningful context. Students are often left with no specific purpose or end goal for learning about a technology, beyond the mastery of the technology itself. This kind of instruction is based on teaching students simply how to use the technology – what buttons to push, or what tabs to click – with little consideration given as to why the technology might be used in particular ways, and to what effect. This “drill and kill” approach does not help to build the critical analysis and production practices that are essential to literacy today (Steeves, 2012).

Conclusion: Re-creating the world

For today’s networked world, effective pedagogy should provide opportunities for students to engage in creative and critical practices with media and technology. To borrow from Paulo Freire, these practices are about “reading the word and the world”: about being able to read and analyze the word on the page or the image on the screen, and to evaluate the information about the world that comes to us through the media (Freire & Macedo, 1987). They are also about “re-creating” the world – using media and technology to connect with other people, to contribute to, and learn from, conversations about our world, and to take action. More broadly, effective pedagogy can help students explore how media and technologies “affect what we *do*, how we make *meaning*, how we *relate* to one another, how we *think*, and the kinds of people we can *be*...” (Jones & Hafner, p. 15).

The development of a global consciousness in education is directly linked to an ethical, responsible use of media and technology for participation, collaboration and communication. Through their use of social media and

networks, young people are recognizing the value of intercultural dialogue in civic engagement, in the opportunity to hear alternative voices, consider new perspectives, and develop creative solutions to the challenges facing us today. If we embrace the metaphor of McLuhan's village, today's media and digital technologies can indeed work for us as we connect with people from around the world and move from a position of critical autonomy to one of solidarity.

The onus clearly remains on teachers to "break down" classroom walls and provide students with the opportunities for civic engagement that media and technology make possible today. These opportunities can include such activities as: exploring what it means to "be a witness" through citizen journalism; participating in real-time conversations with authentic voices from "the field"; and exploring and analyzing social networking sites and practices for youth activism. It is also important to emphasize the fundamental role of literacy in helping teachers and students achieve these goals. The following passage articulates several essential questions to consider:

Literacies are not things we develop just for the sake of developing them. We develop them to do certain things, become certain kinds of people, and create certain kinds of societies. And so the most basic, underlying questions governing [the] development of digital literacies [and civic engagement] are: 'What do you want to do with them?', 'Who do you want to be?', and 'What kind of society do you want to live in?'

(Jones & Hafner, p. 190)

Perhaps it will be in our exploration of these questions that today's conversations about global education and civic engagement will find new inspiration and relevancy in our digitally networked world.

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Affinity Spaces on Facebook

A quantitative discourse analysis towards intercultural dialogue

Catherine Bouko

This article aims to analyse the “affinity space” (Gee, 2005) created around the virtual World War 1 soldier Léon Vivien’s Facebook page. Firstly, it briefly discusses Facebook as a tool for education and examines how World War 1 has been endowed with fresh ‘readability’ and visibility, markedly modifying our relationship with History. The sometimes problematic use of archived images is at the heart of this experiment: historical commentary is replaced by illustrated, literary fiction. Secondly, through a discourse analysis of comments from Léon Vivien’s fans, about Léon’s daily posts, the article provides fruitful insights into the activities that these discourses help constitute. The quantitative discourse analysis frame used in this article is based primarily on Fairclough’s distinction between three major types of text meaning (2003, p.27), namely Representation (related to discourses), Action (related to genres) and Identification (related to styles). The article shows that with a mix of fact and fiction leading to comments expressing emotions, points of view, testimonies, and distributed knowledge or “truths”, Léon Vivien’s Facebook page exemplifies how diverse backgrounds can enter into intercultural dialogue and hopefully stimulate historical education.

Keywords: Facebook, affinity space, discourse analysis, Great War, education, intercultural dialogue

Introduction

On the premise that the younger generations feel increasingly distanced from the First World War, the Meaux World War Museum (Musée de la Grande Guerre de Meaux, northeast Paris in France) chose spring 2013 to raise awareness of this historical conflict among young people by creating a Facebook page for the virtual World War 1 soldier Léon Vivien, thereby putting the young generation’s skills and media-centered knowledge into practice. As at writing this article, this page recorded more than 60,000 “likes”. Relayed by the media, it constitutes a unique experience of civic and historical education.

Given its proven worldwide success, (1.19 billion users in the world according

to the company's latest figures), it is of no surprise that Facebook has become researchers' "new exciting arena of social behavior" (Wilson, Golsing & Graham, as cited in McAndrew et al., 2012, p. 2359). Our study is also situated in this social perspective: we follow Knobel and Lankshear who state that

understanding participation in social networking sites in terms of digital literacy practices involves considering some of the socially recognized ways in which people go about generating, communicating and negotiating meaningful content through the medium of digitally encoded texts of various kinds in contexts where they interact as members of Discourses.

(2008, p.259)

The purpose of this research is to explore the literacy practices of members of Léon Vivien's Facebook page and to identify how they participate in this "affinity space" (Gee, 2005). As Léon Vivien's page aims at historical-civic education, the research aims to study how and what learning is stimulated through online participation. In other words, how is this page developed to create a collaborative learning environment?

The study is based on a socio-linguistic approach to language. Indeed, beyond its function of conveying information, the article focuses on two other fundamental functions: "to scaffold the performance of social activities (whether play of work) and to scaffold human affiliation within cultures and social groups and institutions." (Gee, 1999, p.1) Through an analysis of the languages used by Léon Vivien's fans in their comments about Léon's daily posts it is hoped that insights into the activities that these comments help constitute will be gained. To do so, 6,669 comments written by 2,461 different fans were analyzed.¹

Léon Vivien's Great War

Over an imaginary period from 18th June 1914 to 25th May 1915, Léon Vivien posted messages, images and documents almost daily on his Facebook timeline. Léon's page can be considered as a hybrid form, between fact and fiction.

Studies on docudramas and other hybrid forms often invalidate their historical significance, as McConnell opined, "Docudrama does not represent historic fact, or history, or journalism, but crusading entertainment with facts carefully tailored to sustain a neat storyline and to suit a particular social, political or religious point of view". (2000, p.54)

The Léon Vivien Facebook page is not concerned with these questions inasmuch as it proposes to follow the daily experience of Léon, a called-up primary teacher, and does not offer any political treatment of the conflict. Its point of view is only from a human perspective, which lends to its uniqueness and

pedagogical interest. The proceedings of the war are not mentioned; neither spatial details such as the name of his training camp, the name of the trenches where he is fighting, or the name of the villages the soldiers cross, etc. The action evolves in space and time that are indeterminate and totally fictionalized. The web surfer does not get any temporal indications either. Vivien's posts are dated but these dates don't refer to dates of real events that happened during the war.

The Great War through narrativisation

To analyze this Facebook page, the research examined Léon's story via the lens of scriptwriting techniques, which relate to popular culture and so may be applied to Léon's fans' "common ground". In the findings, parallels are made between the fictionalization of this infantryman and some scriptwriting techniques of popular movies. These are discussed.

Firstly, a **dramatic story line**, leading to a strong climax is observed. It is interesting to note that the building of the story, which indeed aims at a dramatic climax, may be divided according to Aristotle's theory of three acts as advised by the famous script consultant Seger (1992). Leon's story adheres to the balance needed between acts: the first lasts three and a half months; it serves to introduce the context and the beginnings of the conflicts from an outsider's point of view, as Vivien has not yet been called up (as a soldier) yet. The second act is the longest (five and a half months) as it serves primarily to recall everyday life in the training camps and reserves. The third act is the shortest one (one and a half months) and the most dramatically intense: Vivien tells the horror of the battlefield by evoking details of many particularly violent events.

Second, Léon Vivien is at the center of a network of **sympathetic and universal main characters**: his wife Madeleine, his mother Hortense (minor character), his friends, Anatole Lessert and Jules Derème, as well as his regiment comrades Eugène Lignan, Bourrelrier, Lulu Landouille and L'Cabot Germain.

Third, the Léon Vivien experience is centered on **the human before the soldier**. Many posts evoke the details of the soldier's daily experiences, outside of military operations, or highlight personal anecdotes or precious and touching moments; one of the most touching or emotional moments being the birth of his son. Significantly, the post that was the most "liked" (nearly 3000 likes) is that of the newborn's picture. The family also received many messages of congratulations.

Other posts mention the physical feelings experienced by the soldiers, whose body is put through the mill. Descriptions in details of the sensations felt by the five senses offer a particularly precise picture of the ordeal endured by the soldiers.

Tension between the ordinary life of the humans and the demands of the War is portrayed. About twenty messages either comment on both the horror

of the war and the daily life of the civilians and the soldiers, or succeeding posts deal with either matter. For example, on the 22nd of October 1914, Vivien announces that Madeleine is pregnant. His message which follows indicates that he is summoned by the military doctor. These two important posts follow each other, and, by doing so, link the private and military records, and highlight the intensity of the moment. Indeed, joy quickly gives way to fear.

Fourthly, there appears to be a focus on **sensational and emotional dimensions of the conflict**. Léon's fans are really invited to join in the excitement with the character. Other posts make use of the sensation strategy, mixed with emotion, by providing detailed crude information as in the story of a sergeant who tries to hold his entrails. The reader's sensitivity is severely tested.

The structure and the elements of the story as well as the strategies used to evoke the soldier's humanity appear to follow the rules of good fiction, which claim that the story must invite the reader to live a real experience. For Truby,

Good storytelling doesn't just tell audiences what happened in life. It gives them the experience of that life. It is the essential life, just the crucial thoughts and events, but it is conveyed with such freshness and newness that it feels part of the audience's essential life too.

(2007, p.6)

Facebook is a great tool to create such freshness and liveliness.

Léon Vivien's War through images

A complete work on the use of images has been produced for this Facebook page. Generally, the docudrama's hybridity lies in its articulation between real events and their audiovisual re-creation. Lipkin highlights how docudramas imply a suspension of disbelief from the spectators: "We are asked to accept that in this case, re-creation, is a necessary mode of presentation." (1999, p. 68)

In Léon Vivien's case, the aim of authenticity is not mainly produced by the re-creation of events. The impression of truth is primarily based on the wide use of the Museum's rich collection of visual documents; hundreds of images have been integrated into the story. These are authentic documents; that have been fictionalized. The story is thus not based on real facts, but on documents that were integrated and adapted to the story. At least five methods were used to that purpose: i) the personalization of blank documents, ii) the contextualization of photographed objects (the objects are photographed in a narrativized space, which replaces the museum's neutral frame), iii) the suppression of the picture's caption, particular plastic dimension (colors, etc.) and context, iv) face personalization of some pictures, and v) the modification of original documents. Indeed, some documents have been modified to suit the story. One

picture that is well-known has been modified so that it is no longer identifiable and especially not in an awkward position within the story.

These five techniques have been used to assist in the goal of making the images speak in the fiction, making their content alive and human. Far from a political treatment of the war, this invites us to follow day by day “slices of life” which are more *likely* than true. They are more like *symbolizations* than representations, according to Trouche (2010, p.200).

This important use of images raises several questions. In his analysis of the documentary series *Apocalypse*, broadcasted on a French channel in 2009, Bonzon denounces the omission of the sources, which tends to derealize the event by transforming it into fiction. Such a reproach cannot be made against the Leon Vivien experience, as it is presented as fiction, and thus precisely derealizes the documents in use.

At no time do the producers mention the methods of construction of the fiction. Without any interpretative frame, the power of truth inherent in images tends to give a status of authenticity to the Facebook page – authenticity that it does not claim but neither refutes. Bonzon reminds us of André Bazin’s warning: “The spectator has the illusion he observes a visual demonstration while in reality it is a succession of equivocal facts which hold together only thanks to the cement that goes along with them.” (Bazin as cited in Bonzon, 2010, p. 176)

The absence of information about the treatment of the documents provokes a real risk of interpretative misunderstandings concerning the value of images as demonstration. Comments written by some followers suggest that they sometimes forget the fictional treatment of the documents and approach them as a proof of reality. Here, the mediation typical of the “interpretative museum type” (Casey, 2003, pp. 78-95) is not really visible.

Consequently, in order to become a real pedagogical tool, the Léon Vivien experience should include a reflection on the production and on the modes of diffusion of historical knowledge, and in particular on the complexity of images and their use as trace of historical facts. It is necessary to show how Leon’s experience represents deliberately constructed events. As the education curricula focus on critical analysis of historical sources, this Facebook project including in-class activities relating to media analysis can be seen as unique and exciting pedagogical tools.

Facebook as an online host for affinity spaces

This study aims to analyze the digital literacy practices, the forms of participation, and the performance of identity in the learning process that Leon Vivien’s page stimulated. This Facebook page is approached as an “affinity space”, which Gee posits as an alternative to the concept of a “community of practice” (Lave

and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998 as cited in Gee, 2005, p. 10) to focus on the *space* of interaction, instead of on *membership* in a community. Indeed, the latter would tend to label and attach people to groups with problematic criteria of affiliation.

For Boyd and Ellison, the rise of social networking sites provoked a “shift in the organization of online communities” (2007, p. 10 as cited in Knobel and Lankshear, 2008, p. 251): whereas the first online communities were dedicated to common interests, the social networking sites which are now dominant are organized around people, no longer around interests. One aspect of Léon Vivien’s page’s specificity lies in the fact that this affinity space includes conventions from both types of online community.

Contrary to most online communities built around a common interest, Facebook is a “nonymous” environment (Zhao et al., 2008, p. 1818): the individuals (are supposed to) interact with the other members of the website via their real name, which can obviously have consequences for the nature of the interaction and the performance of identity. For Zhao et al., the nonymous online world emerges as a third type of environment, between totally anonymous websites and nonymous offline worlds. In nonymous online environments,

People may tend to express what has been called the ‘hoped-for possible selves’ (Yurchisimet al., 2005). [...] Hoped-for possible selves are socially desirable identities an individual would like to establish and believes that they can be established given the right conditions. [...] They are ‘socially desirable’ or norm-confirming, but that does not necessarily mean that they are not true selves: even though they are not yet fully actualized offline, they can have a real impact on the individuals.

(Zhao et al., 2008, pp. 1818-1832)

McAndrew et al.’s findings, among others, confirm Zhao et al.’s hypothesis, as they consider that “Facebook usage is heavily driven by a desire for social interaction” (2012, p. 2360) rather than for impression management. As a result, the performance of identities tends to show accurate reflections of their personality rather than idealized selves.

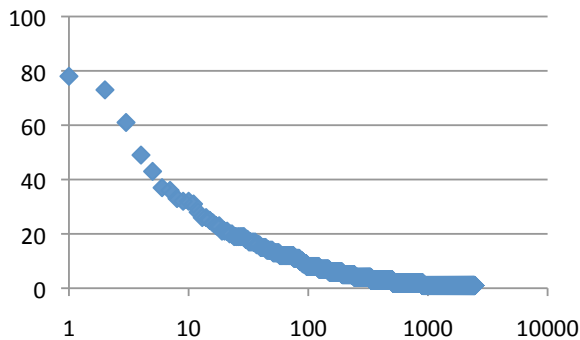
Facebook’s nonymity is quite specific, as some members prefer using a pseudonym instead of their real name, for obvious privacy reasons. Among the 2,461 different fans who wrote at least one comment in reaction to Léon’s posts, the research found out that at least 12% used a pseudonym, which is to say a name which didn’t include ID information (a first and a last name). However, these figures must be taken with extreme caution, as some Facebook users might of course use a realistic pseudonym to avoid Facebook’s pseudonym restrictions. Given the absence of official statistics about the number of pseudonyms on Facebook, it is currently impossible to compare these figures

and define their significance. It appears, however, that these figures might be lower than the average number of pseudonyms, given the Facebook company's judicial war against such fake names and the rather high rate of fake profiles. Be that as it may, an average Facebook user is never totally anonymous: while the Facebook company (and its commercial partners) may not know who the user really is, his or her friends do know, and are aware of his or her Facebook activities, notably via the news feed. Total social impunity is thus not a common feature of Facebook, which may influence the nature of the interactions analyzed in this study.

Léon Vivien's fans' comments: A discourse analysis

The section begins with factual data on Vivien's Facebook page. Among his 60,000 fans, 2,461 (4.1%) wrote at least one comment in reaction to one of his posts. The average number of comments is 2.70, but, as the following diagram shows, this figure is not significant, as most comments were written by a limited number of fans.

Figure 1. Number of comments per fan



(Abscissa: number of fans who wrote comments; ordinate: number of comments per fan)

In comparison, one person wrote 78 messages while 1,563 persons only wrote one message.

According to the page's official records, Vivien was most popular with the 25 to 34 year olds.

Specific to Vivien's affinity space is the absence of moderators. Vivien's page borrows its logic from a common friend's page; you follow his adventures like you would follow those of one of your friends. This page is thus deprived of "moderator-created norming texts" (Lammers, 2011, p. 48), which would nor-

malize the interactions. The (small) number of silly messages that are neither regulated nor deleted act as evidence of this. The shared norms and practices are thus implicit and constructed intuitively by the page's followers.

Another characteristic of this affinity space is the absence of interaction between Léon Vivien (and the other characters) and the fans. Notably, for obvious practical reasons, they never reply to any comment posted by fans.

Our analysis of Léon Vivien's fans' comments is based on Gee's key notion of "social language", defined as a style of language enacted and recognizable in a specific setting, related to *situated* identities and meanings. The digital literacies we aim to decipher are thus approached as situated social practices. Our hypothesis that Vivien's page is a collaborative learning environment is based on Gee's three aspects of his definition of affinity spaces, which provide a total of eleven features (Gee, 2005, pp. 226-228). Firstly, affinity spaces encourage intensive (specialized) and extensive (broader) knowledge. Second, they permit different forms and routes to participation. Gee focuses here on the range between peripheral and central participation; we also include the relationship with the characters and the other fans in this feature. Third, different routes to status are possible. For Gee, status can be related to the user's skills or reputation. We also associate status with the performance of identity and its possible symbolic power.

The quantitative discourse analysis model is based primarily on Fairclough's distinction between three major types of text meaning (2003, p. 27), namely Representation (related to discourses), Action (related to genres) and Identification (related to styles). These three interconnected levels of meaning can be related to the relationship with the thing, with the other(s) and with oneself respectively.² The article suggests that three hypotheses about Vivien's affinity space can also be connected to these three levels: "Representation" is about the nature of knowledge (intensive, extensive); "Action" can concern the routes to participation, and "Identification" can be linked with status. This article focuses on these first two levels leaving identification for further research.

As the Table 1 shows, these levels were compared with the nature of the fans' stance on the fiction:

- Adhesion: through his suspension of disbelief, the fan approaches the fiction from an inside position and communicates with Léon and the other characters as a friend, or even, in some rare cases, as a character he created himself. The fan "lives" the fiction in the present.
- Distance: the fan maintains his disbelief and follows the fiction from an external point of view. The fiction is seen as an opportunity for historical learning; instead of an experience in the present, he comments on the fiction and the war in the past tense.

- **Doubt:** this intermediary position refers to the less frequent comments that question the real nature of the fiction. Such comments are *metacomment*s about the creation of the story.

The choice of one approach invalidates the other two modes: if the fan approaches Vivien's page by adhesion, he excludes distance and doubt. That said, whereas most comments obey this separation, others mix two approaches. For example, the following comment written by "Alexandre" mainly illustrates a distant point of view, one century after the conflict, but it ends with a wish for Léon, and thus shows some adhesion to the fiction as well: "In these November days, [...] I went to the Triumphal Arch and I took off my hat in front of the flame, in the middle of the indifferent touristic populace. Rest in peace Léon." In such cases, the comments are considered as primarily distant (as they see WWI as past), and are classified in this category.

Table 1. The author's quantitative discourse analysis frame based on Fairclough 2003, Gee 1999 and Georgakopoulou & Goutsos 1997

	Representation (discourses)	Action (genres)	Identification (styles)
	Representation of the thing	Social relation	Commitment, judgment, evaluation
	Nature of (intensive and extensive) knowledge: narrative (relational or not) or non-narrative	Routes to participation	Routes to status
Adhesion			
Distance			
Doubt			

As Table 1 shows, the nature of knowledge can be split between narrative and non-narrative (paradigmatic) knowledge exchange (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997, pp. 42-54). These researchers approach narrativity from a broad perspective: beyond literal stories, "the 'narrative mode' is a way of knowing human reality, experiences, beliefs, doubts and emotions", while the "'paradigmatic mode' deals with natural (physical) reality, truth, observation, analysis, proof and rationality." (Bruner 1986, 1990 as cited in Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997, p. 39)

As the article has shown, Vivien's narrativisation of the Great War is important and aims to provoke emotions (empathy, etc.) by following the war through his eyes. The article then proposes the hypothesis that such narrativi-

sation particularly stimulates (relational) narrative comments. Relational meanings would be a subset of narrative knowledge, mainly expressing solidarity, affinity, etc. instead of primarily conveying information. Although relational meaning is nothing new under the sun, the variety of relational content on social networking sites is such that it requires specific attention in research about digital practices (Lankhears et al., 2008, p. 271). We distinguish three mutually exclusive categories of knowledge: relational narrative, non-relational narrative and non-narrative. However, as Georgakopoulou & Goutsos (1997, p. 135) mention, following Chafe (1982), involvement and detachment, which underpin narrative and non-narrative knowledge, need to be considered as a continuum rather than as the two poles of a strict prototypical dichotomy. As was the case with the distinction between adhesion and distance, some comments may belong to both categories (narrative and non-narrative.) For example, in his comment, “Jean-Pierre” expresses his opinion about present times and about Vivien’s Facebook page, but also recalls memories of his grandfather. “Would we be able to redo what they did? I’m wondering. Very good to show us our ancestor’s slice of life thanks to this initiative. That makes me even closer to my grandfather. I’m a fan.” Such comments are categorized according to the predominance of narrative or non-narrative contents, which give a dominant “color” to the comment.

The third column of Table 1 refers to the actions illustrated in the comments, which imply specific social relations. Contrary to the nature of knowledge, the different social relations aren’t mutually exclusive; comments can combine various actions: a comment can express the fan’s opinion about the war, as well as can encourage the characters, for instance. The research chose to mention all the relevant actions instead of classifying the comments according to the most relevant one. This explains notably why 23.8% of the comments are considered as relational narrative ones, while 25.3% of the comments encourage, support or express wishes for the characters; it means that 1.5 % of the comments are not considered as mostly relational narratives, but contain nonetheless relational narrative social actions (in a limited degree compared to the other actions contained in the comment).

Our quantitative findings are presented in Table 2:

Table 2. Quantitative analysis discourse frame applied to Léon Vivien's Facebook page's comments

	Representation (discourses)	Action (genres)	
Adhesion (internal point of view): 58,2% of the comments	Narrative relational-knowledge 23,8%	Encourage, support, advises the characters	25.3%
		Thank the characters for their war effort	1.4%
	Narrative non-relational knowledge 11%	Supply the story, by asking question or by creating his/her own character	4.1%
		Express emotion	8.5%
	Non-narrative knowledge 23,7%	Judge the characters positively or negatively	1%
		Express an opinion about the post	15.5%
		Express an opinion about the war	3.7%
		Write a little humor	1.5%
		Express an opinion about the images	0.9%
		Inform via "truths"	0.4%
Distance (external point of view): 36,7% of the comments	Narrative relational knowledge	Inapplicable	
	Narrative non-relational knowledge 6,1%	Recall a (family) memory or a personal experience	5.4%
		Express emotion	1.9%
		Mention new learning (ex.: "I didn't know that!")	0.9%
	Non-narrative knowledge 30,4%	Express an opinion about the post	4.4%
		Express an opinion about the war	6.5%
		Write a little humor	0.7%
		Judge our contemporary time	2.4%
		Express an opinion about the images and/or the page	2.9%
		Inform via quotes or references (distributed knowledge)	5.1%
Inform via "truths"		2.2%	
Ask a question for information	0.7%		
Judge the other fans	1.3%		
Doubt: 0,1% of the comments	Non-narrative knowledge 0,1%	Express an opinion about the images and/or the page	0.1%
Irrelevant comments: 5%			
Total number of comments: 6,669 (100%)			

First, it is observed that 58.2 % of the comments show their author's adhesion to the fiction: the majority of the fans followed Vivien's story respecting his timeline, as any other Facebook friend's page. In 36.7% of the comments, the fans approach his story from a past stance. Very few comments explicitly indicate doubts about Vivien's truthfulness (only 0.1%).

Second, given Vivien's "narrativisation" of the Great War, as shown in the first part of the article, we predicted that this Facebook page would particularly stimulate (relational) narrative comments. The distribution between narrative and non-narrative comments is quite balanced: in total, 40.9 % of them are narrative, while 54.2 % are non-narrative.

Third, following Gee's theory on affinity spaces, we ventured the hypothesis that such a Facebook page would encourage intensive and extensive knowledge, as well as permit different forms and routes to participation. Eighteen forms of participation were identified. Noticeably, the page didn't primarily stimulate exchanges of information: only 9.3% of the comments can be classified in this category. Vivien's fans didn't use this page to show their knowledge: only 2.6% of the comments contain "truths" without sources, while 5.1% of the comments mention quotes or "distributed knowledge" (Gee, 2005, pp. 226-227) which can be discovered other than on the Internet page (mostly books, movies and other websites).

Facebook's social mechanisms also characterize Vivien's affinity space: like other Facebook pages, it mainly appears as a conveyor for social interactions: his fans first used it to express an empathetic relationship with the characters (25.3% of the comments), by encouraging, supporting or advising them. Léon Vivien's fans also wrote comments to give their opinion about Léon's posts (19.8%), about the war in general (10.2%) or, more rarely, about our contemporary time (2.4%). The sharing of emotions was also a common reason for writing a comment (10.4%).

Conclusion

With more than 60,000 people who liked Vivien's page and 2,641 fans writing a least one comment, this affinity space is an encounter space for a multitude of cultures. Following Jones and Hafner (2012) and Scollon and Scollon (2012), we favor the definition of cultures as *systems of discourses* rather than as conventional practices linked with specific groups.

As Jones and Hafner have highlighted (2012, p. 116-117), in spite of the participants' diversity of backgrounds, online spaces "often develop their own 'cultures' or 'discourse systems' which include shared ways of thinking, interacting, and getting things done." (2012, p. 117) This research aimed to identify types of *comments* rather than types of *fans*. This scientific approach was obligatory

anyway, given the fact that no official data about the profile of Léon Vivien's Facebook friends was available³. However, further research may provide fruitful insights through a detailed analysis of the types of comments written by the fans: did the fans write comments of different types, and, if so, which ones? How can the types of fans be identified from their types of comments? A first analysis of that kind shows that some fans were fine connoisseurs or amateurs of World War 1; others were relatives of soldiers. Such types of fans were the most active ones and belonged to the oldest age bracket. While the people from the 25 to 34 age bracket were the ones that "liked" the page the most, they don't seem to be the most active on the Facebook page. This confirms that liking a page doesn't illustrate active interaction; as a matter of fact, some Facebook users have liked thousands of pages.

As we have seen, Vivien's page essentially stimulated horizontal exchanges, between the fan and the characters, as well as among fans, especially when they expressed their point of view about war in general. Indeed, such comments show convergence towards common beliefs and values, towards "Discourses with a big D" (Gee, 1999, p. 7). Only a few comments comprise an educational dimension and engender a somewhat "teacher-pupil" relation. Noticeably, a large number of comments about the horror of war followed one another, showing the importance of expressing and sharing a point of view, rather than of bringing (new) information through comments. The types of comments show that Léon Vivien's page stimulates social interaction in ways similar to classic Facebook pages: sharing opinions and feelings is the most common activity.

With a mix of fact and fiction leading to comments expressing emotions, points of view, testimonies, distributed knowledge or "truths", Léon Vivien's Facebook page exemplifies how diverse backgrounds can enter into intercultural dialogue and hopefully, but not primarily, stimulate historical education.

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Notes

- 1 While Léon's page's content is no longer updated, the page is still visited infrequently with very few comments. This research covers comments received to the end of January 2014.
- 2 Fairclough draws a parallel upon his triadic model and Foucault's a "three broad areas: relation of control over things, relations of action upon others, relation with oneself. [...] We have three axes whose specificity and whose interconnections have to be analyzed: the axis of knowledge, the axis of power, the axis of ethics..." (Foucault, 1994, p. 318) as cited in Fairclough, 2003, p. 28)
- 3 Facebook protects its members' tranquility by preventing direct contact between people who are not mutual friends. It was thus impossible to contact them efficiently to get sociological data.

Fostering Intercultural Dialogue at the Intersection of Digital Media and Genocide Survivor Testimony

Claudia R. Wiedeman, Amy M. Carnes & Kori Street

The purpose of this article is to report on initial findings from recent research on the intersection of digital stories in the form of testimonies and the development of requisite capacity in youth aged 13-18 for intercultural dialogue. The research question guiding this study was: How can video testimony of survivors and witnesses to the Holocaust and other genocides foster students' capacity for intercultural dialogue? Using a mixed-methods approach, a convenience sample of 288 students from the U.S.A., Italy, and Australia, between the ages of 13 and 18, completed testimony-based multimedia projects using a digital platform, iWitness. Findings suggest that engagement with digital testimonies of survivors and other witnesses to the Holocaust and other genocides is effecting attitudinal change in students, while also expanding their worldview and improving cognitive and digital media, and information literacy skills.

Keywords: digital storytelling, genocide, video testimony, media literacy, intercultural dialogue

Introduction

Through its adoption of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, UNESCO (2001) recognized intercultural dialogue as a key priority of its work, asserting it to be an “equitable exchange and dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based on mutual understanding and respect and the equal dignity of all cultures,” and “the essential prerequisite for constructing social cohesion, reconciliation among peoples and peace among nations.”

The Council of Europe Ministers of Foreign Affairs (2008), however, noted a lack of clarity about what intercultural dialogue is both in theory and practice, as well as the necessary conditions and tools needed to facilitate it. In the con-

text of a rapidly changing world – both real and virtual – and in the framework of policies calling for intercultural dialogue, we aim to show how engagement with digital stories in the form of eyewitness testimonies of survivors and other witnesses to genocide through an innovative digital platform, *IWitness*, can facilitate students' development of requisite capacity, including cognitive and affective skills, for engaging in effective intercultural dialogue.

In the current move toward an “increasingly (if unevenly) networked public culture,” (McPherson, 2009) and as 21st century demands on youths' multiple literacies increase, it is clear that access to and affinity with digital technology remains a concern. The focus on access to technology (i.e. the “digital divide”) has been joined by an additional perspective, which highlights the opportunities for using technology to develop the knowledge and skills to access, create and manipulate information to engage in new forms of expression (Jenkins, Clinton, Purushotma, Robison & Weigel, 2006). Balkun (2011) articulates these shifts as follows, “students not only must have access to digital media but also learn how to use technology thoughtfully, creatively, and cooperatively” (pg. 16). An important element in our current changing digital and socio-cultural landscape, and a key assertion of this article, is that engagement with communities beyond one's own, and across time and space, needs to acknowledge the need for digital access and individual expression through technology. Such a pedagogical arc requires a broad set of social skills and cross-cultural competencies. With these skills and abilities, youth are more equipped with the cultural capital needed for full participation in civil society (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

The research question guiding this study was: How can video testimony of survivors and witnesses to the Holocaust and other genocides foster students' capacity for intercultural dialogue? We argue that engaging with compelling personal stories in a complex digital environment builds media and digital literacies, empathetic and cross-cultural understanding and respect for others that can lead to authentic cross-cultural dialogue. The intersection of access, expression and cross-cultural competencies presents educators with opportunities to engage students in developing the cognitive and affective skills necessary for intercultural dialogue through the power of the familiar digital space. More specifically, we make the case that through engagement with first-person audiovisual testimonies, in this case of survivors and other witnesses to the Holocaust and other genocides, youth are afforded a pathway for learning about and considering the experiences of others as they solidify their own identities and position in the world. On the basis of recent research on students' self-reports of attitudinal and behavioral change, we report initial findings on how the engagement with digital stories through an innovative digital platform, *IWitness*, positively influences secondary school students' worldviews and attitudes about diversity. More broadly, the data

suggests that these measures foster the knowledge and skills necessary for effective intercultural dialogue.

The potential of digital storytelling

Storytelling has a long tradition in cultures around the world – to ensure cultural continuity, preserve the historical record and socialize the young (Heath, 1982). Frank (as cited in Zipes, 2012) asserts, “Stories work with people, for people, and always stories work *on* people, affecting what people are able to see as real, as possible, and as worth doing or best avoided.” In the context of education stories have served as a primary means for learning about history, morality, and human nature. Bruner (as cited in Cole, Street, & Felt, 2011) also has noted that narrative has the power to help us construct an identity and positionality; a process, he asserts, which should be facilitated by the school. In this light, the role of storytelling as a viable pathway for supporting students’ learning and development across cognitive and affective measures is becoming more important as students encounter increasingly diverse communities, but also as network technology facilitates the spread of digitized stories near and far.

Anderson (2010) notes that while the place of storytelling across cultures has not changed, the ways in which we tell stories and construct narratives has been transformed by digital technologies. Traditionally, storytelling in the educational context has primarily framed the student as a passive recipient of information, one who merely banks information from the educator-storyteller. However, in today’s participatory culture (Jenkins et al., 2006), the lines between educator and learner, and between storyteller and audience have changed. They explain,

A participatory culture is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices. A participatory culture is also one in which members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another (p. 3).

Our work with an innovative digital platform, *IWitness*, demonstrates that digital storytelling takes all the educational value of traditional storytelling and renders it still more powerful in its ability to engage learners. Anderson (2010) notes important implications, “A digital story allows people to connect socially beyond their communities with a diverse and vast audience...” Therefore, digital storytelling has the potential for engaging students in self-reflection about their own worldviews and those of others different from themselves.

IWitness

The USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History and Education houses nearly 52,000 testimonies of survivors and other witnesses to the Holocaust and other genocides. The collection includes full life histories of individuals in 34 languages from 57 countries. Each audio-visual testimony is digitized, catalogued and indexed using thousands of key words, making the collection fully searchable and discoverable. It is the largest audio-visual history collection on a single subject in the world. IWitness, the Institute’s educational website, gives secondary school students and teachers access to search, watch, and interact with more than 1,300 of these compelling personal stories. The platform also provides students the opportunity to complete multimedia activities arranged across a series of pages with multimodal assets (e.g. testimony, photographs, animated maps), and students watch, listen, read, and write in response to guiding questions along the series of pages, leading to a culminating project based on the testimonies. By focusing on the integration of individual stories from multiple and international perspectives, IWitness engages learners in a way that fosters a sense of personal connection, and in turn that connection translates into cognitive gains, empathy, and potential for social action.

The student learning outcomes that frame activities in IWitness include: 1) deepen students’ capacity for innovative, creative and critical thought; 2) develop a more complex worldview; 3) foster empathy; 4) develop students’ capacity to recognize and value responsible participation in a civil society; 5) develop enhanced problem solving skills; 6) increase students’ knowledge and ability to apply new media skills; and 7) increase students’ content knowledge in the target area (history, genocide studies, language arts, etc.). The Institute tested different types of IWitness activities in several classrooms across the U.S. (in major metropolitan areas), as well as in Australia, Italy, and Rwanda. Results from research in the U.S., Australia, and Italy form the basis of this article.

Methods

Following other leaders in the field of educational research, the research was conducted using a quasi-experimental research design. As others have noted (Heck, 2011) quasi-experimental design is useful in “examining the implementation of a particular intervention and determining its impact by reducing the plausibility of rival explanations” (p. 204). However, given the myriad factors that can contribute to students’ learning, “reducing the plausibility of rival explanations” can often prove difficult in educational research. Measuring the impact by establishing outcomes and evaluating the degree to which the outcomes are met, is the focus of our research design.

Mixed methods research allows the gathering of evidence about learning outcomes through multiple data sources, which is a significant benefit when outcomes are complex. Gathering data from multiple data points increases validity as well, which leads to higher degrees of confidence in terms of conclusions. This approach is also eclectic and pluralistic, allowing for creative and expansive ways of thinking: approaches which mirror the outcomes we hope to see in our learners (Harwell, 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Participants

The participant sample size ranged from 114 students in Italy, to 96 students in Australia, to 78 students in the United States. All were between the ages of 13-18. The students represented a convenience sample identified through the support of Institute partners. Appropriate measures were taken to obtain consent to conduct research with the students, a vulnerable population, following guidelines set forth by the University's Institutional Review Board. Several classes and grade levels were involved. In the United States, classroom pilots were conducted with middle and high school students in two private schools in a large metropolitan area in the Western United States, as well as one public urban elementary school in a large metropolitan city in the Midwestern United States. Data from the latter is cited separately from the rest of the U.S. data, as it involved slightly different instruments. Additional research is required to ascertain whether our initial findings would be generalizable to a larger population.

In Australia, we conducted pilots of IWitness in three schools located in large urban centers and included students with varied demographics. Two of the three schools were public institutions, both in suburban locations, and one was a private school. In addition to evaluating student outcomes, this project was intended to test the capacity to integrate IWitness into the new centralized Australian curriculum and the digital platforms that serve as the link for Australian teachers, nationally, to curricular materials. Students completed surveys before and after their work on IWitness, focus group interviews were conducted and observation data were collected.

In the case of Italy, four schools were selected by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research to represent the general range of schools. All were located in urban areas and all were high schools. Similar to Australia, the primary focus of these classroom pilots was to measure teachers' capacity to integrate IWitness into their existing curriculum, but again we also measured student learning and engagement. In addition to evaluating student and teacher learning outcomes, this particular project was intended to test IWitness in a foreign-language environment, to determine viability of the concept as an initial step towards possible development of an Italian version. Students and teachers completed pre- and post-activity surveys. Self-reflections and other

surveys, in addition to those reported here, were completed at the request of local educational partners. The research on which this article is based represents part of ongoing evaluation of educational programming.

Data collection

In the cases cited here, we used pre-post student surveys, relying on self-reporting to measure levels of perceived change following the intervention using IWitness. Although self-report methodology has limitations related to validity, it allows for access to phenomenological data, including respondent's perceptions of self and their world – data not otherwise obtainable in any other approach (Barker, Pistrang, & Elliott, 2002). Classroom observation of the intervention was conducted using a five-part rubric that tracked classroom activities, digital skills, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, and levels of student engagement. Each of these sections contained 7-10 elements, measured in 5-minute increments. Post-intervention focus groups were conducted where possible with a subset of students.

Data were collected between November 2012 and November 2013. In each case, teachers selected and assigned an IWitness activity to students, which integrated with their existing curriculum or pedagogical outcomes. For the most part, pilot activities took place during regular class periods. Activities covered a range of topics, from poetry to history of genocide or the importance of storytelling, but the foundation of all activities was audio-visual testimonies of genocide survivors and witnesses. With the exception of Italy, students completed multimedia activities within IWitness during one class period (about one hour) each day over the course of three to five days. The teacher provided an introduction of IWitness to students, who had no prior experience using the website. The IWitness activity completed by students in all samples required students to watch, listen, read, and write in response to guiding questions along a series of pages with multimodal assets (e.g. visual testimony, photographs, animated maps), leading to a culminating video-editing project based on the testimonies of survivors and witnesses to the Holocaust and other genocides.

Results

The initial findings indicate that IWitness is effecting attitudinal change in students, while also expanding their worldview and improving cognitive and digital, media, and information literacy skills. They appear to be developing a more pluralistic worldview where they acknowledge that it is important to recognize the perspectives and beliefs of those who might disagree or be different than their own. When asked “if using IWitness would impact how

they treated others,” after using IWitness, students overwhelmingly responded in the positive. In the American classrooms, more than 70% indicated that it would. Measuring a change in students’ worldview involves multiple measures. Our pre-post instruments included several questions related to this issue. Table 1 maps the measures related to this learning outcome.

Table 1. Mapping student learning outcomes to pre/post student survey questions

Student Learning Outcome	Pre/Post Survey Question	Scale
Develop a more complex world view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rate your interest in helping others - Rate your knowledge about the importance of issues and events that are going on in the world - Rate your ability to consider multiple perspectives when solving problems - Rate your ability to understand people from different backgrounds/cultures 	5 point scale Top 10% to Lowest 10%

The data from the Midwest U.S. sample showed significant change. Student responses to the “rate your interest in helping others” increased dramatically, with students assigning themselves as either “Top 10%” or “Above average” increasing from 86% in the pre-survey to 100% in the post. Their “Knowledge about the importance of issues and events that are going on in the world” also increased, from 71% in the pre-survey to 79% in the post.

Table 2. Develop a more complex world view: Pre/post comparisons of students (Midwest U.S.)

% “Top 10%” or “Above Average”	Pre (N=22)	Post (N=14)	% Change
Interest in helping others	19	14	+16
Knowledge about the importance of issues and events that are going on in the world	15	11	+16
Ability to consider multiple perspectives when solving problems	12	6	-20
Ability to understand people from different backgrounds/cultures	17	11	-2.5

Other data points further support this trend. The observation data demonstrated that most students were highly engaged in the activity during 75-100% of the observation period. In addition, in open-ended written responses to the questions, “What impact did participating in the IWitness activity have on you? Do you think it will influence things that you do in the future? If so, how?”,

students included critical discussion of prejudice and stereotyping and indicated a desire to change their behavior in the future.

“I think that participating in this program has definitely changed my perspective on meeting new people and also to try to nullify prejudice in the world.”

“I think that IWitness will influence on the things that I do in the future. I’ve always been against anything that was unfair and that didn’t seem right to me. I have always been an up-stander and I have always wanted to make a difference in the world when i [sic] grow up. Now that I learned more about situations like these I kind of have an idea on where to start that change.”

“I also learned not to be prejudice at all or even treat people different based on their race because at the end, we’re all the same!”

“it might influence me in the future because they told many stories from the past which might make me do some changes in the future. i [sic] would go against people who would stereotype other people.”

“the impact that iwitness have [sic] on me is that it taught [sic] me how to listened [sic] to others peoples’ testimonys [sic] tell somewhat about the what had happened during the holucast [sic]. I think it may influence things about the future by making you realize how many streitype [sic] there is [sic] and not you trying to make them”

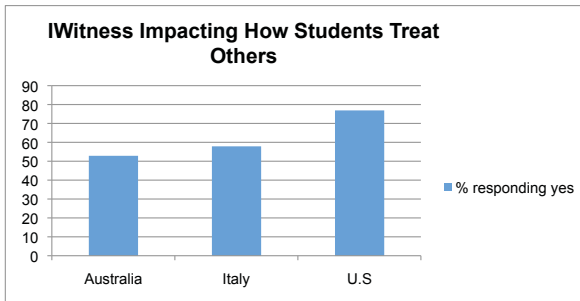
Students’ emphasis on taking action against prejudice and stereotypes further supports that they are understanding the importance of expanding their worldviews, including taking action for others, and appreciating the importance of understanding others.

The two other measures illustrated in Table 2 were less conclusive and require further investigation. Given the demographics of the school (US Midwest – 48.9% English language learners- it is possible that students did not have sufficient English vocabulary knowledge to understand the question as well as what they were asked in the pre-survey, but had a deeper understanding in the post-survey of the issues of multiple perspectivity and cultural pluralism. Their engagement with IWitness may have helped them realize the complexity and importance of understanding multiple perspectives, and they may have reassessed their own standing in light of this new insight. This is borne out by other data points, suggesting that students are developing the capacity for intercultural dialogue. As our evaluation continues, we will monitor the data and may adjust the instruments in order to arrive at more conclusive explanations.

In terms of measures aimed at uncovering how the worldview of participating students is changing (empathy and respect for others), again we see a pattern of positive improvement as a result of engagement with IWitness. For

example, in response to the question “Do you think what you have learned in using IWitness will influence how you perceive or treat others who are from cultures or backgrounds different from yours?” 53% of respondents said yes in Australia, 58% said yes in Italy, and 77% said yes in the U.S. Many of those who responded “no” or “unsure” emphasized that even before using IWitness, they treated everyone in the same way regardless of background, so therefore, they represent the “handles” and that data would not be significant either way.

Figure 1. Student self-assessment on treatment of others: Post IWitness



When asked if “using IWitness influenced your understanding of the world and your place in it?” – 71% of the Australian students said it had to some degree (somewhat, very much, or completely). Students’ written open-ended responses to this question offered some insights into how it had influenced them: “It has shown me that people need to consider other perspectives in life and not just see things as black or white [sic]: be more open minded;” “Hearing of the stories brings immense sadness to my heart, and makes me quite cynical and untrusting of the world.”

Qualitative data from the Midwest U.S. also suggests positive improvements to measures that contribute to effective intercultural dialogue. In response to the question, “What are the most important things that you learned from participating in the IWitness activity in your classroom? What do you think you will most remember?” students provided responses that demonstrated an empathic reaction to hearing personal stories of the past, and made connections to their own lives:

“The most important thing that I learned while using IWitness in my classroom is that something little can get out of control really fast. In other words, even the smallest things that we see everyday [sic] such as teasing and stereotypical jokes can get out of hand so not even things like those should be tolerated. They can get out of hand and cause even bigger, unstoppable problems.”

“I learned that stereotypes aren’t true, and that when you have a prejudice against a group of people, you act upon it and start a major conflict with discrimination. I think the most important thing that I will remember is the emotion and tears of the people telling their story. In a way, I feel a connection to their emotions just by hearing them sobbing or talking in a low voice.”

The qualitative data seems to indicate students’ capacity for empathy as well as a complex worldview, which has been consistent in the data collected outside of the U.S. The question yields significantly higher results in the U.S. data. Further research will provide us with potential for a comparative study.

In addition to advancing their social and emotional learning, students who use IWitness also demonstrated gains in cognitive and media literacy skills. There is evidence in all pilots that students developed knowledge about the subject matter under examination. In the Western U.S. pilots, the high school focused on the Rwandan genocide and the students at the middle school learned about the Holocaust. In Italy, all activities focused on learning about the Holocaust. Students reported increased content knowledge, specifically greater knowledge of the Holocaust. In Italy, for example, use of IWitness significantly contributed to students’ perception of their knowledge of the Holocaust. Following the completion of an activity in IWitness, every student reported that they had at least heard of the Holocaust, and the overall level of knowledge students reported increased universally, including a 100% increase in the category indicating the highest level of knowledge, with 43% of respondents choosing the highest level of knowledge (“Heard of the Holocaust, know many of the details”) in the post-survey. This suggests that IWitness contributed to a deeper engagement with the topic than their previous learning experiences.

Additional measures on the pre-post surveys asked students to assess their skills, including academic ability and critical thinking. The surveys also indicate positive gains in media literacy. In the case of the data from the Midwest U.S. sample, both academic ability and critical thinking measures increased dramatically, as illustrated in Table 3, below.

Table 3. Cognitive gains: Pre/post comparisons of students (Midwest U.S.)

% “Top 10%” or “Above Average”	Pre (N=22)	Post (N=14)	% Change
Academic ability	10	8	+20
Critical thinking	12 (N=21)	11	+46

In addition to these measures, other data that support these cognitive gains emerged from the pilots. For example, in their responses to questions in the IWitness activities, students demonstrated an ability to critically evaluate audio-visual materials, synthesize and apply information, and make assessments based on learning. These responses model good critical thinking practice and media literacy.

Students also demonstrated gains in digital literacy. Responses to the self-rating on “Ability to use digital technology (computers, Internet, mobile phones), which represents the foundational level of digital literacy, with assessments in the Top 10% and Above Average categories increased in the Midwest U.S. sample from 59% of respondents in the pre-survey, to 86% in the post-survey. Students’ comfort level in using computers also increased, with the percentage of students who “strongly agree” with the statement, “I feel comfortable using computers,” increasing from 64% of respondents to 93% in the post-survey.

In open-ended written responses students demonstrated a capacity to be constructive and critical consumers of technology, a deeper level of digital literacy. While they believed they were learning and improving, they also cited the challenges they had with the digital environment and usability of tools. Of 14 responses to the question, “What would you change about the IWitness activity in your classroom? Do you have recommendations for improvement?”, four students in the Midwest U.S. sample cited the difficulty of using the built-in video editor – which is similar to, but different from the video editing tools many of them are used to, such as iMovie - and other elements involving digital/media literacy. Here are two examples:

“I would make the video editing better explained. Other than that i [sic] don’t have any recommendations for improvement.”

“I like IWitness. However the only thing that I would like to change is the video editing section. It was interesting and now i [sic] know how to edit a video but at first it was kind of difficult to handle and it was kind of challenging for me. I didn’t know how to use it.”

Even though students rated their digital skills highly, and the observation data indicates high levels of engagement, they are clearly learning to negotiate the digital space effectively. The data indicates their capacity to engage in digital participatory culture as reflected in their willingness to contribute to building it. Not only are they interrogating the digital media, but they are participating in critically analyzing the digital medium.

Conclusion

Intercultural dialogue is a necessary prerequisite to responsible participation in civil society, or “social cohesion, reconciliation among peoples and peace” (UNESCO, 2001). Developing the capacity for authentic intercultural dialogue requires knowledge, respect for oneself and others, understanding of multiple perspectives and empathy. Initial findings suggest that these prerequisites can be effectively developed in students through engagement with audiovisual testimonies in online educational environments. Providing students the opportunity to listen to and interact with personal accounts - accounts that contain perspectives and experiences that, while different from theirs, remain relevant to them as individuals - has the power to impact students’ learning and development. As one student in the Midwest U.S. sample commented, “[IWitness] made me think about the people who have these types of story’s [sic], and just how strongly impacted you could be by the story telling of someone you don’t know.”

These students are learning about themselves and others by engaging with testimonies through a digital medium. Using IWitness can contribute to the development of these important skills and capacities. Additionally, it can develop digital and media literacies that are necessary for authentic engagement in the participatory media driven culture that students operate within. While the paucity of longitudinal data limits the ability to generalize from these results, early indications suggest that attitudinal change will be followed by behavioral change leading to students who are more able to engage in respectful intercultural dialogue.

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Moving from ML to MIL

Comparison between the Hong Kong and Mainland China experiences

Alice Y. L. Lee

While Hong Kong and mainland China are moving into the digital era, the media and information literacy (MIL) movement is gaining momentum. In both regions, MIL development is an extension of their media education practices. The aim of this article is to compare media education programs in primary schools in these two regions and examine how their media literacy curricula are evolving into MIL programs through academic exchange and cultural dialogue. The analysis is based on empirical studies conducted in Hong Kong and mainland China. Findings of this study show that the media education curricula and the MIL programs in these two regions have different foci. The MIL programs in Hong Kong place emphasis on developing students' 4C skills (critical thinking, creative, communication and collaboration skills) while those in mainland China emphasize guiding students to understand, discriminate and use media and information. Yet, both regions share common goals of training future knowledge workers and media-and-information-literate citizens in the 21st century. Two MIL development models (autonomous and organized models) are put forward for discussion.

Keywords: media literacy, media and information literacy, Hong Kong, mainland China, knowledge worker, 4C Skills

Introduction

Hong Kong and many big cities in mainland China are rapidly transforming themselves into knowledge societies and moving toward the Web 3.0 era (Tsoi, 2011). Educators are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of media and information literacy (MIL) for the development of competent knowledge workers and media-and-information-literate citizens with a global perspective, and so MIL has recently begun to gather momentum in Hong Kong and mainland China.

There are many ways to develop MIL in a given country or region. For example, MIL can simply be introduced to the society through mandating

MIL courses in schools and universities, or it can be an extension of a related field such as information literacy, information and communication technology (ICT) literacy, or transliteracy. In the case of Hong Kong and mainland China, MIL development has generally grown out of existing media literacy (ML) programs. Although Hong Kong is part of China, the sociopolitical and media environments of the two differ. Therefore, their existing ML programs and the evolution of MIL also differ.

The purpose of this article is to compare the ways in which ML is evolving into MIL in two Chinese contexts. As today's children are tomorrow's knowledge workers, quality MIL training for Millennials has special social significance, and primary school ML programs are thus selected as the target of study.

The article is divided into three parts: (1) a comparison of the goals and practices of primary school ML programs in Hong Kong and mainland China; (2) an examination of how the schools' ML curricula are evolving in the digital age through academic exchange and cultural dialogue; and (3) identification of the similarities and differences between MIL development in the two Chinese regions and a summary of their experiences during the ML evolution process. Two development models are put forward for discussion.

The comparative analysis is based on empirical studies (student surveys, focus group studies and expert interviews) conducted in Hong Kong and mainland China, with 1,182 questionnaires collected from two primary schools in Hong Kong and 628 from two primary schools in Zhejiang Province which is located on the eastern coast of China. Regarding the survey in Hong Kong, pre-tests and post-tests of students who took the ML program were conducted. Referring to the student survey in China, the ML group (students who took the ML courses) and the control group (students who did not take any ML courses) were tested. Five focus group studies of school children and teachers, as well as 22 interviews with educators (including ML scholars, ML teachers, school principals, volunteer teachers, and volunteer teaching group members) in both regions were also carried out during the study period: 2011 to 2013. Finally, secondary data on an ML program for children in Guangzhou, the main city of Guangdong Province in China, were also analyzed.

Moving into the networked knowledge age

As they entered the 21st century, countries worldwide began transforming themselves from industrial societies into ICT-based knowledge societies (UNESCO, 2005). Hong Kong and many large cities in mainland China are technologically advanced and actively engaged in creating a knowledge economy (Government Information Service, 2011). In Hong Kong, the household broadband and mobile subscriber penetration rates are 83.3% and 237.6%,

respectively (OFCA, 2013), and 4.3 million of the city's 7 million citizens have Facebook accounts (Ip, 2014). The former general manager of Yahoo! Hong Kong has predicted that Hong Kong will enter the Web 3.0 age, a networked world supported by artificial intelligence and mobile technologies, by 2016 (Tsoi, 2011). In mainland China, the number of 'netizens' reached 590 million in June 2013, with 460 million of them estimated to be mobile netizens (CNNIC, 2013). SinaWeibo social networking users now total 500 million (Wee, 2013). Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, Wechat, QQ, Instagram and Snapchat have become part of the daily lives of most people in both regions (Youth Study Group, 2013; Zhang, 2013a).

According to Drucker (1998), most of the population in a knowledge society will inevitably be knowledge workers. Information is the means of production, and the reception, production, and transmission of information and knowledge are essential in the economic, political, social, and cultural sectors. Developing a media-and- information-literate population is essential for the development of the knowledge society. Moreover, both media and information are vital for engaging the populace in the civic process, building communities, and strengthening civil society (Moeller et al., 2011).

Educators in Hong Kong and mainland China are well aware that training competent knowledge workers is important for the future networked society. In Hong Kong, the educational reform launched in 2009 made Liberal Studies a core subject in the secondary school curriculum, and media inquiry is an elective within the new subject (HKedCity, 2011). Themes of "learning how to learn" and "lifelong learning" are being promoted to prepare Hong Kong students for the knowledge society, and media educators have proposed extending the concept of ML to MIL (Breakthrough, 2003; Lee, 2012). In mainland China, ML is also regarded as an important indicator of the quality and competitiveness of citizens in the digital age (Zhang, 2013a). Media educators in Guangzhou have informed parents that their children's ML capabilities will affect their ability to gain resources, communicate, and share knowledge in the coming age (Zhang, 2013b). ML has therefore been dubbed the "essential competency of Chinese children in the 21st century" (Zhang, 2013a, p.1). A UNESCO publication entitled *Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers* has been translated into Chinese (Wilson et al., 2012).

Media Literacy programs for school children in Hong Kong and mainland China

While ML educators in Hong Kong and mainland China share the common goal of training citizens to meet the challenges of the networked knowledge society, ML programs in the two regions have different emphases. Two pro-

grams were selected as research cases for this study: (1) the “21st Century Skills Learning: Creative Information Technology Education” ML project in Hong Kong; and (2) the ML program developed by the Zhejiang University of Media and Communications in mainland China. In addition, the Children’s Palace media education program in the mainland city of Guangzhou is also discussed.

Primary school Media Literacy programs

In 2009, with the support of the government’s Quality Education Fund, the Shak Chung Shan Memorial Catholic Primary School and Good Counsel Catholic Primary School in Hong Kong launched a media education project entitled “The 21st Century Skills Learning: Creative Information Technology Education.” The project’s aim was to establish an ML curriculum that integrates ML with information technology. The curriculum combines two subjects, General Studies and Computer Studies, into an integrated media literacy program. In the General Studies class, Grades 4 and 5 students are taught about the media and guided in discussing media issues, while Computer Studies equips them with ICT and information literacy skills. Students are also required to produce a one minute news story to discuss a social issue, such as environment protection, on which they have their own unique views.

Before the ML program was launched, teachers in both schools developed a special Web platform to which e-books, online resources, and related teaching materials were uploaded. During the course, students were required to study the online materials, complete their assignments online, and exchange views online. In the classroom, they use tablets or desktop computers to access learning materials, watch related video clips, and engage in interactive discussions.

The Zhejiang University of Media and Communications in Zhejiang Province has conducted a media literacy (ML) program since 2008. Through this program children from the YongkangDasixiang and JinyunChangkeng Primary Schools take ML courses. Curriculum materials were developed through the joint efforts of university students and lecturers under the supervision of the university’s Institute of Media Literacy Studies and a volunteer student teaching group from the university initially sent members to the schools to deliver the ML courses. In the first stage of the program, university lecturers and trained university students were the course instructors, while the teachers in the two primary schools attended ML classes with their students. In the later stage, once the teachers had acquired sufficient experience, they conducted the classes. This kind of indirect teacher training is helpful in cultivating competent ML teachers in primary schools. In addition to using the standard media education curriculum materials developed by the university, the teachers have also developed their own school-based teaching materials (Wang, personal communication, November 1, 2011).

The Children's Palace, a children's organization under the Education Bureau of Tianhe District, in the Guangzhou Province, actively delivers media education in both school and non-school settings. It is associated with the young Pioneers system in China. In addition to holding ML classes, the Children's Palace also carries out a media survey among school children and publishes ML textbooks and reference materials for parents (Zhang, 2013c). The media education program in Children's Palace can support up to 38 schools in the city of Guangzhou (Zhang, 2013a). In fact, every province in China has its own Children's Palace as it is a large national organization.

Curriculum objectives

ML educators in Hong Kong and mainland China are enthusiastically carrying out media education programs, yet they operate in different social, political, and cultural contexts, and their media environments also differ greatly.

Table 1 shows a comparison of the media education programs for school children in Hong Kong and mainland China. It suggests that tasks required by the programs differ. In Hong Kong, the "21st Century Skills Learning: Creative Information Technology Education" media education project involves varied tasks (See Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of evolving Media Literacy programs in Hong Kong and mainland China

	Hong Kong ML Program	Mainland China ML Program
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train wise media consumers and responsible media producers (prosumers) with a global perspective - Nurture future knowledge workers with 4C skills - Equip young children with information literacy and ICT skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train children to understand the media and form a correct view of the media - Guide them to discriminate among media messages - Teach them how to use the media constructively (to obtain information, learn about the world, communicate and network, produce media, express views, and participate in the community)
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critical and reflective autonomy - 21st century leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constructive media and information use - Good citizenship
Curriculum Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curriculum website and e-books (online platform) - Desktop computers and iPads in the classroom (new media gadgets) - Forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures - Media production workshops

Pedagogy	- Collaborative learning - Participatory learning	- Lecturing - Participatory learning
ML Approach	- Critical analytical approach - Media production approach	- Inoculative approach - Introductory approach - Media production approach

The main task is training sophisticated “prosumers,” as children in Hong Kong are not only curious media consumers, but also active content producers on Facebook and other social networking sites. Cultivating critical and responsible media and information use is regarded as an important task in the Web 2.0 age (Wat, 2014). Primary school teachers report that students in Hong Kong are very interested in reading the online animated news provided by *Apple Daily*, a local newspaper, because they are entertainment-oriented (Teacher Focus Group, personal communication, July 15, 2013). Students are also frequent Google users. Many primary school students own smart phones. Children in Hong Kong have ready access to a huge amount of news and information. According to a local survey of 582 school students, 84% of them use smart phone frequently everyday while 76% of them use desk top computer on a daily basis too (City University of Hong Kong, 2013). It is the responsibility of educators to guide them through this information overload.

Furthermore, as these Millennials will be Hong Kong’s knowledge workers of the future, they are expected to be equipped with the 4C skills: critical-thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills (Tsang, 2009). In the knowledge society, collaborative learning and working will be the norm and it is thus very important to develop communication and collaboration competencies. As constant innovation and problem-solving are also characteristics of the knowledge society, critical-thinking and creativity skills are important. Finally, information will be the means of production in this era, and mastering information will thus be the key to success. Hong Kong educators recognize that merely equipping the young with ML will not be enough to meet future challenges. They must also be armed with information literacy and ICT skills. The hope is that the current media education program will achieve the ultimate goal of helping Hong Kong’s young people to maintain “critical and reflective autonomy” in an information-overloaded world and nurture them into highly competent knowledge workers of the 21st century (Lee, 2011).

In mainland China, as Table 1 shows, the three major tasks of the media education program are to understand the media, discriminate among media messages, and use the media constructively. As China has now entered the information age, the media are seen as social institutions of the utmost importance. It is considered essential for the country’s children and youth to have

knowledge of media, and the ability to formulate a proper conception of the media, and learn about the world through the media lens. In the Chinese networked world, citizens are bombarded by media messages and information in their everyday lives, and Chinese young people are expected to be able to select and evaluate information wisely (Huang, personal communication, November 3, 2011). Of particular importance is the ability to distinguish good messages from bad messages and between true and false information. The major objective of the media education program is thus to train young people to use media and information effectively (Hou, personal communication, November 5, 2011; Zhang, 2013c). China regards itself as a developing nation. It thus expects its citizens to be smart media users capable of accessing information and using information for communication and knowledge building (Zhang, 2013a). Therefore, the emphasis of the mainland media education program is on constructive media and information use. Educators also wish to enhance the quality of the citizenry, and hope that media-and- information-literate youth will become responsible citizens and contribute to creating a harmonious society. In addition, educators recognize that ML training will help to reduce the social problems of Internet addiction, rumor-spreading on the Web, cyber bullying on social networking sites, and other digital malpractices (Liao, 2008).

Media Literacy approaches

The Hong Kong ML program is contextualized in the Web 2.0 media environment, and uses new media tools (e.g., iPads) and online platforms (e.g., a course website, YouTube, social media) to deliver its curriculum. Traditional lectures are integrated with new media strategies. By taking advantage of the interactive features of digital media, Hong Kong school teachers are able to facilitate collaborative and participatory learning in the classroom. The results of student focus group studies indicate that the elements of the program that students enjoy most are discussions and online interactive voting in the classroom. They also appreciate the opportunity to engage in creative expression by developing media products (Student Focus Group, May 17, 2010).

Media programs in the mainland are less technologically driven. The Zhejiang program, for example, still relies on face-to-face media lectures. However, the curriculum content has been revised to include new media elements (Wang, 2010). The Guangzhou Children's Palace program is more aligned with current MIL practices and its curriculum places emphasis on both lectures and hands-on media production workshops (Zhang, 2013b).

Curriculum outcomes

The empirical data collected in this study indicate that the media education programs in both Hong Kong and mainland China have had positive outcomes. Survey findings show that students became more media literate after taking the programs. For example, the pre- and post-test survey results show that the Hong Kong program greatly enhances school children's media literacy. After taking the ML course, students demonstrated greater understanding of the media, mastery of some media analysis skills, improved use of the media for communication, and media production abilities. The survey findings show that after taking the course about 80% of 518 students who participated in the post-test survey knew that different newspapers have different editorial stances and understood the characteristics of various media such as newspapers, radio, television, and the Internet. Only 7.5% reported being unable to distinguish fact from opinion. The results of the student focus group interviews indicate that these students are aware of the influence of the media on their lives and their society. After in-class discussions, students reported that they realized that not all media reports, particularly those appearing online, are reliable. They also reported being able to apply the ICT skills they had learnt to video production. The survey results also indicated that the ML course improved students' 4C skills (critical thinking, creative, communication and collaboration skills), particularly creativity skills, and their ICT and information literacy skills. Moreover, most of the students said they enjoyed the media education program, and they showed great interest in using iPads and the online platform for learning. After taking the course, only 8.7% of the students who participated in the post-test said they did not feel excited about learning through information technologies. In fact, 67.6% of them considered the course innovative and interesting and 91.9% said they did not think at all it is boring.

The survey results also confirmed the success of the Zhejiang media education program (See Table 2). It has been able to enhance children's understanding of the media, educate them about the characteristics of various types of media, and teach them how to identify inaccurate information and distinguish fact from opinion. More than half (53%) of the students who participated in media literacy courses (the ML group) agreed that the media have a great influence on them, relative to only 40% of those who did not take the courses (the control group). Furthermore, following course completion, 55% of students disagreed that online information is reliable and 53% agreed that not all stories reported by the media are true. The media education students also stated that they had benefited from learning how to use the media and now recognize the importance of media ethics. However, different from the Hong Kong data, the mainland data did not show ML classes to have helped students to enhance their 4C skills.

Table 2. Survey findings of the media literacy program in Zhejiang province

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
I think the media exercise great influence on me	ML Group	53.4%	22.6%	24%	100% (425)
	Control Group	40.4%	28%	31.6%	100% (196)
All the reports from the media are true	ML Group	26.4%	20.5%	53.1%	100% (420)
	Control Group	38.1%	17.4%	44.5%	100% (189)
Online information is reliable	ML Group	25%	19.6%	55.4%	100% (419)
	Control Group	26.4%	27.8%	45.8%	100% (194)

Hong Kong program versus mainland China program

The foregoing comparison confirms differences between the two programs. The Hong Kong program places great emphasis on 4C skills training, particularly critical-thinking and creative skills training, whereas the 4C skills are not mentioned in the mainland program. It appears that the mainland program puts less emphasis on critical analysis. The focus instead is on teaching young children how to use the media constructively and how to create media products. The two mainland programs considered in this study, i.e., those in Zhejiang and Guangdong Provinces, are clearly more practical in nature than the Hong Kong program. In terms of practice, the Hong Kong program is more information technology oriented and places emphasis on collaborative learning and conceptual understandings. However, both programs have similarities. Both the Hong Kong and mainland ML programs are aimed at competency building to meet the challenges of a changing media and technology-based society. The two programs have also had satisfactory outcomes.

From Media Literacy to Media and Information Literacy

MIL is a holistic concept that integrates Media Literacy (ML), Information Literacy, and ICT skills (Wilson et al., 2011). It has been shown that the curriculum for the Hong Kong ML program (i.e., 21st Century Skills Learning: Creative Information Technology Education) includes training in these three areas. On the one hand, students are guided in building media knowledge and

developing media analysis skills, while on the other hand, they were equipped with information literacy and ICT skills. They were also motivated to produce their own video stories. Moreover, the program's curriculum goals match the main objective of MIL by stressing the cultivation of "critical and reflective autonomy" (UNESCO, 2013). In terms of the curriculum delivery format, the program has also made effective use of the emerging technologies and new media tools such as tablet computers, and adopted up-to-date pedagogical approaches. In summary, the Hong Kong ML program is moving toward the MIL approach of practice.

ML programs in mainland China are heading toward MIL at a slower pace. However, these programs include new media content to their curricula (Zhang, 2013c). Twenty-two experts involved in the Zhejiang ML program were asked to complete a questionnaire concerning MIL. The findings show that they all support the MIL concept. Moreover, the Children's Palace in Guangzhou has published an ML survey report entitled "Apple Generation" (referring to the generation that uses Apple products such as the iPad and iPhone) (Zhang, 2013a). Respondents stated that in addition to acquiring media knowledge, it is important for the millennial generation to learn how to use information. Although the mainland has made slower progress than Hong Kong in evolving its ML education programs into MIL education programs, educators there do recognize the importance of MIL.

Academic exchange between Hong Kong and the mainland has also fostered MIL development in China. In 2012, Hong Kong scholars introduced the concept of MIL to mainland ML educators, and UNESCO MIL expert was invited to introduce the MIL curriculum. Two ML conferences which were subsequently held in mainland included sessions on MIL. A Media Literacy Summit will be held in May 2014 at the Zhejiang University of Media and Communications, will have MIL as its theme. Educators and scholars involved with the Zhejiang ML program also paid a visit to Hong Kong in 2013. Discussions with teachers at the Shak Chung Shan Memorial Catholic Primary School motivated them to update the mainland ML program and organize the 2014 MIL conference.

ML educators in Hong Kong have also benefited from academic exchange with their mainland counterparts. They have been impressed with the Guangzhou educators' conceptualization of Millennials as the Apple Generation and with the serious research they have undertaken to better understand young people's media use and media and information needs in the digital world.

The Autonomous Model and Organized Model

The above analysis indicates that there are similarities and differences in the development of MIL in Hong Kong and mainland China. Two models, namely

autonomous model and organized model, are proposed to explain the characteristics of both programs (Table 3).

The findings of the cases suggest that the driving force behind the MIL development in these two Chinese communities relates to the preparation of students in the transition to knowledge society and the technological revolution. MIL development, at least at the primary school level, is the extension of existing media literacy programs.

Table 3. MIL Development Models

	Autonomous Model (Hong Kong)	Organized Model (Mainland China)
Curriculum Response	Self-initiated awareness + experimental practice	Guided awareness
MIL Knowledge Building	Internal growth + external input	External input
Advocacy Pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversified groups - Voluntary participation - Cooperative networking - Small scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leading groups - Organization-driven participation - Large scale
Development Mode	Free development	Institutional-oriented development
Funding	One-off and limited funding support	Sustainable funding support

However, the MIL development patterns in these two regions have different characteristics. The Hong Kong case is coined the Autonomous Model while the mainland case as the Organized Model. In Hong Kong, the move to MIL was motivated by self-initiated awareness from educators. Using the 21st Century Skills Learning media literacy program as an example, it is shown that teachers in the two partnership schools initiated the innovative curriculum and they developed the online curriculum materials by themselves. In 2000, Breakthrough, a youth organization in Hong Kong, initiated a Media and Information Literacy Education (MILE) program and published primary school MILE textbooks (Breakthrough, 2003). These cases show that some Hong Kong educators were not only aware of the need to move to MIL but also designed programs to execute their ideas.

Mainland educators, however were alerted to MIL development through the academic exchange program, the cross-border visit and MIL promotion by UNESCO. As mentioned before, through exchange with the outside parties, MIL was recognized as an important educational task in China. Hong Kong

educators, took the initiative to contemplate MIL development quite early. The concept of “infomedia” literacy, similar to MIL, was put forward in the late 1990s (Lee, 1999). The Breakthrough proposed the MILE program. Local scholars also joined the UNESCO MIL project, helping to develop MIL documents (UNESCO, 2013; Wilson et al., 2011). Through academic exchange with the international experts and their mainland counterparts, the MIL development in Hong Kong was also pushed forward.

In Hong Kong, there are a number of groups voluntarily participating in the MIL movement. The Shak Chung Shan Memorial Catholic Primary School and Good Counsel Catholic Primary School are representative examples. Apart from schools, NGOs such as the Breakthrough, university academics and the Education Bureau have been involved in the area of MIL. Although these dispersed groups have had cooperation with one another, their efforts are quite scattered.

The mainland scenario is somewhat different. Media education advocacy comes mainly from institutions. Many media education programs are university-driven. The Zhejiang media literacy program is an outstanding example. The Zhejiang University of Media and Communications organizes media literacy programs for both primary schools and secondary schools. Another outstanding primary school media literacy program at Beijing HeizhimaHutong Primary School is coordinated by the Communication University of China. The Children’s Palace is also a large national organization. There is a plan to set up a Centre for Children Media Literacy Education Research at Children’s Palaces in the coming years to conduct MIL research. Thus, in mainland China, MIL development tends to be organization-driven. Lastly, it seems that media literacy and future MIL programs in mainland China may be more sustainable due to the existence of a better funding system. In Hong Kong, funding support is limited and usually from one-off initiatives. Therefore, relevant programs there have always been conducted on a smaller scale.

Concluding remarks

This study on the primary school media literacy programs in Hong Kong and Mainland China demonstrates that there is an enthusiastic move from media literacy to media and information literacy as an educational response to the social and technological changes in the Chinese digital world. Although media literacy programs in these two regions have different focus, they share the same objective of nurturing media-and-information-literate young citizens. Inherited differences in their media literacy programs and variations in socio-cultural situations partly explain the differences between the two programs. Different characteristics have led to the program being identified as autonomous and

organized models. While there are differences, media literacy educators in the two regions enjoy academic exchanges with each other. Cooperation between the two regions may be able to combine the strengths of both models. With continued exchange and dialogue, MIL development in Hong Kong and mainland China is expected to grow steadily in the future.

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Pop-Up Newsroom as News Literacy

Covering poverty through a global reporting project

Melissa Wall, David Baines & Devadas Rajaram

This article describes a collaborative, multinational project (India, UK and USA) that trained university journalism students to become more critical when reporting on issues of income inequality. We describe how three universities created 24 hours of live mobile media coverage about low-income and other marginalized communities. We began by sensitizing students to issues around traditional misrepresentations of poverty. This was approached differently at each school according to the local context. However, professors also shared their approaches, so that students in one country could learn more about how income inequality is viewed in others. Students then reported for The Pop-Up Newsroom, a temporary, virtual news space, live with cellphones from key places where poverty is being challenged. Their primary distribution tool was Twitter. We believed that changing the reporting structures would change reporting practices and bring students closer to grassroots voices. Thus, the conventional newsroom was replaced with structures ranging from makeshift gatherings of students with laptops who curated others' content to student labs turned into community spaces.

Keywords: students, journalism, media, literacy, poverty, low income, global, India, UK, USA

Introduction

In this article, we describe how journalism programs in three different countries directed a project to collaboratively increase students' Media and Information Literacy about poverty. Students from the Asian College of Journalism (ACJ) in India, California State University – Northridge (CSUN) in the US, and Newcastle University in the UK¹ joined together in the fall of 2013 to lead the production of 24 hours of live news coverage about poverty-related issues. Co-

verage was all online and done almost entirely through social media platforms.

Our effort focused on improving the students' news literacy regarding the subject matter – poverty – as well as the ways in which new media tools enable students to produce live news in new ways. The vehicle for this effort was the Pop-Up Newsroom, a temporary virtual newsroom that has no permanent space or location. The Pop-Up Newsroom was first launched in 2012 in California and periodically springs to life to cover selected topics and events, hibernating until the next event. This unconventional newsroom seeks to create new practices for journalism students that will help them break free from the traditional views of how to cover stories. It does so by incorporating new tools into their reporting and operating in a networked fashion that connects students with those they cover as well as ordinary citizens participating themselves in the events and topics being covered. It frequently operates from the streets or within neighborhoods and communities as opposed to a traditional newsroom.

The Pop-Up Newsroom project covering global poverty contributes to the discussion of where news literacy fits within the broader area of media literacy and also builds on growing calls for media literacy to take into account participatory technologies that are being enabled by new media and digital devices (Hobbs, 2010; 2013) The project further embodies one of the goals some supporters of media literacy have called for: Bringing together different countries to cooperate in order to produce new knowledge (Grizzle, Torrent & Tornero, 2013).

New News Literacies

Some observers note that journalism courses and programs have been identified as part of the media “problem” in terms of reinforcing stereotyping and naturalizing social and economic divides. Even attempts to reform existing journalism pedagogy through news literacy have been criticized. Indeed, Hobbs (2011) has argued that news literacy may merely glorify a mythical version of the news and fail to adequately help students become critical consumers or producers of it. On the other side, critics suggest that media literacy proponents have in some instances aimed mainly to vilify the media as harmful to students while failing to take into account ways that media may be a positive tool for self-expression in students' own hands (Fleming, 2013).

It is true that traditionally journalism programs have provided less emphasis on critiques of their own practices and systems and concentrated instead on building students' media skills. That is, they tend to focus their energies on teaching students how to use technologies to report stories, emphasizing traditional forms for reportage, etc., rather than seriously and systematically questioning those tools and practices. Yet journalism and mass communication

programs are the natural places, indeed important sites, for changing the ways that the professional media themselves produce content. After all, the journalism students of today will become the news professionals of tomorrow. Thus, students' own media production – their first-hand collection of information and fashioning of it into media messages – must also be informed by a level of critical news literacy (Orozco, Navarro & García-Matilla, 2013).

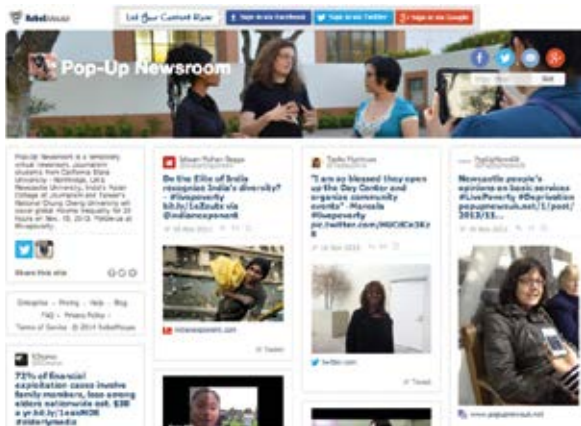
A key entry point for media literacy to influence journalism education has emerged in recent years: The paradigm shift created by participatory media. Bruns (2008) calls this change “produsage,” the blurring of lines between producer and user, while Castells (2009) identifies it as “mass self-communication,” the ability of individuals to produce content that could potentially reach a global audience due to the networked forms of information distribution enabled by the Internet. These new forms have led some researchers to identify a new distribution system for news, “networked journalism.” Russell (2011) and Heinrich (2011) suggest that new connections have been established among and between creators and sources of news. All of these changes must also be considered in the development of new news literacies. Obviously, such thinking can lead to overblown techno-fantasies or a mythologizing of technology and must be taken with a measure of skepticism, as Castells (2009) himself argues. Yet these innovations do suggest that professional media including journalism are undergoing ground-shifting changes and media literacy advocates would do well to take advantage of the possibilities offered by this shift in media cultures.

For journalism teachers interested in media literacy, these changes offer an opportunity to overcome previously entrenched news patterns to incorporate critical news literacy into the training of student journalists. Of course, as Rheingold (2008) suggests, simply teaching students how to use new media tools isn't enough. They need “social scaffolding” that establishes a structure for their voices to become public, to reach an audience with which they might engage (p.99). We argue that the Pop-Up Newsroom is an example of such scaffolding for media literacy because it does not follow the traditional student newsroom structures that have been identified as replicating hierarchies and traditional practices (Mensing, 2010). This suggests that having students produce journalism with new tools and within new spaces could help them rethink story forms and reporting practices; to move beyond the accepted ways of producing journalism, and to explore journalism as a process within a participatory culture.

Pop-Up Newsroom and Global Poverty

The Pop-Up Newsroom sprang to life on Nov. 16, 2013 to cover poverty as viewed within the different countries in which the reporting was taking place. The main vehicle for coverage was Twitter with each student using his or her personal account. Additional group accounts maintained by the students aggregated their content and a central account, @PopUpNewsroom, reposted select Tweets from each country. The management of the central account was done in shifts with India taking the first leg, passing to Britain for the second and finishing in the United States. A social media aggregator, RebelMouse, was also used to automate aggregation of content by finding items posted online using designated hashtags, the most prominent being #livepoverty (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. Pop-Up Newsroom content aggregated on RebelMouse



Leading up to that day, each university department worked with its students to develop a critical consciousness about coverage of the topic. The different approaches and sources of information are discussed below. Each entailed discussing deficiencies in how the news media generally depict low-income people and communities, what exactly was meant by terms such as poverty, etc. In this way, students would have a critical understanding of poverty and previous coverage before producing any themselves. One of the first issues the professors who ran the project faced was the ways in which the topic itself was best labeled. Each university chose its own designation. See Table 1 below for numbers of participants, key term chosen for the project by each university and a summary of preparation methods.

Table 1. Pop-Up Newsroom numbers of participants, terminology and preparation

Country	Number of students participating	Terminology	Preparation
Asian College of Journalism, India	60	Deprivation	Interviews with poverty experts
California State University Northridge, Mass Communication, USA	15	Poverty	Pre-event reading and discussion
Newcastle University, UK	49	Austerity	Pre-event reading and discussion, speaker on poverty

The Indian team initially chose deprivation as their keyword based on the content of their existing curriculum, which includes a focus on its poorest citizens (see below for details.) The British team, dealing with the dramatic impact of the global economic downturn that began in 2008 and brought massive cutbacks in social services, initially chose “austerity.” While similar cutbacks had occurred in the United States, the American team chose the word “poverty” to provide a broader framework for their stories. Each team’s keyword evolved through reflection and discussion to include other terms sometimes including those of the other teams because these were considered to better reflect people’s lived experience. Students in all countries developed a critical awareness of the importance of specific words (and images) in challenging or reinforcing prejudice and marginalization in both their reporting and their interactions with those whose voices they sought to host. Each country’s strategy and outcome is outlined below.

India

The Asian College of Journalism, whose participants were master’s level students, came to the project with the topic of poverty already a priority. According to a World Bank study, *The State of the Poor*, a third of the world’s poorest people (known as the extremely poor) – approximately 400 million – are living in India, the world’s second-fastest growing economy (Olinto, Beegle, Sobrado, and Uematsu, 2013). The country’s problems are compounded by poor health services, child malnutrition and inadequate education and training. Almost half of students drop out of school by the age of 13 and only one in ten people have received any form of job training. However, most of the mainstream news media in India give very little coverage to the dire state of the poor and economic deprivation of its large population.

In response, the ACJ curriculum has a permanent news project in the form of its “Covering Deprivation” module, which is a mandatory part of the curriculum for all students. It is believed to be the only one of its kind taught by a journalism school anywhere in the world. The module defines “deprivation” as the inability of individuals in a society to live a long and healthy life, free from avoidable disease and hunger, and the opportunity to be educated and to have access to resources needed for a socially acceptable standard of living.

For the Pop-Up Newsroom, 60 master’s level students at ACJ almost all from India but also Sri Lanka and Bangladesh participated. The project enabled the students to delve deeper into the issue of poverty and examine the causative factors that lead to deprivation. They started with weeks of preparation to learn and practice live mobile reporting as a means of covering poverty. Because of the large number of students involved and the scope of the problem in India, professors and students identified specific sub-topics under “poverty” such as the elderly or sexual minorities. In addition, ACJ made some of its own preparations for Pop-Up Newsroom available to the public, such as posting a series of video interviews with poverty expert Prof. K Nagaraj, to YouTube (Dhanjal, 2013). See Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Interview with Prof. K Nagaraj on Economic Inequality of Elderly People in India Posted to YouTube



Thus, even people not directly part of the project could watch and learn from his discussion of topics such as news coverage of India’s slums, gender and economic inequality, etc. One of the key lessons the students learned was that social attitudes toward one’s gender, caste and sexual orientation are also major reasons for poverty in India.

United Kingdom

Newcastle University students were predominantly masters level, with two reading for PhDs; they had started their journalism, and in a few cases, public

relations courses just seven weeks before the pop-up news project. Around 85 percent of the cohort came from outside the UK and represented 17 countries, as well as Britain. These included the USA, Western and Central European, Middle Eastern, African and Asian nations. Students from China made up the largest single cohort.

So, for many, Britain was an unfamiliar country with a cultural landscape which was difficult to negotiate. When tutors announced the project, some students were surprised that poverty existed in Britain. UK Government figures for relative income poverty, the most commonly used standard, (households below 60% of mean disposable national income) showed that in 2011/12, after housing costs were considered, 3.5 million (27%) children, and 7.9 million (21%) working age adults were in poverty (Department for Work and Pensions, 2014). Some students – British as well as overseas – found such conceptions of poverty to be very different from their own cultural and social norms and this led to rich, reflexive discussion, engagement and analysis.

Students began preparations with a lecture from Newcastle Professor of Education Technology Sugata Mitra, whose research explores complexities relating to deprivation and education in India and Britain. They were then directed to a series of studies by the social research institute, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), on poverty and the media (McKendrick et al., 2008; Robinson et al., 2009). These studies highlighted the invisibility of poverty in much of the media and the lack of reporting on causes and consequences. Where there was coverage, it focused on “blame” and distinctions between “deserving” and “undeserving” poor. Students were also directed to a guide for journalists on reporting poverty, produced by Britain’s Society of Editors and the Media Trust charity in association with JRF (Seymour, 2009), which prompted further discussion and reflexivity. They then began making contacts, primarily through organizations that worked to support people living in poverty.

Students set out to meet, build trust with, and give salience to the voices of people for whom poverty was a lived experience, voices little-heard in mainstream media. Some organizations, such as Newcastle City Council and a food bank, were helpful but students found many shielded their clients from the students for fear that media contact would be injurious to “vulnerable” people. Few students had their own local networks, and they found institutional voices speaking on behalf of others in their work. Their wish to feature least-heard voices was often frustrated. But many did persevere, made connections, and uncovered personal narratives, insights, and accounts of and reflection on lived experience. They also made connections between poverty and public policy which resulted in a live interview with the local Member of Parliament who provided a political context for poverty (See Figure 3 below.)

Figure 3. Screenshot of live stream of Newcastle University student interviewing British member of parliament.



Newcastle students later reflected that they had not engaged as fully as they needed to with Twitter, however, and while they produced a range of rich, complex reports on the website, these were not opened up to as wide an audience as might have been because they were not tweeting links to them.

United States

At California State University- Northridge, 15 master’s level students in the Mass Communication program participated in the Pop-Up Newsroom. Of these students, 4 were from outside the US (2 Danish, 1 Chinese and 1 Jamaican). They began their preparation for their participation in Pop-Up Newsroom by reading and discussing articles about poverty and the ethics of its coverage from a special issue of the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*. The articles included “The Ethics of Poverty Coverage” (Wasserman, 2013); “Detroit: Exploiting Images of Poverty” (Borden, 2013); and “Finding Porn in the Ruins” (Vultee, 2013). The readings helped students heighten their awareness of the ways U.S. news media coverage of poverty is often one-dimensional and stereotypical. Students were particularly surprised to see the word “porn” associated with media images of low-income people and neighborhoods. This keyword spurred a rethinking of what it would mean to cover poor people – from where the students should look for poverty stories to the ways in which they might be given more of a voice.

In their resulting coverage, most students sought a different angle for their reporting. Among their stories, they covered a youth soccer program for at-risk girls that brought together the girls and their parents, a volunteer-run nonprofit that provides free health care for low-income residents and an information fair for homeless military veterans. Instead of merely harvesting information, stu-

dents appeared to have built relationships with the communities they covered. For example, two students covering the veterans' event were asked to participate in a radio show being produced by homeless people, learning about how this group produced media content about itself and becoming the interviewed as well as the interviewers (See Figure 4 below).

Figure 4. Tweet showing a CSUN student being interviewed by Skid Row Radio



Another change in perspective was evident in the ways students presented statistics about poverty within the US and California (46 million or 15 percent of Americans are living in poverty in 2012, with California slightly higher). This information was presented through social infographics, which are created through website tools that make them sharable online. Thus, they could easily create colorful graphics and put the emphasis on sharing that content even within their personal social networks, which led to discussions with the student's Facebook friends.

Not all students sought different settings for their stories; some gravitated to Los Angeles' Skid Row, where poverty is highly concentrated among homeless people. They later realized they had sought these images because they were the ones regularly featured on local television newscasts, particularly during the holidays. By seeing how they had previously normalized this reporting perspective, they reached a critical reflection on their work that is often absent in the typical reporting classes. Part of how students came to these realizations was through the writing of reflection papers and the creation of videos, Facebook posts and other online forms that allowed them to look back at their coverage and ponder what they had created. In this way, their literacy was both exercised within their project but just as importantly became a point of self-analysis. They wanted, indeed appeared to need, to not merely create content but consider the meaning of what they created.

Conclusion

A key component of this project was its international aspect, which also played a role in helping students further develop their understanding of poverty and how it is constructed by media. Listening to how poverty was talked about by students in other cultures and seeing how they used information to produce news about poverty allowed them to better see its constructed nature and how local conditions and values shape those constructions. Seeing the news through these comparisons became another outcome of the project.

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Note

- 1 National Chung Cheng University in Taiwan also participated as did individuals who heard about the project and wanted to contribute through social media shares and reposting.



Youth Engagement

Migration & “Reflexive Cosmopolitanism” among Singaporeans in Melbourne

Esther Chin & Ingrid Volkmer

The relevance of migration for media literacy and intercultural dialogue (MILID) is often discussed with reference to particular countries of ‘origin’ and ‘residence.’ This article, however, considers how contemporary experiences of media and migration inform understanding of, and communication within, a globalized ‘network society’ (Castells, 2010). Drawing on qualitative interviews with Singaporean university students in Melbourne, Australia, we argue that social relations are organised as ‘global fields’ that are locally and unequally differentiated (Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2009).

The article builds specifically on notions of ‘reflexive cosmopolitanism’ (Beck, 2006) to assess how ‘the world’ is subjectively constructed through mediated experiences. The angle of reflexive cosmopolitanism provides insight into the way in which the subjective construction of globalized trajectories becomes locally significant. The article concludes by discussing how these reflexive processes provide resources for citizenship in a differentiated, globalized network society.

Keywords: media literacy, news literacy, migration, global and local, cosmopolitanism, Singapore

Introduction

Despite an interdisciplinary debate on globalization and networked communication, migrant communication is still perceived in media literacy approaches as a nationally bounded sphere, as a hybrid sphere between one’s country of origin and country of residence. This article, however, suggests a different approach and considers how contemporary experiences of media and migration inform understanding of, and communication within, a globalized networked sphere.

Building on the paradigm of ‘cosmopolitanism’ (Beck, 2006), this article suggests a transnational turn in media literacy and as a critical assessment of the way in which the subjective construction of globalized trajectories becomes

locally significant. These reflexive processes provide resources for citizenship in a differentiated, globalized network society, especially in the field of migrant media studies.

Conceptions of Communicative Cultures of Migration and MILID

Intercultural dialogue is still rare in today's national mainstream media (Anderson, 1991), resulting in specific fine-lined public dichotomies of 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' along the lines of a minority-majority nexus of nation-states. The mechanism of exclusion ranges from non-representation (Morawska, 2008) and stereotypical misrepresentation (Alia & Bull, 2005, pp. 157-162), to challenges of self-representation "on [their] own terms" (Silverstone & Georgiou, 2005, p. 437). Furthermore, mainstream discourses perceive minorities as different from national society (Mainsah, 2011), associating them with a threat to national security (Nickels, Thomas, Hickman, & Silvestri, 2009).

It is not surprising that within such a framework, minorities vary in their media literacy regarding exclusionary discourses. They may be aware that exclusionary discourses can powerfully influence public opinion (Aly, 2007), exclude other minorities (Banaji & Al-Ghabban, 2006), internalise negative representations (Mai, 2005) or efface signifiers of cultural difference (King & Mai, 2009) as they fully assimilate into national culture (Mai, 2005) or limit expression of minority culture to private spaces (Morawska, 2008). However, overall, minority cultures in media literacy contexts are still framed in the paradigm of hybrid diaspora.

However, today's advanced structures of satellite and digital communication shift the paradigm of hybrid diaspora and diasporic mediated spaces as networks of connectivity that simultaneously crisscross local, national, and transnational scales. Various discourses have addressed the specific implications of these dense communicative structures on the subjective situatedness, through, for example, 'transnational embodiment' (Alinejad, 2011), interweaving digital media and geographies (Christensen, Jansson, & Christensen, 2011), and in contexts of social structures, transnational fields of sociality, emerging through continuous interlocking networks of social relationships specifically through social media communication. Although a number of studies have, over the last years, begun to address the specific use of social media spaces among migrants, these are conceptualized in national frames.

However, what is required is a shift away from national embeddedness towards a subjective situatedness, in a spatial communicative sphere where communities of practice emerge as networks.

These spheres constitute a new space for the negotiation of multiple localities, processes which have implications on the desires for social integration and, indeed, the deliberative engagement in national public spheres. The ordering of these formations of communicative engagement constitutes a new sphere of mobility cultures which require new conceptual frameworks.

Cosmopolitan Media and Information Literacy

As has been argued in sociological debates, the contemporary networks are new ‘mixed spatio-temporal assemblages’ of the digital, subnational, national, and global (Sassen, 2006). The networked “global/local communication media system” enables global public discourse (Castells, 2008, p. 89) in “supranational and subnational communication spheres” (Volkmer, 2009, p. 447). As a result, the narratives of ‘media events’ are no longer mass-mediated and centrally distributed, but develop unpredictably in decentred discourse domains in which event-related images are continuously exchanged (Volkmer, 2008, pp. 92, 97).

As community is no longer centred on territory but emerges from a specific holding together of multiple differences and inclusive identities, media and information literacy (MIL) requires what Beck calls a ‘cosmopolitan outlook’ – “an everyday, historically alert, reflexive awareness of ambivalences in a milieu of blurring differentiations and cultural contradictions.” (2006, p. 3)

In today’s era of ubiquitous media (Tomlinson, 2011), cosmopolitan MIL (CMIL) includes the ability to negotiate ‘proper distance’, i.e. an “ethically appropriate” space of relations between self and other (Silverstone, 2003, p. 476). In interpreting the mediation of distant war, conflict, and disaster, CMIL recognises the “world system of socioeconomic relationships” (cf. Philo, 2002, p. 180) in which publics of spectatorship and categories of sufferer are constructed in “hierarchies of geographical place and human life across the globe” (Chouliaraki, 2008, p. 845). It identifies opportunities for “relations of solidarity” to be extended across local, national, and global spaces (Stevenson, 2003, pp. 118, 124).

Cultural cosmopolitanism is the competence to move between cultures (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002, pp. 9, 13), “the ability to stand outside a singular location (the location of one’s birth, land, upbringing, conversion) and to mediate traditions” (Held, 2002, p. 58). Cosmopolitan migrants are fluent in different local cultures (Hannerz, 1996, Ch 9) and relativise interpretations of globalized conflict events through diverse satellite television news sources (Gillespie, 2006). CMIL also respects difference (Stevenson, 2000), thereby enabling intercultural dialogue.

Method

International students are emerging as a new globalized mobile migrant class who – despite diverse countries of origin – reveal a generational specific situatedness in digital spheres and – through these practices – a new perception of ‘locality’. Given the increased globalized student mobility and the fact that these cohorts are socialized in digital cultures, research is needed to investigate their perception of ‘worldliness,’ but also the relevance of locality within such a horizon.

Empirical research has found that highly educated Singaporean students lack critical news literacy skills such as understanding, deep engagement, and questioning of news’ claims to truth (Koh, 2004). This lack of critical news literacy could be related to the Singaporean news media environment, where the expression of public opinion is discouraged (Tey, 2008, p. 896) and political discourse is uncritical (Kenyon, 2010). In addition, although Singapore has “a state-of-the-art communication infrastructure that [is] open to services from around the world” (Curtin, 2007, p. 178), there are significant variations in Singaporean university students’ levels of “technological proficiency” (Cheong, 2008, p. 788).

However, the Internet is an “alternate civic space” for Singaporeans, especially when the user is interested in politics (Lin, Cheong, Kim, & Jung, 2010, p. 14). In Singapore, there is a significant increase in online forms of civic engagement such as news reading and civic discourse, and compared to other East Asian civic cultures, greater participation in petitions and discussion of international events (Lin et al., 2010). Singaporean bloggers and political organisations value foreign information sources – foreign news agencies comprise almost two thirds of news agencies in Singapore’s online public sphere (Soon & Cho, 2011, pp. 101-102).

There are 192,300 overseas Singaporeans (5.57% of Singaporean citizens) – “Singaporeans who were overseas for a cumulative period of six months or more in the previous 12 months” (National Population and Talent Division (Prime Minister’s Office), Singapore Department of Statistics, Ministry of Home Affairs, & Immigration & Checkpoints Authority, 2011, p. 16). Overseas Singaporeans epitomise the Singaporean state’s construction of the Singaporean citizen as “cosmopolitan”, one who is “comfortable living and working abroad, yet retains a strong emotional attachment to home” (Singapore 21 Committee, pp. 45-46), and who engages in temporary migration to obtain worldliness, to “understand how the world operates” (Lee, 2006, p. 7). Empirical research suggests that Singaporean international students in Australia “may best be described as “cosmopolitan locals” for their mix of agency as (upwardly) mobile, educated citizens and liminality in inherently temporary, subject positions, clearly identified with a nation-state in which they choose not to reside presently.” (Weiss & Ford, 2011, p. 231)

This study involved 21 qualitative interviews with 20-26 year old, self-identified Singaporeans who are students at a university in Melbourne and media users. Informed by the methodological approaches of studies of news memories (Volkmer, 2006) and 'mediated public connection' (Couldry, Livingstone & Markham, 2010) in relation to migration (Gillespie, 2006), interviews explored how participants perceive public issues/events. In contrast to studies that explore media literacy with reference to a single media technology such as the newspaper, this study situates migration in networked communication environments.

Interviewees were selected based on the number of places in which they have lived, to explore the relationship between migration and media with reference to multiple places. Sampling also aimed for a "diversity of discursive repertoires" (Schróder, Drotner, Kline, & Murray, 2003, p. 160), reflecting gender balance and the selection of interviewees across a range of demographic characteristics, cultural capital (linguistic proficiency and education), and biographical experiences of migration (significant places, life stage when migration occurred, and experiences of family migration). The Appendix provides details of the interview participants cited in this paper. The interpretative framework builds on a phenomenological interview approach, which studies phenomena or the meaning of things as they are structured in reflection or first-person experience (Smith, 2011).

Results

The results of the interviews are best illustrated through specific quotes from the participants. The quotes are arranged based on the forms of media and information literacy they reflect: evaluating the significance of media issues and events; evaluating the coverage of news sources, comparing societal viewpoints on news; and understanding the complexity of media content through inter-cultural dialogue.

Although events such as the Iran election protests and the US presidential debate are located in particular countries, they are defined as global issues important for a global public. That the US presidential debate is broadcast globally in real-time, "live, wherever, everywhere", indicates its importance for global politics and for the global audience. One of the participants' states, it is "so important to the world's affairs, so everyone's going to watch it. So I decided I'll watch it too" (Timothy, male).

Whereas social movements may be downplayed as minority concerns, global warming demands attention and deserves advocacy because its consequences are experienced locally and globally. Ivan (male) interprets global warming as

a translocal phenomenon as circular migration enables a subjective sense of longitudinal trends in local weather across two places:

“... in Singapore, it wasn’t so hot. I do remember being able to walk around my house and feel normal, feel cool ... ever since 2004 onwards, the average temperature in Singapore has gone up a couple of degrees, and even just standing around and doing nothing, you’ll start to perspire. ... Whereas in Melbourne ... in 2006 I can’t remember more than any two or three days having rained in the whole year, but whereas for 2009 it has rained quite a lot.”

Overall, mainstream news organisations are trusted to set the agenda about “the most important things that are happening around the world”. Within this agenda, local news is ranked; primarily according to its proximity to personal relations, secondarily based on its global political significance. Multiple global powers dominate news coverage, whereas personally proximate territories are multiplied through first- and second-hand experiences of migration:

“... news which is closer to home. That would be the main priority. ... after that, the second priority would go to global powers ... [thus] Singapore [country of birth] would be first. Australia [country of permanent residence] would be second. Burma [parents’ country of birth], third. The United States, fourth. And EU, fifth.”

(Timothy, male)

The above-mentioned criteria for ranking territorially situated news applies to both everyday news consumption and attention to geographically distant crises such as terrorist attacks:

“... America ... has such international significance that [the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks] was of viewing value. But [the bombings in] Mumbai ... There’s so much more human contact, simply because of the people I knew there [in India].”

(Nicole, female)

News preferences are individualised, including a combination of sources such as the BBC, the Guardian, CNN, CNBC, the New York Times, Reuters, Bloomberg, Yahoo! News, Sky News, the Japan Times, The Age, Channel NewsAsia, The Straits Times, and Today Online. Experiences of migration influence usage of particular local news sources, such as those of Vancouver, London, Japan, Australia, and Singapore. The participants access multiple sources for alternative descriptions and evaluations of global society, recognising that a single source is partial in coverage:

“... CNN, CNBC, Channel NewsAsia, Today Online. It’s a different perspective; different part of the world has different news... I just like to be informed about what’s happening in the world, get a different perspective. Because sometimes it’s very one-sided, and I just don’t want to have that kind of thinking this is wrong, this is right, but see a different view.”

(Thornton, male)

Social media is also used to address the limitations of news organisations for participation in global public discourse and action:

“... to read real time updates about what was happening over there, which the news can never capture, is exciting. ‘Cause you’re really into it, and people just update every few minutes. ... [The Iran election protests] would be a worldwide movement. ‘cos everyone was tweeting, everyone from everywhere.”

(Lisa, female)

Where migration encourages participants to add local media to their ‘media repertoires’ (Hasebrink & Domeyer, 2012), new and existing media may be critiqued in relation to one another. Local news organisations are assessed and compared based on their coverage of global news:

“... The Age talks a lot about local news, which is understandable. But having used the Straits Times, I also need updates on what’s going on around the world, and I think the Straits Times does that better.”

(Peter, male)

Motivation to keep informed of “what’s going on in the world” also relates to a childhood experience of transmigration across the Singapore-Malaysia border. One respondent defines world news across various political contexts – from global centres such as Australia and America, to “countries with repressive government” such as Myanmar, Afghanistan, and Iraq. This capacity to synthesise diverse political news discourses has been developed from childhood, through everyday negotiation between conflicting political news discourses:

“There are different views in the media, in the Singapore Straits Times or the Malaysian New Straits Times. ... they would be pro-government, but pro for their own government. I grew up reading two sides, I grew up having an opposing view to every issue, I was brought up ... having many views and forming an opinion for myself.”

(KoT, male)

Through migration, other respondents become familiar with the discourses of two states. This familiarity enables one respondent to acknowledge the diverging views of different states, as well as to justify his position on transnational public issues and bilateral relations:

“When Singapore made Melbourne a ‘do not travel unless necessary’, Melbourne responded Singapore is overreacting. ... Obviously they have an interest because they don’t want tourists to stop coming. But the fact [is] that [swine flu] cases are increasing here and it’s only fair that Singapore protect [its] own interest by issuing travellers’ advice. It’s the same: when the bombings in the Marriott and the Ritz Carlton in Jakarta [occurred], Australia also issued [sic], warning its people to not go to Jakarta. That’s perfectly natural. I would think that it’s very amusing if Jakarta issued to say that no, you’re overreacting.”

(Peter, male)

Migration can bring together people from different political cultures, enabling cross-cultural relations and intercultural dialogue on political news. One respondent’s knowledge of world news is hindered by geographical distance; however, he learns about distant political contexts through conversation with friends who draw on their personal experience and globalized education:

“... hot topic for me and some of my friends (I’ve this Iranian friend and my neighbour, and this Media and Comm [Communications] student who’s into the Middle East), they were talking about the elections in Iran, Ahmadinejad ... I wouldn’t know [about the Iran elections], ‘cos it’s on the other side of the world to me, Iran. But good thing I had this friend who explained to me how the political system in Iran works, how there’s this supreme leader who’s mostly above the law, and how bad the current president is.”

(Mark, male)

Reflexive Cosmopolitanism and Civic Identity in networked spheres

In order to further develop a transnational turn in media literacy, our approach focuses specifically on the reflexive perceptions of civic identity within a globalized society. Results reveal that the civic self is situated in the dimensions of globalized issues (such as global warming), which are evaluated as significant and are perceived in subjectively constructed local horizons. This means that global citizenship can be facilitated not only by digital networking (Castells, 2008; Sassen, 2006), but also by migration which enables the development of

“embedded and encultured knowledge in more than one place” (cf. Williams & Baláz, 2008, p. 45).

Furthermore, participants construct the world as a ‘global field’ that is locally and unequally differentiated (Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2009). They establish “hierarchies of geographical place and human life” (Chouliaraki, 2008, p. 845) based on notions of distance and proximity (Silverstone, 2003, p. 476). Migration is relevant for these hierarchies as multiple places are brought closer to the self through not only first-hand but also second-hand experiences of migration. The participants are also conscious that the relative importance of news is based on a “world system of [not only] socioeconomic [but especially political] relationships” (cf. Philo, 2002, p. 180).

Through migration, subjects with different forms of cultural capital (such as experience and education) can come together in intercultural political discourse. The experience of migration not only creates an awareness of ‘transcultural diversity’ (Robins, 2007), but also enables people to appreciate that CMIL can be developed through the exchange of capital in ‘transnational social fields’ (cf. Lam & Warriner, 2012; Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004).

As Singaporean university students in Melbourne tend to be highly educated, mobile, and globalized, the transferability (Bertrand & Hughes, 2005, pp. 63-68) of the results of this study is limited. However, the participants can be viewed as critical cases – cases in which particular ideas, themes and characteristics of phenomena are revealed in high visibility (see Deacon, Pickering, Golding, & Murdock, 1999, p. 53). This study emphasizes the potential of migration for the development of CMIL as a resource for globalized citizenship in a ‘reflexive’ networked world. Furthermore, we suggest a transnational turn in media literacy, which will allow us to address the awareness of not only deterritorialized but also relativistic world perceptions enabled by new transnationally situated interactive publics. Such an approach will contribute to the much needed debate of shifting the notion of migrant cultures no longer as a powerless ‘diaspora’ within national frames but as a globalized community.

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Appendix. List of interviewees cited in this paper

Interviewee		Demographic Characteristics			Locality Context			Cultural Capital		Mobility					
#	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Ethnic.	Religion	Legal Status	Kin	Language	Education	Localities	Sum.	A	B	C	D
									U/G	P/G					
4	Nicole	F		Chinese	Christ.	PR			BA	HSc	C1, C2, D1			1, 2	1
7	Lisa	F	25	Chinese					BA		B2, C2	2	2		
9	Timothy	M	22	Burmese		PR	Parents are Burmese, mother is in Australia		BCom		D1				1
10	KoT	M	21	Chinese	Free-thinker				HSc		A2	2			
11	Thornton	M	25	Chinese			Sister studied in Melbourne, married a Singaporean, and is working in Melbourne		BEng		C2, D1			2	1
12	Peter	M	22	Chinese					HSc		C2			2	
19	Mark	M	24	Chinese					BCom						
20	Ivan	M	20	Chinese	Atheist			Russian	BA						

Appendix. List of interviewees cited in this paper

Notes

Languages:

All participants are likely to be able to speak English, Mandarin Chinese and possibly a Chinese dialect.

Mobility Classification:

A-C: Mobility in Biography

A: Childhood mobility

A1: Born in a locality other than Singapore and moved to Singapore as a child

A2: Born in Singapore and moved to a locality other than Singapore as a child

B: Post-childhood mobility

B1: Moved to one or more localities other than a childhood locality before moving to Melbourne

B2: Moved to one or more localities other than a childhood locality after moving to Melbourne

C: Future mobility

C1: Intends to move to a new locality

C2: Intends to return to a previous locality

C3: No intention to move in future (not indicated)

D: Other mobility

D1: Family-related mobility post-childhood

Virtual Partnerships

Implications for mediated intercultural dialogue in a student-led online project

Usha Harris

Computer mediated communication has important implications for future class room learning which is no longer bound by space or centered around text books. It has the ability to incorporate real life learning whereby students can make important contribution towards global problems without having to leave the campus. This study looked at the impact of virtual communication processes and online tools on student and partner engagement in an on-campus undergraduate unit which enables Australian students to create communication campaigns for an NGO in India. The study found that the communication exchanges provided students with opportunities for intercultural dialogue, both in real and virtual spaces, and how to use ICT and media in a social justice framework within a transnational working environment. Internet technologies have become part of the daily communication pattern of a new generation of students, who see it as their natural environment in which to learn, play and work. It is thus important to expand students' use of the global digital network from superficial social interactions towards activities which enable them to become active and informed global citizens.

Keywords: virtual partnerships, e-service learning, global citizen, mediated intercultural communication, transnational, remote engagement

Introduction

Computer mediated communication (CMC) has important implications for future classroom learning which is no longer spatially bounded or centered around text books. It has the ability to incorporate real life engagement whereby students make important contributions toward finding solutions to international problems without having to leave the campus (Herrington, 2010). Students gain unique intercultural experience in the context of a professional setting while working remotely on issues facing culturally divergent communities. The resulting sense of connectedness to a community with which they have had no prior links gives young people an emerging sense of what it means to be

a global citizen in a digitally networked world. Increasing importance is placed on virtual service learning in professional degrees to provide opportunities for students to connect with global partners and ‘collaboratively solve open-ended problems’ (Johnson, 2013, p.1; also see Starke-Meyerring, 2008).

Mufeti, Foster and Terzoli (2012) define virtual partnerships as ‘collaborations between geographically dispersed institutions, where interaction between these institutions is enabled mainly by electronic modes of communication’ (p.1). The trend in virtual partnerships will increase rapidly with greater demand placed on students and professionals to use online tools to engage in global partnerships (Johnson, 2013). Mediated intercultural communication aspects of such engagement remain under-explored within a framework of e-service learning and its contribution to notions of global citizenship.

This article discusses the implications of CMC on student and partner engagement in an on-campus undergraduate unit in which Australian students create communication campaigns in partnership with a non-government organisation (NGO) in India. The activity is offered under the auspices of Macquarie University’s Professional and Community Engagement (PACE) program which enables students to ‘learn by doing’, while engaging with key theories and concepts. Students use a range of online tools such as Skype, emails, Facebook, Dropbox and Prezi for meetings, file sharing and the final presentation of their work. They consider the problems of planning campaigns which are ethical, sustainable and cross-cultural, and identify social and cultural issues in the community where the campaign will be implemented.

Research was conducted to gain greater understanding of the mediated communication processes and ways in which these foster good professional relations and cross-cultural understanding. This research found that innovative delivery modes for community engagement, such as in this unit, provide opportunities for rich intercultural dialogue, and contribute to students’ own growing awareness as global citizens. Furthermore, the transnational exchange teaches digital media and information literacy to students and to partners, besides achieving the specific outcomes of the project.

Background

The ease of communication facilitated by Web 2.0 platforms has seen a rapid uptake of Internet services around the world. There are now 7 billion Internet users worldwide with China, United States and India having the highest numbers of users (Internet World Statistics, 2014). CMC has played an important role in the development of global partnerships with multinational/multi-cultural virtual teams sharing knowledge and skills without the restrictions of time and space in various fields of commerce, science and civil engagement.

It has afforded new opportunities for transnational linkages in higher education with educators developing curricula which ‘build rich shared learning and knowledge cultures’ (Starke-Meyerring and Wilson, 2008, p. 7). Students develop ‘transliteracy’ when they engage in problem-based learning around issues of sustainable development while working with cross-cultural communities online (Frau-Meigs, 2013). These collaborations are variously called virtual partnerships (Ratcheva and Vyakarnam, 2001); e-service (Strait and Sauer, 2004); globally networked learning environments (GNLEs) (Starke-Meyerring, 2008); and international service learning (Johnson 2013; Crabtree 2008).

Principles of global citizenship are closely related to the values found in service learning. Combining learning with volunteerism was espoused by John Dewey, who connected knowledge with experience, individuals with society, and reflection with action (Jacoby, 1996). Service learning involves joining the complex process of acquiring individual knowledge with initiating positive collective community action (Guthrie & McCracken, 2010). Objectives include active, collaborative, applied, and experiential learning; development of cross-cultural, global, and diverse awareness and skills; critical reflection; increased university-community collaboration on social problems; and the formation of an informed and engaged citizenry (Crabtree 2008; Berry & Chisholm, 1999; Boyer & Hechinger, 1981). It empowers communities as collaborators in knowledge production and social action (Crabtree, 2008). Studies have shown positive outcomes in students’ grades point average, writing skills, critical thinking skills and understanding of course content (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996). Virtual service learning contributes to many of the outcomes discussed above, despite limited community and cultural immersion.

While the field of intercultural communication deals with face-to-face communication between members of different cultures in various contexts, mediated intercultural communication extends these discussions into the digital environment. Martin and Nakayama (2007) describe the Internet as the ‘postmodern cultural space where scholars study how the virtual place/spaces affect the communication that occurs there’ (p.275). A review of past research reveals that study of mediated intercultural communication is limited. A recent publication in this area by Cheong, Martin and McFayden (2012) provides important insights into how identity, community and political action in varying cultures find expression in the mediated context.

The authors note that much of the literature originating from CMC scholars has tried to understand the ‘importance of culture in the design, implementation and use of the tools of mediated communication’ (p.4). They propose that research ‘embrace (or develop) theoretical and methodological approaches that can accommodate and offer greater insight into the “processual, relational, and contradictory logics” of *mediated* inter- (and intra-) cultural communication

and its local and global consequences' (p.10). This paper considers some of these aspects in its discussion of the student-partner engagement in the PACE Stream of the undergraduate unit ICOM202 International Communication Campaigns offered at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia.

Rationale

What is PACE?

International engagement is an integral part of Macquarie University's Professional and Community Engagement (PACE) Initiative and embodies Macquarie University's new strategic direction and commitment to excellence in research, learning and teaching, and community engagement. Run in partnership with Australian Volunteers International (AVI), PACE International offers Macquarie University students a unique opportunity to work and learn in partnership with communities overseas. Participants apply classroom learning, theories and research to real-world situations and develop the capabilities to actively contribute to a more just, inclusive and sustainable world (Mukuria, 2012; Baker et al., 2013).

ICOM202 is a 200 level unit within the International Communication (ICOM) major offered in the Bachelor of Arts degree at Macquarie University. The ICOM curriculum enables students to analyse debates and practices related to communication in a variety of contexts that cross national and linguistic boundaries. Areas of study covered in the major include intercultural communication, global media flows and communication for social change. Students are encouraged to recognise diverse cultural perspectives and evaluate their own contribution to social justice, equity and sustainability as engaged global citizens. Learning activities promote collaboration and interaction with peers and professionals in a cross-cultural environment. Intercultural competency is an important attribute for ICOM graduates to enable them to successfully practice in a globalised world. Learning and teaching activities in ICOM202 engender professional skills through design of social change campaigns for implementation in the developing world using the Millennium Development Goals as a starting point. The unit aims to investigate how cultural values and assumptions shape communication methods, media choice and audience reception.

Using the latest research, students identify an area of need, and design a campaign plan using traditional and new media forms that can be delivered across cultures and language groups. Case studies of information campaigns developed by international agencies such as the United Nations, as well as governments and NGOs are researched and critiqued. Non-PACE Stream students design hypothetical campaigns by choosing one of the Millennium

Development Goals. The theoretical underpinning of the unit engages communication for development (C4D) with focus on participatory communication. Emancipation and empowerment of communities are central in this approach to development, which seeks participation of people for whom change is sought. The basic tenets of participatory development has its origins in the teaching philosophy of Paulo Freire (1970) who promoted praxis, or active involvement, of students, as opposed to banking education where one person acts on another. Dialogue is an important aspect of learning. The PACE initiative undergirds these principles in its approach to learning through participation (LTP) (Baker et.al 2012).

The PACE Stream

The ICOM202 PACE stream was introduced as a campus-based model in which selected students have the opportunity to work on actual campaigns with NGOs in a developing country without needing to travel internationally. The Stream was successfully trialled in 2012 with five students who worked with Insan, a Lebanese, non-profit human rights organisation, on an awareness-raising campaign targeting youth on Facebook about the treatment of migrant domestic workers. The pilot was repeated in 2013 with 15 students who are the focus of this study.

Students enter the stream through a selection process which takes into account their academic standing and motivation to engage in real-life work experience. Students work in small teams to develop a campaign plan based on a project brief developed by the NGO. They use online communication technologies, both synchronous and asynchronous, to engage with the partner organisation, as well as amongst themselves. Over a ten week period there are approximately 30 hours of two-way interaction between students and the partner organisation including six formal Skype sessions. Exchange of written information, briefs and draft material is done via Dropbox, a file hosting service, e-mail and Facebook. The project culminates in the final week of the semester when students make a formal presentation of the campaign plan to the partner via Skype and Prezi, which is a cloud-based presentation software. Students also attend regular lectures, tutorials and undertake the prescribed readings.

The organisations involved with PACE are screened carefully by AVI to ensure that they comply with ethical standards consistent with PACE guidelines. The current partner, Restless Development (RD) in New Delhi, facilitates peer-based programs that aim to improve basic health and education, and promote civic participation among young people in India. Restless Developments' Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) trains young people in rural schools and communities to actively contribute to the development of their communities, to

make responsible and informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and to improve their livelihood opportunities (Restless Development).

Students conduct in-depth research to understand the historical, political and socio-cultural context of the society with a focus on youth and gender. A collaboration model instead of a competition model is favoured. This model allows each group to work on a different but related campaign instead of the same campaign which would allow only one group to win. This approach provides the partner with a variety of materials which are useful in different areas of their work, while students learn important lessons in collaboration and shared problem-solving. At the end of the semester students fill in a self-assessment form which enables them to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses in teamwork and to identify skills they have gained to successfully engage in future collaborations.

In designing the stream, the intention is also to determine if it is a model that could be applied more broadly across other units of study, thereby extending the opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning in their programs. Evaluation of the success of the pilot project was undertaken by PACE International.

The findings were that innovative models such as ICOM202 may prove more feasible to sustain in the long run in comparison to the planning and delivery of more traditional modes of international community engagement (that are capital- and human resource-intensive to both the host organisation and the educational institution). An important benefit of virtual placement for the partner is that they are relieved of the responsibility of managing student activities and having duty of care towards them, which are special considerations for resource poor NGOs. It also opens up opportunities for students who are unable to travel overseas because of disability or cost factors. It was noted that the on-campus program contributes to new and transformative ways of rethinking community engagement, transcending borders through cost-effective projects that effectively enable partner organisations in developing countries to increase their capacity to address local issues (Mukuria, 2012). It benefits society through partnerships between the university and the community, and produces graduates committed to lives of service (Schaffer, 2004).

Research results

Through interviews and focus group discussions the partner and students were asked to share their experiences of virtual engagement in the ICOM202 PACE stream. Four areas were explored –online communication processes, cross-cultural experiences, tools and technologies, and the advantages and disadvantages of remote engagement.

Intercultural dialogue

The study results revealed that the communication exchanges provided various layers of intercultural dialogue both in real and virtual space. The multicultural character of the cohort led to rich cultural exchanges within the group, which included international and Australian students who came from diverse backgrounds such as Anglo-Australian, American, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Malaysian, Peruvian and Vietnamese. The students reported that they were genuinely interested in learning about each other's culture as a way of getting to know each other and actively engaged in conversation to gain other perspectives, leading one to observe, "We are all from different countries but aiming for one goal. We are united in a diverse way". Working in teams of four they developed campaign plans targeted at young people to a) raise awareness about HIV Aids; b) make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health; c) improve young women's livelihood opportunities. A case-study of online student learning experiences by Wang (2011) found that students considered the collaboration with peers to be a positive experience. International students gained an opportunity to engage with local students for the first time with one student noting that her group did not judge her for her lack of English, but valued the other skills she brought to the team:

I didn't have a chance to talk to local students. I was afraid they might ignore my language and maybe not listen to my opinions, but after the first meeting everyone was really trying to understand whenever I try to make an idea.

Aspects of service learning espousing global citizenship heighten awareness of social problems (Markers, Howard & King, 1993), giving students a global perspective of subject matter and encouraging them to question the "common sense" that organizes their own world (Starke-Meyerring, 2008, p. 5). Since designing a communication plan requires identifying the target group, appropriate channels and message design, it was critical for students to understand the socio-cultural context in which it would be delivered. As the partner wanted messages which could be translated to different States and languages within India, this complicated the assignment even further for the students. In an immersion model, students would already be within a community experiencing the everyday life of the community. In the virtual model, students had to experience immersion of a different kind – by engaging in intense research about the social, cultural and political context of India and its different states, which included Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Orissa and Bihar. Students observed that they would have to negotiate the complex layers of gender concerns, cultural taboos, social inequities and lack of access to technology and education. Watching Hindi films such as *Monsoon Wedding* and *Lagaan* became another way of learning about Indian culture and led to

the realisation that “they are really religious and proud of their own culture”.

Coordinating with community partners across time and cultures also adds layers of complexity (Johnson, 2013). During the research phase, students met via Skype with the RD project coordinator to clarify their concerns. These discussions elicited greater insights about the society, promoting a mental shift, as demonstrated in this quote:

[The RD coordinator] gave us a really good insight into things we didn't really know. Like we had a small, generalised preconception, let's say, about gender. We had a lot of questions about that. We had a lot of questions about teenage pregnancies and [he] cleared a lot of that up. And it's just interesting. A great experience.

They realised that despite the fact that Indian society was modernising and had access to technology it was “still culturally and religiously influenced”. For example, phrases that would be easily accepted in western society such as “sexually transmitted disease” were not suitable for use in a more conservative Asian country. One student commented that she had not expected such high levels of HIV infections and drug use in the country “India wasn't a country I thought would have high drug use or high numbers of unplanned babies”. These experiences confirm that globally networked learning environments challenge one's ethno-centrism, described by Stark-Meyerring and Wilson (2008, p.9) as “commonsense, culturally bounded assumptions, habitualized and normalized ways of thinking”, and helps students to understand their subject matter from a cross-boundary, global perspective. The cultural awakening also led students toward new interests such as travelling to the country, seeking interactions with other Indian students on campus, and reading international news pages. Deeper understanding of global issues led some students to compare the situation in India to their own country and to find common grounds and solutions that would cross cultural boundaries:

I compared India to the Philippines and we found from our research that HIV and AIDS come from the rural areas. We took aside the cultural differences and took aside religious differences and put it in the context of the rural community. From my experience in the Philippines with the school kids is that if they are in a rural community they tend to have more time on their hands...they can get into sex, into drugs, but if we give them extra curricular activities with sports, arts and all these different things...

Another student became acutely aware of the need for sex education in her own country:

We need to be educated about how to have sex. In Korea we have a serious problem about teenagers having sex. This is big problem in South Korea because we didn't have enough education about sex.... I don't have a sexual vocabulary. It's the language problem. Like the word 'womb', I'd never heard the word.

This illustrates students' expanding awareness as global citizens who begin to think beyond the project to wider problems in other societies and develop programs which are transnational in nature.

ICT and Media Literacy

Information and communication technologies (ICT), including mobile technology and social media platforms, have become an integral part of students' own learning environment. Facebook was favoured by students for group communication and exchange of ideas. They used it to set up meetings, upload files and receive instantaneous feedback on design ideas from other members of the group as described in this statement:

When the picture was uploaded to Facebook, we could all see it, then we could say 'oh, why don't we change this to this' and we could change it in that instant because we saw what it looked like on online media, while we were all there.

Since they checked their newsfeeds constantly, the group was available 24/7 and did not seem to mind that they may be asked to comment on a piece of work in the middle of the night or while out with friends. However, during semester recess there would be a lull, illustrating that communication on Facebook was focused on outcome. Students saw Facebook as their own personal space where they did much of their thinking and collaborating and felt that the presence of their tutor would impact on this free flow of ideas and be seen as surveillance.

Sapp (2004) observed problems arising from technological inequality, when business students in US worked with Cuban students. PACE Stream students received important lessons on how communication can be impacted by the digital divide. The tenuous connections during Skype meetings, the lack of technical support at the partner's end, quality of hardware, all became important considerations as well as irritation at times. One of the challenges of using Skype was its unreliability, with the connection dropping out at crucial moments, as well as the difficulty of understanding accents without the benefit of body language. After the initial introductions, video was turned off and the meeting was conducted with voice only to avoid lag or disconnection. How-

ever, despite the problems, both the RD coordinator and the students described Skype as a 'fun' and easy way to communicate. A student describes how Skype can collapse formal spaces, allowing business to be conducted from anywhere anytime:

He [RD coordinator] was in a taxi at that time. He was Skyping with us formally. It was like a formal meeting but he was in a taxi and we were at a table. You could hear the cars racing by. Motorbikes. That got a bit distracting. Since he is busy you can't really help that.

The students only used email to communicate with the lecturer and the partner and seldom used texts or phone calls, some even describing these as annoying. Dropbox was used to retrieve files or deposit completed projects for the partner or tutor for comments. iLearn, the online teaching platform at Macquarie University, was thought of as "organised and formal" where unit-related material could be accessed. Prezi, the cloud based presentation tool, was new for many students. The students felt that each technology had its place in their learning environment, as seen in this comment: "I think iLearn and Facebook are about balance. I wouldn't want to choose one or the other. I would want to use both". Students had first hand experience of the digital divide when they realised that access to technology such as smart phones is a privilege and not a fact of life for rural Indian youth and could not be included in their communication plan.

The project also led to important learning outcomes for RD staff such as improving their media literacy, thus "upskilling" the whole organisation. They had not used Dropbox and Prezi before, but quickly integrated these into RD's own organisational communication. They also realised the importance of theory in undergirding campaign design. In this project the NGO treated students as professionals who were providing a service that they really needed, compared to the commercial sector, which treats interns as learners. RD clearly expected material they could use and the students felt the high expectations of them because of the "real" nature of the project, and rose to the occasion accordingly:

We go for donor meetings and we need lots of this material to pitch for our work. Otherwise we would have to pay someone for the skills and we don't have the money. These are specific skills that not everyone has. We have not modified. We have used them.... The content is brilliant, really brilliant.

Professional courses lend themselves well to the remote model, whereby discipline-specific skills in communication and business, for example, can expand the capacity of NGOs in areas such as data analysis and policy analysis, which the partner sees as "youth-friendly, user-friendly, not jargon".

The function of the academic/facilitator is crucial in ensuring that students understand how theories and concepts inform project design. The students are

helped throughout the semester with appropriate readings, lecture material and case studies to make sense of the links between theory and practice. In tutorial discussions students are asked to justify the choices they make in relation to target group, media channels and message design. As one student observed, “I would be able to develop a campaign and I would know how to write the report for it, whereas I wouldn’t have before”.

Challenges

While the remote model has immense benefits for intercultural dialogue it also has its challenges. A lack of geographical context can lead to a fragmented cultural experience. While the students knew more about the culture of the communities in which the campaign was to be implemented, they did not feel that they had actually interacted with the community, as they would in the immersion model. Students met with only one person from the partner organization online. One student observed “if you are there, you can see other people, you can hear the language, whereas here we are only exposed to a square”. Nevertheless they believed that the experience had given them a greater understanding and respect for another culture.

Students wanted greater interaction with Indian youth (their target group) and recommended that this be implemented in the next project. A possible model would be peer-based mentoring whereby each group of students could work with cultural guides to enable deeper intercultural dialogue, or in the words of a student “we would have a friend, listen to their problems and make a campaign for them”. Another student explained the relevance of speaking to Indian youth:

We could ask them what they do after school. Even if it is intrusive, we could ask questions like do they know anyone doing drugs, do they know anyone who is sexually active, ask questions about the health systems at school and at home, the whole relationship they have with their parents.

As mentioned earlier, technology also had its challenges. While Skype was easy to use and provided multiple communication modes – audio only, audio and video and instant messaging – the connection with India proved unreliable on several occasions. Initial introductions were made on video followed by audio only conferencing.

Conclusion

Values espoused by global citizenship include commitment to communication and mutual dialogue, mutual respect and tolerance for difference, and global concern for humanity (Stokes, 2004). The study revealed that the communication exchanges provided important lessons in intercultural dialogue, both in real and virtual spaces. The PACE experience allowed the students to reflect on the contextual validity of theory, develop cross-cultural insights and practice skills which have implications for their future career. The experiential learning came from interaction with staff at the NGO, their response to the project brief and development of the campaign. Significantly, it gave students exposure to a transnational working environment in a service-learning context, thereby developing their identity as global citizens.

They learned how to use ICT and media within a social justice framework and recognized that the cultural diversity of their own team was a strength. By researching the assigned topic and designing campaigns they were able to translate classroom knowledge and skills into the work environment. Internet technologies have become part of the daily communication pattern of a new generation of students, who see it as their natural environment in which to learn, play and work. It is thus important to expand students' use of the global digital network from superficial social interactions towards activities which enable critical thinking skills and active engagement as informed global citizens.

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I wouldn't Have Had a Clue How to Start

Reflections on empowerment and social engagement by former youth journalists

Naomi Lightman & Michael Hoechsmann

This article reports on the findings of a focus group with former youth journalists who had been associated with Young People's Press (YPP), a small, grassroots, youth-serving non-profit organization, which was operational in Canada from 1995-2005. As a former youth journalist and an educator/editor at YPP, we aimed to test the claims made by YPP a decade before that - alongside the primary mission of giving youth, 14-24 years old, a "voice" on major public issues of the day - it would empower young people as citizens and develop their capacity to participate in media publications in their adult lives. Our conversation was structured around an exploration of the themes of empowerment, capacity building and citizenship engagement, with a focus on what sort of effects and impact (if any) an early involvement in youth journalism had on the participants' subsequent life pathways. The conclusions, as reported here, are quite frankly highly encouraging for the prospects of youth journalism projects.

Keywords: youth journalism, empowerment, capacity building, citizen engagement

Introduction

Empowerment, capacity building, citizenship engagement. On the one hand, these are buzzwords used by many in the non-profit sector who are involved in youth-serving media production projects when applying for funding or demonstrating accountability to a board of directors or a community at large. On the other hand, these are also the real, desired pedagogical and practical outcomes of facilitators and instructors engaged in grassroots youth development work in media and communications. Working in these contexts often involves some measure of optimism and hope that there will be an eventual long term impact beyond the short term good news generated by youth invol-

vement in media production, and that the youth involved today will become tomorrow's empowered, capable, and engaged citizenry.

The two co-authors of this article were participants of Young People's Press (YPP), a now defunct Canadian news agency for youth, between the ages of 14-24 years, which existed between 1995-2005. Naomi was a youth journalist, and Michael an adult educator and editor. Having decided that it was worthwhile to revisit the question of the long term impact of the YPP experience, now almost a decade later, we invited a small group of former participants to spend an afternoon together to discuss how the experience of being youth journalists shaped later events in their lives. The article recounts some of what that conversation revealed, and it provides some insight in to the potential longer term take-aways that youth carry forward from youth media experiences.

Young People's Press was a small, grassroots, youth-serving non-profit organization, started in 1995 by the Canadian Centre for Social Justice and inspired by *Children's Express*, an American and UK-based news agency that involved children and teenagers in the production of news content. During its tenure, YPP published copy written by youth in several major Canadian newspapers – including regular columns and features in the *Halifax Chronicle Herald* and *The Toronto Star* – and through newswire services such as Scripps Howard in the U.S. and CanWest in Canada (Tam, 2002).

The mandate of YPP was to give youth a voice and to empower young people through capacity building and publication in mainstream newspapers. In practice, this meant that the organization was necessarily structured as a nontraditional newswire service, one that would recruit “journalists” based on their access to a “story” and then instruct and guide the youth on how to write within a news genre. Many of the writers whose stories were disseminated by YPP were one-timers who attended a workshop or responded to a call for publication. Others, including the individuals we assembled for this focus group, took the opportunity to write several articles over a longer period of time. While an underlying goal of the organization was to contribute to the development of forms of participatory democracy for youth who otherwise might not have been able to find their “voice,” at the time it was unclear if the underlying inequalities between the mostly white and male, adult editors and the young writers were substantially upended. Given the collaborative nature of workplace writing, YPP editors would sometimes substantially rewrite youth articles before publication, and, even if this were intended as a pedagogic intervention, the follow-through teachable moment was not always forthcoming.

The educational component of the organization included the creation of teaching materials, particularly the YPP Writer's Guide; the provision of writing workshops for young people, and just-in-time instruction and editing with youth in the process of researching or drafting a story (Hoechsmann, 2008).¹ Despite some reliance on “middle class kids with modems” to provide

regular copy for the weekly columns and features, the majority of the outreach and education efforts of YPP were targeted to socially, culturally and economically marginalized youth. These efforts brought YPP editors and educators to mainstream high schools, youth organizations and community centers during their recruitment and outreach, but also to insurgent spaces where they would work with inner city homeless youth, queer youth collectives, First Nations youth in urban and reserve contexts, Black youth in an Afrocentric summer camp in Toronto's suburbs, and incarcerated youth in a detention centre.

On September 14, 2013, five former YPP journalists and one former editor spent three hours in focused discussion, reflecting on our experiences with YPP and how and if they had shaped our subsequent life pathways. We met at the Centre for Social Innovation, a meeting space and café in Toronto's trendy Annex neighbourhood, with the intention of testing the hypothesis that sustained participation in a project like YPP, which promises capacity building and empowerment, leads to future citizenship engagement.

The selection process for choosing the participants in our reflection was based on a convenience sample of former YPPers who had published at least three pieces in *The Toronto Star* and who still lived in or near Toronto. Our email query yielded a 33% response rate. Initially, we noted the likelihood that those who found the time and had the interest to take up our invitation may have had more cultural or social capital than those who did not; the four who came certainly were involved in interesting and successful lives. However, as the topic for reflection was situated firmly in the past, we were less concerned about barriers to participation or potential repercussions for respondents. We settled on using a focus group format for the gathering, reasoning that this would facilitate comparisons between participants and group reflection and enrich the overall data collected, as compared to doing individual interviews (Kvale, 1996).

The participants of our revisiting were Naomi (the co-author of this article and a doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/ University of Toronto [OISE/UT]), Shellene (a journalism graduate who is a Communications Specialist in the corporate sector and has occasionally maintained a blog), Kathy (an MFA graduate with a day job as an admin assistant and a thriving vocation as a creative writer), Shaun (a school trustee with the Toronto District School Board and a doctoral student at OISE/UT), Kirk (a journalism graduate, and a B.Ed. and M.Ed. graduate who presently works as a high school history teacher) and Michael (co-author of this article, OISE/UT Ph.D., university professor and occasional op-ed writer).

We structured our conversation around an exploration of the themes of *empowerment*, in terms of YPP's ability to support and enable youth to have a "voice" in the debates of the day, *capacity-building*, focusing on how and if YPP had helped develop tangible journalism and advocacy skills for its youth

writers, and *citizen engagement*, in terms of exploring the potential impact of YPP on the participants' future motivation to participate in the public sphere (Hoechsmann & Lightman, in press).

Empowerment

Perhaps it is not surprising that a group of former youth journalists would express strong opinions about the importance of creating meaningful spaces for youth voice as vehicles of empowerment and motivation for young people to share their unique perspectives about the world around them. Generally, our research participants agreed that working with YPP gave them a first taste of the thrill of seeing their name in print and allowed them to access audiences outside of their immediate community. One participant, Kathy put it this way:

There is something legitimizing about an institution like The Toronto Star saying your voice matters and it is an important type of leadership. There is something about that. And I still get the same high that I got back then every time I publish a piece (Kathy, personal communication, September 14, 2013).

Similarly, Naomi recalled that having an article published in a national newspaper was something that changed how she thought about learning and expressing her opinions:

I always liked writing. For me, I do think of YPP as a real turning point because school wasn't particularly fascinating. I found myself in this place of informal education with people that were motivated to help me. I remember for the first time getting one of my opinion pieces published... It was this amazing and legitimizing experience of being in a national newspaper. I think this is very different than writing a blog post that your friends see because The Star has this huge, huge audience.

A second participant, Shaun, emphasized that the framing by young journalists of what is news provides an original take on how and what issues should be covered in the media: "There was an authenticity that came from the Young People's Press... it was young people who are caring about these issues and writing about these issues themselves."

Another participant, Kirk argued that youth media projects can break down some of the boundaries between adults and young people. He said that young people are eager to be part of the decision-making within society, but are often excluded.

There is hierarchy in our society that says if you are an adult you have more say, more voice, more force in society to be listened to. I think a lot of us [youth journalists] had a yearning to be heard, to be seen and to be listened to seriously about the concerns that we had. They weren't just concerns that were fluffy, pie in the sky notion of Disney world, or that we wanted to change society over night... We wanted to actually sit down at the table where decisions are being made that affected our lives. Whether it is about equity or gay/straight alliances in school, whether it is the affordability of education in post-secondary institutions or about the futures of our jobs/careers, or about the global impact of our environmental footprint.

Racialized boundaries too were regularly transcended by YPP writers. Shellene was emphatic about the importance of including writers of colour in newsrooms. She pointed out that there is a common misconception embedded into journalistic practice, that interviewing youth, or members of racialized communities, functions as inclusion:

A lot of people who are not youth believe that they can write from the youth perspective, just as a lot of people from outside of racialized communities feel they can write from that perspective. But this is ultimately not inclusive. They [outsiders] think that talking to someone [from a different community] is sufficient. But having people who are from these different communities actually participating in creating the content that goes in the newspaper is so different. It is so much more engaging to have a young black man write about the issues a young black man faces, rather than someone else asking this young black man what the issues are and writing it from their own perspective.

By facilitating youth from myriad backgrounds and with diverse worldviews to have a forum to express their voices to the mainstream population, YPP legitimized a voice that has been traditionally shut out of many public forums (Miller & Caron, 2004). For these efforts, YPP received recognition from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation in the form of an Award of Excellence in 2001 (Tam, 2002).

Capacity building

While YPP was not set up to provide formalized vocational training in journalism, it was premised on a pedagogical model where every intervention along the editorial process was also a 'teachable moment', based on one-on-one dialogues between editors and writers, aiming to develop youths' writing skills, confidence and media literacy. All outreach for potential participants was provided

in the form of writing workshops. Some potential writers came to YPP because they were already dreaming of becoming a journalist or author. Many budding journalists were highly motivated to get involved with YPP to develop admissions portfolios for post-secondary journalism programs. Other YPP writers such as Shaun, came to YPP as youth activists who were primarily motivated to spread the reach of their ideas through mainstream publication. As Shaun says, he would not have been able to write journalistically without the mentorship of YPP editors:

I wouldn't have had a clue how to start. They just guided me along, like 'maybe that opening paragraph needs some work' and I would not have understood that otherwise. Knowing I had to get x, y, z in the 600 word limit, I think those are the tips that helped me become a better writer... with YPP I knew who I could talk to get that guidance and mentorship.

The principal journalistic genre taught at YPP was first-person opinion-editorial writing, a style of expression that seemed to correspond well to the highly opinionated manner in which young people articulate their beliefs and worldviews. These pieces were typically published in a weekly *Youthbeat* column in *The Toronto Star* and also in a series of e-zines published by the organization. Looking back on some of these articles, the focus group participants assembled emphasized that it is important to enable youth voice on the central issues of the day, but that this does not emerge from within a vacuum. The former youth journalists recalled the unique nature of the YPP writing process and working with editors who were focused specifically on articulating youth content while providing skills, guidance and friendship along the way.

Shellene came to YPP when she had already finished formal training in journalism. She used YPP as a place to build her portfolio, hone her skills, and gain professional experience in editing and working in a newsroom environment. Shellene described YPP as an important stepping-stone on her career path:

*I went to YPP after moving to Toronto from Montreal and working some really crazy jobs. I had a degree in journalism but no success getting into the journalism field. I entered a contest YPP was having in *The Toronto Star* and I decided why not and I sent in my submission. I got a call from them saying 'Hey why don't you come in?' I came in and that is how we started working together and then they hired me on as an associate editor.*

While Kirk acknowledged the importance of the mentorship and guidance he was provided with at YPP, he said that the main benefit was that it was a place that allowed him to write about stories that he felt passionately about, to reach a wide audience, and also to do that while developing an editorial position that aligned with his views:

For me, it was about having the tools to express myself in a way that I knew conventional media wasn't always comfortable with and wasn't ready to hear. I felt that YPP provided a space for me to nurture that... to tell raw stories that reflected voices that were being either silenced or were not being heard... And one time this 81 year old war veteran wrote back and said "Kirk, your piece was amazing"... So, it was very empowering to learn that my voice was reaching others beyond my age range.

Capacity building at YPP thus involved not only the support and mentorship to develop journalistic writing abilities but also the space and leeway to develop modes of expression and youth "voice" that accorded with the beliefs, lifestyles and worldviews of the participants.

Citizenship engagement

In regards to the influence that the YPP experience had on the life pathways of former youth journalists, it was clear that writing remains part of the connective tissue of all the focus group participants' lives. Yet, interestingly enough, none of this group ended up working in formal journalism. For Shellene, Kirk and Naomi, who spent time as interns and employees in professional newsrooms, YPP may have "spoiled" them to the realities of "real" news work in highly competitive environments, with precarious working conditions and little agency to determine the subject matter of one's stories. While Kirk and Naomi continue to publish occasional articles in the alternative press, Shellene has had two blogs running at different times – one on current affairs and the other on Black hair. Shellene made the decision to leave journalism after experiencing the siren-chasing realities of newsgathering at a major newspaper and deciding that she needed more stability in her life. Yet, despite leaving journalism, Shellene has kept up blogging to satisfy her need for self-expression:

I asked myself, 'Do I fight this fight and force my way in to have a [journalism] contract and not know what life is going to look like six months down the road? Or, do I find something where I can still write and enjoy writing, but yet have a more stable environment for myself?' That was the decision I had to make. And I decided to come out of journalism. I miss writing, that kind of writing, and interacting with interesting people and writing cool stories. But what I saw from when I spent that year [as a professional Intern] that is probably not what I would be doing anyhow. So I might as well leave that, get a stable job, and start blogging. And that is what I did.... Writing will always be something I come back to, because there is always something to say with my blogs to people who read them, or know, or care.

In Naomi's experience working as an Intern at an alternative weekly newspaper, she saw the growing trend towards lifestyle journalism, "a focus on film, art, food, and not on news," coupled with a stressful, highly controlled environment. Presently in graduate school, she echoed Shellené's sentiment that writing would always be something she uses to convey her worldviews.

What I do think YPP left me with.... is a knowledge that writing was going to be a part of my life. That I knew I had this skill and whatever I ended up doing I was going to have writing be some part of that. And I would work to make writing a part of that. So, that's powerful. To have a passion outside of where you choose to take your career professionally.

Kathy, who is a fiction writer and part-time administrator, states that she "was never somebody with a grand master plan." Her identity is highly invested in creative writing and while she has not followed through with journalistic writing, she has begun to run writing workshops and peer mentorships for aspiring writers.

Shaun was the participant who appeared to have wandered furthest from the YPP writer's experience, but he states that he never really saw himself becoming a professional writer. He wrote as a means to express himself about the social justice issues he was passionate about, and YPP was a critical vehicle in providing the skillset and confidence to write about those issues. Currently, he is a doctoral student in education and a trustee for the Toronto District School Board. He sees his current work as a Trustee as a continuation of the work of developing formal argumentation, as he was doing in the writing he did during his time with YPP.

I am doing the same thing now, but I am doing it in a different venue. I may not be necessarily writing, but I am speaking out on things. That ties back to the confidence that I got from writing through YPP, and understanding that I could make change and reach out to other people. This is the same concept applied in a different way in my work with the school board, as a trustee, the idea that the things you say are important. Be it whether you are writing it down on an article, or in a boardroom, or through the media.

Shaun's experience is all about citizenship engagement. As a young man who was able to seek office and get elected to a public School Board, a potential springboard for further political opportunities in Canada, Shaun demonstrates that the capacity to express oneself persuasively crosses communication domains and modalities.

Conclusion

As co-authors of this study, we have asked ourselves repeatedly how we came to interview such an engaged and motivated group of former journalists. Our results feel almost “too good to be true” and it may be the case that if another group of former journalists had been assembled, we might have had a much less empowered sample (or the results may have been similar). Furthermore, it is apparent that these participants had to cross two thresholds that already suggest motivation and engagement – one being that everyone chosen had written at least three articles for publication while at YPP; and, two, that these participants self-selected themselves after receiving an e-mail invitation from the authors. We acknowledge that the findings presented here are not intended to prove a causal link between writing and publishing several articles at a youth journalism project and an empowered future of public advocacy and self-expression ten years later.

Rather, our point is more nuanced and contingent: grassroots projects that mentor youth journalists have tremendous potential to shape and alter the life pathways those former participants will take. Though empowerment and engagement are hard to calibrate and measure, they are qualities that are more likely to emerge from positive experiences where youth are given a sense that their worldviews and beliefs are valued by their mentors and will be given a public airing. In regards to the latter, YPP provided its participants a great advantage in being able to secure mass audiences for their writing. On the surface, this can seem like an easier task today due to the changing technologies of communication which have opened up new venues and forums for youth expression through lowered barriers to writing and sharing content that have been attributed to forums such as blogs, podcasts, YouTube, and Twitter. There is a DIY (Do It Yourself) revolution going on around us and an apparent outpouring of youth expression.

The challenge remains, however, to provide rich opportunities for mentorship and instruction, to engage youth to feel empowered and motivated to remain involved for an extended period, to foster contexts and pretexts for structured and respectful intergenerational dialogue and to view youth voice as both relevant and vital. Grassroots youth media projects have played an important role in this regard for several decades, and they continue to fill an important space in helping and supporting youth to develop the abilities, confidence and motivation to get involved, and stay involved, in some forms of public engagement.

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Notes

- 1 An account of the pedagogical challenges faced, and strategies used, by YPP editors and educators can be found in Hoechsmann, M. "Teaching Media Writing" (2008) at <http://newlits.wikispaces.com/Teaching+Media+Writing>. The YPP Writers' Guide, a five-part curriculum for youth writers, is included as a series of attachments to this article.

Whatever Happened to South African Youth?

New media & New politics & New activism

Ibrahim Saleh

South Africa's crisis of culture and other woes are often attributed to the 'reminisce of the apartheid,' and to the large-scale socio-political and economic challenges that were inherited and have escalated since 1994. Yet South African youth have redefined the ideas and notion of politics & activism (Saleh, 2012). The main focus of this article is to examine the current predicament of digital divide in South Africa and the impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on youth. Many non-African scholars ignore the 'missing link,' which can be seen in the recent social uprisings unleashed by the inequalities, historical baggage and the digital divide that have not abolished the hierarchy of power in South Africa, but only changed it. It is thus crucial to adopt a contextual approach that is concerned with what happens to the technology when it is appropriated and adapted by people to transgress the boundaries imposed by the state, the culture, the economy, and by the technology-capitalism complex itself (Mabweazara, 2010).

Keywords: South Africa, digital divide, youth activism, information communication technology (ICT), appropriated

Introduction

South Africa's crisis of culture and other woes are often attributed to the 'reminisce of the apartheid,' and to the large-scale socio-political and economic challenges that were inherited and have escalated since 1994. Yet South African youth have redefined the ideas and notion of politics & activism (Saleh, 2012). The deep social divisions in South Africa both historical and current – along lines of 'race', class, tradition and modernity, make it very difficult to identify the national culture and identity supposedly being projected by media.

The article borrows its title from Galal Amin's book: *Whatever Happened to the Egyptians?* (Amin, 2001). The reason for this appropriation of the title to South African youth is the exponential growth of internet and social media

penetration without clear outcome on its political activism and the impact of these media on youth. The research argues, however, that these factors alone are insufficient to explain the fundamental changes in youth behaviour and attitudes that characterize the new South Africa and the role played by social media. Twenty years since the first democratic elections in South Africa, and the new round of elections on May 7, 2014 have made the emphasis of the current political dynamics on the youth, especially that all political parties have established their online platforms in an attempt to attract the youth. In such volatile, yet timely historical moment, there is an urgent need to refine and explain how concepts such as “digital”, “net”, “native”, and “generation” (Brown & Czerniewicz, 2010) are used in South Africa in order to understand the term “digitizen.”

A recent working paper from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has emphasized that the availability of ICT is insufficient to reach any potential social progress, but rather the reverse of the current dim reality of poverty, inequality and violence resulting from the increasing rates are detrimental in achieving development. “Technology itself is not suited to make a difference in the practice of international development. It is rather “the economic and social processes behind the technology that drive the change. Thus, ICTs are instrumental, not a goal in [themselves]” (Sarrazin, 2011).

The main focus of this research is to examine the current predicament of the digital divide in South Africa and the impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on youth. Many non-African scholars ignore the ‘missing link,’ which can be seen in the recent social uprisings unleashed by the inequalities, historical baggage and the digital divide that have not abolished the hierarchy of power in South Africa, but only changed it.

In many instances, there has been a kind of negligence towards the contextualization of the sudden upward mobility and attendant prestige, self-confidence, and purchasing power of a very isolated niche segment of the South African society. This segment is eager to display a new-found social position with all its related ‘multiple literacies’ (Saleh, 2013a) as conspicuously as possible, which has an enormous effect on the attitudes and allegiances of other groups in relation to race, gender and power in their appropriation of social media and the culture of convergence. In short, the problem ignited is the fact that newly available media was not supported by new ways of thinking. In many cases, the political parties’ attempts to attract South African youth are still anchored within the realm of conventional politics. In such setting, the new spaces that could have been a refuge for South African youth only serve their existing missions and agendas (Bennett, 2003a). The older generations of politicians still exercise considerable influence and power over the media (Hallin and Mancini, 2004), though the impact of political economy and commercialization remain as deterring authorities.

The evolving communicative ecology (Foth and Hearn, 2007) in South

Africa emphasizes a causal interaction between political actors, social actors, and media businesses that enabled desperate African youth to break away from traditional systems and communication spaces to other alternatives. But the peculiarity of ICT in South Africa is very complex, and confirms the digital divide based on ‘multiple literacies’ instead of enlarging its scope (Mansell, 2010). It is thus crucial to adopt a contextual approach that is concerned with what happens to the technology when it is appropriated and adapted by people to transgress the boundaries imposed by the state, the culture, the economy, and by the technology-capitalism complex itself (Mabweazara, 2010).

In the meantime, there is little or no pan-African networking, experience-sharing, or documentation of activities. This is specifically evident with the current insufficient empirical evidence and the prevailing interpretation of “mitigating euphoria,” which makes many scholars and educators implement scenarios of developed societies on Africa (Mabweazara, 2010).

“Destabilized political communication” is becoming a pattern in South Africa which is reflected in the chaos, inefficiency, and unpredictability among the youth’s use of social media (Dahlgren, 2005). The horizontal civic extension of political communication, as well as vertical communication opportunities between citizens have seen slight signs of change in the balance of power (Benkler, 2006). These new alternative cooperating communities’ power is said to be ascendant (Mossberger et al., 2008), as they create a “new politics” of South African youth that redefines the organisation of society and the power relations within it (Bennett, 2003c).

However new political activism remains limited to the minority privileged niche (Mazzoleni, 1995), though it uses personalised media and operates within multiple public spheres (Della Porta & Tarrow 2004). Social media platforms have provided citizens in South Africa with unimaginable possibilities to engage politically regardless of the variations in the nature and extent of changes (Southwood, 2008), while providing understanding of how these values and norms are communicated through the different media channels (Goggin, 2006).

Conceptual framework

The South African higher education experiences increased access to and use of ICTs, which indicates that age is not a determining factor; but rather the level of familiarity and experience in using ICTs (Brown & Czerniewicz, 2010). In addition, the idea of ‘architecture of the net’ highlights the unlimited potential of new spaces for many forms of civic initiatives that challenge the established power structures (Kalathil & Boas, 2003).

The “Access Rainbow Model” (Clement & Shade, 1996) is a 7-layer conceptual model of access to the information / communication infrastructure that

provides a basis for universal access to the new technologies (Gurstein, 2000). The model focuses on the content / services layer in the middle, while all the other layers are necessary in order to enjoy content / service access to achieve success is the careful articulation of the relationships between the seven layers (David, 1997; Gurstein, 2000).



The collection of communicative spaces permits the circulation of information, ideas, and debates in an unfettered manner and the formation of political will (Habermas, 1989). However, this research argues that such spaces serve two contrasting goals, which could extend pluralisation, or disperse the relatively clustered public spheres (Galston, 2003). The research also examines the implications of circulation of political information and debate without structural connections and formalized institutional procedures between these communicative spaces and the processes of decision making (Sparks, 2001).

It is thus suitable to refer to the “Network army”¹ (Holstein, 2002) to describe the new, or more specifically the reemphasis of communities and individuals working together in South Africa on the basis of ideology, not geography (Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 2001). Such networked public spheres are characterized by interaction and meeting of ‘like-minded’ individuals based on class and gender, who were often led to ‘deliberative enclaves,’ where group positions and practices are reinforced rather than openly critiqued, thus avoiding any real confrontations with difference (Harmon, 2004; Sunstein, 2001).

There absence of a common decent, culture and language necessary for the creation of a communal/national culture, which caused a primordial view of ethnic identity that is promoted by segregationist and apartheid ideologies. The broader “lifestyle publics” (Bennett, 2003b) is laden with memes that are easily imitated and transmitted to images that cross social networks and resonate with common experiences (Lasn, 1999).

Technology does not automatically mean more deliberation and freedom (Information Bill/Law²). Unequal access does not only depend on penetration rates, but also on the availability of leisure time, literacy, and language hegemony, especially with the Anglo-American dominance (Thornton, 2001). Gender dynamics is also an issue that is directed towards males and urban residents in Africa (Hilbert, 2011). Language hegemony, cultural alienation between

racism and the shared politics of anti-colonial struggles remain as hurdles for any development (WaNgugi, 2007).

Social issues such as anxieties around migration, integration, and Xenophobia (Song, 2008) have stained the construct of 'native' as the future and while the 'immigrant' is constructed as the old, the past and obsolete (Bayne & Ross 2007). In South Africa, this (re)appropriation of new politics and new media exemplified what Jenkins (2006) called the 'convergence culture,' where both traditional communication tools and new ones complement each other in strengthening mobilization activities and allow new kinds of activism and engagement (Saleh, 2013b).

The New Media Ecology in Africa

South Africa distinguishes itself from other local settings in the rest of Africa. Historically, South African media have not provided a common space of shared public communication. The explanation might be related to how media have been used to reproduce notions of separate and distinct populations, with their own separate cultures, belonging in separate geographical areas (hegemony of race, class, language and gender). Consequently, South African citizens have unequal capacities to express their cultural and political preferences through individualized, commodified forms of media provision.

The South African 1996 Telecommunication Act, promoted access to telephony and other ICTs, particularly in the townships and rural areas (Martindale, 2002). The Department of Communication's decision gave the Universal Service Agency the mandate to set up Telecentres to provide access to these information technologies with the aim of exposing people to the exciting use of the various forms of information & communication technologies (Benjamin, 2003). The Southern African Development Community (SADC) agreed in 2009 that the Southern African region should work towards completing digital migration by 2013, by switching analogue signals to digital signals by 2015 (Duncan, 2013).

Many scholars note the positive effects and contributions of ICTs to social progress (Stevenson, 1988; Van Audenhove, 1999; Kouakou, 2003; Nwuke, 2003; Lesame, 2005; Osunkunle, 2008). But the availability of technological infrastructure does not guarantee development and economic benefits unless these facilities are used effectively when the South African government puts mechanisms in place to address the issue of digital divide (Benjamin, 2003).

Optimists propose the ability of ICT will bypass restrictive state and corporate mainstream media, while pessimists are sceptical about the beneficiaries of such spaces and their targeting towards the elitist niche circles (McCaughey and Ayers 2003; Kahn and Kellner 2004). African activists could have used new media to create a counter-flow of information and communication, by drawing

on sympathies abroad to embed local issues within global discourses and solidarity networks (Wasserman, 2005).

At the end of 2010, there were some 175 mobile operators with live operations with (60%) affiliated with major international telecommunications groups such as Bharti, Airtel, MTN or Vodafone. Estimated mobile phone penetration surpassed (50%) with 508.6 million mobile subscribers in 2010.

Mobile phones offer a new avenue for political activism in Africa, especially that it is the first continent to have more mobile phone users than fixed-line subscribers (Goldstuck, 2010). Less than 3% of the population had access to a telephone in 2001, and by 2010 the number of mobile subscribers had grown to approximately 500 million (Rao, 2011). Mobile telephony has no doubt come to be seen as a veritable instrument of political struggle, its potential effectiveness is bound to be determined by the way in which it is used (Obadare, 2004).

In January 2004, there were 5-8 million email users in Africa, and around 52 million mobile phone subscribers; 450 million SMS messages sent in December 2002, compared to 350 million for December 2001 (Mutsvauro, Columbus, & Leijendekker, 2012).

Figure 1. Fixed-telephone subscriptions in South Africa (2000-2012)³

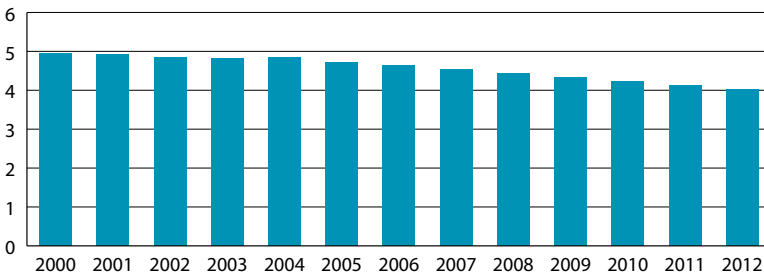


Figure 1 shows the decrease in telephone fixed lines in South Africa from 4.961 million in 2000 to less than 4.031 million in 2012 (Telecommunications Development Sector).

Figure 2. Internet penetration in South Africa (2000-2012)⁴

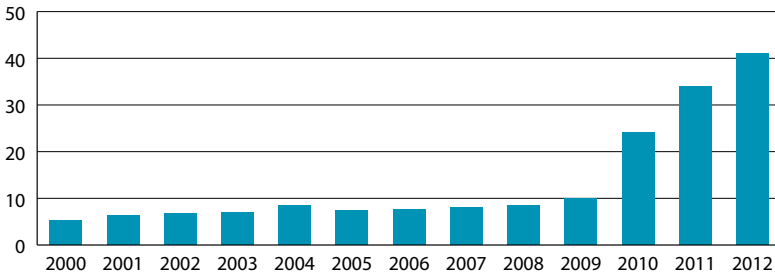


Figure 2 indicates a relative increase in internet penetration in South Africa from (2000-2004) that faced a decline in (2005), but since 2010 onwards there is a systematic increase that reached 41%.

Many young people have never seen a computer, let alone use it or connect to the Internet. In 2006, 67% of South African schools had no computers for learners (Department of Education, 2007). Inequality of access is intertwined with low socio-economic backgrounds, and with those who do not speak English as a home language (Czerniewicz and Brown, 2009).

Higher education institutions face increasing enrolment and diversity with more students entering higher education, especially the Black African students with relative gender balance (HEMIS, 2004). This expansion is more likely to shift local identities and interests away from conventional national politics (Inglehart, 1997). This privileged minority has more options to seek personal solutions for their problems (Bennett, 1998).

The digital divide still exists between white universities and black universities. For example, students in historically white universities (HWUs) like Wits, Rhodes, Stellenbosch and University of Cape Town enjoy unlimited access to ICT facilities, while the historically black universities (HBUs) have reverse realities, where access rate is very limited. Others like the University of Fort Hare, the University of Limpopo, Turfloop Campus, and University of Zululand do not have complete access (Wright, 2003).

The following indicators were captured from a study conducted by Tetzcher (2011a; 2011b) and World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators database 2013 (17th Edition)⁵ showing ICT development in South Africa.

Figure 3. Mobile penetration in South Africa (2000-2012)

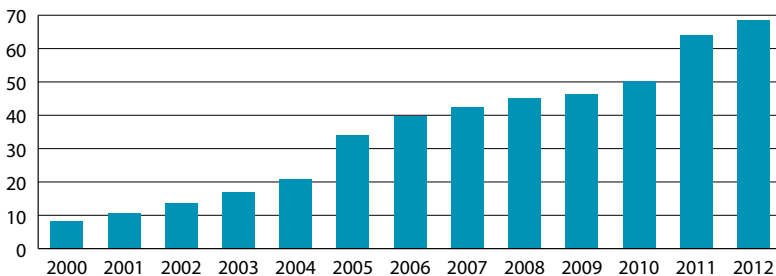


Figure 3 reflects an exponential growth of mobile phone in South Africa from 8.339 million in 2000 to more than 64.394 in 2012, which not only reflects eight times increase but also exceeding the total number of population in South Africa.

Figure 4. Mobile-cellular telephone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants in South Africa (2000-2012)

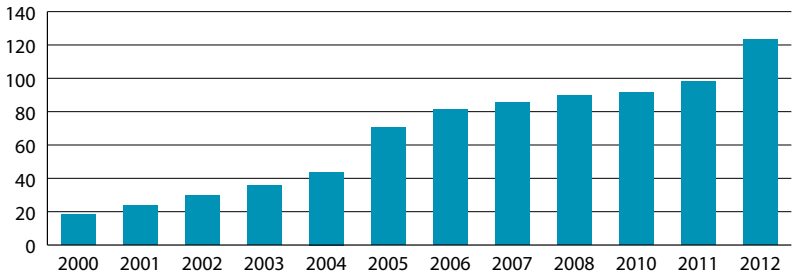


Figure 4 reflects that the mobile subscription/100 inhabitants increased from (18.59) in 2000 to more than 123.20 in 2012.

Figure 5. Fixed (wired)-broadband subscriptions in South Africa (2000-2012)

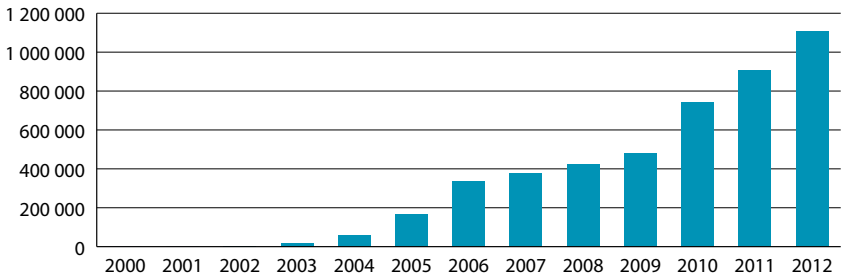


Figure 5 emphasizes that there is a gradual increase in fixed broadband mobile phones in South Africa; however it is very slow and insignificant increase. It was zero in the year 2000 to less than 1,107,200 in 2012.

Figure 6. Fixed (wired)-broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants in South Africa (2000-2012)

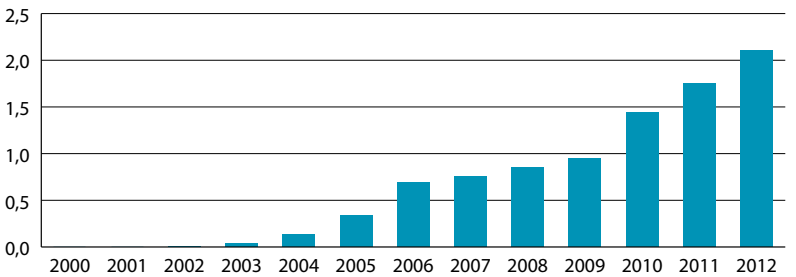


Figure 6 indicates that there an insignificant growth in fixed broadband subscription per 100 inhabitants from zero in 2000 into 2.11 in 2012.

Mobile phones in South Africa have one of the highest mobile phone penetrations in Sub-Saharan Africa (Tetzchner, 2011b). De Bruijn et al. (2009) argue that there is now an emergence of an African 'mobile phone culture' centred on a multiplicity of activities involving the mobile phone.

According to the first *Twitter Map of Africa* (Sarrazin, 2011), South Africa is the home to the most active tweeters on the continent. Mobile phones are evidently driving much of the uptake of social media, which might lead to a mobile society in South Africa, because it is not age specific, and which is ubiquitous (Von Lieres, 2005).

Twitter has grown by 129% from 2.4 million to 5.5 million users in SA with posts exceeding 54 million tweets a month, 85% from cell phones. There are also 9.4 million South Africans on Facebook with 87% of users accessing from cell phones.

The Oliver Tambo Airport is the most checked-in location by South Africans on Facebook with 454,000 check-ins in one year. Mxit is losing grounds with 7.4 million active monthly users, down from 9.5 million, though those who use the platform are highly engaged, with an average of 95 minutes (Tubbs, 2013). YouTube subscribers in South Africa each have more than 1.5 million account views.

There are 466,828 active Google+ users. New mobile messaging platform 2go has 40.4 million registered users, with 4 million active in the last three months. However, only 1.1 million of them reside in SA. There are 2.7 million registered LinkedIn users in SA; with the top demographic being those aged 25 to 34 (34%). There are 680,000 active Instagram users in SA, with Amaro being the most used filter.

In another study which surveyed 500 young people in deprived townships of Phillippi and Khayelitsha in Cape Town found that at least 83% of those surveyed accessed the Internet through their mobile phones. He also reveals that 93% of the eleventh grade learners reported having used the Internet on mobile phones, with 68% using their phones for Internet access on a typical day, opposed to 39% using computers (Kreutzer, 2009).

One has to remain cautious of the overall trajectory of changes in power relations, not only as implicated by the new media, but within society as a whole (Couldry et al., 2007). This is especially so since the old political gatekeepers attempt to exploit the youth and manipulate any new communication spaces to promote themselves by adopting populist stances on issues to get attention (Adeiza, 2013).

There are three recent examples; manipulation of communication spaces which are relevant here: current saga between the African National Congress (ANC) and Democratic Alliance (DA) that only propagates the practice of "indexing", where journalists and editors limit the range of political viewpoints and issues that they report on.

A second example is the saga between Mamphela Aletta Ramphel, head of Agang and Hillen Zille, head of Democratic Alliance (DA) on the merging

between the two parties in 2014. The third example, the Marikana miner's strike is also known as Lonmin strike which lasted from August 10, 2012 to September 20, 2012. Forty-four persons died violently during the strike, among them were two policemen, two security guards, and 40 miners. On August 17, 2012, eNCA uploaded a video on YouTube and 07 seconds⁶.

Conclusion

South African youth lack quality education, and exhibit digital illiteracy and poverty. The challenge remains on how we situate our responses in that vast diversity, rather than in exclusionary dichotomies. Empirical evidence suggests that the new media's penetration into the economy and society means that power relations are always contested (Goldstuck, 2010). However, we are not sure to what direction or with what intensity?

The majority of South African youth are not from the elite (digitally or economically), which classifies them as outsiders without 'multiple literacies'. However many non-African scholars are misled with the notion that the interpretive leap from access could be viewed as part of the impact of social media on democracy. This presumption bypasses the unpredictable and highly contextualized usage of phones in everyday life, and has led to either overoptimistic conjecture about the potential impact of mobile phones or moral panics about their detrimental influence.

The active grooming of a revamped competent generation of youth is blocked with the inequalities in ICT availability and accessibility. Undoubtedly, ICT by itself it will not suffice to make new politics or new democracy. The truth is that South Africans may never be able to tweet their way to better participation in governance. The aspired functional democracy needs more than a new space, to enable more useful efforts to bring people together for such civic deliberations. Part of the answer may lie in routes of media literacy among the youth.

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Notes

- 1 Such military metaphor is also used to describe the swarming behaviours of high tech political militants (Arquilla&Ronfeldt, 2001).
- 2 The Bill also allows classification of undefined "economic and technological secrets". The consequence of this vagueness is that it prevents State employees from being able to apply the law properly or consistently, and will likely cause the default position to be classification rather than openness.
- 3 Available at: <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>
- 4 Available at: <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>
- 5 <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/publications/mis2013.aspx>
- 6 Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mt11f7p13f0> with the duration of 05 minutes

Intercultural Dialogue Through Immersive Learning

Media internships in Ghana, West Africa

Ed Madison & H. Leslie Steeves

This article explores a Media in Ghana summer-abroad program run by the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon. Each summer, a dozen or more university students from the United States travel to Ghana, West Africa for a six-week educational experience that differs from most other cultural exchange programs. While the students live together in one house, each is assigned a different internship at a Ghanaian media outlet – where he or she is the only American. The media organizations include newspapers, radio and television stations, and ad agencies. The program is intentionally designed to provide students with an immersive learning experience outside of their comfort zones. Students research and file stories alongside Ghanaian journalists, many of which are published. Former students describe the program as transformative, and several have returned to Ghana to engage in service-oriented work. The authors argue for the merits of immersive learning to build intercultural dialogue and stimulate international exchange between journalists and other media practitioners.

Keywords: Ghana, study abroad, media, internships, immersive learning

Introduction

While the Internet makes the world seem more connected, most of us acknowledge its limitations. Many members of our global community are not online, and mediated communication arguably lacks the richness and depth of face-to-face interaction. The distinct experience of actually *being* together is at the heart of why many students seek to participate in study abroad programs. Such programs can offer opportunities for intercultural dialogue, immersive learning, and personal growth.

Now in its twelfth year, the University of Oregon's "Media in Ghana" summer study abroad program is a six-week educational experience shared by a cohort of a dozen or more students annually. However, it differs from many other

cultural exchange programs. While the students live together in one house, each is assigned a different internship at a Ghanaian media outlet – where he or she is the only non-Ghanaian. The media organizations include newspapers, radio and television stations, advertising and public relations agencies, and NGOs seeking communications interns. After an initial orientation both at the University of Oregon and onsite in Ghana, students are required to use public transportation to reach and return from their daily assignments. The program is intentionally designed to have students venture outside their comfort zones on their own and work alongside Ghanaian media professionals.

This essay provides an overview of the program, including observations and reflections from some of the sixteen 2013 participants. It addresses the challenges students face when confronting perceived “differences,” ancestral transgressions, issues of representation, media literacy, and unexpected setbacks. We argue that despite these hurdles, immersive programs set in developing nations, even short-term programs, provide students with experiences that are potentially transformational, and advance intercultural dialogue.

Participation in the “Media in Ghana” program

The “Media in Ghana” program was initiated by the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon in 2004 to address an increasing commitment by the university to multiculturalism and internationalization (Steeves, 2006). Recognition of global interdependence dramatically increased in the wake of the 9/11 attacks on the US, and the growth of study abroad programs was an evident outcome. In the first academic year following the attacks, 175,000 U.S. college students received credit for study abroad, an 8.5% increase over the previous year and more than double the number 10 years earlier (IIE, 2004). The Institute of International Education’s 2013 report noted that some 283,000 U.S. students studied abroad for academic credit in 2012. While interest in study abroad programs in the Western European countries remains strong, interest in alternatives (including developing nations) is strengthening. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 5 percent of all study abroad programs (IIE, 2013).

The prospect of participation in the Ghana program begins nine months in advance. Interested students apply for consideration by submitting a dossier that includes a personal statement about the motivations behind their desire to enroll. Selected students participate in a ten-week pre-travel course designed to introduce them to Ghanaian history and culture. Teams of students research the country’s media, economics, and politics, then present their findings during weekly class sessions. Students meet with previous program participants, as well as our University’s currently enrolled Ghanaian undergraduate and gra-

duate students. They have opportunities to learn basic Twi, one of the country's dominant languages, and to become familiar with Ghanaian customs. They are also briefed on logistics, including health and visa requirements, flight information, and packing recommendations. One of the primary objectives of the pre-travel course is for the cohort to establish rapport and for interpersonal bonding.

Ghana is a compelling choice for students seeking opportunities for intercultural dialogue. In 1957, it was the first Sub-Saharan African nation to declare independence from colonization. After periods of alternating civilian and military rule, today Ghana is a stable republic experiencing economic growth and expansion of its media. Accra, the nation's capital, is a cosmopolitan city where use of English is prevalent. Our program has an established alliance with the University of Ghana's School of Communications Studies (SCS). We also partner with the Aya Centre, a Ghana-based educational organization committed to intercultural awareness. These ties help to create a hospitable learning environment. Yet poverty is very evident when traveling in Ghana - especially in outlying communities. The schedule is intentionally slower-paced during the first week to allow students to acclimate to the heat and dietary differences.

Several of our students acknowledged that their peers were puzzled by their choice of Ghana, West Africa as a study abroad destination. Some parents also express trepidations, mostly related to safety. Such fears are to be expected, given the narrative that dominates western media coverage of Africa. Long portrayed as the "dark continent," our knowledge of its people and customs is mostly limited to negative news stories about famine, AIDS, and civil unrest.

Western discomfort with the subject of Africa is also exacerbated by history. Our relationship with the continent is marred by three centuries of atrocities associated with the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Several centuries later, new revelations about the severity of those transgressions continue to haunt European and American consciousness and scar the psyches of the period's descendants. This is especially the case in the United States, where the facts of slavery radically contradict the ideals of American exceptionalism (Glickstein, 2002; Wiencek, 2003; Roberts, 2009). Yet several students described their choice to participate in the program as nothing short of a "calling."

Dana is journalism major in her senior year. She is white, and has long been fascinated with Africa:

There is so much mystery around Africa. In the U.S. it is either spun as being Eden or just total chaos. When there is so much mystique around a place, as a person and as a journalist I want to go there and see for myself.

Juwan is a journalism major in his junior year. He is also a first generation Jamaican- American, and traces his family's lineage back to Africa:

I always wanted to go to Africa since I was younger. So, it gave me personal satisfaction to get more in touch with my roots.

Carson is a graduate student studying advertising, and is white:

I thought you couldn't really be a full citizen of the world until you understand that most people don't live like we do in the United States.

Julianne is a journalism major in her senior year. She is Asian-American, and was less certain about what was motivating the group to choose Ghana as a destination:

We can say all we want that we're here for the internships and for the professional experience, which we are. But I think no one would sign up for a trip to Ghana if they weren't looking for something more. And whether we know what that is; we may not. But I think we're all searching for more than just professional experience.

The practice of journalism fundamentally focuses on capturing first-person accounts of the human condition. Thus, our students arrive in Accra armed with digital cameras, video gear, laptops - and a strong desire to document their experiences accurately. But how does one define accurate? The rise of social media has created new challenges for student journalists regarding representation. Journalism has evolved from a monologue to a dialogue, and publics can (and do) participate in the process. Our students quickly discovered that images they posted through Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram could be misinterpreted by family and friends back home.

Jeff is a journalism major in his junior year, and is Latino. He was caught off-guard by the response to a picture he posted on Facebook of fellow cohort members and himself interacting with Ghanaian children:

Within an hour, my brother had shared that picture with his friends. And the quote said, 'My older brother is in Ghana saving the kids.' Somehow, me being playful and just having fun with these children turned into me 'saving' them.

Jeff's experience sparked several group discussions about journalistic integrity and representation. Carson noted:

I'm a little scared that if I post all of my pictures, I will perpetuate a constructed reality of what Africa really is. Some of the most powerful pictures I have are of children ... in some of the most horrendous circumstances. The pictures are arresting and sort of powerful, but at the same time don't really do justice to the place or the people.

Students observed that Ghanaian children's smiles often changed to frowns as their pictures were about to be taken, as if such poses were expected. This created a conundrum. The group asked themselves: what is "accurate?" And what are the boundaries of ethical journalism?

Dana recalled:

We were taking pictures. And we said 'smile, smile.' And then said [to ourselves] wait - we're not supposed to tell you what to do. So we're having a hard time.

Jeff reflected that the group learned the importance of context:

If I post anything from now on, I have to be more elaborate about what I'm depicting, through what I write.

Juwan agreed:

If you post a picture, you have to add some type of context to it. Anyone can see a picture of you in the slums and associate a negative image that is completely different from what it really is.

Students lived in a shared rented home in East Legon, a suburban community located approximately 10 kilometers from the central city of Accra. Most were enthusiastic about venturing beyond the confines of their cloistered community. The first week of the program included orientation lectures and discussions with scholars at the University of Ghana and visits to various landmarks.

Written reflection

While Ghana's media industry is the focus of this experiential learning program, it also involves a substantial amount of written reflection. Students keep a daily media log noting their exposure to local news, entertainment, music, and advertising. They also maintain a blog¹ that includes photos and videos (<http://ghana.uoregon.edu>). Additionally, they are required to write a formal research paper using primary sources. During the second week in-country they begin using public transportation, sharing "trotros" (crowded minivans) with Ghanaian locals to reach and return from their work assignments each day. The road-worn vehicles are packed with passengers and are prone to breakdowns. It is a commuter experience that bears little resemblance to the comfort of riding in western taxis. Yet Ghana is visibly in a stage of vibrant growth - especially its media. There are more than 135 published newspapers, nine of which are dailies (Freedom House, 2007); There are more than seven television stations and dozens of radio stations (CIA Factbook, 2007).

Journalism interns research and file stories alongside Ghanaian journalists, many of which are published, sometimes on the front page or as lead stories in electronic media. Some students cover Parliament and interview high-level officials, even Ghana's President, as well as write and produce features and commentaries. Advertising and public relations interns team with Ghanaian marketers to plan and implement strategic campaigns. For example, in 2012, an advertising intern took a lead role in creating an image for a national branding campaign, an image subsequently published in Ghana's leading newspaper, the *Daily Graphic*, and on billboards around Accra.

These work experiences are where students experience true intercultural dialogue. Dana interned at *Today*, one of Ghana's daily newspapers. She team-reported with Regina Woode, a young Ghanaian journalist about her age. Time together provided opportunities for conversation about notable similarities, perceived differences, and common misperceptions pertaining to Africa and the West. Woode observed:

You hardly ever see American media portray something good [about Africa]. It always centers on the bad things, and portrays that to the world. That is certainly no good. Sometimes, it is not the fault of American media. It's also how we portray our own country. I think [journalists] should have firsthand experience before they publish anything negative.

In a short time, our students transition from being perceived as tourists, to being accepted as coworkers. Bonds develop and friendships can endure. Dana reflected on her experience:

My coworkers were telling me that I was their 'sister' and they were my 'brothers.' So I think it's kind of like we've become a family.

Students report having numerous unanticipated insights as they observe and work within Ghanaian media. One striking difference from home is the degree to which Ghanaians are engaged in politics. When the results of Ghana's 2012 presidential election were called into question, students saw citizens from every walk of life following the gavel-to-gavel deliberations on radio and television. This is a sharp contrast to the United States, where the students observe lower levels of civic engagement. While Ghana's government is stable, its democracy is relatively young and was previously blemished by several military coups. Consequently, Ghanaians and citizens of similar developing countries may share a deeper appreciation for democracy than older free nation states.

Sociocultural differences

Beyond politics, our students struggled with observable sociocultural differences. Ghana is predominately a Christian, socially conservative nation, and several of the student's coworkers expressed intolerance and, from a contemporary U.S. perspective, rather startling and naive views about acceptance of gays and lesbians. On the first day at her newspaper internship, one of Julianne's co-reporters asked: "Do you believe in homosexuality?" and "Have you ever met any homosexual people?" This reporter and many Ghanaians the students met said they were particularly vexed by President Obama's support of same sex marriage. They expressed difficulty reconciling their sense of pride about his African heritage with his progressive views and social policies. Rather than directly confront these ideological differences, most of the students concluded that, much like the country's infrastructure, their new colleagues' views would evolve.

Our students were also surprised to discover that Ghanaian journalists routinely accept bribes. The term "soli" refers to transportation money often offered by sources. The Ghana Journalists Association denounces the practice (GJA, 1994). However, editors generally don't enforce the organization's guidelines, realizing that their underpaid reporters rely on the extra money. Research indicates that African journalists are not unique in their acceptance of favors. Similar practices are also prevalent in Asian and Eastern European countries (Ristow, 2010). Even in the U.S., while bribes may not be delivered in brown envelopes, the influence of economic and political interests on media content is well established (e.g., McChesney, 2004). By the end of our program, students have a much more nuanced and globally informed understanding of the context of soli.²

Further, as students became immersed in Ghanaian media, their cross-cultural sensitivity and overall global media literacy necessarily increased. For instance, they quickly observed information flow imbalances in that U.S. news routinely appears in Ghanaian media, whereas the reverse is rare. Newspaper interns were commonly asked by editors to lengthen and 'pad' their stories, in stark contrast to the U.S. emphasis on brevity. Students also were shocked by: the many graphic photos, e.g., of accidents, that appear prominently in Ghanaian media; by the editorial commentary that enters into many news stories; and by the frequent references to 'God' and 'Jesus' in supposedly secular media. These and other observations sparked long discussions and forced the students to question their prior assumptions about what should and should not comprise media content.

Weekends provided opportunities for excursions away from the student's workplaces and living areas. One powerful trip is when students retrace the footsteps of slaves at two of the many castles along Ghana's coast.³ No amount

of prior information could have prepared them for this experience. An affable African guide led the group through dark, dank cobblestone dungeons that are now shadowed by shame. Students shared a wide range of insights and emotions.

Kinsey is a journalism student in her senior year and is white:

Hearing the stories about how many people they would stuff into those rooms. And about the governor and how he would stand up there and pick and choose his women. That was very eerie.

Dana reflected on the experience:

Over the women's dungeon is this church, and our tour guide described it as 'heaven and hell on earth.' I can't imagine someone being at peace with God on top of that - and I can't imagine what that does to your humanity.

Carson offered a broader perspective:

You can't go through it, not just as a person of European decent, without feeling sort of overcome by guilt. I feel guilty that someone within my lineage was probably involved in some way. [But] more guilty as a person - that for whatever reason humanity was able to perpetrate something so horrendous with so little guilt or moral conflict.

Students discovered that Ghana's link to the West did not begin nor end with slavery. They also learned about the country's influence on the Civil Rights movement in the United States by visiting the W.E.B. Du Bois Memorial Center in Accra. While most knew the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., many knew relatively little about his predecessors. In the early 1900s, Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois were rivals who disagreed about how to further civil rights in the United States. Garvey advocated for Black Nationalism and a return of African decedents to their ancestral lands. Du Bois fought for reconciliation, integration, and equal rights. However, his opposition to the Vietnam War became a breaking point. At the invitation of Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, Du Bois spent his final years living in Ghana and obtained citizenship. Students discovered that prior to moving to Ghana Du Bois was the first African-American to earn a doctoral degree from Harvard University, was a cofounder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), was among the first to advance the notion of Pan-Africanism, and was a prolific journalist.

Other weekend excursions took students to the Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti kingdom and the center of Ghana's craft industries, and to the Volta region, home to numerous natural features, including the tallest waterfall in West Africa and the Tafi Atomie Monkey sanctuary. In addition to field trips

and their work in the media industry, the program also provided students ample opportunities to shop and enjoy recreational activities. Students learned how different the experience of shopping can be when they realized that prices for most handmade Ghanaian items were negotiable, and that haggling was expected.

Reactions to setbacks

By the third week of the program, most of the students reported a shared sense of familiarity and ease. However, despite best intentions there were occasional setbacks; some of which were potentially devastating. Exuberance during our summer 2013 trip was diminished by a burglary at the students' residence. Despite the presence of a security guard, gated windows, and a barbed wire fence, unidentified perpetrators entered the home while the students slept - targeting laptops, iPads, cameras, and smartphones. Our students awoke shaken, but unharmed. What is particularly significant is how they chose to respond. The evening of the burglary, after spending much of the day filing police reports, they initiated a discussion of what each was grateful for. Their comments revealed insightful perspective and maturity. They expressed gratitude for the opportunity to travel and have this immersion experience, and for their mutual friendship and support. One student commented that while she had saved for two summers to purchase her laptop, she knew that she would eventually buy a new one, whereas her Ghanaian colleagues might never own their own laptops.

The students additionally chose to deliberate among themselves for several days before sharing the news of the thefts more publicly, fearing that they might perpetuate the stereotype that all of Africa is a perilous place. In actuality, home or hotel burglaries are uncharacteristic of travel experiences in Accra or elsewhere in Ghana. The U.S. State Department notes that "most reported incidents are crimes of opportunity for immediate gain, such as pick-pocketing or petty theft. The greatest threats continue to be road safety and street crime" (U.S. State Department, 2013). Students' personal accounts of the incident, once published on their shared blog site, were judicious and self-reflexive.

Julianne wrote:

As the days passed we began having conversations about how we, as overly analytical journalism students, would write about what happened. We sat together and dissected every possible angle to take on the story. We scrutinized over every detail, and we debated every implication our story will have ... I've sat down to write about this story several times. Our group has had many conversations that are as enlightening as they are inconclusive, but I still don't know what to say. We want to be fair. We want to be objective. We don't want what happened to us to perpetuate beliefs that all countries

in Africa are unsafe. I've never felt unsafe here. I've never felt unwelcomed
(Ghana Blog, 2013).

Also significant is how local Ghanaians responded. In Accra, a city of four million, news of the robbery made the headlines and citizens rallied behind efforts to recover the stolen items, many viewing the incident as an affront to national pride. Julianne's blog post stated further:

Our coworkers began calling to express their condolences. They treated the incident as if mourning the loss of a family member. My boss, Mr. Hanson, versed Bible passages to me over the phone and asked if he could stop by to pay his respects. A coworker today at work shook his head and told me he was personally embarrassed as a Ghanaian, both about the burglary and the way we were treated by police. Another told me his heart had been aching for us all weekend. 'This is not Ghana,' he told me. 'I hope you can forgive us' (Ghana Blog, 2013).

While the items were never recovered, the experience sparked a deeper level of intercultural dialogue than might be expected. Our students were also able to place the incident within a larger context - due to an unrelated incident. Surprisingly, within a week of the thefts in Ghana, our newly remodeled journalism school in Eugene, Oregon was also burglarized. The facility had yet to be outfitted with security cameras, allowing those perpetrators to escape with several thousand dollars worth of laptops and electronics - without a trace. That incident failed to be reported in the UO campus or Eugene city news, as unfortunately such break-ins and thefts in Eugene are much more frequent than in Ghana's capital.

Our study abroad students stated that the coincidence didn't lessen their sense of loss. Yet they shared a commitment to not have the burglary of their home taint the entirety of their experience of Ghana. Julianne additionally wrote:

*My next thought was thank God we are all alive and no one was hurt.
A laptop is just a laptop. It can be replaced.*

Insurance covered replacement of some of the items, and extra security measures were put in place. As facilitators, we feared students might experience some form of lingering trauma, and that the experience might deter future students from choosing to participate. Neither outcome has been evident. There was unanimous agreement that the benefits of the overall experience were more significant than the material losses. The 2014 program is fully enrolled including a wait list that warrants consideration of a separate second trip.

Immersive learning is key to establishing and maintaining intercultural dialogue. While facilitating study abroad programs in developing nations can be challenging, we assert that the merits outweigh the concerns. Numerous

students from previous trips have since traveled elsewhere in Africa. Many have returned to Ghana. One returned to finish an immersive reporting project and later wrote an essay for an elite anthology on spending Christmas alone in Accra (Boots Theriault, 2011). Another helped establish a radio station at the Coconut Grove Beach Resort in Elmina and also worked on the 2008 presidential campaign for the owner, Paa Kwesi Nduom. Others have returned for thesis or dissertation research, to do volunteer work, or lead student study groups. Stephanie, a member of the 2013 cohort, posted a summation of the overall experience:

At the end of the day, we all just want to love and be loved. I like to think that all human beings are inherently good. I believe we come into this world with a clean slate and our experiences shape who we become as people. We might live a completely different life than someone we meet but I truly believe we share the same core values. I think culture strongly shapes who we are, and this is evident in my many conversations with Ghanaians. When I feel the cultural barrier closing in on a conversation, I must remind myself of this notion: We are more alike than we are different. All the emotions I am capable of feeling are the same exact ones they feel. Everything I crave: support, love, happiness, and acceptance are the same exact things they crave (Ghana Blog, 2013).

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Notes

- 1 The Ghana blog was created by UO Instructor Sung Park
- 2 See also Steeves (2006). Kasoma (2007) further provides a detailed discussion of brown envelope journalism in Ghana and Zambia.
- 3 There are more than 80 castles and forts along Ghana's coast built by colonial powers, many of which were used in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Our group visited the Cape Coast and Elmina castles, both UNESCO heritage sites.



Education & Educators' Changing Role

Promoting Media Literacy in Jamaican Schools

Broadcasting regulator embracing a new role

*Hopeton S. Dunn, Richardo Williams
& Sheena Johnson-Brown*

The Broadcasting Commission, Jamaica's regulator of the electronic media, has been engaged in a multi-year UNESCO funded project aimed at developing media literacy capabilities among Jamaican teachers, as well as among primary and high school students. The article makes the argument that media literacy interventions are of strategic importance in the early stages of the human life cycle. It argues that media consumption among Jamaicans occurs through multiple paths for engagement that need to be deconstructed and understood for mature navigation of the local and global environments. It discusses this negotiation of content among Jamaican youths exposed through media to other global cultures. The authors suggest that media literacy competencies are of paramount importance in enabling Jamaicans to appreciate difference and to negotiate and assimilate other cultural expressions within their environments without losing their own cultural national identities. The article concludes that such undertakings by the Broadcasting Commission, seen by some as unusual for regulators, may soon become mainstream activities of media and or communications regulators globally. The approach is deemed by the authors as a vital means to enhance the judgment of audiences as they interact with complex media content, global cultures and emerging communications technologies.

Keywords: media literacy in schools, information technology access and inclusion, broadcasting and regulatory policies, electronic media in Jamaica, educational technologies and youth

Introduction

The multiple and expanding range of information and communications technology platforms now in use, some connected to the Internet, are demanding higher level skills from students, teachers and from citizens at all levels of society. In view of these emerging trends, the Broadcasting Commission,

regulator of the electronic communications industry in Jamaica decided to partner with UNESCO, the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE) and the Ministry of Education (MOE) to introduce for the first time a media literacy curriculum in primary, secondary and teacher training institutions throughout Jamaica. We explore some key outcomes and share documentation on some of the pedagogical tools that were successfully used.

Grounding Media and Information Literacy

The Alexandria Proclamation on Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning (2006) and the Prague Declaration: Towards an Information Literate Society (2003) are among the seminal declarations acknowledging the strategic role of literacy in supporting human rights and the millennium development goals (MDGs). Much has happened globally since those two declarations were made: the world has been the site of significant transformation in terms of information, its sources and its management.

The Alexandria and Prague declarations, in spite of their foresight, did not anticipate the groundswell of mega new media and communications platforms and services birthed in the last 15 years: Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram et al. All of these media are accessed daily by more than 1 billion of the World's population, across many demographic and social classes.

Kasinskaite-Budderberg (2013) problematizes this significant growth in new media platforms:

The exponential growth of data and information, the constant introduction of new ICTs, and the exposure to media and its content, is imposing a number of structural and behavioural changes. In particular, it alters the ways people access, evaluate, and use information to produce knowledge and communicate with each other. Access to information and production of knowledge in different forms and formats is no longer the exclusive domain of specialised institutions or professional communities. Citizens are increasingly becoming not only information or media content consumers, but also producers and evaluators, through the use of various tools and media. User generated content is growing and new platforms for sharing information and media content are emerging. In short, information and content can now be easily produced, accessed and shared by nearly everyone, leading to increased collaboration and greater participation by citizens in society.

(Kasinskaite-Budderberg, 2013)

Against this background, the Fez Declaration on Media and Information Literacy in 2011 and the most recent Moscow Declaration on Media and

Information Literacy (2012) are timely reaffirmations of the importance of information and media literacy to the Human Rights Agenda, and to inter-cultural dialogue, which all take on added significance in the context of digital convergence.

It is useful to briefly outline, here, concepts of ‘media literacy’ with a view to show its many diverse and transversal linkages into other multi-faceted development and empowerment constructs; a necessary dialogue towards helping to redress continued unawareness about the empowering capabilities of media and information literacy, as suggested by the Fez Declaration.

Burn and Durran (2007) argue that media literacy is at once a ‘cultural’, ‘critical’ and ‘creative’ process. It is foundational works of theorists such as Raymond Williams, who popularized the notion of “lived culture”, which grounds the cultural conception of media literacy. This view of culture “...is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour” (Williams, 1961:41). By inference, it could be concluded, as Burn and Durran suggest, that the cognitive capabilities of individuals in understanding and negotiating with media technologies and their output is a key contributor to that social construction of culture. The critical and creative conception of media literacy is linked to notions about “recorded culture”, meaning, those documented expressions that represent the ways of life of a people.

Beyond ‘text’

Other alternative viewpoints on media literacy suggest that “literacy must be reframed to expand the definition of a text to include new modes of communication and popular culture to enhance our critical analytical processes to explore audience reception, learn to critically read media texts, and aim at social justice, as well as grasping the political, economic, historical, and social contexts within which all messages are written and read” (Kellner & Share, 2007). There is also the already referenced notion of ‘multiple literacies’ in the context of the technological revolution (Kellner & Share, 2007). There is also the notion that Media Literacy is a vital skill for the effective functioning of democracy (European Commission, 2007). Jenkins (2006) links media literacy within the overarching and new paradigm of a participatory culture, one that debunks the traditionally distinct boundaries that demarcate information/knowledge producer and information/knowledge consumer. In the participatory cultural paradigm the two are one and the same. A multifaceted approach is embraced through: “play, performance, simulation, appropriation, multitasking, distributed cognition, collective intelligence, judgment, transmedia navigation, networking and negotiation” (Kotilainen and Arnolds-Granlund, 2010).

So, particularly in the Global South, media literacy is conceptualized in broader terms than just mastery of textual media; it is also about enabling people in those spaces to use media tools at their disposal to contest and successfully navigate the global digital space, learning from other cultures without necessarily losing their own cultures or the larger struggle for identity. Highly functional competences are being developed in these spaces to enable citizens to become skilled 'prosumers', at once information producers and information consumers, telling their own stories. It is in this context that Jamaica's Broadcasting Commission embarked upon its media literacy intervention to help alter, for good, the perceptions of young minds.

The Commission's perspective that media regulators should not be just about laws, infringements and transmission technologies, opens up new possibilities for work related to audiences, content and the development of people's critical faculties, through their more discriminating use of media. It is this view that informs the Commission's adoption of a media literacy intervention in Jamaica, partnering with a range of educational and child development agencies, including the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Joint Board for Teacher Education (JBTE).

The project

The project, started in 2007, involves the creation of a range of learning resources delivered by trained teachers in classes within Jamaica's secondary school system.

Resources include videos and CDs containing media literacy instructions, with supporting literature. Materials focused on media bias, gender stereotyping, deconstructing advertisements, understanding the impact of violence in the media and how to identify child friendly programmes. It explored the application of critical, analytical and evaluative skills to what is seen and heard on various forms of media. The idea is to increase the ability of students and teachers to be more media savvy. It encourages them to discuss issues of bias and credibility, evaluate the source of information, critically analyse media messages and create and produce their own messages for varied media platforms. (JBTE, 2010).

Overall, an estimated 500 students were exposed to the project in its three phases and several trainee teachers were involved in its delivery. The staff of the Commission visited regularly with students of the target schools to reinforce the messages in the training materials delivered by their teachers. A systematic evaluation exercise was carried out at the end of each phase to determine the effectiveness and relevance of what was being presented to students.

Evaluative reports on the roll-out and impact of the media literacy content

seem to corroborate its design as a ‘creative process’. One teacher, in whose school the pilot was conducted, remarked that:

“The programme brought out the expressive side of the students. I observed more students participating than in the normal class sessions. They were driven by the information. They did not want to put down their hands until they spoke their part.”

(Project Report, 2010)

These creative elements were targeted and nurtured by the teachers who encouraged students to write their own news releases and other media related products, tasks that were eagerly embraced by the learners at all levels.

Encoding meaning

When citizens engage with media in their own private domains, how do they relate to the content being purveyed? How does their understanding of the material come about? In this respect, Stuart Hall’s *encoding-decoding* theory is a useful analytical lens. (Hall, 1980).

Hall suggests that elites who occupy a ‘dominant-hegemonic’ position ‘encode’ media content with both ‘denotative’ and ‘connotative’ messages, often, advancing agendas favourable to those dominant interests. But, the germ of Hall’s postulate lies in how he supposes media users de-construct or ‘decode’ those embedded messages, in order to construct meaning of their own. He suggests that there are three main ways by which this is accomplished: first, there are those viewers who will decode media messages within the dominant-hegemonic position, which means they accept the connotative meanings that the encoder inscribed. In many ways, this pattern of media consumption and meaning making forms the foundations of cultural imperialism and ‘cultural inundation’. It implies that people are encouraged to cease to exercise their own agency to refute, reject and accept and assimilate media content infused into their social system.

The second way is the ‘negotiated code’. In this context, media users still decode content within the dominant-hegemonic paradigm in the main. However, they allow for a modicum of situated and oppositional thought. In this approach, the dominant-hegemonic meanings and inferences are still most influential.

The third way represents an oppositional de-coding among media users. That is to say, they understand the connotative and literal meanings being transmitted through media, but opt instead to decode or interpret content in an oppositional or contrary manner in their own interests.

Understood and applied creatively, Hall's 'Encoding and Decoding' theoretical framework can assist greatly in the design of media and information literacy interventions, specifically those geared at enhancing peoples' capabilities of analysing media content and arriving at contextual and situated meanings. It is this approach that was encouraged in the delivery of content within the Jamaican media literacy intervention here under review.

The lessons go wider than Jamaica's case study. Audiences in both developing and developed countries must be trained to accept and reject meanings and to re-purpose content creatively to suit their own requirements. Where some sections of the audience have tended to uncritically accept purveyed content, it could be that there is an absence of basic literacy and an overdependence on a single hegemonic source for information.

Critical thinking

The media literacy project is aiming to help young Jamaicans avoid this trap through active engagement with media content. Students were given opportunities to negotiate, assimilate and produce content towards their own end goals and those of the community. To accomplish this re-orientation of education in a constructivist sense, "requires that the process of instructional design, pedagogy and infrastructural developments are so designed as to motivate the critical thinking dimensions of our students and to motivate within them a passion for learning" (Dunn, 2008).

The media literacy intervention is beginning to accomplish those goals as reflected by a teacher, who is involved in the project:

Low performing students got a chance to express themselves in a way they have never done in a normal class session. They were even writing more than before. During the breaks/pauses of the videos, pupils were writing and discussing the information seen and heard at times without being directed to do so.

(Project Report, p. 27)

On the basis of the teacher's observation of students' responses in the media literacy project, we argue that the competencies being built up are useful enhancements to the everyday practices of young Jamaicans. Continued training towards their discriminating navigation of the several streams of global content, many bearing the imprints of varied foreign ideologies, cultures and mores, is crucial for personal growth and national development.

In the text box below, an example is shown of part of the curriculum designed to facilitate personal development of students through Jamaica's Broadcasting Commission media literacy strategy.

Table 1. Curriculum Design

GRADES 7-9 BCJ-JBTE MEDIA LITERACY CURRICULUM

MODULE 1- Impact of Media Literacy on Self-development

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this module is to help students understand the impact of media literacy for self-development. It will cover:

- Literacy Development
- Types of Electronic Media
- Definition of Media Literacy
- Print Media

1. Literacy development is the ability to develop language art skills, view, speak, listen, read (comprehend) and write (create, design, produce) print and electronic materials that will communicate information successfully.
2. Recognizing and identify three types of electronic media

OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to:

1. Discuss the importance of language arts skills in today's media environment.
2. Design a ten minute video illustrating different media being used by students
3. Identify different types of electronic media
4. Define media literacy after collaborative group discussions
5. Describe the relevance of each type of media

TEACHER'S TASK

1. Ask students to identify the five language arts skills. Encourage student discussion about the importance of each skill in today's media environment.
2. Allow students to share at least five sentences for class participation about the importance of language arts skills and the different ways these skills are used in the media today.
3. Have students design video of different electronic media being used by students at school. Focus on the positives and negatives of all types as you facilitate discussion of the theme "my School and I". (Include smart phones and social networks)
4. Engage students in a brief discussion to construct definition for Media Literacy.
5. Use concept map strategy to elicit definition from students
6. Expose students to different samples of age and interest appropriate forms of media.

STUDENTS' TASK

1. Identify language arts skills and talk about their importance in today's media environment. Then email or social network with a friend about the importance of language arts skills to media literacy.
2. Design the video around the use of at least three types of media used by students.
3. Explore the concept "Media Literacy" in groups of four.
4. Record one common idea by the group members.
5. Write class definition in note books.
6. Describe the type of media that impact positively on the self-esteem of grade 7 students.

Resource Materials: Multimedia projector, you-tube internet access, laptop, print media samples (The Sunday Gleaner, The Jamaica Observer, The Youthlink, The Star, The North Coast Time, The Jamaica Herald, The Children's Own) examples of BLOGS and sample pages from Twitter and Facebook

Source: BCJ-JBTE Media Literacy Project Report - Jamaica

The excerpt of the curriculum above is not far removed from the model media and information literacy curriculum that UNESCO suggests. However the pedagogical approach is more personal, constructivist and is aimed at helping young Jamaican students to contextually understand themselves, and their relations to emerging global communications and media technologies.

Lesson guides for teachers

The Broadcasting Commission and its partners recognised from the outset that the significance of media literacy is magnified in the face of the deep transformation taking place in the information and knowledge economy. One complication that arises from these developments in the knowledge society is that a whole new slate of literacy competencies is required from citizens and which may not necessarily be acquired in the same old way via the traditional curricula. Some of these new literacies, according to UNESCO, include: games literacy, access to information literacy, digital literacy, internet literacy, cinema literacy, among others.

Accordingly, media and information literacy are becoming increasingly included in the traditional curriculum. This is because "Media literacy educators must help students understand and analyze media constructions of reality, which sometimes offer incomplete or inaccurate portrayals of the world we live in. Media literacy education begins with awareness and analysis but

culminates in reflection and engagement. The ultimate goal of media literacy is empowerment” (Ashley, 2013). Against this background it is useful to evaluate a sample curriculum for the teachers in the media literacy project in Jamaica. It may also help other jurisdictions to think about some of the issues that ought to be included in specialised curricula for teachers of media and information literacy.

Table 2. Curriculum for Student Teachers and In-Service Teachers

Curriculum for student teachers and in-service teachers	
COURSE NAME	INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA LITERACY
COURSE CODE	
YEAR	2
SEMESTER	1
NO. OF CREDITS	1
NO. OF HOURS	18
COURSE DESCRIPTION	
<p>Media Literacy Education is vital in today's world, as students are readily accessing and using a variety of media. Media is used to indoctrinate, educate, entertain, and is now a powerful form of socializing. Students today are more aware of what is happening in our global village as just by a click (on the Internet or on their cellular phones) information, music, images and videos are available to them. Students are also influenced by the fashion they see, the advertisements they view and hear, the stereotypes portrayed by the media e.g. body images, sexuality, gender and race. With these factors in mind this course was created. The main aim is to introduce, expose and educate teachers-in-training and in-service teachers to aspects of media literacy education, so that they will in turn be able to help their students develop critical thinking skills that will enable them to make informed decisions.</p>	
COURSE OBJECTIVES	
<p>By the end of this course teachers-in-training and in-service teachers will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the relevance of media literacy education • Examine aspects of media students are exposed to and its impact on their thoughts, thinking and way of life • Examine various media literacy initiatives, and their importance • Investigate the power of persuasion of advertisements and how they influence people's thinking • Investigate how media influence popular culture • Develop unit plans and integrate these within aspects of the revised early childhood and primary curricula • Deliver a workshop to parents 	

UNIT 1

NO. OF HOURS: 3

UNIT TITLE: Introduction and Relevance of Media Literacy

- Definition of literacy
- Types of literacy e.g., family, technology, media, health
- Definition of media literacy/media literacy education
- Types of media
- Importance of media literacy in today's school e.g. the effect of media on academic performance, socialization

ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss influence/impact of the media (positive and negative) on the society e.g. music, language – oral and written, clothing, culture in general – violence, sex, portrayal of body image, the “bling” culture and privacy
2. Investigate and make report on types of literacy
3. Research on media literacy and types of media
4. Investigate and make comparison between past and present media available to Jamaican children
5. View and discuss module 1 video (Broadcasting Commission – media literacy project)
6. Discuss the extent to which teachers are media literate
7. Discuss the role of primary and early childhood teachers in the teaching of media literacy

UNIT 2

NO. OF HOURS: 4

UNIT TITLE: Education vs. Censorship

- The audience (Readers, Listeners and Viewers)
- Programme rating process (including the rating symbols)
- Relevance of rating and censorship
- Role of the Broadcasting Commission
- Media Literacy Initiatives (e.g., UNESCO, Children's Media Literacy Pilot Project with Joint Board of Teacher Education and The Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica)
- Keeping teachers informed

ACTIVITIES

1. Investigating Social Network/Media – e.g. Facebook, Hi 5, You Tube, My Space (debate “Networking Sites - tool or nuisance in school”)
2. Visit and interview personnel from Broadcasting Commission and media houses and make report
3. View and discuss module 2 & 3 videos (Broadcasting Commission's Media Literacy Project)

4. Debate – topic “Censorship or Education”
5. A look at some Media Literacy Education Initiatives
6. View/discuss television programmes e.g. comedies (Family Guy), cartoons and their influence on peoples’ thinking
7. Find articles that relate to media, media changes, censorship for discussion or debate

UNIT 3

NO. OF HOURS: 3

UNIT TITLE: Advertisements in the media

- Developing critical thinking/reading e.g. identifying propaganda techniques, persuasion, questioning and making valued judgements/informed decisions
- Consumer education and advertisement

ACTIVITIES

- View and discuss Module 4 video (Broadcasting Commission’s – Media Literacy Project)
- Examine propaganda techniques and the importance of developing critical thinking so as to be able to make informed decisions
- Create advertisements for class critique
- Research on consumer education for class presentation

UNIT 4

NO. OF HOURS: 4

UNIT TITLE: Integrating Media Literacy with the curriculum

- Disciplines that media literacy can be integrated with e.g. Language Arts, Social Studies and Mathematics

CONTENT

The Revised Early Childhood Curriculum – 4 and 5 year olds

The Revised Primary Curriculum – Grades 1-3, 4, 5 & 6

ACTIVITIES

1. Learning using the social media/network and You Tube
2. Integrating educational programmes e.g. Nick Jr., Disney, National Geographic and TLC, stories in the newspapers
3. Create unit plan (Must integrate different forms of media and material produced by JBTE and BCJ. Must also include information on persuasive techniques used in advertisements and how to identify facts from opinion. Must also have activities and information on rating.)

UNIT 5

NO. OF HOURS: 4

UNIT TITLE: Involving Parents in Media Literacy Education

- Educating parents on media literacy (monitoring media content that children listen to and view)
- Planning a Media Parenting Workshop

CONTENT

- Media education begins at home
- Children risk poor grades and behaviour problems by spending too much time with TV and radio

ACTIVITIES

- Discuss handout on performance and behaviour (Broadcasting Commission and Dr. Samms-Vaughan)
- Access articles and web-sites that provide information for parents on media education (for both early childhood and primary age children)
- Coordinate, produce information, pamphlets/brochures and conduct workshop/seminar

MATERIALS

- Videos produced by Broadcasting Commission
- Information from UNESCO
- Online articles

ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENTS

Method of assessment: Course work only

Number of Pieces 2

Possible Assessments

1. Parenting Workshop/seminar for a PTA or Parenting Week
2. Develop Unit Plan and Micro Teaching
3. Create Advertisements using various propaganda techniques
4. Critiquing movies/television programme/advertisements
5. Research

Source: BCJ-JBTE Media Literacy Project Report- Jamaica

This proposed curriculum finds resonance with the model media and information literacy curriculum from UNESCO, but with a more focused and targeted emphasis on the new and emerging media platforms and also on the dynamic process of parents and child interaction in the media consumption and interrogation process. That is, there is the underlying assumption within the curriculum that irrespective of the media platforms, able or trained parents are poised

to play a very powerful role in enabling students to be dynamic and intelligent consumers of media content.

Another important point is that the curriculum contains among its objectives the process of popular culture construction and the role that media literacy could play (representation of dancehall images, sounds, songs, gender identity). This is particularly important, given that new media outlets have democratised access to ears, eyes and minds of people globally, such that a plethora of new, varied and previously unknown voices are enabled to contribute to the emergence of popular cultural expressions. But there are also adverse dimensions of social media and popular culture, particularly when the technologies are deployed to cause harm. Instances of cyber-bullying provide a useful reference for how people sometimes misuse a technology to inflict harm to others. Issues such as these are addressed in the media literacy project.

Success and lessons learned

Table 3. Media Literacy Project Successes

Project Success	Factors that supported Success
Teachers are more aware of the idea of media literacy and its relevance to young children.	The teachers were briefed by the facilitator at every opportunity that she met with them. Student teachers and in-service teachers were acquainted with the materials, and lessons were team taught with the facilitator and the host and student teachers.
Students' knowledge of the media and how to use it responsibly has improved significantly.	The videos were very child-friendly and the students clearly loved watching them. The topics explored were also very interesting to the children.
Interest in the project is high among several education stakeholders – students, teachers and parents.	Teachers infused concepts from the videos into the other teaching activities and content. The children shared the information with their peers and their parents.
Noticeable improvements in academic areas, especially literacy.	The students did many written and oral activities based on the projects to demonstrate their learning.
General improvement in students' attitudes and behaviours towards learning and individuals	The content of the videos and the activities that the children engaged in were personalized in many instances and so they saw the relevance of the project to their lives.

Source: Media Literacy Project Report

Table 3 shows that the media literacy project is already starting to bear fruit, particularly in the areas of students' general attitudes to their academic work and to their learning.

Limitations

As with many other developing or middle income countries, schooling in Jamaica is widely available. However, scarce economic resources number among the main limitations besetting education. Some of the more costly aspects of the programme included the actual equipment and devices that the schools required to facilitate students' viewing of the material. In some instances, schools had only a very small TV set. But one limitation in particular that might have relevance to other jurisdictions concerns the disparity between the knowledge base of teachers about the technologies and that of the students. Based on this experience, there is evidence that teachers do not have a good grasp of the new technologies and consequently are sometimes constrained in executing the lessons fully given glitches in setting up the technologies. Also it happens that sometimes teachers are less knowledgeable about the technologies than their students; this could be an opportunity for empowered learning, that is, when students are allowed to help in tutoring their teachers to master the technologies.

There is also the very problematic, but ultimately fulfilling, issue of integrating media literacy within the curriculum. Is it best to have it as a stand-alone unit, or should it be integrated within the general curriculum of the schools? This represents a limitation in the project to the extent that teachers were unable to adequately deliver the media literacy modules in an integrated way, without it appearing as though the modules were unrelated to the general curriculum.

Conclusions

This Jamaican media literacy intervention demonstrated some very important lessons, which might be useful to other jurisdictions internationally. The first is that media regulators can forge alliances to intervene in the educational system to help create a future generation of informed media audience members. Many of these youths will become critical analysts of national or community media outputs and will act as media monitors against abuse of accessible media channels and of citizens' rights.

Secondly, the project demonstrated that media literacy programmes are useful routes to achieve other pedagogical learning outcomes. A part of the project's success is attributable to the use of local indigenous, culturally relevant content to which students and teachers could easily relate.

Thirdly, it is clear that the so-called participatory culture, of which Jenkins speaks, represents a significant element in pedagogy at the primary and secondary levels of the educational system. This conclusion arises from the explicit advances that students made in the media literacy project after having been allowed to develop their own learning experiences. Furthermore, it also

shows that the technologies, in themselves, are merely tools to be used creatively towards other higher order objectives, such as personal development and educational attainment.

Finally, partnership with entities that are placed to deliver sustained student engagement is of crucial importance. In the Ministry of Education's Joint Board of Teacher Education, the Broadcasting Commission found a strategic partner whose remit allowed access to hundreds of young Jamaicans to become exposed to lessons in media and information literacy. And, in the Ministry of Education, there is some assurance that the project will continue in the formal curriculum, when the project officially ends in 2014. In this sense, the Jamaican media literacy project could be useful for others, including regulators, wanting to construct media literacy interventions towards human and national development.

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An Implementation and Evaluation of “Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers” in Japan

Masato Wada & Yosuke Morimoto

This article aims to examine the efficiency of media and information literacy education in the Japanese Normal University based on using the UNESCO Media and information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers (MIL Curriculum). In Japan, some teachers have been teaching media literacy, and others information literacy. Additionally, Japanese teachers sometimes misunderstand media literacy; they have students connect the notion of critical autonomy in media, to moral education using media or education through media. This confusion about the definition of media literacy is one of the major obstacles when we try to teach media and information literacy in Japan. An authorized curriculum is needed. We have been implementing the UNESCO MIL Curriculum for in-service and pre-service teacher education. We evaluated the effect of the Curriculum on teaching using quantitative and qualitative methods. Students learned Module 3 (Representation in Media and Information), Module 4 (Languages in Media and Information) and Module 6 (New and Tradition Media) of the MIL Curriculum. Activities included a student comparison of a Japanese movie to a Korean movie and students playing an online game, Food Force. These activities increased student motivations to learn.

Keywords: media and information literacy curriculum for teachers, media and information literacy, media literacy, Japan, teacher training

Introduction

This article aims to examine the efficiency of media and information literacy education, focusing on the Japanese Normal University (Tokyo Gakugei University). In Japanese education, many Japanese teachers sometimes misunderstand media literacy; they have students connect the notion of critical autonomy in media, to moral education using media or education through

media. This confusion about the definition of media literacy is one of the major obstacles when we try to implement media and information literacy in Japan. This obstacle arises because there is a need for an authorized media and information literacy education curriculum for teachers.

The following passages describe this Japanese situation in detail and explain some obstacles that arise when we promote media and information literacy in Japanese schools. These discussions will demonstrate the value of using the UNESCO MIL curriculum “*Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers*” in pre-service teacher training. This is followed by a discussion of the Japanese pre-service teacher training system. Finally we examine the efficiency of the MIL curriculum in Japan.

The situation about MIL education in Japan

Media literacy came to the attention of Japan’s citizens around 1994, when Japanese mainstream media reported some biased news that had influenced all Japanese people (Suzuki, 1997). For instance, when the Matsumoto sarin attack occurred in 1994, one man (Mr. Kono) was falsely accused, mainly because of the mass media (Suzuki, 1997). Another example is when the Great Hanshin Earthquake occurred in 1995; mainstream media reported mainly emotional scenes and shocking footage (people rescued from a collapsed building, and collapsed raised motorway or express railway). Because of these reports, some disaster areas could not get the support they needed, and some people who lived away from the disaster area could not get necessary information (Suzuki, 1997).

However, some believe the term ‘Media Literacy Education’ was brought from Canada to Japan earlier, but was not specifically called ‘media literacy education.’ Nakamura said that language education text used from 1952-1954 included a unit on ‘how to listen to the radio’, and also that text for grade nine junior high school students used from 1959-1961 included a unit on ‘the necessity of reading the newspaper’ (Nakamura, 2013). Because the description in those texts included a critical thinking process similar to those requested in media and information literacy, Nakamura argued Japanese teachers had already been teaching media and information literacy education since the late 1940s (Shimomura, 2002).

Japanese educators had been interested in education using media since television was brought to Japan in the 1950’s (Kasahara, 2012). On the other hand, the term ‘screen education’, or teaching correct understanding of moving images plus viewing and analysis skills, was also introduced in the 1950’s and attracted the attention of audio-visual educators. However, ‘screen education’ did not become popular among ordinary teachers and educators (Kasahara, 2012).

It can be said that Japanese media and information literacy education has been divided into two streams and each stream has developed independently. One stream is media literacy that focuses on critical media analysis. Another stream is information literacy that focuses on education using media. Those two streams about media and information literacy cause a vague understanding of the concepts of media and information literacy for Japanese classroom teachers. For instance, Ishikawa (2006) studied Japanese elementary and junior high school teachers understanding of media literacy. Thirty-nine elementary and junior high school teachers participated in the training of information morals education on Hitachi-city in 2005. Ishikawa used a questionnaire to ask those teachers how well they understood media literacy and whether they had taught media literacy in their classes. Teachers stated that they taught “privacy protection”, “copyright”, “how to use media in a right way”, “utilization ability of the media”, and “convenience and the risk of the media”. Ishikawa’s research shows that those teachers tended to confuse audiovisual education and information education with media and information literacy education.

These studies show that the main problem in Japanese schools is teacher’s inability to distinguish the concepts of media literacy and information literacy. UNESCO points out the difference between media literacy and information literacy in the MIL curriculum as follows.

... information literacy emphasizes the importance of access to information and the evaluation and ethical use of such information. On the other hand, media literacy emphasizes the ability to understand media functions, evaluate how those functions are performed and to rationally engage with media for self-expression. (Wilson et al., 2011, p. 18)

The UNESCO MIL curriculum explains how the concepts of media and information literacy can be seen as ambiguous, and it is possible that the ambiguity of the definition will lead classroom teachers to misunderstand the concepts. As was mentioned earlier, some Japanese educators believe they have already been practicing media and information literacy education. However, those are partial practices. Japanese educators and classroom teachers still do not have a comprehensive understanding of media and information literacy education. If Japanese educators and classroom teachers want such an education, they are encouraged to gain the knowledge, teaching skills and understanding about media and information literacy during their pre-service and in-service teacher training. However, Japanese classroom teachers are so busy that they don’t have time to learn it. In addition, other obstacles may be involved. One of the big elements in Japanese schools is culture or habitus and this can influence a teacher’s willingness to learn about media and information literacy as well.

School culture

In Japanese school education, most educators tend to consider it is not the school's responsibility to teach contemporary culture, in particular youth culture, because youth culture is recognized just as 'entertainment'. However, this is not only true in Japan. In England, David Buckingham said "the term 'media' still often appears to be a synonym for anything that is not 'literature' – so that it is not uncommon to find popular fiction being studied in a Media Studies classroom" (Buckingham, 2003). In the USA, Renee Hobbs argued "some spectacularly bad decisions on the part of some teachers, who may use movies as a reward for good behavior, take the kids to the computer lab as a break from "real" learning, or use music, media, or technology to keep disruptive classrooms quiet and orderly" (Hobbs, 2011). In Canada, Robert Morgan said that English teachers tend to regard traditional English literature, such as William Shakespeare, as important, and they do not discuss television programs, comics, and teen magazines in their classrooms (Morgan, 1998). These cases demonstrate even in countries and regions where media and information literacy education has been done, school culture tends to not accept popular culture as a serious aspect of classroom work. Japanese school culture is no exception. At least in the case of media use and teacher's recognition about media, Japanese schools are similar to those countries and regions mentioned. However, when we focus on practice, Japanese school is different from other countries and regions.

Some media and information literacy education practices in Japanese schools are carried out in 'Japanese Language', 'Social Studies', 'Information Studies', and 'Arts' classrooms, but most practices are carried out in 'Integrated Studies', 'Moral', and 'Special Activities' classrooms (Morimoto, 2008). This fact means that Japanese media and information literacy education is a sporadic approach, and is not a comprehensive approach. The Japanese Ministry of Education locates 'The Period for Integrated Studies', 'Moral Education', and 'Special Activities' as being outside of the main subjects. The Japanese Ministry of Education explains "these are referred to as subjects etc.; special activities are limited to classroom activities, excluding school lunch programs" (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan: MEXT, 2011). These 'subjects etc.' have some different features when compared to regular subjects. First, 'subjects etc.' do not have government authorized textbooks. Second, teachers do not need a specific license to teach these topics. Third, teachers do not need to assess student's achievement about those classes. Finally, the number of times their classes meet is less than for regular subjects. The Japanese Ministry of Education says "the annual teaching program should be made to cover 35 or more school weeks (34 weeks for Grade 1) for all subjects, including moral education, foreign language activities, the period for

integrated studies and special activities” (MEXT, 2011). Japanese teachers have to teach ‘Moral Education’ and ‘Special Activities’ in just one hour per week, and do ‘The Period for Integrated Studies’ in two hours per week. In these classes, it is difficult for teachers to teach media and information literacy using a comprehensive approach.

Taking into account Japanese teacher’s work environment, they may have no choice. Japanese elementary teachers have to teach almost all subjects, provide instruction during school lunch, contact parents, attend committee meetings, do counseling, and so on. In addition, class size in Japanese elementary schools is 27.9 students per classroom, and 32.8 students in junior high school. These numbers are greater than the 6 to 9 students noted as the OECD average (OECD, 2012). Japanese teachers have so much work that they only do their class with the government authorized textbook. Almost all of the government authorized textbooks lack content about media and information literacy because it is not included in the national curriculum. As many effective media and information literacy education practices demonstrate, teachers should include discussions about contemporary media texts, such as movies, music, video games and television programs (Hobbs & Cooper Moore, 2013). When teachers teach media and information literacy, they have to examine those media texts first and determine whether they can use those texts in their class. However, Japanese teachers do not have time to consider those things and they do not have the flexibility to create teaching materials. Further, as Hobbs and Cooper Moore discuss, teachers do not include popular culture texts because they often lack knowledge about them (Hobbs & Cooper Moore, 2013).

As many media literacy educators have stated, we have to teach and learn about the media that is around us in our daily lives, with students (Masterman, 1985; Buckingham, 2003; Luke, 2003; Tornero, 2008). In other words, we should connect student culture outside of the classroom with the culture inside of the classroom (Hobbs, 2011; Silverblatt, 2014). If Japanese teachers are eager to change the current situation and teach students about media and enable them to discuss democratic society, they have to learn about media and information literacy before they become a teacher. Although it is hopeful that classroom teachers learn media and information literacy during their in-service teacher training, they do not have much time to learn and in-service teacher training often results in independent learning. Since a comprehensive understanding of media and information literacy education is necessary, it will be appropriate to introduce MIL curriculum into pre-service teacher training.

Japanese teacher training course

Japan has authorized requirements that must be common to all teacher training courses in universities, but it is difficult to speak generally about them because they vary in every university (university, teachers college, and junior college). Generally speaking, a teacher training course in Japan is four years of concurrent course work. This means students acquire their diploma and teacher qualification simultaneously.

Tanahashi and Imai (2009) developed the media literacy curriculum for the students of the teachers college, and assessed the curriculum. Furthermore, Teraoka et al. (2009) discussed the class practice in the university that viewed media literacy education as one of the current education problems and brought it up in the teacher training course of the university. Through their work, some universities have tried to introduce education about media literacy and the information literacy.

However, research around these practices is not comprehensive. This research just focused on a particular field. The practice that focuses on just one field or a few particular fields will cause some problems. One of the major problems is that so called ‘intertextuality’ that is explained as “the idea that texts are inextricably bound up in their relationships with other texts” (Buckingham, 2003, p. 136).

When we consider the contents of the MIL curriculum and the existing Japanese teacher training course, we can introduce the MIL curriculum into teacher training in two ways. One method is to incorporate it into an existing unit and another is to introduce an additional unit. However, it is thought that the latter method is unrealistic. This is because the number of lesson hours required of university students is already overloaded. The UNESCO curriculum states that the “MIL curriculum focuses on “required core competencies and skills which can be seamlessly integrated into existing teacher education without putting too much of a strain on (already overloaded) teacher trainees” (Wilson et al., 2011, p. 19)

In order to integrate these core competencies, University teachers who teach the MIL curriculum should understand the contents (mainly analysis using semiotics) of Cultural Studies in particular. Sometimes a university teacher is in charge of a subject about the teaching profession and its pedagogy (i.e. educational science and each subject pedagogy), but may not be taught the sociological field where that specialty is regarded differently. This may be so even if the teacher can teach pedagogical approach and literacy theory. Therefore teachers who are in charge of the MIL curriculum should have interdisciplinary knowledge. How to best train such a talented teacher is a critical issue. Conversely, one might consider letting a sociologist be in charge of a part of

the MIL curriculum for example. In this case, the sociology teacher must first learn the pedagogy of MIL.

To solve those problems, at Tokyo Gakugei University we are teaching and learning the MIL curriculum, and we are also in charge of pre-service teacher training. We experimented with teaching some MIL modules in our classes.

An implementation and an evaluation of MIL Curriculum

We implemented Curriculum Modules 3, 4, and 6 for pre-service teacher training students at Tokyo Gakugei University in Japan. As suggested in Modules 3 and 4, students compared a Japanese drama/movie with a foreign drama/movie. Other students learned the *Food Force* game from Module 6. We measured their teaching motivations and evaluated the Modules.

Drama/Movie comparative analysis in Module 3 and 4

Forty-two students reviewed the MIL Curriculum and decided to compare a Japanese drama/movie and a foreign version of the same drama/movie. In our experience, Japanese students dislike critical analysis. Of course, analysis is an important method to learn for media and information literacy. However, “critical” is a negative word for Japanese. Japanese students think that they have to deny their favorite dramas/movies in order to do critical analysis. Students understand that TV advertisements contain some misinformation. They think that the advisement can be corrected by critical analysis. However, they are conflicted when they think about their favorite dramas/movies and critical analysis. So instead, they say they do not like critical analysis. When they have to do comparative analysis of a drama/movie, will they happily evaluate this drama/movie in detail? If they will not, one must ask whether comparative analysis is effective for MIL education in Japan?

We have two research questions.

Question 1: Do students have high motivations to do drama/movie comparative analysis?

Question 2: Is their motivation high on movie/drama comparative analysis compared to TV advertisement analysis?

Methods

Forty-two pre-service teacher training students were divided into six groups. They compared a Japanese movie/drama with a similar foreign movie/drama, using the media representation from Module 3 and the media language from Module 4 in the MIL Curriculum. Students made a presentation of their

comparison of the movies/dramas and wrote comments. They answered a questionnaire about their motivation. The motivation analysis evaluated four sub-motivations; attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. Those motivations are detailed in the ARCS motivation model developed by John Keller (1983). We measured students' motivations on a nine point scale, ranging from 1 (*lowest*) to 9 (*highest*).

Results

Students selected six movies/dramas. The movies/dramas were 1) *Godzilla* (Japan/USA), 2) *Shall we dance?* (Japan/USA), 3) "Sekai no Chushin de Ai o Sakebu"(Japan)/*Crying out in Love, in the Centre of the World* (Korea), 4) "Ikemen desu ne" (Korea/Japan), 5) "Hana Zakari no Kimitachi he (Hana Kimi)"(Japan)/*For you in Full Blossom* (Taiwan), and 6) "Hana Yori Dango" (Japan)/*Boys over Flowers* (Korea). Students selected Asian movies more than Hollywood movies, since Hollywood movies are not popular in Japan. Japanese movies account for 60.4% of the box office and imported movies account for 39.6% of the box-office (Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan, 2013). "Hana Yori Dango" was the most popular series of all time in Japan. It is an animated TV drama (available in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and China), and a movie, written in "Manga".

Hana Yori Dango is a secondary school drama about a poor girl and four rich boys. Students selected a five-minute scene from *Hana Yori Dango* and compared the Japanese drama version with the Korean version. They analyzed every thirty-seconds for media language and representations. In the Japanese drama, Tsukushi Makino, the main girl's character, is staying in the classroom and drama progresses with her narrations. In the Korean drama, the TV news announces that these are rich students and a rich school. There is one bullied boy and the main girl character helps him in both dramas. The bullied boy commits suicide from the top of the school building and a girl helps him in the Korean drama. However, there is no suicide scene in the Japanese drama. Students wrote impressions of their drama comparisons. "It was easy to understand the difference of two drama's sounds and shots. I was surprised that the main character did not appear sooner in the Korean drama." "I had seen Japanese drama before. I am very interested in Korean drama that reflects Korean culture, thinking style, sound, and screen structures. The expressions of two dramas were very different." Students analyzed TV advertisements too. We compared their learning motivations for drama/movie comparisons with their motivations for TV advertisement analysis. The motivations of drama/movie comparison were over 5.00 (middle). There was a marginally significant difference in attention (one sided t-test: $t(17)=1.56, p<.10$) and confidence (one sided t-test: $t(17)=1.64, p<.10$) between drama/movie comparison and TV advertisement analysis (Table 1).

Table 1. Drama/movie comparison and advertisement analysis

	Drama/movie comparison		Advertisement analysis	
	M	SD	M	SD
Attention	7.17	1.29	6.83	1.20+
Relevance	7.06	1.35	6.83	1.29
Confidence	6.94	1.35	6.33	1.28+
Satisfactions	7.00	1.06	7.00	1.33

N=18, *M*: mean, *SD*: standard deviation, scale range: 1 (lowest), 5 (middle), 9 (highest), +:*p*<.10 (one sided *t*-test)

Discussion

The motivations of drama/movie comparison were over 5.00 and students had high motivations on drama/movie comparative analysis. A drama/movie's average score of attention and that of confidence were higher than advertisement analysis scores. The drama/movie comparison has an effect on motivation.

Online game on Module 6

An online game is an interactive multimedia tool in classrooms. Game play is one of the pedagogical approaches and activities used in Module 6, Unit 3 of the MIL Curriculum.

Online games: Play a free online humanitarian simulation game, such as Peacemaker, Food Force or Darfur is Dying. How can a computer game help you to think creatively about global issues? What are the learning outcomes from these games?

Activity: Develop a lesson plan using an electronic game as part of teaching and learning, to raise awareness about global issues, such as hunger, conflict and peace. Teach this lesson and write a short report on teacher's responses to the issues, noting the questions they raised and how the games helped to address them.

(Wilson et al., 2011, p. 126)

Peacemaker and *Darfur is Dying* have no Japanese tutorials. Japanese students have no motivation to play the game's English version because they have already been playing many kinds of games with Japanese tutorials. *Konami*, a Japanese game maker, developed *Food Force* with a Japanese version on Facebook. *Food Force* is known as a serious game in Japan (Fujimoto, 2007),

but Japanese students are not familiar with that game. The game on Facebook is a social game. Most students have an account on Facebook and they can play *Food Force*. Petros & Georgios (2011) taught *Food Force* to primary education students. Their research showed that playing *Food Force* provided no significantly different results in knowledge construction compared to modern pedagogical interventions without the game, but the game contributes significantly to attitudes and views of students and the engagement of students during learning, making the learning process significantly more interesting and motivating for them. Imaeda (2010) taught *Food Force* to students of the training course of registered dietitians at the university. Those students had a high motivation to learn about food problems and understood nutrition improvement activities.

We have two research questions.

Question 1: Does the game lead to positive attitudes that will help to teach children in class?

Question 2: Do students who play *Food Force* increase their teaching ability?

Methods

Forty-two pre-service teacher training students were divided into eight groups and played *Food Force* on Facebook. They developed a lesson plan using *Food Force* as part of teaching and learning, to raise awareness about hunger. They wrote a short report about how the games helped to address hunger. They answered questions about their teaching motivations using the ARCS model. Teaching motivations were as follows;

Attention: I have an efficacy to teach children to pay attention to food problems.

Relevant: I have an efficacy to teach children to think that food problems are relevant to their life

Confidence: I have an efficacy to teach children to have a confidence that they can learn about food problems.

Satisfaction: I have an efficacy to teach children to be satisfied with learning food problems

Results

(1) Lesson plans and a short report

Student teachers put children's game play activities in the first stage in their lesson plans. They intended to use the game to raise children's motivations to learn about food problems. They adopted a collaborative learning style and were invested in their learning.

Student teachers responses for *Food Force*:

“Game provides children the chance to think about food problems with interest.”

“Children will learn about food problems by playing this game.”

“Game is not real and teacher should add real teaching material on this lesson plan.”

(2) Teaching motivations with *Food Force*

We compared students' teaching motivations before and after game play. There was a marginally significant difference in attention (two sided t -test: $t(27)=1.99$, $p<.1$) and relevance (two sided t -test: $t(27)=1.94$, $p<.1$) and significant difference in confidence (two sided t -test: $t(27)=2.79$, $p<.05$) and satisfactions (two sided t -test: $t(27)=5.31$, $p<.05$) between pre and post scores (Table 2).

Table 2. Teaching motivations with *Food Force*

	Play Food Force			
	Before		After	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Attention	3.04	1.01	3.50	0.69+
Relevance	3.21	1.10	3.64	0.95+
Confidence	2.71	0.76	3.18	0.90*
Satisfactions	2.71	0.78	3.54	0.88*

$N=28$, M : mean, SD : standard deviation, scale range: 1 (lowest), 5 (highest), +: $p<.10$, *: $p<.05$ (two sided t -test)

Discussion

Student teachers had positive attitudes about using the game to teach children in class. They hoped to use the game at the beginning of the food problem lesson. They thought that the game would increase children's attention and motivation in external events of Instructions (Gagne et al., 2005) However, teachers also stated that the game had no reality and they should add a lesson plan with real teaching material. Students played *Food Force* and increased their teaching abilities (Table 2). Our findings suggest that this online game is a useful tool to teach about global issues and increases teaching motivations, but the teacher has to add a lesson plan with real teaching materials.

Conclusion

The drama/movie comparison activity had an effect on teachers motivation. The value of Module 3 and 4 on the MIL Curriculum was

verified. Students played the *Food Force* game and increased their teaching abilities. The value of Module 6 on the MIL Curriculum was verified. These results imply that using a few modules is a good start to fully understanding the MIL curriculum, but more is needed. We believe the whole MIL Curriculum must be introduced to pre-service teacher training. There are many other Modules in the MIL Curriculum and each Module should be verified for use in Japan.

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Different Cultures, Similar Challenges

Integrating multilingual multicultural multimedia in media literacy education

Melda N. Yildiz

This article outlines the role of Social Interaction Software (SIS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) software in global education. The article outlines the results of a participatory action research (PAR) project in the US and Turkmenistan and; offers creative strategies and possibilities for integrating new media and technologies into the multicultural, multilingual, media literacy curriculum with limited resources and equipment. The research projects were conducted while teaching transdisciplinary courses and workshops. 13 pre-service teachers in the US, 12 Turkmen students and 15 teachers in Turkmenistan participated in the study. The study explored three key topics in order to examine the educational experiences of the participants: 1) the wide range of meanings they associate with global media literacy education and the role of new technologies in P12 education; 2) the impact of developing transdisciplinary collaborative curriculum projects on pre-service teachers' 21st century skills while integrating SIS and GIS into their curriculum; and 3) the ways in which the participants developed culturally and linguistically responsive Universal Design for Learning (UDL) curriculum while integrating global education and media literacy skills.

Keywords: participatory action research, global positioning system, universal design for learning, social interaction software, Turkmenistan

Introduction

In 2009, I served as a Fulbright Scholar in Turkmenistan for five months. This article is based on my collaborations with my Turkmen colleagues and students. I would like to first thank all of them for allowing me to share their stories, reflections, and global media literacy experiences in this article. This article is based on several global media literacy workshops, courses and projects that I designed and conducted. I found many similarities and challenges as well as opportunities in teaching youth media literacy skills in Turkmenistan.

At first, it was difficult for many Turkmen students and teachers to embrace an American into their schools and communities as I was the first Fulbright scholar to Turkmenistan. But day-by-day, I was welcomed into many global media literacy projects.

Where is Turkmenistan?

Turkmenistan is one of the Turkic states that declared its independence in 1991 after the collapse of The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). It is located in Central Asia, east of Caspian Sea, neighboring Iran in the southwest, Afghanistan in the south, and Kazakistan and Ozbekistan in the north. It has an estimated population of 5.1 million living in an area the size of California. According to the CIA World Fact book, 89% of the population is Muslim and 9% are followers of Eastern Orthodox Church. Turkmenistan has a rich history due to being at the crossroads of many civilizations and trade routes such as the “Silk Road” for centuries. 80 percent of the country is covered with Karakum (Black Sand) desert. According to U.S. Energy Information Administration¹ Turkmenistan has the sixth largest natural gas reserves in the world.

Global Media Literacy

Since the beginning of the 20th century, many scholars and academics (Dewey 1916, Eco 1964, McLuhan 1964, Freire 1971, Postman 1979, & Masterman 1985) have worked on cultivating critical thinking skills in education, deconstructing mass media messages, and transforming education from a factory model. Since the 1990s, media literacy has been broadly defined as the ability to “access, evaluate, analyze, and produce media in all forms” (Aufderheide, 1993). As the population of our global village grows to an estimated 9.6 billion by 2050², the definition of media literacy expands to include developing global competencies in education across borders, cultures, and platforms “through an interdisciplinary and cross-border approach to teaching and learning.” (Mihailidis & Moeller, 2010).

For educators, global media literacy education provides skill sets to improve upon the “Inequalities, misunderstandings and ‘soft conflicts’ (that) may increase on a planet increasingly interconnected and subject to rapid intercultural exchanges.” (Grizzle et al., 2013). Developing global media literacy skills is a continuum with never-ending learning opportunities and challenges.

My Fulbright assignment focused on advancing scientific knowledge of media literacy education as a means to promote global literacy skills in P16 education and examining the development of Turkmen students and pre-

service teachers' through the lens of global education. The participatory action research projects focused on the role of multiple literacies as a means of further developing pre-service teachers' global competencies, as well as designing innovative transdisciplinary activities with limited resources and equipment in global education contexts. A transdisciplinary approach to curriculum signifies a unity of knowledge beyond, across, and between disciplines and gives equal weight to each discipline. It allows research studies to spread over disciplinary boundaries, while focusing within the framework of disciplinary research. Jean Piaget introduced the term in the 1970's. (Piaget, 1970)

Having taught in different settings (e.g. university) in Turkmenistan, I had come across some similarities to other Middle Eastern education models. During class discussions, my Turkmen colleagues and students indicated the lack of critical thinking or media literacy skills in the curriculum similarly reported in Lebanon academic settings (Abu-Fadil, 2007). Instead of taking political science for instance (which would require use of critical thinking skills), I observed most students were taking foreign language courses in Turkmen schools and universities. Later, a colleague told me, "teaching languages are [considered] safe" as opposed to Political Science, Comparative Literature and Media Studies. In Kamal's article, "Oil Won't Last: Invest in Arab Education," a number of research participants said, "natural resources in Turkmenistan may not last long," the best investment is activating the thinking among youth generation. Instead of teaching what to think, youth needs to learn how to think. (Kamal, 2007)

Through the use of quick polls and surveys, I found out the myths and misconceptions among my students about American culture, education, history, politics, and people. For instance, when I asked them to draw a picture of an American and write three adjectives, they all drew a white person, primarily male, and overweight. The common adjectives were big, tall, rich, free and heavy. They shared their pictures over the Internet with my pre-service teachers in the US who knew almost nothing about Turkmenistan.

One Turkmen student mentioned that he feels the tribal culture in Turkmenistan is racist. He explained to me how a person from one region will be able to identify another by even a design of their clothes or earrings, how they discriminate against one another in the workplace, how a one person from one region may not marry someone or buy a property from another region. The same day we watched a movie called: "Crash." In the movie, the filmmaker, Paul Haggis (2004) presented stories of racism in Los Angeles, CA, USA and misconceptions through the eyes of several characters. We had a heated dialog about the points of view of different groups of people. We discussed how misconceptions develop. We compared Turkmen culture to American culture and identified similarities among our cultures and most importantly discussed the role of media education that day and how it could impact racism.

Purpose and objectives

What is the role of new media and technologies in designing effective multi-lingual multicultural instruction in P12 curriculum? Today the younger generation uses a variety of mediums to communicate and form communities of interest outside the classroom. But there is a disconnect between the technology used in current educational practices and the technology students are exposed to in their daily lives. We encouraged teachers and pre-service teachers to integrate new media and technologies into their curriculum units. Turkmen participants outlined the difficulties of using Web based technologies, such as having limited Internet access in some schools. Together, they discussed the power of social interaction software in creating educational learning tools and developing media literacy skills.

The purpose of this study was to meaningfully integrate geography and social networking software into the P12 curriculum as a means of further developing their multicultural education. This research project relates to several International Standards for Technology in Education's (ISTE) National Education Technology Standards for Teachers. For example, Standard One states that programs will, "Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity: Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face- to-face and virtual environments." (ISTE, 2008, p.1)

Our goal was: a) To present the role of new technologies in order to argue the challenges and advantages of Global Positioning System (GPS) and Social Interaction Software (SIS) in K-12 curriculum across content areas; b) To introduce maps and media across content areas to assist in in developing multiple literacies such as information, technology, geography, numerical and media literacy; c) to demonstrate creative strategies and possibilities for engaging K-12 students in meaningful multicultural activities while incorporating maps and media.

Objectives

By the end of the 15 week session, 80% of the participants in group A and B will be able to:

- argue the challenges and advantages of SIS and GIS technologies in the global education curriculum;
- experience a self-study participatory action research (PAR) model during the focus group discussions;
- develop global media skills in bridging theory into practice with work demonstrated in their journals, digital stories and curriculum projects;

- explore and examine the innovative transdisciplinary and inclusive tools, and strategies for teaching and learning during focus group discussions, online dialogs and peer feedback;
- demonstrate lesson plans, assessment tools, and curriculum guides that incorporate UDL, and the “Pedagogy of Plenty” model across grades and subjects;
- showcase their projects through skype, and provide feedback as a culminating activity.

Theoretical framework

The study focused on the impact and power of Global Positioning System (GPS) and Social Interaction Software (SIS) and outlined its promising implications for multicultural education, creativity and collaboration among its users. From showcasing digital portfolios (secondlife) to posting online reflections and journals (blogspot), co- writing books (wikibooks) to co-producing digital stories (voicethread, footnote), social interaction software is increasingly being used for educational and lifelong learning environments. The usage of handheld devices and social interaction software develops opportunities and supports “Open Learning” practices and processes, and promotes exchanges, connections, and collaboration among people who share common ideas and interests.

Social interaction software allows greater student independence and critical autonomy (Masterman, 1985, p. 24-25), greater collaboration, and increased pedagogic efficiency (Franklin & Van Harmelen, 2007). It also provides learners with an effective method of acquiring those 21st century skills. But, Bugeja (2008) warns of digital distractions and outlines significant issues to consider in implementing changes in education. He writes: “Due to academia’s reliance on technology and the media’s overemphasis on trivia, we are failing to inform future generations about social problems that require critical thinking and interpersonal intelligence.” (p. 66) Noon (2007) questions what it means to be a media literate “global citizen” and questions the role of schools in preparing students for the work force. Gould (2003) argues we tend to promote the need for a productive citizenry rather than a “critical, socially responsive, reflective individual.” (p. 197)

With the advent of social interaction software, there will be expanded access to alternative resources and real work examples. Teaching and learning have the potential to be a continuous life-long process; it can be personalized, learner-centered, situated, collaborative, and ubiquitous. Suter, Alexander, and Kaplan (2005) summarized the notion of social interaction software “as a tool

(for augmenting human social and collaborative abilities), as a medium (for facilitating social connection and information interchange), and as an ecology (for enabling a 'system of people, practices, values, and technologies in a particular local environment')." (p.48)

A growing number of initiatives and projects directed for P12 education make use of GPS devices. Geocaching, for instance, has been used as an experiential learning activity based on constructivist theory (Christie, 2007) to stimulate students to think critically and provide group collaboration in authentic settings. Social interaction software and handheld devices such as GPS are ideal for distributed learning. Mejias (2006) states "Social interaction software allows students to participate in distributed research communities that extend spatially beyond their classroom and school, beyond a particular class session or term, and technologically beyond the tools and resources that the school makes available to the students." Wesch (2008) argued the importance of welcoming social media into the classroom as powerful learning tools and wrote: "When students recognize their own importance in helping to shape the future of this increasingly global, interconnected society, the significance problem fades away." (p.7)

Participants

Most of the youth (ages 12-18) I worked with in Turkmenistan were from privileged families, went to private schools, and spoke several foreign languages fluently (e.g. Russian, English, Turkish). All were motivated to study abroad and many are currently pursuing their education in various countries around the world- Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Bulgaria, Turkey and United States.

Participants for the Participatory Action Research (PAR) are:

Group A- 13 (3 male and 10 female) pre-service teachers pursuing different K12 subject fields (biology, math, art, social studies, and English) in the United States;

Group B- 15 English Language Teachers (2 male and 13 female) who were attending professional development workshops in Turkmenistan; and

Group C- 12 students (4 male and 8 female) ages 12-18 participating in the transdisciplinary courses on the topic of US Public Affairs in Turkmenistan.

Methodology

We choose the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method for our study. PAR research considers each participant as co-researchers and focuses on integrating: a) participation- life in society and democracy; b) action- engage-

ment with experience and history; and c) research- thinking and the growth of knowledge (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013). Through our Inquiry based on PAR, participants explored their teaching and learning methods, the role of new technologies in preparing the younger generation to be globally-connected citizens and most importantly how to be a change agent to transform the current curricula.

Setting and data collection

Over the course of twelve meeting sessions we had rich discussions and cultural exchanges. Three of these sessions we connected to my pre-service teachers in the US and five sessions included field trips to local historical sites.

Data collection included analysis of surveys, electronic journals and reflections, responses to online activities, and content analysis of participants' digital stories and online map and multimedia projects. For our research, we also collected all the written responses from group A and B based on integrating GIS and SIS into their lesson plan and curriculum projects with limited resources and equipment.

Research questions

Our investigation was guided by these questions:

For Group A and B:

1. What common problems and discoveries did the participants experience in integrating new technologies and activities into their UDL model lessons and curriculum projects? How do they envision incorporating SIS and GPS into their teaching practices?
2. How can pre-service teachers and teachers prepare for 21st century teaching and learning? What skills do they need to be transformative educators?
3. What suggestions do participants have to improve teaching and learning? How can educators design effective instruction that cultivates global competencies and media literacy skills?

For Group C:

1. How do we develop global competency and media literacy skills among youth?
1. What can we learn from their experiences participating in media literacy activities integrating SIS and GPS?

Media Literacy Projects

Pre-service teachers participated in several media literacy activities. Examples of media literacy projects among pre-service teachers included a gallery walk, skype discussions, creating maps using Global Positioning System (GPS), group projects, debates, and co-creating multilingual projects with other students and schools worldwide.

Gallery Walk

Gallery Walk is based on a museum approach to teaching. Gallery Walk for this project was a collection of artifacts (i.e. maps, pictures, posters, audio and video clips) designed to showcase the importance and exemplary usage of geography across content areas. All students and teachers explored the Gallery Walk as it also provided learning centers for each individual to interact and complete their tasks while interacting in group discussions and writing responses. Different maps (i.e. Peterson projection) were available for participants to view and explore. The participants wrote their reactions next to these maps and discussed the significance and possibilities for incorporating these maps and technology across curriculum areas.

Global Positioning System (GPS)

The next project was designed to provide hands on experience with GIS and SIS, as well as show how to use new technologies to develop interactive maps and social interaction modules online. In one activity, students (ages 11-16) went on a hiking trip. This two and a half hour outdoor activity is called Hi5 (Hiking for Health, Happiness, Head, Hand and Heart) to Nature project. Participants engaged in Geocaching - a high-tech treasure hunting game using GPS devices to seek items such as pens and coins in hiding spots around the public park (Lary, 2004).

In another activity pre-service teachers in the US and teachers in Turkmenistan participated in a mapping project using communitywalk.com and co-developed a map sharing their favorite historical sites. In one discussion, they expressed their surprise that a historical bell in Perth Amboy, NJ was dated as being only a couple of hundred years old, versus the Old Nisa historical site in Turkmenistan dated back to 250 BCE (Before Common Era).

The third activity focused on specific strategies and deconstruction activities requiring reading and writing of interactive maps to facilitate development of multiple literacies. Participants were provided with books related to Art in

Geography, Cartography, Environmental Ethics, GPS/ GIS in Education and even links to music such as the lyrics to “Follow the drinking gourd”.

Skype discussions

Finally, on our online skype sessions, the pre-service teachers discussed challenges and advantages of SIS technologies and GIS devices as classroom tools. Discussions outlined the use of new technologies, such as voicethread, geocaching, educational apps and games in an instructional context and explored curriculum guides that incorporated multicultural education, 21st century literacy skills, and co- created digital videos in multilingual format.

Results

Participants enjoyed working on experiential learning activities, creating digital stories and developing interactive projects and also gained media literacy skills. A number of participants said they learned more than the Internet technologies. One participant stated, “It was amazing to be part of the participatory research. I signed up to improve my English, but this project gave me much more to think about, more than the content of this workshop. I enjoyed learning new skills, creating historical maps of Turkmenistan and share with the world.” Another wrote, “More than learning how to use a GPS device, this project allowed me to learn from global communities. I reflected on my own Internet habits, and how to search the web.” They found the online activities and the resources engaging and helpful in understanding the role its unique characteristics.

One of the pre-service teachers in Group A who collaborated with Turkmen teachers in Group B said,

Here I was participating in an online chat, if not the most important exchange in my under graduate career and I had absolutely no information about Turkmenistan. As a future teacher, I know I wanted to be a fair grader, reliable and accessible. Not having more information I participated in this study with reserved expectations. I decided that I would enter with an open mind and do my best to be engaging and at the same time absorbing as much information as possible. The minute I stepped into the online dialog on that Tuesday, I knew it would be one of, if not my favorite experience of the semester, and it turned out my predication was true. I was able to learn and acquire a broad array of knowledge and skills that will without a doubt be beneficial in the field of Early Childhood. I would hate to be associated with the phrase “Lies my teacher told me,” because I was too lazy to seek out the correct information. I want to make a difference to each young life, help them to be global citizens and that is what this project has taught me to do.

Another student in group A wrote in her online reflection:

Through skype, we've covered a wealth of content that provides important information to future educators. It was great to help translate our subtitles to our videos. I learned how to design a UDL model lesson focusing on "pedagogy of plenty" versus "pedagogy of poverty". As a future "global scholar" I will not bring "myths and misconceptions" to my teaching. I will help my students to read between the lines and find ways to bring global stories into my classroom. I hope to be able to use skype in other classrooms around the world for instance. This research project has helped me to pay attention to global perspectives. I shared so much of what I have learned over the past few months with my family and friends and will continue to develop multiple perspectives.

The Turkmen teacher participants repeatedly said in their reflection papers how much they were intimidated by the new technologies, especially social software at the beginning. They were discouraged to use computers in their schools because they were afraid they would break and their institution might ask them to pay for it. After two weeks, most teachers said they were encouraged to use new technologies, and they especially enjoyed collaborating with pre-service teachers in the United States. They felt like being part of the world community is critical in teaching their students. As one said, "I don't believe all Americans are the same anymore. There are even Turkmens living in the US. We need to re-read media messages. I created a lesson plan integrating billboard commercials on the streets of Ashgabat. I want my students to understand all the news statements can be true or false depending on the point of view."

Group A and B participants, in addition to creating UDL lesson plans integrating maps and media into the curriculum, developed Internet search skills, focused on deconstructing websites and analyzing wiki entries. Lesson activities and projects were designed by the team using the UDL model to fit the needs of all children (e.g. Special Education, English language Learners). The UDL modules we designed and implemented in our study can be replicable and adoptable in other schools.

By actively involving participants in collecting and analyzing data, taking and uploading pictures and videos, producing media such as interactive maps, wiki pages, blogs and digital stories, they understood the conventions of the medium. As they became the producers of their own media projects, they developed media literacy skills, and became informed consumers and citizens of the world.

Conclusion

From developing digital portfolios (google sites) to posting online reflections and journals (wordpress), co-writing books and maps (communitywalk) to co-producing digital stories (voicethread), social software is increasingly being used for educational and lifelong learning environments. SIS provides space for its participants to co-construct meaning using multilingual (Google Translator) and multimedia (slideshare) tools. Participants are bricoleur (Lévi-Strauss, 1998) where they are the author as well as the cast, collector, and the director of their projects. Just like in our PAR, the content of their knowledge is co-constructed, co-developed, co-edited and co-translated as they are involved in a global community network (Hobbs et al., 2011) while developing their global media literacy skills. From digital storytelling to geocaching projects, the PAR team not only explored innovative and transdisciplinary activities which integrated various disciplines (e.g. science, geography, media literacy) and social interaction software (i.e., wikis, google earth), but also fostered collaboration among the students and teachers in the United States and Turkmenistan.

Participants developed multiliteracies (i.e. numerical, geographical and media literacy) through the lens of multiculturalism and experienced a UDL model curriculum that is inclusive, innovative and multilingual. Together, they explored the power of educational media in improving global media literacy and 21st century skills and discovered they had many similar educational issues. Most importantly, they gained alternative points of view about one another's cultures, history and people and experienced a renewed interest and commitment to global education.

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Notes

- 1 <http://www.eia.gov/countries/country-data.cfm?fips=tx>
- 2 World population projected to reach 9.6 billion by 2050 – UN report http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45165#.UwuV_vRdWC4

A Brief Mapping of Media and Information Literacy Education in Japan

Kyoko Murakami

This article examines media and information literacy (MIL) education regarding cultural and educational practice both in and out of schools in Japan. This article seeks to examine the following three questions of MIL in education: (1) What are the features of the Japanese government with respect to MIL and what challenges does Japanese MIL education face?; (2) What are the features of the non-government sector and what challenges does Japanese MIL education face from these sectors? How is MIL understood in the Japanese context?; and (3) What are the best ways to promote MIL education in Japan and in other regions? The findings are discussed and explored in terms of implications for the realities of MIL education in Japan.

Keywords: media and information literacy education, media literacy, information literacy, critical thinking, media education policies, collaboration, Japan

“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.”

(UNESCO constitution)

Introduction

In the 1990s media and information literacy in Japan became visible due to the significance and popular introduction of media literacy in North America, both in publication and broadcasting.¹ The term media and information literacy in this article is the combination of media literacy and information literacy that has been defined by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) various documentations.² Thus if the term media literacy education includes the concept of print literacy, such as reading and writing, Japan’s early grassroots teacher educational movement for writing children’s own lives in their own words appeared in the 1910s. This movement,

called pedagogy for *writing of life* or *seikatu tuzurikata*, spread over Japanese schools during the 1930s and 1950-60s.

In the late 1920s, the germ of early media education that included the use of film, came along and influenced the ways of teaching. Although this movement was less concerned with critical approaches to film, there was early controversy regarding the educational usage of film overall during the late 1920s (Machida, 2002; Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, 1999³).

After Japan's defeat in World War II, radio and television broadcast programs for school education and social education were encouraged by the Civil Information and Education division of US General Headquarters (GHQ) in order to provide thorough postwar democratic education throughout Japan. In 1950, radio broadcasting started due to the independent broadcasting system. Television broadcasting commenced in 1953 after termination of the Occupation. In response to the early media education trend during the 1950s, the Japanese Audiovisual Education Society (1954-1993) and the Japan Broadcasting Education Association (1955-1993) were founded. These two organizations were integrated later into the Japan Association for Media Education Study.⁴

In 1977 one of the pioneers of media literacy and media studies in Japan, Midori Suzuki (1941-2006) founded the Forum for Children's and Citizen's Television (FCT). It was renamed the FCT Japan Media Literacy Research Institute in 2006.⁵ The organization introduced critical analyses of media literacy by building substantial networks with media-oriented individuals and organizations, including academics, NPO/NGOs, and journalists, as well as running conferences and workshops, and publishing and translating many important media related books and articles such as the Ontario Department of Education's *Media Literacy Resource Guide* into Japanese in 1992.

Influenced by the publication of *the Grünwald International Symposium on Media Education* in 1982 stating that the significance of media education had been recognized by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO), the Japanese government announced the report of the National Council on Education Reform in 1985. In this report government recognized the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education that enabled children and students to utilize media and information. Since then, the government of Japan, academics, broadcasting, NPO/NGO and media related individuals and groups have gradually encouraged growth of media literacy, information literacy and media studies that focuses on how to use ICT.

According to Shin Mizukoshi, a leading media studies scholar, there are three realms where "media literacy" is well cited and its activities are well developed in Japan: media studies and media literacy, school education, and ICT. Media studies and media literacy scholarship were originally introduced by North America and Europe. In these continents a variety of media images

and texts, such as gender, ethnicity, and sexuality in the area of mass media, journalism, cultural studies are critically analyzed. The themes of the ICT include a variety of topics, such as the utilization of computers and applications, technological innovation and/or technology trends, and technical training that involves government, firms, universities, and technical schools.

This article concentrates on media and information literacy (MIL) education that is based on the definition found in various types of UNESCO publications, as space is limited for an extended discussion on the historical and cultural context of media studies/literacy as well as technical topics of the ICT. This article also seeks to examine the following three questions of MIL in education: (1) What are the features of the Japanese government with respect to MIL and what challenges does Japanese MIL education face?; (2) What are the features of the non-government sector and what challenges does Japanese MIL education face from these sectors? How is MIL understood in the Japanese context?; and (3) What are the good ways to promote MIL education in Japan and in other regions? The findings are discussed and explored in terms of implications for the realities of MIL education in Japan.

The features of the Japanese government – establishment and challenges

Many educators and non-educators today believe that acquiring MIL competencies is indispensable if children are to become active democratic citizens with empowerment and promotion of equity in the world. Influenced by the leadership of inter-governmental organizations such as UNESCO and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations that have been encouraging forms of media training and education, various countries and regions are cultivating global citizenship, as well as fostering inter-cultural dialogues. Thus a spread of MIL education is vitally important in every country and region, and Japan is no exception. In the next section, the MIL-related policy of two government agencies, namely the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIAC), are briefly introduced.

of Study restricts the contents and implementation of certain subject areas, as government approved standards do not contain the term “media literacy.” However, there have been various elements of media literacy and information literacy in such course subjects as Japanese Language, the Period for Integrated Study, Art, Technology and Home Economics, ICT, Social Science, and others. Several Japanese Language textbooks, in particular, have had media literacy related units at elementary and lower secondary school levels since the late 1990s (Nakamura, 2013). According to the Course of Study guidelines, for example, children and students will be able to compare and contrast written and visual texts of newspapers independently, or produce literature/articles as well as fine arts of artistic merit.⁸ Although the inclusion of MIL in curriculum and its implementation is not mandatory yet in Japan, there have been encouraging signs of MIL in Japanese education.

Simultaneously, there has been a considerably broader community of multi-disciplines that values the significance and benefits of collaborative partnership involvement and implementation regarding MIL education in Japan. For instance, a number of academics and non-academics in school education, educational technology, media studies, journalism and broadcasting, citizen media, cultural studies and other disciplines have loosely collaborated with each other in order to pursue MIL projects in school settings. They promoted MIL practices and its implementation in various ways by providing workshops of video and documentary production for children and students’ interactive class activities, and supporting technical elements in order to reduce the burdens on teachers and school staff.⁹

In April 28, 2011, MEXT in Japan announced *The Vision for ICT in Education*, a comprehensive policy to promote the utilization of ICT in school settings.¹⁰ It was because of the “New Strategy in Information and Communications Technology”, determined by MEXT’s Strategic Headquarters for the Promotion of Advanced Information and Telecommunications Network Society in May, that the government promised to improve the conditions of ICT in school settings by making classes more interactive as well as user-friendly, and by enhancing children’s information literacy. Thus, MEXT has provided teachers, children and students a variety of teaching/learning materials, practical models for teaching and learning, ICT support for teachers, and teaching equipment such as electronic whiteboards, and so on (Ibid.).

Nonetheless, it must be noted that MEXT’s MIL policy focuses more on the utilization of ICT and the Japanese meaning of “information literacy” rather than media literacy (Yamauchi, 2003). According to *The Vision for ICT in Education* by MEXT (2011, p.9), “information (*johou*) literacy” means having a practical capability to utilize information, having a scientific understanding of information, and having an attitude to willingly participate in the information society. The Japanese concept of “information literacy” is developed specifically

for information education in universities, and supported by technology associate academics and private firms (Yamauchi, 2003), while the term information literacy is generally from the realm of library science and education as a basic human right that promotes the ability to foster a knowledge-based society and globalization advances in lifelong education. Regarding MIL trends in Japan, it is the Information and Communications Bureau in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (MIAC) that is responsible for advancing the digitalization of broadcasting, advancing the use of ICT and fostering “ICT media literacy.” The next section briefly introduces the theoretical framework of media literacy as defined by the Japanese government.

A theoretical framework of Media Literacy, MIAC

What is media literacy for the Japanese government? According to MIAC, the definitions of media literacy include the following elements: (1) competency to read and comprehend the media contents independently; (2) competency to access and utilize newly prevailing ICTs; and (3) competency to make interactive communication with audience through media.¹¹

The above definition of media literacy seems to align with mainstream media education and media literacy in North America and Europe. Since the late 1990s MIAC has developed the theory and implementation of media literacy together with multi-partnership involvements with groups such as academics, participating scholars, media professionals, and school teachers. It also published a report titled *Media Literacy: Ability of Young People to Function in the Media Society* (June 23, 2000).¹² The MIAC has produced many practical teaching materials in cooperation with media professionals, academics, and school teachers. Examples are shown on the website *Media Literacy on Broadcasting* (Japanese only).¹³ This website contains many learning/analyzing TV kits for children, and teaching materials for elementary through secondary levels including worksheets, video, and a variety of lesson plans. Additionally, the website *Let's Extend ICT Media Literacy* (Japanese only)¹⁴ also includes teaching and learning materials, supplemental teaching aids with video clips, teaching plans and worksheets. Another example is found on the website *Promotion of Educational Information*¹⁵ by the MIAC. It includes the following seven items: (1) many promotional programs for future schools; (2) case studies of ICT usage in education; (3) promotion of LAN maintenance in school; (4) fostering ICT media literacy; (5) promoting the e-net caravan; (6) case collection for Internet trouble; and (7) enlightening teaching materials for spotlighting the ICT system in society and industry. MIAC has made a significant contribution to MIL education in Japan.

The MEXT seems to focus more on the elements of information literacy,

while the MIAC seems to emphasize the elements of media literacy. In light of the MIL perspectives, however, both share contentious assumptions underlying MIL education policies. Some of these government assumptions in Japan are taken up later in the conclusion. With these issues in mind, various non-government private sectors encouraging MIL will be examined in the next section.

Various non-government private sectors promoting MIL in Japan

Since the mid-1990s there has been MIL support for class activities, projects, and workshops developed not only by the government, but also by academics and non-academics in Japan. Besides government, there have been various private sector activities and projects to practice and promote MIL education in cooperation with academics, schools, broadcasting, non-profit organizations (NPOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and media-related industries. This section will introduce briefly the significant private organizations and private sectors that contribute to the advancement of MIL in Japan and their conditions and featured activities.

Academics

In Japan both theory and practices of MIL education have gradually spread out into various fields of scholarship. With government policy favoring full utilization supports with the aim of ICT in school settings, many individuals and groups including broadcast, citizen's media, academic and non-academic organizations, and media-related industries in media studies and media literacy have collaborated with each other. Devoted teachers and school staff have made an important contribution toward MIL education, particularly teachers of Japanese language from elementary through secondary schools and the faculty members of universities, though the spread of MIL education is somewhat limited.

One of the significant collaborative project examples for academics is “Media Biotope,” by Shin MIZUKOSHI Lab. Since the late 1990s, Shin Mizukoshi, at the University of Tokyo, and his colleagues have pursued an innovative media study, “critical media practice” for citizens’ media literacy and media expression by collaborating with a variety of groups and individuals nationally and internationally.¹⁶ Another collaborative example is between Gree Inc. and Daisuke Fujikawa at the University of Chiba. It is an innovative educational project that utilizes games and creates education-oriented applications.¹⁷ Besides the aca-

demographic affiliation, Fujikawa is serving as the president of several organizations, such as the Japan Media-literacy Education Council¹⁸ and others.

Other important media study research institutions that make efforts to teach media studies and media literacy education include Hosei University, Tokyo Gakugei University, International Christian University, Kansai University, Ritsumeikan University, Rikkyo University, and others.¹⁹ These universities, in varying degrees, have loose collaborations with government, broadcasting, a variety of stakeholders, and schools. One example is the Kansai Telecasting Cooperation's project, *a Project Connected by Heart*. Since 2008 the project has created a substantial number of media literacy programs, provided delivery classes in many primary and secondary schools every year, supported video production for secondary students and collaborated with neighboring universities that make great efforts for ML education such as Kansai University, Ritsumeikan University, and Nara University of Education.²⁰ In addition, Hosei University and Tokyo Gakugei University have joined the UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID) as associate members.

Academic associations

Besides ML academic institutions and individuals, there have been important associations that promote MIL education. The Japan Society for Educational Technology (JSET, 1984-),²¹ for instance, has made a significant contribution toward the implementation of ICT policies by collaborating with government, ICT-oriented enterprises, research institutes, universities, and schools. With government support for the utilization of ICT media literacy, JSET pursues the educational ICT technology related research, and effective educational methods and systems.²² It should be noted that JSET tends to focus more on full advancement of ICT aspects and short-term results than on critical thinking skills for media messages and long-term results. Thus it is important for educators and researchers to retain a certain degree of balance between teaching and learning critical thinking skills and ICT utilization.

Other media and information literacy related academic associations include the Japan Association for Education Media Study (1994-),²³ where both audiovisual education (1954-1993) and broadcasting education (1955-1993) were integrated; The Japan Association for Social Informatics;²⁴ and The Japan Society for Studies in Journalism and Mass Communication (1993-),²⁵ and a society descending from the Japanese journalism association (1951-1991).

Besides ICT, media, and/or information related associations, there are many academic societies that recognize the significance of MIL and its competencies. Examples are mainly Japanese language related associations, such as the Japanese

language educational association (1954-) and Japanese Teaching Society of Japan (1950-).²⁶ With government initiatives encouraging a certain degree of MIL competencies, such as active inquiry and independent thinking about messages and texts, these associations have developed a practical implementation methodology about MIL.

Broadcasting and stakeholders

From the late 1980s to the present, considerable numbers of media and media literacy related TV programs for elementary and secondary schools have appeared on TV. In the late 1980's, local branches of public and private broadcasting companies produced superficial and acceptable self-restraint programs because there were some controversial disputes regarding fake programs at that time. The Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), Japan's public broadcasting system, however, produced a number of the MIL related programs, including "NHK for School," MIL teaching materials, image/animation clips, working sheets for teaching and learning, teachers' library, and many other elements from the mid 1990s through today. Recently, NHK added creating teaching materials for e-boards that are a part of government supported teaching equipment.²⁷

One of the most significant contributions by NHK concerning media production is a program of "the National High School Broadcasting Contest (1954-)". This program is under the auspices of both NHK and the Federation of National Broadcasting Education Society (1950-) and has been organized by teachers nationwide who practice broadcasting education in their schools. The National High School Broadcasting Contest added production oriented programs such as TV and radio during the 1960s, and currently consists of the following 4 sections: announcement section (1954-), recitation section (1954-), TV program section (1969-), and radio program section (1960-). Since 1984, the National Junior High School Broadcasting Contest has been held along with a high school contest.²⁸ With gradual increases in the number of participating schools, broadcasters with government support have provided teachers and educators with teaching materials for utilization of ICT in course instruction in their website. There has been an encouraging sign of collaboration for media production between broadcasters and schools.

In addition to the NHK, commercial broadcasters have been one of the leading stakeholders that promote and encourage MIL by supporting the creation of self-verification programs that reflect the viewer's opinion. For example, the Japan Commercial Broadcasters Association, JBA (the former NAB), is a general incorporated association, and their membership includes 205 commercial broadcasters in Japan. Since the early work of MIL in late 1990s, JBA

has made important contributions to MIL in cooperation with government, academics, schools, other broadcasters such as NHK and other local broadcasters, media and information related firms, and others by producing media literacy related programs. JBA has been planning promotional events such as International Drama Festival in TOKYO and Radio Campaign, providing professional supports and equipment to schools and universities, publishing books and reports, contributing promotion business, and holding conferences, symposiums, seminars, and others.²⁹

The Newspaper Foundation for Education and Culture (1998-) has been working with the Japan Newspaper Publishers & Editors Association (1946-) to develop the Newspaper in Education (NIE) program, an educational activity where teachers and students use newspapers as learning and teaching materials in classroom activities.³⁰ Such activities originated in America during the 1930's; the NIE started the program systematically in 1985. Since then, both newspaper companies and schools have cooperated by providing free newspapers to the schools.

Another important stakeholder for promoting MIL education is the Japan Library Association (JLA, 1892-),³¹ which is more concerned with utilization, access, evaluation and creation of information and acquisition of information literacy. Specifically, earnest school librarians and teacher librarians have made contributions, encouraging MIL education in Japanese schools among collaborating teachers. An example is Kanagawa prefecture's media-literacy network & practice at school (2005-)³² consisting of teachers and school librarians.

Since the concept of *information literacy* as well as *media literacy* is an important vehicle to foster democratic citizens, the role of school librarians is of extreme importance in promoting MIL education in school settings. For this reason, controversial issues (e.g. unstable conditions of school librarians) for school and teacher librarians should be carefully examined.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

In 1947 the foundation of the Sendai UNESCO Association was established as the first private UNESCO association in the world, and the following year the National Federation of UNESCO Associations (1948-) was founded. At the same time, Japan gained membership in UNESCO in 1951, and the National Foundation of Commission for UNESCO was also established in accordance with the proclamation of the Japanese law concerning UNESCO activities.³³ Since then, Japanese private associations have contributed significantly by supporting and promoting UNESCO activities, particularly fostering basic traditional literacy, such as reading, writing and numeracy in less developed countries and regions. With the arrival of new ICT and media studies, it is

urgently necessary that basic education must include new skills and competencies as well as new pedagogical approaches nationally and internationally.³⁴ Responding to this trend, the newly founded Asia-Pacific Media and Information Literacy Education Centre (AMILEC, 2012-)³⁵ intends to take an initiative to promote MIL education in cooperation with UNESCO and its stakeholders. A volunteer group of AMILEC and its colleagues translated UNESCO, United Nations and Alliance of Civilizations related books such as *Mapping media education policies in the world* (2009) and *Media and information literacy curriculum for teachers* (2011) from English into Japanese.³⁶

Conclusion: What we can learn from Japanese lessons

Although educators and non-educators around the world have recognized the significance of MIL and media education, policy-makers shaping national education in various countries and regions have not always fully understood its essential potential for the creation of a democratic society. Children and adults need MIL to become global citizens without borders. Such trends for fostering globalization and global citizenship are also bringing new opportunities for understanding and for changing the limitations that many countries and regions may have faced depending on their historical, political, and cultural context.

Concerning separate cases of both government and non-government practices and implementations of MIL education in Japan, there have been substantial and encouraging signs for MIL education. However, questions that still seek research include, what are the problems for promoting the central idea of MIL education in both public and private sectors? What are the good ways to promote MIL education in Japan and other regions? To shed further light on the reality of MIL education in Japan, this section examines three critical questions that both public and private sectors have shared regarding MIL both in and out of schools. These topics remain as matters to be discussed further.

Firstly, there has been very limited horizontal cooperation and/or collaboration in both public and private sectors, as well as among governmental or private sectors. Concerning a governmental system, for instance, there is dual governmental jurisdiction toward MIL education in Japan, namely through MIAC and MEXT. The Information and Communications Bureau in MIAC is specifically responsible for creating a number of promotional programs and lesson plans for the utilization of the ICT in education, promoting the LAN maintenance in schools, and fostering *ICT media literacy* (MEXT, 2011, p.6). The Educational Media and Information Policy Division in the Lifelong Learning Policy Bureau of the MEXT is mainly in charge of promoting the utilization of ICT in course instruction, reducing burdens of school administrative works for teachers and school staff, and promoting information literacy educa-

tion (Ibid.). Although these two governmental agencies are in some degree collaborating and encouraging MIL education together, this vertical structure of the government has led to criticism that it is sectionalism at the ministry and agency level. As MIL policy makers in Japan, MEXT and MIAC could focus on eliminating the vertical structure and encouraging substantial collaboration among media and information related ministries and government offices. This would make it possible for government to work as a whole, together.

The same problem applies to separate private organizations and individual cases. Though there have been a growing number of collaborative activities among professionals (broadcasting, media related NPO & companies, citizen's media), educators (schools), and researchers (academic) in local areas of Japan, they occur as separate projects. In individual cases, a teacher may need support and personnel assistance for collaborative activities, equipment for ICT associated activities, and/or MIL methodology at the beginning because teaching hours and contents are strictly specified by the Course of Studies in Japan and there is very limited time to practice new things for teachers.

As this article showed, there have been numerous cases of separate MIL activities and programs locally in both public and private sectors; however, there has been little effort to create a channel, a platform or a clearinghouse for sharing information, teaching materials, and good practices, in both public and private sectors. There is a pressing need to create archive sites and/or clearinghouses that can unify both educational contents/programs and technology systems so that collaborators can share such great experiences together.

Secondly, another point concerns policy-makers' value allocation. It is true that all policy is value-laden and has much ideological significance in every culture, and Japan is no exception. Historically Japan and neighboring countries and regions have had many ideological disputes; in many case, nationalism. Thus, in examining a particular policy through various countries and regions, one usually finds different norms and criteria applied to different issues of policy allocation, depending on social beliefs and value systems.

Another value-laden issue is the conservative trend toward MIL policy. In Japan both government agencies share a protectionist viewpoint on ICT policies, believing that MIL is a means to block harmful information from youth. Thus both MIAC and MEXT tend to encourage a narrow meaning of media literacy, such as how to apply computer, information and ethics. They tend to foster protectionism, rather than teaching children how to use, analyze, access, and create media spontaneously. Indeed a certain level of protection may be necessary depending on children's school age, but excessive conservative policy implementation toward children could be an obstacle to freedom of expression and fostering democratic citizenship. At the same time, protectionism-oriented attitudes by Japanese governmental agencies reveal the danger and fragility of global media.

According to the 2013 World Press Freedom Index³⁷ by Reporters Without Borders, Japan's rank dropped significantly from 22 to 53 because of insufficient disclosure of official information regarding the Fukushima nuclear disaster. In 2014 the World Press Freedom Index³⁸ downgraded Japan from 53 to 59 because of the enactment of the Secret Information Protection Act in 2013. The authors of the annual World Press Freedom Index report stated that Japan's "secrets" law "would reduce government transparency on such key national issues as nuclear power and relations with the United States, now enshrined as taboos (Feb.12, 2014)."³⁹ Extreme protectionism in media would lead to a lack of transparency regarding information about the target issues; consequently, children and adults may retreat from the value of democracy and global citizenship.

Thirdly, Japanese policy-makers tend to emphasize utilization of ICT and information ethics rather than critical thinking of media literacy. Japanese governments, for instance, have cautiously avoided the word "critical" or "critically" when talking about MIL and have instead used the word "independently." Although critical thinking is one of the most important elements for MIL, why do Japanese governments use the word "independently" (*shutai-tekini*) rather than "critically" (*hihan-tekini*)? The word "critically" in direct Japanese translation implies a somewhat unfavorable meaning such as "to criticize" or to find fault with something. According to the Japanese dictionary,⁴⁰ the word "independent" (*shutai-teki*) means an adjective form of "the behavior depending on one's will and judgment" or "a condition of being subjective."

The term "media literacy" or "information literacy" is originally from grassroots activism that values critical thinking by educators and citizens. Therefore acquiring critical thinking of MIL is the first priority and an important vehicle to understand the theoretical framework of MIL (e.g. representation, commercial interests and implications, ideological and value messages, coding and decoding, and others). By acquiring critical thinking skills first, children and students are able to then analyze and produce media texts independently because global citizens in modern society have lived in a world with various elements of cultural, ethnical, political, social, and economic complexities intertwined. In addition, such underlying of critical thinking competencies implies some degree of social action through the media messages to promote cultural understanding and dialogues. On the one hand, MIL started as a grassroots activity and contains bottom-up activities, such as critical thinking. On the other hand, policy-makers' assumptions are top-down by nature because they must consider policy framework within the socio-economic and political dynamics. Hence there has been a huge gap between government and citizen' assumptions.

Considering Japan's MIL experience, how could one solve some of the problems that culturally and politically embed assumptions about MIL? This

question is difficult to solve, however, one thing is clear; MIL educators are grassroots activists and active participants of the educational system. Therefore, honest, continuous, face-to-face inter-cultural exchange programs can be a positive solution to a long term educational goal. The author and her colleagues have pursued for years the CultureQuest project,⁴¹ an inquiry-based classroom project that has explored other peoples and cultures by utilizing ICTs. Through this project, many children and students both in Japan and in counterpart countries and regions mentioned that their impression of the counterparts changed dramatically. Some children even analyzed why he or she had a stereotype and bias for the target countries or regions, and where and how he or she did obtain such stereotyped images or messages. To encourage better understanding, promote toleration and appreciation of diverse cultures, to eliminate political and cultural disputes or sentiments through inter-cultural dialogues in both public and private sectors, there is a pressing need for cultivating democratic citizens in the future. Children and students who will lead the future global society must acquire critical thinking and communication skills, access diverse media messages, and evaluate and create various types of texts and images with MIL competencies as global citizens. When young people enter the global environment, regardless of their fields, they may face some difficulty in understanding their counterparts. Inter and cross cultural understanding and sincere dialogue are one of the highest priorities for MIL and media education with the all-encompassing universal human right to education.

Photograph 1. Japanese Children Preparing Video Conference (October, 2013)



Photograph 2. Video Conference in Cambodia (November, 2013)



Photograph 3. Video Conference in Cambodia (November, 2013)



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Notes

- 1 For instance, the early introduction of media literacy was written by Midori Suzuki and Akiko Sugaya from the late 1980s through early 1990s. In the late 1990s many programs on media literacy were produced in both Japan's public and commercial broadcasters.
- 2 For example, see the background of detailed definition for media and information literacy. Retrieved March 30, 2014, from http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=27064&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=-465.html and *Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers* (2011) from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/media-and-information-literacy-curriculum-for-teachers/>
- 3 In 2001, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications was merged with other ministries to form the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
- 4 See the Japan Association for Media Education Study's website. Retrieved March 30, 2014, from <http://jaems.jp/> (Japanese)
- 5 See the FCT Japan Media Literacy Research Institute's website. Retrieved March 30, 2014, from <http://www.mlpj.org/> (Japanese)
- 6 It means that the Japanese government seriously considers lower scholastic attainments of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s Program for International Student Assessment PISA, though Japan has had considerably good academic standings at PISA as compared with other countries and regions. For a more detailed discussion, see White Paper 2011 on the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2014, from http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/html/hpab2011101/detail/1330512.htm
- 7 Ibid., According to the 2011 White paper, "the main initiatives it advocates to accomplish this are cultivating children's information literacy, the utilization of ICT in places of learning, the informatization of school administration, the utilization of ICT in special needs education, and support for teachers." (see Chapter 9)

- 8 See MEXT's website, Improvement of Academic Abilities (Courses of Study). Retrieved March 30, 2014, from <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/elsec/1303755.htm>
- 9 Some of the examples are found in the Japan Audio Visual Education Association's web site at <http://www.eduict.jp/> (Japanese)
- 10 See MEXT's website, The Vision for ICT in Education (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2014, from 1305484_14_1.pdf at http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/houdou/23/04/1305484.htm <http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/houdou/23/04/1305484.htm
- 11 See MIAC's website, *Media literacy in the field of broadcast* (Japanese) at http://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/joho_tsusin/top/hoso/kyouzai.html and *White Paper 2011* at <http://www.soumu.go.jp/johotsusintokei/whitepaper/eng/WP2011/2011-index.html>.
- 12 See MIAC's unofficial translation (2000, June 23) at http://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/joho_tsusin/eng/Releases/Broadcasting/news000623_1.html
- 13 See MIAC's website, Media literacy on broadcasting (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2014, from http://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/joho_tsusin/top/hoso/kyouzai.html (Japanese)
- 14 See MIAC's website, *Let's extend the ICT media literacy* (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2014, from <http://www.soumu.go.jp/ict-media/> (Japanese)
- 15 See MIAC's website, *Promotion of Educational informatization*. Retrieved March 30, 2014, from http://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/joho_tsusin/kyouiku_joho-ka/index.html
- 16 There were three main projects such as Media Expression, Learning and Literacy (MELL) project (2001-2006), MELL platz (2007-2011) and Media Exprimio (2006-2011). More details for Mizukoshi projects, see the following website, <http://www.mediabiotope.com/>
- 17 See Gree & Education, a project report of the GREE, Inc. Retrieved March 30, 2014, from <http://corp.gree.net/jp/ja/csr/special/chiba-university/>
- 18 See the Japan Media-literacy Education Council's website, retrieved March 30, 2014, from <http://jmec01.org/> (Japanese)
- 19 See the following websites, retrieved March 30, 2014, from Hosei University: <http://www.hosei.ac.jp/english/>; from Tokyo Gakugei University: <http://www.u-gakugei.ac.jp/english/>; from Kansai University: http://w3.kansai-u.ac.jp/Fc_inf/en/en_index.html; from Ritsumeikan University: <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/eng/>; from Rikkyo University: <http://english.rikkyo.ac.jp/>; from International Christian University: http://www.icu.ac.jp/en/liberalarts/major/major_24.html.
- 20 See the Kansai Telecasting Cooperation's website, retrieved March 30, 2014, from <http://www.ktv.jp/ktv/literacy/>
- 21 See the Japan Society for Educational Technology's website, retrieved March 30, 2014, from <https://www.jset.gr.jp/english/index.html>
- 22 According to the Japan Society for Educational Technology's website, *Welcome to JSET, Japan Society for Educational Technology*, major research topics are: (1) Research on new educational systems and ICT development; (2) Research on the development and promotion of high quality and effective educational methods; (3) Systematization of educational technology research and practical research. Retrieved March 30, 2014, from <https://www.jset.gr.jp/english/president/index.html>.
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- 33 See the National Federation of UNESCO Associations' website. Retrieved March 30, 2014, from <https://www.unesco.org/en/>, and the National Foundation of Commission for UNESCO from <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/unesco/index.htm>
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- 41 See more details: MILID Yearbook 2013: Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue, 387-397: <http://www.unaoc.org/2013/05/new-book-on-media-and-information-literacy/>

From Schools to Startups?

A report on media literacy education in Hungary

Anamaria Neag

The project provides an overview of the historical and social background of the implementation of media literacy programs in Hungary during the '90s and explores the role of media literacy as it has developed in scope and focus in recent years. Hungary, a country with a communist past, has 20 years of democratic society and an equally young interest in media literacy education. It is member of the European Union and its capital is home of international start-ups such as UStream, Prezi.com, or Colorfront with Budapest striving to become the "Silicon Valley of Central and Eastern Europe". With such hopes it is important to examine the current status of media literacy programmes and analyse how media and information literacy is taught in Hungarian schools. This article also presents recent findings based on participant observation conducted in Budapest high schools and in-depth interviews with Hungarian media literacy activists and policy makers.

Keywords: media literacy, Eastern Europe, media education, Hungary, media literacy programs

Introduction

It was a long and challenging road from communism to democracy in Hungary, full of hope for a better life, a competitive economy and a successful educational system. In the early years of democracy media literacy activists lobbied intensely for the introduction of this discipline (media literacy) in schools. Today it seems however that politicians pay more attention to issues of media and information literacy with the stated aim of having digitally literate citizens who in turn will help the economic growth of the country.

In relation to this, the final months of 2013 proved to be very productive for the Hungarian government in terms of science, technology and innovation policy. Supported by a number of successful startup companies and Hungarian research universities, the State Secretariat for Parliamentary and Strategic Affairs of the Ministry for National Economy issued the *Runway Budapest 2.0.2.0 – A Startup Credo* initiative which aims to transform Budapest into Central and Eastern Europe's startup capital by 2020¹. The working group charged with this

ambitious goal already identified some initial problems that must be solved in the immediate future. According to the *Credo* one of the first issues to be dealt with is education and training: “It is undeniable that good (higher) education, particularly in the STEM areas (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) [...] together with competition are necessary prerequisites for innovative enterprises” (State Secretariat for Parliamentary and Strategic Affairs of the Ministry for National Economy, 2013, p. 6).

The *Startup Credo* comes at a time when media and information literacy education is at a historical turning point in Hungary. The new National Core Curriculum notes that while media education has a long history spanning several decades, it seems to be transforming in its scope and teaching methods. The article will discuss these changes and their implications. In a digitally networked world, children have to be prepared to become not only citizens of a nation, but global citizens as well. In an effort to promote new technologies to improve skills and competency-based education, Hungary also adopted the *Digital Renewal Action Plan 2010-2014*, in accordance with the *Strategic Plan of Action for the Renewal of Digital Europe 2020*. *Digital Renewal Action Plan 2010-2014* includes four action plans which deal with ensuring equal opportunities for citizens, increasing the competitiveness of enterprises and the improvement of the ICT infrastructure of the country. The Hungarian government hopes that the information communication sector will provide a breakthrough for the country since an increased number of digitally literate citizens will contribute to a higher economic performance for the country (Country report on ICT in Education, 2013).

This article sets out to add an Eastern European perspective to the discussion on global citizenship in a digitally networked world, by highlighting the changes in media literacy and Information Communications Technologies (ICT) education in Hungary. While the Hungarian political PR says that the future belongs to media and information literate citizens, it is important to examine the current status of media literacy programs and analyze how media and information literacy is actually taught in Hungarian schools today.

The following literature review provides a short history of media literacy education in Hungary, and it will be followed by the recent findings of a research based on in-depth interviews with Hungarian media literacy activists and teachers, as well as participant observation conducted in a secondary school from Budapest.

History of Media Literacy education in Hungary

There is no thorough written account on the introduction and development of media literacy education in Hungary. This article depends on oral accounts and

personal notes of one of the leading advocates of media literacy education in the country, László Hartai.² Media literacy education in Hungary had its beginning in the 1960s when film aesthetics was first introduced in the curriculum of literature classes in the Hungarian education system. Literature teachers across the country were assigned by the Ministry of Education to teach four hours of film aesthetics per year in secondary schools' educational program. Besides these classes, pupils were required to attend compulsory movie screenings at cinemas. This regulation was included in the National Core Curriculum of 1978 and stayed in force until 1995. It is important to note however, that the majority of these literature teachers were not trained and thus they did not have the necessary knowledge to teach this subject and according to Hartai (personal communication, March 13, 2014) this eventually led to the "disappearance" of the film aesthetics topics in the teachers' everyday practice.

Some secondary-level schools across the country continued to offer programs about film-making and film culture as an extra-curricular activities. These activities were organized mostly by passionate teachers who were not in contact with each other, but in the 1990s they would become important participants in the development of media literacy education. Some of these educators met for the first time in 1992 to form a working group that would later lobby for the introduction of film education in the forthcoming new National Core Curriculum. The early activists had several major concerns, namely the lack of a curriculum for the subject, the lack of textbooks and the most serious, the lack of prepared teaching staff. Hartai states:

"It was quite obvious that we can have the most sensational textbook, but we cannot talk about anything without educators. [...] It was not until 2000 when this specialization appeared in the film theory-film history department at Eötvös Lóránd University in Budapest. We came to acknowledge that at least for the next 20 years everything depended on the continuous professional development of in-service teachers."

(Hartai, 2002, p. 5)

Finally, in 1996 the Hungarian Government accepted the "Moving Image Program" to aid the implementation of the new subject, titled "Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education", into the new National Core Curriculum. The new subject was introduced in the Curriculum in the 1998/1999 academic year. In the 2003/2004 academic year media literacy became a compulsory subject for 3rd and 4th graders at secondary schools. From 2005, pupils could further choose the "Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education" as an exam subject for their secondary school final examination. Grades from this examination may count towards matriculation to higher education.

Media and Information Literacy education – current dilemmas

In a recent research project on the relationship of teenagers and the media in Hungary, Kósa and Wiklós (2010) revealed contradictory results in relation to media literacy education in Hungary. In contrast to the regulation of the National Core Curriculum (in which media literacy is a compulsory subject from 1996), the researchers found that education in media literacy was not widespread. According to the findings of a research project conducted in 2009, sample of out of a 2024 students from primary and secondary schools aged 12 to 17, 67% of the respondents believed that media literacy education was important, but a surprisingly high number, 58% said that they did not receive this education at school (Kósa and Wiklós, 2010). These findings can be explained partly by the lack of teaching staff and by the reluctance of schools in discussing media. As a result, this subject was integrated into other subjects, such as Art or Hungarian literature.

In 2012 the newest National Core Curriculum introduced major changes in the teaching of media literacy. At the primary level Culture of the Moving Image Culture and Media Studies was integrated into a subject called Visual Culture which will be taught via 32 lessons. The biggest changes happened at the lower secondary level where integrated media education is being phased in. Instead of a separate subject, a module on media will be introduced in History, Literature/Mother Tongue Education and Visual Culture. This is particularly troublesome for those teachers who taught Media Studies and were left without their classes. It is equally intriguing how the actual introduction of these modules on media will occur in practice by teachers who are specialists in history or literature, but did not receive training in media literacy.

In relation to the upper-secondary level, media literacy became a separate subject. In year 9 schools can opt to teach either drama or media studies in one lesson per week. Later on, in years 11 and 12, schools can once again decide whether to devote two lessons per week to teaching visual culture, drama or media studies as part of art education.

It is definitely positive that media education is included as a cross-curricular theme in the educational goals and skills to be developed by the National Core Curriculum

In relation to ICT competencies, the latest survey carried out for the European Commission by the European Schoolnet and the University of Liege (2013) shows that Hungarian schools have fewer computers per student in comparison to the majority of the European Union (EU). Almost all secondary schools in the country have an Internet connection, but the speed of the connection is slower than in most European countries. According to the survey there is also a positive correlation between the population size of the school's locality and the

broadband speed of the internet, meaning that in bigger localities the broadband in schools is faster. Reports also indicated that students' computer use in the classrooms is also below the EU average. In relation to Virtual Learning Environment, which is the strongest indicator of connectedness, only 6% of 4th graders and 11% of grade 8 students have access to learning platforms. An interesting finding of this EU survey relates to teachers' use of ICT equipment in teaching. Hungary also scores below the European Union average (European Commission, 2013).

In their report Kósa and Wiklós (2010) show that usage of computers is higher at home than at school. This can be explained partly by the fact that in 2005, 15% of families did not own a computer, while in 2009 it became a piece of "basic equipment", with only 3% saying they did not own a computer. In 2009, 84% of families had internet access at home. The use of the Internet, computer use in general and PC games are also major factors in the increase in time spent with media compared to figures from 2005. Total screen time (TV, video/DVD, Internet, computer use and PC games) increased to 575 minutes in 2009, an increase of 164 minutes from 2005 (Kósa and Wiklós, 2010). This might partly explain why Hungarian students have a high mean score in relation to safe internet usage. As part of the research project commissioned by the European Commission students were asked to rate their level of confidence in their ability to perform twenty-four ICT related tasks and grade 8 Hungarian students achieved far better scores than the rest of the European Union (European Commission, 2013).

While surveys and research projects can give an overall view on the context in which media literacy education is conducted in Hungary it is necessary to discuss the daily experiences of media teachers and students in order to gain a deeper understanding of the current situation.

Hartai, confirms the fact that in Hungary there is a severe shortage of qualified media studies teachers. In the last 15 years only 400 teachers were trained, and approximately only 40 can count as "committed professionals" (Hartai, 2002, p. 22). Despite this small number of professionals, teachers complain about the lack of regular communication among colleagues. One of the teachers interviewed suggests an internet forum could be of help:

It would be nice for us, media educators some type of forum where we could talk about our everyday practice and problems. I have been working as a teacher for three years and there was no other media literacy teacher in our school to whom I could talk to, ask for advice and so on.

(Teacher, personal communication, February 18, 2014).

Another teacher highlighted the importance of further training which could help them in keeping up-to-date with innovations in this field. One of the more

serious and more difficult problems to solve is that media literacy teachers have to work hard to prove their discipline's worthiness. As one of the interviewed teachers bitterly explained:

I think media education is not regarded as an important subject among teachers. One of my pupils didn't study enough so he failed the exam and had to retake it in the fall. So all of my colleagues were shocked saying that: Well, media literacy is not such a serious subject, why didn't you let the poor child pass the exam?

(Teacher, personal communication, February 12, 2014)

The other recurring issue that emerged in the interviews with the teachers was the lack of time. The curriculum seems too complex to be completed by the end of the academic year. In Hungary, media literacy education has a strong film culture component and as a result teachers worry that they can only present fragments of movies and pupils are not interested in coming to after school film clubs. This topic also arose during one of the participant observation³ sessions. When the teacher asked whether the pupils had watched a movie which was discussed in a previous session, the students were reluctant to answer, as some of them had not watched the film or they were simply not interested in the topic.

Despite the challenges that they have to face media, teachers interviewed appeared to be devoted to the subject and believed that media literacy should be "part of everyone's general knowledge".

Conclusions

It is almost a cliché to state that global knowledge societies need citizens to be equipped with a new set of competencies. There is need for a type of literacy that is dynamic and active. It is also known that not only companies are becoming global, but the very concept of citizenship as well. Countries and governments agree and emphasize repeatedly that they need to invest in new knowledge environment for businesses and citizens alike. Policymakers likewise stress that education should focus on developing a new set of critical skills that enable citizens to use and create new (media) content, to use new information and communication technologies in order to discover new possibilities for an overall development of social, economic and political life.

Yet there is a long way from speech to action. When we move from the world of academics to politicians, the reality of media literacy education seems to be a bit dim. Although media literacy education in Hungary is considered important when compared with other Eastern European countries, there are some major concerns. The lack of ICT equipment in many schools (such as computers, laptops or interactive white boards) and slower Internet connections, are problems

that must be addressed to achieve better results in digital learning and to have more user-generated content.

In day-to-day practice teachers complain about the lack of up-to-date teaching materials and the scarcity of proper IT equipment. Ironically while the country's officials state the need for Hungary to become an active player in the global knowledge society, media literacy teachers denounce the lack of professional status which makes it difficult for them in school settings. There is a definite need for schools to realize the impact of the media on their environment and so support the development of this subject across the country. While the status of media education is somewhat better at the primary and tertiary levels, it has deteriorated at the lower-secondary level, where the separate subject has disappeared and will be integrated through media modules in other subjects.

The on-going problem of shortage of media literacy educators needs to be addressed. According to data from interviews with Hungarian media literacy experts approximately 4000 qualified teachers will be needed to have sufficient staff in every school. The 400 educators that are now working can only help a limited number of students in becoming responsible participants of the mediated global public sphere.

If the government of Hungary is serious about transforming Budapest into the "Silicon Valley of Central and Eastern Europe", and its citizens into digitally literate people, it becomes essential for them to invest in media literacy programs. It is equally important to introduce and sustain innovative curriculum for classrooms teaching media and information literacy and intercultural dialogue. There is little chance that citizens will be prepared for the culture of participatory democracy and entrepreneurial bravery without a solid media literacy education.

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Notes

- 1 According to the document “The BudapestHUB working group has set a target to make Budapest the region’s startup capital by the end of this decade; the State’s responsibility is to act as a catalyst and clear all obstacles along the way. [...] Budapest needs to build-up a critical mass of start-ups, find its comparative advantages and rely on local characteristics in order to become the Start-Up Hub of Central and Eastern Europe.” Retrieved from <http://www.nih.gov.hu/strategy/publications/budapest-2-0-2-0-runway>
- 2 László Hartai is the director of a non-governmental organization that advocates media literacy called Magyar Mozgókép és Médiaoktatási Egyesület (Hungarian Association of Film and Media Education). He is the author of a number of pedagogical books on media literacy and he organizes adult education courses for teachers on methodology, media theory and creative workshops.
- 3 In this project I visited on a number of occasions a vocational secondary school in Budapest. The media literacy classes were held by the same teacher, the pupils were in the first and third grade.

Marginalization of Media Literacy in Indian Public Sphere

A contextual analysis

K V Nagaraj, Vedabhyas Kundu & Ashes Kr. Nayak

The assessment of media literacy in a mediated world assumes significance for both media institutions and media educators. In recent times, India has seen a phenomenal growth in media. Media support to campaigns in the public sphere has its own merits, but its neglect of media literacy of the citizenry is unfortunate. For reasons not so obvious, media organizations have totally marginalized the movement. In fact, it is suspected that the market forces have very little sympathy for the media literacy drive. Civil society movement against corruption in public governance in recent times has caught the attention of the society as a whole, which in turn was propelled by media – both electronic and social. Both argument and counter-arguments regarding the role of media need a dispassionate and unbiased scrutiny. This article proposes such a scrutiny and investigates the importance of media literacy and possible reasons for media marginalization of media literacy in the context of campaigns like anti-corruption and the unfortunate December 16, 2012 Delhi gang rape. This analysis is also critical in the context of the vast cultural diversity of India and the need to facilitate dialogue with these diverse communities in the public sphere. The article is therefore exploratory.

Keywords: media literacy, public sphere, media approbation, marginalization, anti-corruption campaign, contextual analysis.

Introduction

Training in media and communications is important for young people to initiate dialogues on community concerns. Through these skills we can take up issues of public and civic interest, challenge misinformation and ills of the society like corruption. Our Shishu Panchayat¹ has a media education programme for the children to be able to contribute to strengthening of grassroots democracy and social discourses. The village leadership development and

budget literacy programmes of our Shishu Panchayat¹ further enhances our communication skills to look at complex grassroots issues and deliberate on issues of public interest—Ramsheena, Class XI and President, Waynad Shishu Panchayat, Kerala (2014, February 6).

Ramsheena, a student trained in media, who uses her skills to contribute to community building in Waynad, Kerala, attempts to capture the importance of media literacy education in strengthening democracy. When she says that communicative skills which she and her peers acquire through media training enable her to look at complex grassroots issues and facilitate deliberations on public concerns, it underscores how media literacy education can contribute to the public sphere.

In the Indian context, discourses on the constitution and function of public sphere are limited to a few academic interventions. Most notably are the works of Rajagopal (2009); Ninan (2007); Bhargava & Reifeld (2005); Jeffrey (2010); and Chaudhuri (2010).

Further, in relation to media literacy and its role in revitalising the Indian public sphere through increased public participation and an active citizenry as argued by Tornero and Varis (2010), it is observed that neither the concept of media literacy has been promoted in Indian education, nor its role in encouraging citizens' participation has been much deliberated upon. It is quite an observable fact that the condition of media and its impact on the condition of the public sphere in India has gone through a dramatic transformation in recent years. As explicated by Chaudhuri (2010), "the Indian public sphere has been reconfigured and transformed as a result of its 'inclusive and interactive public'" (p. 65). Such a condition of the Indian media, which has witnessed a significant change in its structure and audience formations, demand the inclusion of media literacy in academic and policy discourses for providing a platform for citizens' participation resulting in a healthy public sphere.

The role of media literacy in strengthening public sphere and democratic participation has been discussed by Tornero and Varis (2010) who argue for the promotion of media literacy with a participatory orientation. This they say would strengthen the value of the public sphere and citizens' capacity to react. They also argue for the creation of media-based educational content and the promotion of activities that foster participation and cultural diversity for the renewal of public sphere.

One of the points for a harmonious public sphere cited by Tornero and Varis (2010) is the integration of communication values and the need to balance freedom of expression and information with the right to information and transparency. In the context of developing communicative skills of young people in a country like India through media literacy, Thomas (as cited in Borah, 2014) says,

If we have to deepen our democracy in today's context, it would imply a redefinition of governance. We have to make our young people understand that today governance is not simply what governments' do or want to do. Young people must be able to critically understand that governance is about the process and systems of decision making, which mobilize and utilize public resources for common good. They need to be alert to the significance of openness and transparency in the process and systems of decision and should be accountable to the citizenry. They should also be able to contribute to critical public discourses (para. 14).

In this context, Thomas (2014) further argues that the development of communicative skills, media and information literacy is the key to develop capacities of young people to contribute to critical public discourses.

The essence of grassroots democracy, use of communication skills to contribute to resolving conflicts in the community and the importance of openness and transparency in the decision making system can be linked to the notion of active citizenship. According to Felix Frankfurter, the US Supreme Court Judge,

Active citizenry is an essential condition for democracy to succeed. Democracy involves hardship, of unceasing responsibility of the active citizen. Where the entire people do not take a continuous and considered part in public life, there can be no democracy in any meaningful sense of the term. Democracy is always a beckoning goal, not a safe harbour (as cited in D'Souza, 2012, para. 1).

This perspective on active citizenship underscores the need for empowering the citizenry and enhancing their capacities to contribute to strengthen the democratic system. The importance of citizenry action for social transformation can be explained against the backdrop of the emergence of a new political party, Aam Admi Party (AAP) in India which was formed from a civil society led anti-corruption movement, India Against Corruption. Notwithstanding the intense debates and discussions after the success of this party in the recent elections in Delhi state, the critical point of enhancing the skills of the citizens in media and information literacy to enable them to respond to issues of misgovernance and malaise in the system, needs to be analysed in the context of the current Indian scenario. It is useful to note Chokkar's (2014) argument about the developments in Indian democracy and claims that the AAP only represents the symptoms of a change already taking place. He observes that members of the new party are not the only actors of the process of change but definitely the triggers of the process. Most importantly, he underscores that, "Possibly the most critical actors are the citizens because such deep seated social transformations do not, and cannot, happen without the approval and active participation of the citizenry at large" (Chokkar, 2014).

In the above context, Dreze and Sen (2013) argue that contemporary India do not suffer 'from lack of complaints and protests'. They also point out, "The democratic politics of India do offer opportunities for the most deprived Indian to reflect on their own strength and to demand that the critically important inequalities that ruin the lives of so many people in the country be rapidly remedied."

Another important aspect that needs to be captured in citizens' engagement in public discourses is the unique cultural diversity of India. Such wide diversities across the geographical area pose both an opportunity and challenge to citizens' contribution to the public sphere and dialogues on critical concerns. Hajira Bano, a journalist in Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir and the Peace Gong Ladakh Coordinator (2014) observe communication and cultural literacy as being crucial for young people to contribute to public discourses. According to Bano, critical understanding of the complex cultural traditions of India is needed to capture the diversity of perspectives in different public concerns. Bano (2014) also observes deep-rooted stereotypes; issues of identities and xenophobia often are an impediment to healthy public discourses and become a limiting factor to the advantages of a multicultural society.

Notwithstanding many opportunities, there are challenges for an inclusive citizenry participation in the public sphere, as noted by Kothari,

The challenges of contemporary India are-how to relate and join the deeper, i.e., the inner drives of citizens and communities and the still larger challenge of emancipation; how to engage in the preservation of freedom and autonomy in the face of external confrontations of both corporate and transnational varieties, and confrontations found within the nation state, such as economic divides based on class and caste ... (2005, pp. 2-3)

The insights of Thomas, Ramsheena and Bano on the importance of media literacy education to enable the younger generation to respond to the challenges of inequalities, deprivations and poor governance and their link to active citizenship provide a scope for a wider analysis. Rawls' ideas on deliberative democracy which includes notions of how citizens exchange views and debate concerning civic questions also provide justification for empowering the citizenry (1971). The argument can be taken forward with the perspective of Ambedkar, one of the most prominent authors of the Indian Constitution, who had linked his idea of development to 'educate, agitate and organize'. Education is critically important and so is the centrality of informed and good reasoning. In this regard, Dreze and Sen (2013) state that 'Dr Ambedkar took positive note of the idea of democracy as government by discussion and public reasoning was central to his understanding of it' (p. 259). The authors affirm that it is public reasoning that helps people to understand each other's problems and to see each other's perspectives- and this was absolutely

central to the operation of an electoral democracy (Dreze & Sen, 2013).

In view of the above discussions let us analyse how media and information literacy can strengthen the public sphere in a multicultural and multilingual country like India. This will be done against the backdrop of the large scale corporatization and commodification of the mass media which contributes to the marginalization of the media literacy movement. However, with the large scale proliferation of the digital media and mobile phones in India and against the backdrop of contemporary movements like the anti-corruption movement and the massive people's outcry during the unfortunate December 16, 2012 Delhi rape case, attempts will be made to show how such efforts can be sustained and expanded through a media and information literate citizenry. The attempt is to examine how media literacy programmes can promote public reasoning and civic engagement while strengthening a participatory and deliberative democracy.

An insight into the Indian media scene: Why it marginalizes Media Literacy movements?

The *India Entertainment and Media Outlook 2013* published by the Confederation of Indian Industry, highlights the increasing proliferation of digital platforms that promise to storm the Indian entertainment and media sector, propelling it to greater heights in the next few years. According to the report, consumers will have greater choice and control of content more than ever before. (India Entertainment and Media Outlook, 2013)

According to the Planning Commission of India, the media and entertainment industry in India is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy and is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 13.2 per cent to reach Rs. 1.19 trillion by 2015 (Twelfth Five Year Plan, 2012-2017).

In the context of the growth of the Indian media, Dreze and Sen observe that the media has, however, failed to seriously get involved in 'the diagnosis of significant injustices and inefficiencies in the economic and social lives of people. Noting the biased nature of the media, the authors aver that the biases are easy to detect and discuss. For instance, they underline that there is very little coverage of rural issues in the mainstream media. They also point out that it is remarkably obvious that 'there is a serious lack of interest in the lives of the Indian poor, judging from the balance of news selection and political analyses' (2013). For them, a striking feature of the media bias is the way the deep imbalance has managed to become almost invisible to the classes whose voices count and whose concerns dominate public discussion. In the context of India, the authors say that a comparatively small group of the relatively privileged seem to have created a social universe of their own. "On other hand,

less influential but committed groups and people who stand in solidarity with the underprivileged ‘tend to be comprehensively ignored or sidelined’” (Dreze & Sen, 2013, p. 269). Dreze and Sen refer to this as a failure of public reasoning. They argue, “By enriching the content of the coverage and analyses of news, the India media could certainly be turned into a major asset in the pursuit of justice, equity, and efficiency in democratic India” (2013, p. 7)

The corporatization and commodification of the Indian media is noted by Thakurta (2012) who says, “The growing corporatization of the Indian media is manifest in the manner in which large industrial conglomerates are acquiring direct and indirect interest in media groups. There is also a growing convergence between creators/producers of media content and those who distribute/disseminate the content.”(para. 3). Thakurta further argues, “The closeness between the media and corporate India leads to a deplorable confusion of priorities. Instead of media houses relying on advertisers to fund quality journalism, the relationship becomes insidiously reversed. Advertisers and corporate units begin to rely on news outlets to further their interests” (para. 21). Thakurta (2012) notes that, “Despite the impressive numbers of publications, radio stations and television channels, the mass media in India is possibly dominated by less than a hundred large groups or conglomerates, which exercise considerable influence on what is read, heard, and watched” (para. 6). Taking Thakurta’s arguments forward, Jain (2011) points out that,

Large sections of the media have adopted the market as the ultimate arbiter of everything they do-if they succeed in reaching larger audiences, they are doing what the market wants ... not only is the news a product to be sold to audiences, the news space is also a product to be sold to advertisers, be they corporate interests or politicians. This unrestrained pursuit of profit has led to an abandonment of the media’s role as an ethically credible watchdog in matters of governance and democracy (pp. 59-61).

These perspectives suggest that the contemporary media is controlled by neo-liberal policies and articulates the philosophies furthered by these policies.

Meanwhile Deane (2005), speaking on the erosion of the public sphere, underscores that,

While the proliferation of media in the wake of liberalization in many countries was initially marked by an upsurge of public debate on a whole range of issues, evidence is growing that, as competition intensifies, content is increasingly being shaped by the demands of advertisers and sponsors who pay for the newly liberalized media, and an increasingly intense focus on profitability. The result is more urban biased, consumer oriented media which have diminishing interest in or concern for people living in poverty (p. 182).

The arguments of Thakurta (2012), Jain (2011) and the discussions on the failure of the India media to enhance public reasoning by Dreze and Sen (2013) underpin the points put forward on the marginalization of media literacy. This marginalization prevents the citizenry from being proactive and limits their understanding on how different issues affect their lives. The ubiquitous nature of the corporatized media also exposes the citizens to commercial messages and news directly or indirectly in myriad forms. Such professionally produced messages challenge ordinary citizens to distinguish between real and unreal.

Recent citizenry action and media activism

The December 16, 2012 Delhi gang rape stirred not only the entire country but its reverberations were felt in the international media too. The victim was brutally raped by six men in a moving bus which led to her death several days after. This horrific incident brought large numbers of people from all cross-sections of the society to the streets of India. Discourses on the menace of gender violence were held at different levels and made the headlines for most of December 2012 and January 2013.

Different forms of media especially the new media were used extensively to stir the consciousness of citizens who took part in the protest movement. It can be said that media played a pivotal role in fuelling these protests. Talking about the media's contribution to make it a nation-wide protest movement, Dreze and Sen (2013) observed, "As the newspapers reinvented themselves as rape-reporting vehicles, many of them across the country have been devoting much space, often several pages every day, to reports of rape gathered together in a way they never had been before" (p. 227).

Further Batra (2013) says, "An important part in raising this debate was played by the media, both national and foreign. As the news of the rape broke, the media went into frenzy, not just in tracking the case but in leading people to introspect. A responsible section of the media asked people to be part of radical reforms the country required while it continued to give expression to the public grief" (para. 4).

Batra also reports that the media was at the forefront of the initiating a trial of its own. He says,

The media was also accused of activism and leading a trial of its own while covering the case. As the movement to bring the gang rape victim to justice went viral, the nation saw widespread protests that spilled on streets across the country. The media covered the demonstrations day and night, following the protesters to every street and corner, giving a voice to their demands for justice and bringing them to the centre of political debate (para. 5).

Hukil (2013) describes how the unfortunate incident ‘was among the most sensitive issues where journalism brought to fore the intricacies of altering societal norms’. She notes, “It subsequently became a priority on the Indian policy agenda and led to substantial political reforms. It provided the public accessibility to debate existing government policies, and thrust the centre into formulating stringent laws and regulations as regards to the safety and protection of women in the country” (para. 2).

Bano (2014) contends that incidents like the December 16, 2012 gang rape incident or the anti-corruption movements are only few events or occasions where media genuinely contribute to citizenry activism. She adds that “This is unfortunately not the norm and hence the essence of media and information literacy education. Only with enhanced communicative skills can citizens negotiate the underlying conflicts in different terrain of our society and face the interests promoted by neo liberal forces”.

Against this backdrop, while the mainstream media manufactures choice and preferences for its audience, the social media network propels its own anarchic agenda, trying to denigrate established political institutions and could be said to propel civil action on contentious issues. This can be explained through this perspective of Khare (2012) in the context of the December 16, 2012 incident, Khare points out:

What is more noteworthy is that the protests, at least in the first two days, saw an unprecedented and voluntary participation by upper middle classes, citizens, men and women. Interestingly, there were no leaders, no organisers, no professional crowd managers; and, at first glance, it seemed this participation was facilitated by the new tools of social media ... Access to new technology-induced connectivity has imparted to its users and consumers a new sense of democratic entitlement. The confrontation at Rajpath between the police and the citizens has alerted the traditional guardians of order as also the new “connoisseurs of chaos” (to borrow poet Wallace Stevens’ title) to the possibilities of mischief inherent in the new technology. And this potential should be both fascinating and frightening (2012).

The glaring urban-rural divide can be seen in the emergence of the third sector as the champion of public causes. The manifestation of popular anger against the unholy nexus among the corrupt politicians, arrogant bureaucracy and overtly greedy corporate honchos could be seen in the public alliance of civil society with IT professionals and active public groups. Barua (2012) terms the scale and manner of the nexus between business and politicians/bureaucrats for private benefits as detrimental to national interests and disturbing. The paradigm shift in Indian politics which sees the rise of new players like the Aam Admi Party has led to a cynical rejection of many existing political parties and some fear portends institutionalisation of anarchy. The President of India,

Pranab Mukherjee in his address to the nation on the eve of Republic Day on January 26, 2014 had warned that popular anarchy could not be a substitute for governance. Others feel that the non-performance of the present political class has already institutionalised anarchy that could be evidenced from popular movements across the globe. The role of media in reporting and promoting popular movements demands a greater scrutiny. In a country like India, where the media contents are 'lapped up' by the ever-eager audience, media literacy should be of prime importance.

Conclusion

The public sphere is shrinking with the dominance of private ownership of media and market forces; obviously the citizen-initiative to stem the marginalisation of media literacy is inevitable. The public sphere is slowly emerging as a conflict arena between corporate and civil society activities. In light of these perspectives, efforts should be made to empower and enhance the capacities of the citizenry to critically evaluate media performance on a larger mosaic and this confirms the need for media literacy programmes. Since there is no formal media and information literacy course in any academic institution in the country, the gap is to be bridged by third sector initiatives. The thrust of such initiatives, however, should be able to capture the multicultural and pluralistic nature of Indian society. The enormous influence and interests of the corporate in the media sector do not unfortunately provide much scope for media literacy promotion.

Talking about the kind of media education suitable for a developing country like India, Kumar says (2007) "The primary goals of media education are thus the conscientization, empowerment and liberation of the community and of society as a whole. Its concerns are the promotion of equality, social justice, democracy, freedom, human dignity and a more humane society. The methods or strategies it employs are dialogue, reflection and action." He links media education to 'national development' and argues the need for education for citizenship and democracy' (Kumar, 2007).

While arguing the need to incorporate all traditional and indigenous forms of communications in pedagogy of media literacy, Nagaraj and Kundu (2013) emphasise on the centrality of emotional bridge building and respect for and understanding of other's culture in the curriculum. They further underline the significance of Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent communication approaches in the curriculum of media literacy (pp. 222-224). Gandhi's nonviolent communication can help in plugging obstacles to public discourses in the backdrop of different conflicts in different layers of Indian society.

Bano (2014) explaining her experience of training young people in media

underlines how critical understanding of culture and traditions is important to respond to present realities and complexities. Issues and concerns in Ladakh could be totally different in comparison to Andaman and Nicobar Island, she points out. Unless and until we have the capacities to reflect meaningfully to concerns of others, we will not be able to contribute much to the strengthening of our democracy, she adds.

Another important aspect of media literacy education for enabling citizen's contribution to the digital public sphere is developing critical understanding of the social media and its use. For instance Mehdi (2013) in her editorial for the Peace Gong to mark October 2, 2013 as the International Day of Nonviolence underscored how the social media could be used creatively by young people for promoting a culture of peace. She called upon the youth to work for non-violence using all possible forms of communication as she stressed:

Let every dream become Martin Luther King's dream, let every step towards peace become Mahatma Gandhi's Salt March and let every obstacle in your path become Nelson Mandela's painful twenty-seven years in prison. Promise yourself that you will contribute your best to make the phenomenon of violence outdated, promise yourself that you will try to motivate your friends to walk on the path of nonviolence (p. 1).

Further, according to young people like Ratna Kumari (as cited in Kundu, 2013) from a backward village of India who were trained in media, critical use of communications not only empowered girls like her but also gave them the insight to look seriously on issues such as girls' education, health and sanitation. Meanwhile the Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers developed by UNESCO in 2011 provides an important component in the global effort to promote media and information literate societies. One of the important thematic areas of the Curriculum is knowledge and understanding of media and information for democratic discourses and social participation. Its objective is to develop a critical understanding of how media and information can enhance the ability of teachers, students and citizens in general to engage with media and other information providers as tools for freedom of expression, pluralism, intercultural dialogue and tolerance, and as contributors to democratic debate and good governance (UNESCO, 2011).

Time has come now to seriously consider the issue of marginalisation of media literacy in public sphere and revitalise it by the concerted efforts of public policies to promote media and information literacy through the education system and media activists. Efforts like that of Bano, working in remote part of India to promote media literacy amongst young people need to be encouraged. A concerted media literacy programme can propel citizens to take up more active role in democratic governance and take up social concerns like Kumari (as cited by Kundu, 2013). Also companies could be motivated to devote some

funds as part of their corporate social responsibility initiatives for promotion of media literacy. Media literacy projects need to be the social responsibility of media houses as well as media professionals. All these efforts will definitely reduce the marginalization of media literacy in India and contribute towards a media literate populace.

Photograph 1.



Mr Javed Naqi, the Peace Gong Kashmir Coordinator and the National Core Group member having an interactive session with students on media literacy.

Photograph 2.



Members of the Peace Gong Kargil Bureau in Dras, one of the coldest inhabited town in the world which experiences subarctic climate

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Notes

- 1 Shishu Panchayats or the Children's Councils are children-led initiatives empowering children. (Surovi Shishu Panchayat, 2012). These Councils help children develop greater understanding of grassroots democracy and prepare them for leadership roles.



Media and Information Literacy

A Worldwide Selection

Media and Information Literacy at Queensland University of Technology and in Australia

Michael Dezuanni, Kelli McGraw & Christine Bruce

This article provides an overview of media and information literacy (MIL) activities at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, Australia throughout 2013. It discusses a research seminar and national conference hosted by QUT in July and then goes on to provide an overview of several MIL research projects. The article ends by describing two online projects – the QUT-UNESCO Online Course in Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue and the Arts Pop website designed to support the implementation of Australia's national curriculum in the Arts, including Media Arts.

Keywords: media and information literacy, media education, media arts, information literacy, Australia

Introduction

National events, key research projects and an international online course defined the ongoing development in 2013 of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and within Australia. These efforts included a national conference and research seminar hosted by QUT; ongoing work with several research projects; and the first offering of the Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue for Teachers online course. It also included key presentations by QUT researchers at national and international conferences and a range of research publications, as outlined below.

The key objectives of MIL work at QUT continues to be as follows:

- Investigate the possibilities for Media and Information Literacy education in school and after-school contexts and in the broader community.
- Provide pre-service and in-service opportunities for educators and library professionals to develop knowledge and understanding of MIL.

- Create partnerships with other researchers, industry, government and the non-profit sector to identify ways to work together to advance the provision of MIL in Australian schools.

Digital Media Literacies Research Seminar and National Media Education Conference

From July 1 – 7, 2013 QUT hosted two MIL related events – a research seminar attended by approximately twenty leading researchers in the field of digital media literacies, followed by the Australian Teachers of Media National Media Education Conference.

The research seminar took place on the 1st and 2nd of July at the Kelvin Grove campus of QUT and featured researchers sharing empirical data and findings from a variety of research projects in formal and informal contexts with a focus on children and young people using digital media. There were eight presentations and three thematic discussion sessions across the two days. Reports were presented by Dr Julian Sefton-Green, London School of Economics; Dr Stuart Poyntz, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver; Professor Catherine Beavis from Griffith University, Brisbane; Associate Professor Ellie Rennie, Swinburne University Institute for Social Research in Melbourne; Mr Pete Fraser, former Head of Media Studies at Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge and current doctoral researcher in the Centre for Excellence in Media Practice, Bournemouth University; and several researchers from QUT in Brisbane: Dr Christina Spurgeon, Associate Professor Sandra Gattenhof; Dr Michael Dezuanni; Dr Ben Goldsmith and Dr Nicholas Suzor. Thematic discussions covered topics such as digital literacies in informal contexts; Schools, curriculum and digital literacies; digital literacies and media ecologies; and researching digital literacies in formal school settings. Approximately twenty researchers including graduate students attended these seminar days.

From July 4 – 7, QUT was the venue for the Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM) biennial National Media Education Conference. The conference took place in the new Science and Technology Centre at the Garden's Point Campus of QUT and was attended by over 120 media educators from around Australia and internationally. Keynote speakers included several of the researchers from the Research Seminar outlined above: Dr Julian Sefton Green; Dr Stuart Poyntz; Professor Catherine Beavis; and Mr Pete Fraser. In addition, the conference featured Distinguished Professor Stuart Cunningham from QUT's Centre for Excellence in Creative Industries and Innovation. The ATOM conference also included a range of industry speakers such as Mr Nathan Mayfield, a former Queensland media student who has gone on to establish the internationally successful and Emmy award-winning company Hoodlum; and documentary film maker Dr Cathy Henkle – whose credits include the award win-

ning film *The Burning Season*. A number of practising teachers presented at the conference, notably Dr Colin Stewart and Mr Roger Dunscombe, key figures in the development of Australian media education.

Key conference discussion points emerged around the implementation of the new Australian Curriculum, Media Arts strand, particularly the challenges for primary schools, which do not have a history of media teaching. The ongoing challenges presented by social media and how best to teach about them in media classrooms, gained significant attention. There was also robust discussion about the relationship between formal media teaching in schools and the casual development of media literacies in out-of-school and online contexts.

New research projects

During 2013, QUT received the exciting news that two new projects related to Media and Information literacy have been funded by the Australian Research Council. Each of these projects will be undertaken from 2014 to 2016:

Fostering digital participation through Living Labs in regional and rural Australian communities

QUT Researchers: Dr Michael Dezuanni, Associate Professor Marcus Foth, Professor Kerry Mallan, Dr Hilary Hughes

Partner Researchers (Partner Investigators): Ms Jane Cowell, State Library of Queensland; Mr Warren Cheetham, Townsville City Library; Ms Jeanette Wedmaier, Empire Theatre, Toowoomba.

This project involves collaboration between QUT and the State Library of Queensland, Toowoomba Regional Library Service, The Empire Theatre in Toowoomba and Townsville City Library. The research team will coordinate and support a two-step process to work with residents to identify their digital citizenship needs and implement a series of innovative workshops (Living Labs) to respond to those needs. Living Labs (European Commission, 2012) are sites in which researchers and digital technology users co-create, evaluate ideas and solve problems. The study aims to identify new and successful ways to enable residents to develop their confidence and skills as they participate in a series of responsive and innovative digital experiments. The project will develop community-based networks in which digital citizenship is promoted with an initial emphasis on institutional support and later emphasis on community-led innovation, mentoring and entrepreneurship.

Digital participation initiatives typically address the so-called 'digital divide' and questions of access in which socioeconomic indicators are used to identify which individuals face barriers to digital participation. The concept of digital

‘access’, however, is complex because as technologies change, conceptions of access change. Social categorisation can mask the complex and innovative ways in which digital technologies are taken up. Few studies of digital inclusion capture the views and everyday practices of residents to identify the specific ways in which they use networks (peer-based and institutional) to find innovative ways to participate in digital contexts.

Expected Research Outcomes

Theoretical: The study will investigate how regional and rural residents’ digital media literacy repertoire can be expanded through involvement in various types of digital projects, leading to meaningful digital citizenship.

Methodological: The study will provide an improved understanding of how to conduct field experiments with residents using digital technologies and how this can be achieved through Living Labs.

Practice: The study will provide models of community institutional practice to support digital participation.

Policy: The study will provide an evidence base upon which policy about digital participation in regional and rural communities can be developed.

The following research questions will be addressed:

1. How do residents of rural and regional communities use digital technologies to enhance their varied interactions with friends, commerce, libraries, education and training, community organisations and government agencies?
2. What do residents identify as the barriers to their wider participation in these networks?
3. What role can Living Labs play in establishing and sustaining collaborative user-centred innovative ecosystems in libraries, community organisations and beyond?
4. What are the implications of Living Labs for development of locally relevant policies and practices to support sustainable, digital networks that overcome many of the challenges of digital non-participation?

Australian screen content in primary, secondary and tertiary education: Uses and potential

QUT Researchers: Distinguished Professor Stuart Cunningham, Dr Michael Dezuanni and Dr Ben Goldsmith

Partner Researchers: Ms Georgie McClean, Screen Australia; Mr David Sutton, Australian Broadcasting Corporation; Ms Georgia Westaway, the Special Broadcasting Service; and Ms Maggie Garrard, Australian Children’s Television Foundation.

In this project, researchers from Queensland University of Technology have teamed up with the Australian Research Council (ARC), Screen Australia, The Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABC), the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) and the Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF) to investigate the use of Australian screen content in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Researchers and investigators will undertake a national survey of schools and will conduct in-depth interviews with hundreds of industry representatives, teachers, principals, librarians and students. Furthermore, new approaches to developing screen content and curricula will be trialled. The project aims to develop a comprehensive picture of why, how, how much and where Australian screen content is used in education.

For quite some time education has been considered an ancillary market for Australian film, television and new media producers and there has only been piecemeal information about the size and importance of this market. With the fracturing of the screen content audience, however, due to new distribution and consumption practices, the importance of the education market is now being recognised. Little is known, though, about the specific classroom use of screen content across the curriculum and within specialist areas like media studies. Producers have only anecdotal information about which types of content are most useful to teachers and students, what kinds of support materials are most helpful and which screen content experiences students find the most engaging. The project will contribute to the sustainability of the Australian screen production industries by identifying the scope and growth potential of the education market for screen content.

The project will investigate the production and use all forms of screen content including narrative feature length and short films, documentaries, television programs, video games, touch screen Apps, online education portals and other forms of new media content. A key focus will be the educational design thinking around support materials that are produced to help students and teachers use screen content in productive ways. On the supply side, the project will investigate the dynamics of the education sector as a market for screen producers and gauge the development of skills and knowledge required by the next generation of producers to most effectively supply the education market. The project will also investigate how the next generation of screen producers are being educated in schools and universities by investigating the kinds of media production being undertaken at those levels of education.

The Australian Screen Content project is occurring at a significant time for the screen production industries and for education. New media technologies are making it increasingly possible to access and interact with screen content on different kinds of screens and through different media, both on and offline. Students are able to produce their own screen content and can download and rearrange screen content, making it possible for screen producers to provide

new educational experiences for students. New media literacies are essential for 21st century learning and the Media Arts strand of the new Australian Arts curriculum requires students to interact with screen content as a mandatory aspect of learning up to year 6; and as a possible in-depth learning pathway up to year 12. In this context, both legacy titles from the canon of Australian film history and new forms of screen content like games and Apps have the potential to provide students with important and engaging learning experiences.

The project will include the following key activities: a national survey of all schools and universities in Australia; archival and statistical research; industry interviews; fieldwork in approximately 100 schools Australia-wide; and in-depth case studies of 15 schools. Case studies of different types of screen content and how it is produced and then used in educational contexts will also take place. The national survey will be conducted during 2014 and will be the first survey of its type in Australia, providing significant information about the kinds of Australian screen content schools and universities purchase and use. The industry interviews (to take place in 2014) will provide in-depth information about the challenges facing screen producers and insight into how they are responding to those challenges.

The field work and case studies to be undertaken in 2015 and 2016 will allow the research team to gain an understanding of why and how screen content is used within classrooms at different year levels across the curriculum and how students respond. The researchers will observe classrooms using Australian screen content and will talk to teachers and students about what works for them and what doesn't. Case studies of the production and use of specific screen content titles will include a mix of long and short form, interactive and linear content developed by the ABC, SBS, ACTF and Screen Australia. For instance, a PhD student attached to the project will be embedded at SBS and will help to develop screen content materials, including curriculum resources and will undertake research related to that process.

The Australian Screen Content project will produce important outcomes for both the screen industries and education. At the conclusion of the project, two online guides will be produced; one to inform Australian screen content producers about best practices in educational research design; and one for schools and other educational institutions illustrating best practice in the educational use of Australian screen content. The project will inform policy development, stimulate content production and distribution and increase awareness of the availability and utility of Australian screen content in educational settings.

Ongoing research projects

In addition to the two new projects described above, QUT researchers continue to undertake research for the following ongoing projects, outlined in detail in the *MILID Yearbook 2013*.

Digital media and literacy education in low socioeconomic status community kindergartens

Throughout 2013, this project has investigated how iPads and similar tablet computers can be used to assist three- and four-year-old children in low socioeconomic status communities to develop both technology and literacy skills through multimedia production. The project is led by researchers Dr Michael Dezuanni, Associate Professor Sandra Gattenhof, Associate Professor Karen Dooley and Dr Linda Knight.

Figure 1. Kindergarten children learning with iPads.



The project is currently entering its final phase and a research report will be developed in early 2014. Some preliminary findings include:

- Tablet devices are effective educational tools in early childhood classrooms and in homes when teachers and adults assist children to learn using the devices. That is, they are not effective educational tools when children use them in isolation.

- The successful use of tablet computers requires a significant amount of curriculum planning, teacher professional development and resource planning –that is, they are not simple ‘turn on and learn’ devices.
- Children resist learning with tablet devices when software (Apps) are poorly designed or age-inappropriate.

Serious Play: Using digital games in school to promote literacy and learning in the twenty first century

This project is led by Griffith University research Professor Catherine Beavis, with other researchers from Griffith University (Associate Professor Leonie Rowan, Dr Jason Zagami and Dr Sarah Prestridge), QUT (Dr Michael Dezuanni), Deakin University (Associate Professor Joanne O’Mara) and the National Institute of Education, Singapore (Professor Yam San Chee).

Figure 2. Students playing Minecraft during the Serious Play project.



This project focuses on teachers and learners, and on literacy, learning and teaching with digital games in Australian classrooms. It investigates what happens to literacy and learning, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment when digital games are introduced into the school. It explores ways in which young people’s out of school experience of games and games-based learning can be used to support literacy, creativity and disciplinary learning through the use of both commercial and ‘educational’ (serious) games; and how this learning is best assessed. The middle phase of this project was undertaken in 2013 with a

focus on assessment and video games in the classroom. Throughout 2014 and 2015 a number of publications and reports will be developed for this project.

Focus on Information Literacy at QUT

The QUT Information Studies Research Group, led by Professor Christine Bruce and Professor Helen Partridge and comprising staff and students from both the Science and Engineering Faculty and the Faculty of Education, has continued to develop its strong focus on information literacy research, incorporating a wide range of contexts.

Of particular note was a keynote address (Bruce, 2013) to the European Conference on Information Literacy, hosted in Istanbul, Turkey. This address, which focused on the experience-based (or experiential) perspective on information literacy research and practice, included exemplars from Australia and the United States. Highlighting the transforming and empowering heart of information literacy, Bruce recommended greater research attention to its emancipatory potential. The European Conference on Information Literacy represented a significant and successful attempt to bring together information literacy researchers and practitioners from around the world to explore past, present and future directions.

Central to the experiential perspective is the relational approach to information literacy, and its more contemporary manifestations as informed learning. The development of the relational approach has been analysed by Lyndelle Gunton (Gunton et al., in press), and will appear in a forthcoming book on LIS Research in the Asia-Oceanic region. The experiential perspectives, which are core to the information literacy perspectives of the QUT team, have also given rise to focused interest on the idea of information experience. A book on this concept (Bruce et al., in press), with chapters authored by researchers from Australia, Africa, Malaysia, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States, extensively develops the idea of the need for information experiences in research and practice. It contains contributions from key information literacy researchers such as Annmaree Lloyd, Hilary Hughes, Mandy Lupton, Helen Partridge, Clarence Maybee and others. The book also foregrounds the experiences of particular cultural groups, such as Native Americans, and practitioners from different fields, including design thinking.

Ongoing informed learning research has the potential to foster social and educational wellbeing in a variety of community contexts (Bruce et al., 2013). In higher education, Hughes has provided new insights about international students' experiences of informed learning in culturally diverse classrooms (Hughes and Bruce, 2013). Maybee's (2013) research explores teachers' and students' experience informed learning in a university course. His initial findings reveal important differences in the ways that teachers present and

students perceive the interrelationship between information use and subject content. Insights into workplace information literacy were extended through the work of Elham Sayyad Abdi's first phase investigation of web-site designers' information literacy; an important professional group who have a high influence on peoples' experience of our virtual information worlds. (Sayyad Abdi, Partridge and Bruce, 2013)

2013 also saw the completion of the groups' investigation of ageing Australian's experience of information literacy, funded by the Australian Research Council. This project yielded a range of publications including an early analysis of information literacy experiences across age groups (Yates et al., 2012), an analysis of the experiences of 65-79 year old Australians (Stoodley et al., in press), and a methodological piece on the use of phenomenography for researching information experience (Yates, Partridge and Bruce 2012).

International Online Course on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue

From February until May 2013, QUT's Faculty of Education partnered with UNESCO to offer the inaugural 'International Online Course on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue' for teachers, policy makers and professionals. The course was adapted from the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Curriculum and attracted a great deal of interest with well over 400 international applicants for the 50 available places. QUT eventually enrolled 78 students in response to the high course demand and to ensure a diversity of participants from all parts of the world. At least 50% of the participants were from Arab and African States, with participants from all other continents involved. The gender balance was close to 50/50.

The course was offered through QUT's online learning system with most of the sessions presented as self-directed learning, complemented by ongoing interaction through wikis and discussion forums. Several 'live' sessions presented by QUT lecturers took place in which participants were able to join a Skype – style classroom within QUT's online learning environment. Students could undertake the course in one of three modes: Basic (40 hours over 9 weeks), Intermediate (80 hours over 13 weeks) or Advanced (120 hours over 13 weeks). Students had the option to complete as much or as little of the course as they wished – and provided they completed the necessary assessments, they received an appropriate certificate. Students completing the 'Advanced' version of the course are eligible for credit towards a QUT Coursework Masters degree (this requires a separate acceptance and enrolment into the Masters program).

The course consisted of a range of topics such as Intercultural dialogue and citizenship; Freedom of expression, freedom of information and understanding the news; Representation and Languages in Media and Information Literacy;

Advertising and citizenship; Information Literacy and Library Skills; Communication; MIL and teaching/learning; MIL policies and strategies; Citizens, the Media and technologies; Global media/technologies in an increasing connected world; and Internet opportunities and challenges. Each week consisted of readings, activities, online videos to view and a range of student responses. Wherever possible, students were asked to consider their own local community or workplace and to respond to the activities accordingly.

Students responded very well to the course, with 43.5% 'Very Satisfied' and 51% 'Satisfied' and only 2.5% 'Disappointed' and 2.5% 'Very Disappointed'. Typical written feedback included:

What I loved most was how the course was structured such that we had a practical section whereby the knowledge gained or topic in question required us to personalise it and apply it to our communities.

The knowledge resources that this course contains and the links provided for further reference are incredible and valuable.

I have learned what I expected and even more about media and information literacy and intercultural dialogue. My perspective of MIL is more dynamic and informed.

There were two big challenges for the students and the course in general – student completion and online access to the course. Of the 78 students accepted into the course, 32 completed the course to Basic, Intermediate or Advanced levels. This rate of drop out is consistent with research that demonstrates that free open online courses (such as MOOCs) experience consistently high levels of non-completion (Yang et al., 2013). It is still disappointing, though that a higher number did not finish the course. A key reason given for non-completion was inconsistent Internet access. Although a number of students living in difficult circumstances such as the Sudan did complete the course, many students were disadvantaged by the ongoing challenge of logging on:

I guess the biggest hurdle is the Internet connection. I missed some of the weeks because I am in the remote areas from March to May where Internet signal is weak. I had to catch up as soon as I got back to Manila because of that.

Despite these difficulties, QUT considers the course to have been a resounding success and an important collaboration between QUT and UNESCO. There is clear demand for such a course and it is hoped that appropriate funding will soon be available to offer the course again in the near future.

Arts Pop – Media Arts

During 2013 QUT researchers and practitioners collaborated with Education Services Australia to develop and release the *Arts Pop* website to support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts. As one of five areas of the Arts in the Australian Curriculum, Media Arts was highlighted on this website as a ‘Package of Practice’ (PoP). The PoP includes all of the planning, a description of implementation, video footage of students learning, interviews with teachers and examples of student work. The focus of the Media Arts PoP was students using iPads to create digital books. While Media Arts was the lead area for this package, students developed knowledge of and skills in English, visual arts and some elements of music. In the Media Arts elements, students learned to use media production equipment (in this case iPads, although other tablets could be used), and to use techniques such as composition and lighting to capture digital images and to record voice and sound effects. The package demonstrates that a number of curriculum areas can be combined to ensure that various curriculum areas are covered without losing the specificity of any one area.

Students learned about storytelling in multimodal form by combining still images, text and sound. They created an ebook that consisted of a front cover and three pages. Students were required to plan the ebook using a storyboard that showed:

- the structure of their story
- the text the story would include
- a rough sketch of their images
- a description of their voice recording and sound effects.

Students learned about drawing techniques from a visual artist. A Media Arts specialist teacher and the classroom teacher taught media production skills and techniques. Students used iPads to create digital images, text and sound that were then combined using an app called Book Creator.

All details about this project can be found at: <http://artspop.org.au/>

Into 2014...

QUT continues to develop its activities in the fields of media and information literacy and a number of projects and activities will continue to emerge as the University builds its strength in this area. 2014 will be a particularly important year for reporting through academic publications as several earlier projects come to completion. We look forward to continuing to work with the interna-

tional media and information literacy network to build our expertise and share our findings.

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How the Economic Crisis in Europe Promotes Media Literacy

José Manuel Pérez Tornero

The article examines the impact of the economic crisis in Europe on media quality and advocates that although the crisis has jeopardized communication and education, and created serious social and political problems, it promotes a new attitude towards the media which can be considered as a new awareness towards it. A new state of affairs is emerging in which media literacy is needed and its promotion is more important for individuals as well as the public at large. This demand for media literacy requires a new policy and new initiatives. Media education, the promotion of the conditions that foster media literacy and civic participation become the main areas of this movement.

The article examines research projects and other initiatives aimed at developing media literacy throughout Europe. It highlights the EMEDUS, FilmEd and DINAMIC projects.

Keywords: media literacy, European economic crisis, media crisis, EMEDUS, DINAMIC, FilmEd

From economic crisis to media awareness

“The level of complexities in contemporary societies”, as stated in the introduction to the 2013 MILID Yearbook, “continues to develop exponentially. There is no doubt that the global village as we know it today will become more complex in the coming decade. Inequalities, misunderstandings and ‘soft conflicts’ may increase on a planet increasingly interconnected and subject to rapid intercultural exchanges” (Grizzle, Torrent & Pérez-Tornero, 2013 p. 9).

Without a doubt this is the case with respect to the economic crisis in Europe. The European economy in crisis has, in turn jeopardized communication and education. The result is that these converging crises create serious social and political problems.

Paradoxically, on the other hand, the converging crises promote a new attitude towards the media which can be considered as a new awareness towards it. A new state of affairs is emerging in which media literacy is needed and its promotion is more important for individuals as well as the public at

large. Whatever may be lost with respect to the quality of the media can be recovered by increasing public awareness towards it.

The media in crisis

The sharp decline in the European economy – particularly in southern Europe – has created varied problems in relation to media. These include the loss of public confidence in the media and in the political sphere; the collapse of public broadcasting; the precarious contractual situation of journalists and the increasing commercialization of the media sector.

Along with the economic crisis comes news of political corruption and scandals which now occupy much media time. The lack of faith in the political system is on the rise as is the lack of trust in the traditional media which did not denounce the situation in time (and in many instances were themselves involved). Hence, social networks have seemingly become a more reliable vehicle for the news and a means of mobilizing people. This has created a new way of doing politics via the social networks and, as a result, a new media competence has emerged which is closely linked to the social protest groups embodied by the ‘occupy movements’ in Spain, Greece, Portugal, Italy, and France.

The catastrophic deterioration of the public media – one of the most consolidated of European traditions – is already evident in some countries. On the morning of November 7, 2013 in Greece, the police cleared out the headquarters of the public television station which had been closed by government decree. The same happened on November 29 in Valencia, Spain with the closure of the Valencian regional television station. These were not anecdotal cases of little importance but a sign of the times. Given this deterioration, the European Parliament itself has drawn attention to “the fundamental role of a genuinely balanced European dual system, in which private and public sector media play their respective roles and which shall be preserved ...” especially when, “... in a multimedia society in which there are now greater numbers of commercially-driven global market players”. If this balance is upset, as the Parliament warns, public media loses its main function, namely: “their institutional duty to provide-high quality, accurate and reliable information for a wide range of audiences, which shall be independent of external pressures and private or political interests” (European Parliament, 2013, p. 10).

The precarious state of journalism is also evident in Europe’s economic crisis. With the loss of resources, companies reduce costs, fire journalists and the quality of information suffers. Investigative journalism, which takes time and resources, begins to be replaced by a kind of superficial journalism which is not very analytical in nature.

At the same time the commercialization of information increases which

lowers the quality of the content as media are in search of larger audiences. There is an increase in site advertising, infomercials and advertising control to the detriment of content. The concentration of the media in fewer hands has also increased and pluralism is being threatened. Hence, higher risks in relation to preserving privacy and security of communications.

The new demand for Media Literacy

These drastic changes as reported, enable European citizens to become aware of what is being lost in this media crisis with its dire consequences on democracy. This is why there is a stronger demand for improved media literacy, which means a greater awareness of the media and, at the same time, the improvement in the skills to obtain information and communicate.

When the old communication order breaks down, regulations fail and the balance that has preserved citizens until now starts to become upset, then media literacy is presented in this context as an appropriate response: a good way to solve many of the problems highlighted.

This demand for media literacy requires a new policy and new initiatives. Media education, the promotion of the conditions that foster media literacy and civic participation become the main areas of this movement.

Research and Media Literacy

This situation enables an alliance between research and the media literacy movement in Europe.

The UNESCO-MILID Chair at the UAB¹, guided by the Department of Communication and Education, UAB, is actively participating in these new lines of research committed to the development of media literacy.

The EMEDUS project, in collaboration with other universities and research centers in Europe, has described and analyzed the treatment of media literacy in different European countries. The results and conclusions lead to proposals for the future. The study recognizes that, in recent years, many European education systems have advanced in the introduction of digital skills. However, few educational contexts have paid sufficient attention to the general media environment. This means that the critical capacity of students with respect to the media is not what it should be; nor do students develop a vigilant attitude towards the excesses of advertising and the commercialization of media content.

The solution proposed by EMEDUS is to proceed with a re-draft of the compulsory curriculum of EU states to adapt it to the overall media environment - and not just in the instrumental implementation of ICT². On the other hand, it

would also be necessary to enhance the area of informal education by ensuring that schools become communication centers, both within and towards the outside world.

EMEDUS also draws attention to the fact that the crisis within the public media services is seriously undermining the possibility of educating an actively critical public. Only with the recovery of the public media can this situation change, according to the findings of EMEDUS. The media can serve as a reference of independence and quality with respect to information. And it can actively contribute to the education of the public at large by providing critical awareness. For this to happen a new commitment is required of public media towards audiences and new channels of participation need to be encouraged that can only be activated by empowering citizens through media literacy.

This new commitment would also be valid for the print media and quality journalism in general. Without an audience that is motivated, cultured and caring (that is to say media-literate), neither quality journalism nor even the continuation of journalism itself seems possible any longer.

FilmEd, another project carried out by the Department of Communication and Education, is working along the same lines as indicated above with EMEDUS. FilmEd supports a European education policy that is capable of introducing film studies in education. In so doing it would improve media literacy (in this case the language referring to audiovisual language) and at the same time it would broaden the rich cultural background European cinema possesses.

Another research project of the Chair, DINAMIC, highlights the need to improve systems for assessing media literacy as an essential instrument for effective public policy. Through various tests and experiments DINAMIC attempts to gather under a single structure a system of evaluation for both instrumental skills related to the use of media as well as for the critical and creative attitudes of people. Special emphasis has been placed on the capacity to solve problems and develop projects using the media and its content. Similarly, the connection between this capacity and the necessary critical understanding of the media sphere as a whole has been recognized.

Our hope is that all this research will lead to an improvement in policies and actions related to semiotic literacy in Europe in the coming years.

A new Journalism

In addition to the research projects cited above, the Chair is also involved in projects related to international journalism as a way of responding to the economic crisis.

Within the current context of crisis there is a profound need to regenerate European journalism. Its inability to assess and react to -from a democratic

point of view- the outbreak of the Arab Spring and its following of the policies, often myopic, of European governments on political issues; its difficulty to analyze and explain the human drama of immigration in the Mediterranean basin and Eastern countries; its difficulty to face the challenges that cultural diversity implies within Europe. All these issues demand a global change within European journalism, in its genres, routines and structures.

The MILID Chair is working towards helping address this challenge. The launch of a network of young journalists around the world committed to the spirit of MILID has led to progress and a milestone: The Young Journalists Platform³.

From 2012 to 2014 meetings have been held to try to activate this network in Barcelona, Cairo, Fez, Kingston (Jamaica) and Sao Paulo. And local news rooms have become the platform in each of these cities. In them, journalism students and researchers of media and information literacy have committed themselves to working together online on journalistic issues to foster global dialogue. The aim is to promote collaborative journalism of quality – and informed in terms of the media literacy perspective – which, from addressing issues of common interest, integrate different points of view – cultural, geographical, human – and indicate a path for intercultural dialog and international cooperation in solving global problems.

And all of the above is from the perspective of collaboration between young and experienced journalists of all nationalities working together.

The result of this journalism will create:

- An opportunity for constant experimentation capable of supporting research on media literacy
- A basic tool for the overall education of journalism students
- A platform to the service of media education
- A basis for secondary schools worldwide to access the treatment of current affairs within the perspective of intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and media education.

In 2015 the platform is expected to be operational linking all continents and actively connecting more than 40 journalism schools worldwide.

New challenges

The challenges we face in the immediate future deal with the consolidation of all these initiatives and the dissemination of the results of the progress made. However, as a whole, these challenges will be organized into the following areas:

- The consolidation of the International MILID Observatory and the *MILID Scientific Journal*. With this objective in mind the Department of Communication and Education will carry out in the coming years the implementation of a European Observatory on the subject.
- The creation of a global MILID school favoring the mass production of courses, research programs and graduate degrees, etc.
- The commitment from and support of the Chair towards the Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy.
- The extension of the Young Journalists Project.

It must be noted that all this is in keeping with the commitment to create new alliances and find new partnerships within Europe and beyond.

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Notes

- 1 Media literacy projects by the UAB and the Chair can be found at the following websites: www.eumedus.com; www.filmedeurope.wordpress.com; www.dinamicuab.blogspot.com.es
- 2 It must be stated that this practical and limited use of ICT's as mere instruments is produced as an effect of the communicative and socio-cultural potential they possess.
- 3 More information can be found at: <http://www.youngjournalists.org/>

Notes on Research Projects

FilmEd PROJECT

CONSORTIUM

The FilmED Consortium is composed of partners with a diverse set of expertise in order to respond competently to the requirements of the study. It will provide a study with reliable data on the situation of educational use of audiovisual content in schools throughout Europe. It is coordinated by Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) in partnership with: The Think Tank on European Film and Film, AEDE, the European Association of Teachers (Association Européenne des Enseignants); CUMEDIAE, acronym for Culture & Media Agency Europeaisb; Dr Guido Westkamp.

FOCUS:

The general objective of the study “Showing films and other audio-visual content in European Schools - Obstacles and best practices” will be to support the European Commission in its current efforts to develop a European wide media literacy policy, especially the inclusion of media literacy in school curricula. Our Consortium aims at providing a study with reliable data on the situation for educational use of audiovisual content in schools throughout Europe. And in particular, specifying the obstacles and good practices within the field, considering the three requested angles: educational, legal, and the report with the film industry.

The objectives of the research are three-fold:

Firstly, a European-scale study identifying and analyzing the existing situation concerning the use of audio-visual content in schools throughout Europe. It will include both curricular and extra-curricular use of such content in schools paying exclusive attention to primary and secondary schools.

Secondly, identification of obstacles and good practices for the use of films and other audio-visual content in schools, including licensing models for education use;

And thirdly, the elaboration of recommendations on how to strengthen the commission's work within the context of media literacy policy and in other policy fields.

DINAMIC PROJECT

FOCUS:

DINAMIC -Developing Media Literacy Indicators aims to develop new measurement systems to assess the development and quality of media literacy, which could be applied not only to countries, but to 1) Individuals and groups, 2) Companies, corporations and institutions, 3) Public institutions of participation and decision making, e.g. in the field of active citizenship and political participation.

The project has developed a set of criteria, metrics and evaluation of media literacy competences, which includes both, a comprehensive indicator system and a set of methods, procedures and protocols (test, questionnaires, as well as observation and measurement systems) refined and ready for use by different institutions. This indicators system will be valid and ready for use, and will complement the European indicators.

Poem Codes

Patricia Moran

*This article deals with **poem codes** by Jarbas Jácome, a young software developer and professor at the Recôncavo University of Bahia, who works with, and teaches open source programming. In so doing, Jarbas Jácome contributes to fostering media literacy both in his teaching and in his artwork. The article begins with a discussion of his background and his intentions to show that his programming methodology creates a place and role for the user. Jácome develops open source program, and use comments as poetry. Comments are information to clarify the function of the programming codes. Once open, the codes may be read and modified. In this case the comments are philosophical issues of Friedrich Nietzsche in his novel Zarathustra. Mathematics, just like poetry is impure literature.*

Key words: education, codes, open source, poetry

Introduction

In this article we discuss Jarbas Jácome's experiences in teaching arts and science. We begin with his background, and then move to his innovative approach to programming, an approach that problematizes the place of the user. Jácome's way of integrating teaching, programming and poetry suggests creative ways of fostering media literacy. He is a young idealist, current professor at the Federal University of the Recôncavo of Bahia. He instructs his students in the logic and practice of programming for arts in workshops he conducts in Brazil and Latin America. Our choice to discuss his experiences originate from a diagnosis of the novelty of his art works in their final form and in the understanding of a knowledge of structure as political action when it discusses technical knowledge as an affirmation of power.

To embrace the techniques and the knowledge of programming as politics, integrates the ideals of a variety of open source developers. When open source developers create tools and make them available free of cost and allow changes to codes, they are questioning intellectual property laws and exclusionary practices of corporations. The creative process, whether in the arts or sciences, can be embraced as the flagship banner when fighting for a symbol. Belonging to creative communities indicates an opposition to individualism, which is so common in arts and sciences. Work is treated as a collective effort in the com-

munity. Teaching is a creative activity and artistic creation often necessitates belonging to a group, as part of a bureaucratic organized society. Techniques of mediation are pervasive, but they are invisible in the building process. Programming processes are questioned in workshops as well as in personal works from Jácome that tries to demystify realization as a place for specialists.

By exchanging codes specialists create together in physical space and across distance. Seduced by debates about intellectual property and development of open source cultures, they feed themselves in Internet communities; in Jácome's specific case, with young researchers working together with Silvio Meira, his advisor for his master's degree, and Geber Ramalho, both professors of the Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (UFPE) in Recife. He chats on the Internet, exchanging codes with developers from everywhere in the world and maintains ties with the Recife group. Recently he got together with his students from the University and invited teachers and students of the public system to develop collaborative multimedia art projects.

While completing his master's degree in computer science at UFPE, Jácome developed ViMus (Visual Music)¹, a system for multimedia processing in real time. The work started during his undergraduate years in a course on musical and graphic computing. Since graduation, his work reflects a working together of art and science. The graphic interface has a program called Open Box. The code is visible and can be used and modified by any software developer, which does not occur in proprietary programs. Once codes become freely available and common practice in communities of developers of open source, Jácome moves one step further and he turns the code comments into poetry.

In programming, the comments are pieces of information regarding codes whose immediate objective is to help the software developers remember the specific function for that information, written down with numbers. Simply put, to develop software is to create the possibility of actions (ideas) to be expressed from numbers. When developing software, the steps to reach any given objective, are done in binary language. The more complex the programme, the larger the quantity of texts that are necessary to be adopted. Therefore, as was mentioned, the comments help developers to relate the codes (letters, numbers and signs) to their functions.

Jácome turns his comments into a poetic platform when he withdraws from them the strictly functional and explanatory meaning. Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's aphorisms and themes are applied to the invisible component since, in the case of the comment, it becomes unnecessary for the functioning of the program. This strategy demystifies the technique, and the seemingly complex and essential jargons are exposed as notations or information regarding functional objectives of the written procedure and explain the conventions of creating the program. Jácome thus reestablishes the function as valid information for the developer and not for the development, transforming the same into an

image related to the final image. As we shall see further in the paper “Travelling Lantern Holders”, the visible image developed by the programme is a representation of the image produced by the philosophical concept.

The duality between the visible and the invisible comes into question². The common user normally relates with the machine via interface, by the surface of the contact. The poem-codes, or poetry of the codes are like a Moebius tape, without inner or outer surface. The comments are out of interface, but they converge and are connected like a Moebius tape. This experience redefines the relation of the user with the media, or otherwise problematizes it. From a passive to an ignorant manipulator of an interface, he becomes knowledgeable of the dynamics of the media he uses. Therefore, fears are combated that create useless characters, and explain apparently unreachable knowledge.

Technique and childhood

The so-called ability of children in handling technical devices has been used as an example of how people behave in contemporary times. These certainties produced some myths when the assemblages³ (*agencement*) that appear through the relationship between children and the medium are not considered. Those assemblages invoke desires, **actions and reactions with the media and ourselves, and explain why they are from a subjective dimension. As mentioned above**, programming is a space for negotiation; developed from socially constructed parameters, it puts in motion subjective collective movements in collective production.

Mystification is a major facility of childhood and has, as one of its main starting points, a naïve concept and ignorance of how the adult regards children, the established relationship between the equipment, and its relation with the machine. Maybe, there is no such thing as a privileged place for a child. The use of machines by children does not always produce results. However when machines are free from social narrative about dangers and challenges potentially represented by these machines, its becoming⁴ (*devenir*) allows children to explore the machine and eventually they achieve unexpected results. The children are still coming into the culture and they deal with technical or natural objects with the curiosity of the intuitive explorer. Children ignore the fact of false opposition between culture and technique. Simondon puts it well, stating “knowledge is implicit, unreflected” (2007, p. 105). On the other hand, adults are full of schemes, liable to be abandoned, but structural from social mediations and the role attributed to technique(s).

Romero Tori⁵, professor and software developer, shares this perspective. For him, any person can dominate algorithms and basic concepts as well as programming logic, and many use their intuition to solve problems in their area

of work (2010). Tori's certainty shows his understanding of programming as a form of thinking. If intuition uses solutions informed by programming logic, people who in theory are not technically skilled in this area, tend to programme without conceptual systematization.

Languages such as Processing⁶, Pure Data⁷ and others are pre-programmed. They allow the curious user to learn slowly until he is able to manage even the pre-programmed part. This depends on the time invested and the availability of the parties involved. Technical advancement is able to save costs on audiovisual equipment during programming. The difference lies in how programming triggers the structure of language, making production of knowledge clearly implied in this process. The appropriation of the medium is not enough, but it's creation. Thus the maker is displaced from the place of the receiver. Moving from passive user, he gains the status of inventor.

If we take into consideration Jácome's workshops as an activist, we can allow one to access spaces to knowledge and to the belonging to a group when making an active place for the common citizen. From these workshops, for instance, pieces of work such as poem codes have been established or initiated. If an artist and scientist discuss intellectual property, they deconstruct myths related to the technical difficulty by showing its opacity. Not every artist or average user needs a Moebius tape in his creation; relevant pieces of art may appear from the interface, but to cross this doorway is like opening access to the Matrix, moving the spot of the narrative and the subject, inventing not only the use of the enunciating machine, but the machine itself. For the unskilled user, it is the knowledge of another logic, the one that organizes its actions.

The workshops

With the challenge of introducing adults in the logic of programming, Jácome started by creating the poetry codes. His audience consisted of literature professors and cultural and communication researchers from the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. While studying the culture of young developers, they felt the urge to get to know their universe. Starting from the principle that anyone can master the basic concepts of algorithms⁸ and the logic of software development, Jácome used poetry for the comments. Literature was part of the group's repertoire, and familiarity with the references or creative literature procedures helped learning⁹. The teachers' objective was not to help them become programmers, but to search for the knowledge of their logic by accessing culture. Jácome builds his didactics on the ideology of Paulo Freire. For Jácome teaching "doesn't consist in training the student to show his skills" (2011, p. 16) nor "transferring knowledge" (2011, p. 24). Formal education is not simply about gathering data, since machines do this better without thin-

king. Education creates ways of accessing and debating cultural languages and codes, reading not only words but social dynamics. It is an active process where one infers (concludes) that both sides, professor and student, have previous knowledge and can establish dialogue. Curiosity is a knowledge promoter that motivates one to search and encourages investigative interest. Facing a new field of knowledge demands that one plunges into it. Curiosity turns it into an almost natural process, without suffering or fears, since it aims to fulfill a personal search. Learning, according to Freire, entails changing naïve curiosity into epistemological curiosity (2011, p. 46). Curiosity, even without reflection, is investigative and looks for answers. It is up to the teacher to take advantage of the common sense questions and relate them to formal thought.

A relationship developed out of curiosity is a political gesture, but when dealing with technology it is surrounded by mystery. Foucault (2012, p. 171, 244) has already taught us the devices of negotiated power, and of life in society as a field of constant power and negotiations. When Jácome embraces his open source ideology and makes his codes available, he is part of a culture that believes in belonging to society and power. This origin is a sort of technical knowledge that can become universal.

As a computer scientist, artist and educator, Jácome explains the hidden dangers of technical knowledge and the formation of investigative subjects in the perspective of corporate functionality. Usability is an item of programming that demands little from its users. The objective is to facilitate use of the average user, so he can use the equipment in the most mechanical way possible, without challenges or out-of-the-ordinary situations. One of the usability requirements is the understanding of programming as a work for newcomers. Of course the final user faces difficulties when new tools appear in the programmes or new architecture is added to the interfaces. The most comfortable solution demanded by the user is often the one proposed by the developer; tasks become automatic when transferred to the machine, raising the degree of automation of the system.

Open source systems require more expertise from the user; some systems teach methodologies and allow training, if not programming itself, at least the access to work logic. Dojo Code, which was created in France in 2005, adopts dynamics that allows participants to take turns when programming. A multimedia projector displays the program on a screen as it is being performed by the computer. A student does the programming and a teacher works as a guide showing all the possible ways for programming. After ten minutes of programming, which provides familiarity with the characteristics and functions activated, the programmer is replaced by another student. This method has been used by Jácome. In the current configuration of proprietary systems this programming dynamic would not be reached; at most there would be some knowledge of the interface and features of the programme. The less

one has access to the root of the programming, the more there is a guarantee of reluctance to change the knowledge of its principle.

As already mentioned, proprietary programs tend to be more simple for the final user, but this prevents access to the inner workings of the system, which is intensely automated. Simondon (2007) is adamant in his critique of automation, since it excludes external information (i.e. active human action) and the user's intelligence to relate with the system. The user just pushes buttons, in other words interacting with ready-made systems. From this perspective, automation is not much different from the industrial revolution when the machines substituted for manual labour. Automation can be seen as a contribution to intellectual work because it accelerates manual labour, but with automation people remain subject to the determination of the programs, the regulatory power and the industry. Simondon also proposes that education needs a mini-revolution of culture related to these techniques. This should be taught as part of literature or even physical theory, so that understanding reaches more abstract and symbolic aspects. This technique is not seen as a foreign creation of mankind but as something that eludes human control and, as we see in the imagination of science fiction, it tries to destroy mankind and nature. There is life and culture in technique, either in one's materials and how they respond to the environment through analogies with the physical world or how their components relate to each other. Some small developers stand against these myths.

There is a healthy "war" going on in this respect. The *demoscene* is a scene motivated by healthy competition regarding intellectual property. One of the challenges is to develop small programmes, which are easy to run and work as an action against planned obsolescence by continuous substitution of models. On the other hand, when attached to academic research language, developers show up such as Pure Data/GEM, Processing, Max/MSP/Jitter. Developers are resistant to standardization and automation, like in ViMus, (the program developed by Jácome), which is open source and demands more from the user. The action of these discreet "warriors" is an important aspect of questioning the model of big corporations. At this very moment we are in the age of information. Machines have stopped being a force of replacement, a tool as they were during the Industrial Revolution when thermodynamics was a human and cultural reality to be programmed. Becoming (*devenir*) does not mean one is technically closed to new information. Thoughts and information develop from private needs.

From dot to assembly line: buttons and written form

As we have mentioned before, Jácome adopts the metaphor Open Box in ViMus. As with PD (Pure Data) and Processing, among others, it is a *path orien-*

ted system (PAS). Flowchart-oriented systems allow the editing (construction and modification) in real time of a flowchart (Jácome, 2007). ViMus accepts programming and performance of the images in real time. Video Samples Oriented Systems (VSOS) (Jácome, 2007, p. 27) on the contrary, exhibit video samples that are stored in the machine along with its previously selected effects, altering the image parameters in real time. When the performance happens, images and effects are combined. The mixture could generate meanings and provocative counter-meanings. The performer's skills may create various rhythms, colors and provocative figure images. Even in rigid systems like VSOS many relevant works may appear, but work logic does not allow diversions from the original program. The place of the programmer-performer in relation to the nucleus of the machine is separate and therefore it is excluded.

If the *system flowchart* provides additional opening power, the options of the Open Box metaphor, in contrast to the 'window' metaphor popular with computers, is likely to free the individual from the *naturalis perspective* and epistemological and cultural problems related to this model of representation. The Open Box metaphor expresses the graphic representation of its software components with a transparent side so as to permit access and modification of its internal components. The use of objects from the physical world as visual metaphors in computing, brings components all by itself, as well as concepts for the programmer, and his reading to the world.

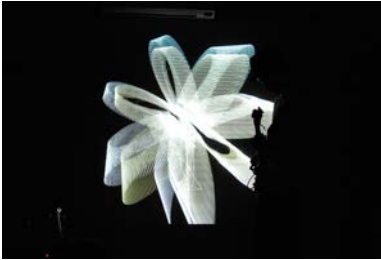
The window metaphor, widely mentioned in the history of visual representation, was originally mentioned by Leon Battista Alberti (Aumont, 2004, p. 115). The perspective, as we are aware, organizes the visible space and promotes the naturalization of the figures and space built from the point of view of escape. Imposing a center of organization on a visible space defines how it should be followed by the eye, and therefore, the place of the spectator. Since Alberti was an architect, he did not ignore the perspective of construction, he contributed to the technical and ideological recognition of it, and from the "central vanishing point, where geometrical naturalization mark, and humanistic ideology were often searched" (Aumont, 2004, p. 115). The vanishing point called "King of Rays" grants the window a supernatural dimension and naturalizes it. For Alberti, the window is the image over frame composition and has a symbolic dimension, on the other hand for the essayist Bazin (1991, p. 255), in the cinema, depth of field is a manner to reach realism, once again the central perspective. This question reflects a large volume of historiography of visual arts, either in painting or optic images, photographs or in motion. We are interested in outlining Jácome's option of the Open Box metaphor, which distances him from the implications of these concepts and from expressive opacity. In the Open Box there is no such thing as a programmed place for the user; this metaphor also points out the influence of mediation and human inscription.

The Open Box is a reference to the Black Box of philologist Vilem Flusser. In

“Towards a Philosophy of Photography”, he discusses how industry turns the artist into a worker. The worker is the person that plays with the device. The camera as a metaphor for a device is an example of phenomena mediated by techniques. This makes us aware of input and output, but not the internal process, or the place of material processing and the physical-chemical phenomena for the creation of cultural and artistic representations such as photography. Being absent from this process, the subject is the worker. In simple digital machines and highly automated ones, there isn't much to do but press the button. Some models of cameras work with light patterns, avoiding dark photos for example. When you click, the machine generates a picture created in standard patterns. That means that the photographer cannot make a picture that deviates from average standards. As an image it only exists when pressing the button, but there it is as a pattern of colour, light, texture, etc. The history of art has a huge repertory of authors that opened or broke boxes, metaphorically or physically speaking. Nam June Paik, Steina and Woody Vasulka are examples of such authors. They refused to be only workers, button pushers with predicted answers.

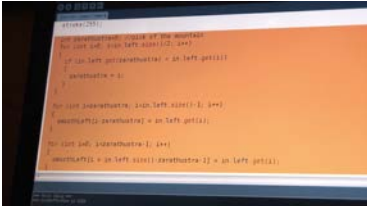
When one engages in a programming game, the opening move proposed by Jácome, recovers the written text protagonism, subverts the *frisson* and the tendency of an easy answer, provided by pushing buttons. It provides the poetry of words in comments that don't express actions but refer to history and philosophy. Comments stop being a support for memory. *Strictu sensu* codes and comments are not literature, but meta-poetry when they produce images by using metaphors of practical order, as with Open Box. These graphics shed light on automation, and the power of the written word in its ambiguity. It is a resource to create associations between knowledge(s). Conversely, computer science demands precise information. For the performance of a given action there cannot be a margin for mistake, the given data must be precise. There is room in the poems for introducing *signifiers* without *signified*, showing the corresponding meaning of practical demands. This moves us from an exact system to the inaccuracy of language and culture. If originally these comments helped the software developer to explain the function of those comments, it would have a meaningful character. But the opposite happens here, as noise is introduced. The comment creates an analogy between how the programme was developed and Nietzsche's discussion about the eagle's flight in Zarathustra.

Outside and Inside – Poems



The live performance of “Travelling Lantern Holders” was shown in Taipei Taiwan in 2011. A guitar attached to the computer transforms sounds in images. The image of a flower is a tribute to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Also Sprach Zarathustra) Friedrich Nietzsche’s book. In the comment the superb book’s image of flight to the mountain was used. Nietzsche uses the eagle’s flight to question the notion of depth in metaphysics as an affirmation of verticality and surface opposed to essence¹⁰. Jácome associates the rise to the mountain with the image of a sound wave, an image in real time that corresponds to live transmitted sound.

In this work, sound waves, like the ones that appear in the lines that reproduce volume control, are stretched and bent, in other words, a circular figure is created in order to produce a visual analogy between the wave and the flower. In “Travelling Lantern Holder”, the word Zarathustra indicates the peaks and lows of the flower, representing mountains and valleys. The peak of the tallest mountain, coordinate X, is the highest point of the curve that represents a sound wave. The programming defines that the peak is kept at the beginning of the screen. “Therefore the mountains always show up in the same place of the screen, making that taller mountain seem static in its horizontal axis and the others being drawn from it”¹¹. Keeping the peak of the wave in the same region of the screen is a resource to avoid the flower from spinning. What changes is the quantity of the petals according to the frequencies. Jácome already stated that the relationship between programming and interface are not in the same world order of essences and appearances, but bring representation between the visible and the invisible simultaneously. If in theory the comments are invisible for the average user, in this case, they represent contents and philosophical problems regarding the understanding of thought. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche assimilates Zarathustra to Dionisius, a god artist, superior to logic. Aphorisms and philosophical problems focused in the figure of Zarathustra, twist as a Moebius tape and reflect the difficulty attributed to programming. This is not dealing with the technique from the perspective of infallibility or truth, rather from a field crossed by potentials.



VIMUS programming screen

This frame is an example of the possibility of error in a comment and shows how it allows instability. When defining the command at the top of the wave we read: pick of the mountain. When Jácome was asked, “why pick?” he was surprised by the typing error in the comment. He then substituted peak for pick, valid for both the wave and the mountain. Great inversions of postures and rational speech regarding automation happen when utilitarian metaphors outline their ideological component. Mechanisms of power and exclusion from technique mystification, from its production as magic when we only know the output, are substituted by transparency. This is very difficult to be handled by a great crowd of users, but creates a community and the notion of belonging to the production of knowledge and gives it power. As education is a living process and school is a state apparatus, actions on information and media literacy have to consider that the main role of teachers is to help students to think outside (or inside) windows created by cinema, computer screens and blackboard, and that “the ability to ‘read’ a medium means one can *access* materials and tools created by others. The ability to ‘write’ in a medium means a person can *generate* materials and tools for others. One must have both to be literate. In print writing, the tools generated are rhetorical; they demonstrate and convince. In computer writing, the tools one generates are processes; they simulate and decide.” (Kay, 2001, p. 125)

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Notes

- 1 <http://jarbasjacome.wordpress.com/downloads/>. Open source software, free for download. He is still being developed by adding new functions. Works in different systems as: Linux, Mac and Microsoft.
- 2 Issues related to opacity and transparency, refer to how screens like cinema and computers do not show the artistic process. Ismail Xavier, a Brazilian theorist discusses the opacity and transparency in avant-garde cinema. Bolter does the same with net art. Jácome's work chooses transparency, therefore, he shows how software works with the Open Box.
- 3 The concept of *agencement* from French philosopher Gilles Deleuze is currently translated as *assemblage*. This is the reason why we chose to maintain the same term in this article.
- 4 Translation of the concept *devenir*, from French.
- 5 <http://romerotori.blogspot.com.br/>, March 24, 2013
- 6 <http://www.processing.org/>
- 7 <http://www.puredata.info/>
- 8 Algorithms: a set of steps that define how a task is performed. (Brookshear, 2000, apud Tori, 2010)
- 9 Paulo Freire in *Pedagogia do Oprimido* suggests providing teaching materials to the illiterate adults world, with the goal of providing concreteness to knowledge, making the process easier.
- 10 Friedrich Nietzsche. Notes, p. XIII
- 11 Discussion with Jácome by e-mail.

Towards an Increased Awareness about Media and Information Literacy in Egypt

Samy Tayie

MILID week is a meeting and dialogue platform between stakeholders, international organizations, universities, associations, NGOs, research groups and researchers, teachers and students from around the world. (MILID: Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue)

Cairo University organized the second MILID Week in April (22-25), 2013. The event was attended by representatives of all 8 members of the UNITWIN in addition to other associate members. (UNITWIN: University Twining and Networking Programme) The event also included an international conference with speakers, scholars and educators from all over the world. In addition to the board meetings and the conference, there was also a training workshop for young journalists, information specialists and researchers from all over the Arab World. This article provides an overview of the event, sessions and programme for the MILID conference 2013.

Keywords: MILID week, young journalists, UNITWIN

Introduction

MILID Week is a meeting and dialogue platform between stakeholders, international organizations, universities, associations, NGOs, research groups and researchers, teachers and students around the world. All of them are working in the field of media literacy and information and intercultural dialogue, MILID Week intends to act as an element of revitalization and strengthening of key sector initiatives, promoting direct cooperation between the protagonists.

The MILID Week is so far meeting with a very good reception. We have received many requests to take part from all over the world, and expressions of interest from several organizations.

The first MILID Week was organized in Barcelona in May 2012. It was Cairo University's turn to organize the second MILID Week in April (22-25),

2013. The event included the board meetings of the UNITWIN members. These meetings were attended by representatives of all eight members of the UNITWIN in addition to other associate members. The event also included an international conference with speakers, scholars and educators from all over the world.

In addition to the board meetings and the conference, there was also a training workshop for young journalists, information specialists and researchers from all over the Arab World.

MILID activities in 2013

In the following pages, I will deal with some of the activities which were carried out in Cairo University and under the umbrella of UNITWIN activities. They include four important activities which may be summarized in the following:

- A workshop for young journalists, information specialists and researchers
- Production of MIL Kit
- A workshop in MIL for secondary school teachers
- A workshop on MIL for senior students at the Faculty of Mass Communication

A workshop for young journalists, information specialists and researchers

In line with UNESCO's policy to spread media and information literacy (MIL) globally, Cairo University organized a workshop for young journalists, information specialists and researchers. The workshop was organized in collaboration with Autonomous University of Barcelona and with the support of UNESCO. The workshop was initially planned for 25 persons, but because of the high demand from the target groups, the workshop was organized for 65 persons, males and females from different parts of the Arab World. Two trainees from Afghanistan and Ghana were also among the trainees. The workshop lasted for three days (14-17 February, 2013).

This workshop included a few sessions. Some light will be shed to some of the issues discussed in these sessions.

The first session of the workshop dealt with "the rise of MIL and the need for it in our modern world". It also concentrates on UNESCO's efforts to promote MIL in the world (Teachers Training Curriculum, UNITWIN)".



Opening Session, February 14th, 2013

This session also dealt with the new media, new literacies and the importance of media literacy in today's modern world.



The main issues discussed in the session included:

- Media are in the middle of our knowledge. Media should balance the political conflicts; the ones that may happen between government and people, or those caused by stereotypes. Freedom of expression, right to information to participate, we need to understand the world of information.
- There have been a lot of technological and media changes over the years; people can access and share information. The question of media and information literacy (MIL) is mainly about how to improve our knowledge, prevent persuasion and be active.
- Language and media.

- Nowadays, social network accounts are more than people, as shown in the video. Thus, MILID (Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue) is needed.
- Importance of media literacy with the emergence of new media
- Social media are creating a new agenda for the media where the Facebook community selects articles that young people read every day. We are creating new spaces now in the virtual world.
- As for the change in the journalistic profession, journalists used to write in isolation and it was up to them to decide what is more important and what is less important. Now, journalists write together with people. They analyze and interpret what people receive about an event.



In another session, freedom of expression was dealt with. Freedom of expression is not enough for real democracy. We also need the right to information.

The following issues were dealt with:

- The government is not the only power. There are also the powers of the business, the bank, and other powers
- How to Promote MILID?
- Institutional policy
- Technological innovation
- Active citizenship (participating in the public spheres)
- Creativity
- Education (means life – long learning)

New trends in journalism are discussed as journalism is changing and journalists are in need of new languages, tools and new perspectives. New technologies and mobile devices have effects on the content as there are new ways of

visualization of information. There are also new interactions now where the agenda is co-produced between mass-media and social media. The structure of discourse and the interpretation of facts are negotiated between user and producer. Now, news driven by friends and family are much more than those driven by news organizations and journalists on social network sites. There is a collapse of the news industry because of the technological change, loss of financial support and new concurrency. Journalists should be concerned with content not the distribution.

A third session was devoted to MIL – from a librarian and information science’s viewpoint. In this session, the relationship between information science and MIL was discussed.

Right now, education is about our skills and about the media. We live in a dynamic society and countries do not live in isolation. We need effective use of information as it is an important source for the economy and “a basic component of education”.

The following issues were also discussed:

- Media literacy is important because of the quantity of exposure, the vital role of information in the development of democracy, cultural participation and active citizenship. It has interdisciplinary uses with several sciences. News and even advertising are constructing reality which means that we believe what media says. Media are not innocent. For example, we buy shampoo or milk because ads say they are the best. There are also several levels of media literacy.
- Information literacy is the ability of searching and using information. Basic library and IT skills.

A fourth session dealt with political participation and social inclusion. Issues discussed included:

- How media literacy can help us to foster the quality of democracy
- The objective of media literacy is people’s rights and actions

The European Union (EU) defines media literacy as: the ability to access the media, understand the media and have a critical approach towards media content and create communication in a variety of contexts.

As for how to “access” the media, the digital/ knowledge divide must be discussed. This includes the generation gap, the digital divide inside families (parents and kids), the rural – urban divide, the digital gender gap...and others.

Moreover, the definition of Intercultural Dialogue should also be discussed. UNESCO defined it as: the mutual understanding and respect and the equal dignity of all cultures is the essential prerequisite for constructing social cohesion, reconciliation among peoples and peace among nations.

- Democracy 2.0: e-participation

This means participation through new technology. Participation meaning basically everything not only political participation, but also taking part in a democratic game and in what society is. New technologies allow us to know the opinions of a lot of people. Through e-participation, there are new ways of dialoguing with people, people's engagement and empowering people (enforcing people's engagement means empowering people). Examples include:

- Obama's presidential campaign.
- E-petitions.
- Iceland's experience in crowd-sourcing (creating participation through the Internet) a constitution.

- Democracy 3.0: creating new spaces

This is the future of democracy, where people can create new spaces through new technology, for example, bloggers in Egypt. People who had absolutely no interest in politics started being active.

A video on media literacy in time of crises in addition to media literacy and active citizenship. The video also shows the power of creativity against banks.

The last day was mainly about brainstorming about the ways to collaborate and how to operate the Network of Young Journalists, Information Specialists and Researchers. The attendees are divided into three working groups, then reports of working groups are discussed before the close up of the workshop and giving the certificates.



Group photo for trainers and trainees

Production of MIL Kit

Cairo University in collaboration with Autonomous University of Barcelona and with the help and financial support of UNESCO Office in Cairo managed to produce an MIL Kit. The main objective of this MIL Kit is to avail resources for university professors to use in their teaching of MIL courses in different public and private universities.

The MIL Kit includes material on the following:

- “Intercultural Dialogue and MIL” (cultural diversity and MIL, stereotyping, reconstructing stereotypes, media cooperation)
- “New Media and Young People” (the use of media, social media, risk and advantages)
- “Global Experiences” in MIL
- “Media and Information Literacy: Curriculum for Teachers” (the UNESCO Curriculum, Media and Information Curriculum around the world: case studies)
- “An Introduction to Media and Information Literacy” (definition, historical perspective, global framework, media and information literacy in formal learning)
- “Media Values and MIL” (analyzing the news, entertainment, advertising, political persuasion)
- “How to implement Media and Information Literacy Curriculum” (Methodology and Resources)
- ”Freedom of expression and MIL”
- “MIL in the school” (New languages and codes, new learning spaces, new learning approach, MIL competencies)
- “Impact of status of Freedom of Expression and Press freedom on MIL in MENA countries”
- 11 teaching videos
- List of available resources

A workshop on MIL for Secondary School Teachers

The Faculty of Mass Communication of Cairo University in cooperation with the United Nations Program of Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) organized a two-day (November 19-20, 2013) workshop for secondary school teachers in Egypt. The workshop was organized in Cairo in the Faculty of Mass Communication and was attended by 34 participants from different areas of Egypt.

Representatives of the Ministry of Education also attended. The workshop was on media and information literacy (MIL).

The first day included three sessions. The subjects of the sessions were on the concept of MIL, planning for media and information literacy in schools' curricula (the strategies and the challenges).

The second day included four sessions. The first session was about media and information literacy and representing media from different cultures. The second session was about applying the media literacy program in schools. The third session discussed who should produce media material for children. The fourth session dealt with the training and the basics of media production.

The closing session was opened for discussion and different questions from the participants and presenting their suggestions for how to improve the education process in Egypt using the media literacy program.

A workshop on MIL for senior students at the Faculty of Mass Communication

Cairo University in collaboration with Filmpedagogerna of Sweden (associate member of UNITWIN) organized a two-day workshop for senior undergraduate students. They were trained on MIL and production of media materials. In the MIL day in Sweden on January 29, 2014, some of the materials produced by the students of Cairo University were presented. They received a big applause as shown in the photo below.



Model Curricula for Chinese Journalism Education

Li Xiguang & Guo Xiaoke

In December 2005, UNESCO convened a meeting of journalism educators in Paris to consider the broad outlines of a curriculum in the study of journalism that would be suitable for use in developing countries and emerging democracies. Model Curricula for Journalism Education (curricula) was released during the first World Congress of Journalism Educators in 2007. However, journalism education methods often differ due to the various cultural backgrounds and political circumstances of different educational institutions. Chinese journalism education faces the same problems as other countries, but also has its own problems. The authors propose a modular curricula based on extensive suggestions from Chinese journalism educators and journalism professionals, in the hope that the curricula will become the reference for journalism education in over 800 journalism schools around China.

Keywords: journalism education, model curricula, UNESCO, China

Introduction

In December 2005, UNESCO convened a meeting of journalism educators in Paris to consider the broad outlines of a curriculum in the study of journalism that would be suitable for use in developing countries and emerging democracies. The initiative was a response to requests for guidance from UNESCO member states seeking to establish journalism programs within their educational systems. Due to the efforts of the working group, Model Curricula for Journalism Education (curricula) was released during the first World Congress of Journalism Educators in Singapore, June 2007. The curricula analyzes basic conditions of journalism education, provides a teaching syllabus and a journalism course list (including MA courses), and carries out detailed course descriptions for 20 categories of journalism elective courses. The curricula has already been translated into various languages, mainly United Nations official languages, including English, French, Russian, Arabic and Chinese. This journalism curricula model has actually received very good comments from countries around the globe. Many countries gave constructive comments, in-

cluding Arab countries and small island countries in the Pacific. The curricula provide the basis for global journalism education on both a theoretical and practical level.

However, journalism education methods often differ due to the various cultural backgrounds and political circumstances of different educational institutions. Educational traditions and teaching resources in these institutions are also quite different. Considering the situation in China, Chinese journalism education faces the same problems as other countries, but also has its own problems. In addition, due to unbalanced economic development in different regions, educational resources in China are unequally distributed. For example, regions such as Yunnan and Xinjiang are not wealthy and have limited educational resources. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to implement the curricula in those regions. After holding four Journalism Education Reform Seminars in Beijing, Chongqing, Yunnan and Xinjiang, it was decided that the curricula needed localization. This modular curricula is based on extensive suggestions from Chinese journalism education experts, journalism professionals, educators and media experts. It is hoped that this curricula will become the reference for journalism education in over 800 journalism schools around China.

Modular courses

Modularization is the process of dividing the system into several modules from top to bottom when solving a complex problem. Each module has a specific sub-function. All modules are put together according to a specific aim in order to form a system and complete the required functions. Course Modularization aims to categorize a variety of courses into several modules, which are different in terms of depth and scope, such as core courses, elective courses, etc.

Journalism is a practical discipline. According to this curriculum, journalism education should teach students how to find news from a variety of sources and opinions. Students should also learn how to interview people, take photos and do editing for different forms of media (newspapers and magazines, radio and television, Internet and multimedia) and for their specific audience. Journalism education should include theoretical knowledge, thinking skills training and professional skills training. Specifically, journalism education should train those who possess systematic journalism theoretical knowledge and practical skills, have a broad range of cultural and scientific knowledge, know relevant policies and regulations of media, and are capable of working as journalists, editors or management staff for news, publications and publicity organizations.

Focusing on these journalism education goals, journalism courses are divided into two parts, compulsory and elective modules. The compulsory module includes general basic courses, core courses, a professional internship and a

graduation project/thesis. The elective module includes general electives and journalism electives. The elective module is an open modular system. It could be designed according to the teaching resources and characteristics of different schools. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1. Modular Courses

Compulsory	General basic courses	Literature, history, philosophy; English, basic computer skills, sports (PE), etc.
	Core courses	News Reporting and writing (for three or four semesters) journalism theory, journalism history, journalistic English, media ethics, media law and regulations, etc.
	Hands-on training or internship	Students work as intern journalists and editors in media organizations, and are encouraged to publish their stories.
	Graduation project/thesis	Second semester in the fourth year
Electives	General electives	Economics, political science, sociology, law, medical science, physics and engineering, agriculture, etc. (depends on what courses other schools in the University offer)
	Journalism electives	Press media (newspaper editing, commentary and column writing, investigation journalism); Broadcasting media (television filming, television editing, broadcasting, television commentary); Multimedia (photography, graphic design, website making, multimedia production); Industry journalism reporting (environment, health, culture, economy, physical science).
	Creative courses	Extended courses related to journalism

(Note: Modular courses listed above are only for undergraduate studies in China. For diploma courses, please refer to Appendix 1)

Modular course descriptions

General basic courses: The general basic courses include literature, history, philosophy, English, basic computer skills, and sports (PE). Literature is suggested to be taught in the first semester of the first year. The history course

should be taught at the same time, focusing primarily on the historical perspective of thinking and research methods. The philosophy course is mainly about Western philosophy, which aims to improve student's logical way of thinking. It is better if this course is taught in the second semester of the first year. The English language course should be taught for two semesters in the first academic year. The key is that students can prepare themselves well for journalistic English in the future. Basic computer skills should be taught differently for students of Arts and Science. Students should learn to use basic computer applications. They should also improve their information literacy. The PE course should be designed for two semesters in the first academic year.

Core courses: The core courses include news reporting and writing (for three or four semesters), media theory, media history, journalistic English, media ethics, media law, etc.

The news reporting and writing courses (for three or four semesters) includes news and feature writing, in-depth reporting and professional news reporting. Regarding news and feature writing, students could learn how to report on meetings, lectures and other events, how to organize and carry out face-to-face, telephone and e-mail interviews, and how to study trending topics. In-depth reporting enhances student's reporting and writing skills of in-depth news. Professional news reporting is suggested to be taught in the second semester of the third year or the first semester of the fourth year.

Journalism theory aims to introduce basic knowledge, concepts and principles of journalism theory, studies the most general laws of journalism activities, and focuses on studying the specific elements of journalism development in China.

Compared with the history class in the general basic courses, journalism history puts more emphasis on the basic knowledge of journalism. Students mainly learn the historical research methods and the overall development of journalism, including the history of Chinese journalism and foreign journalism. It is recommended that the course be taught in the second semester of the first year.

Journalistic English is necessary so that students develop an international perspective, as English is an international language. This course can last for one or two semesters, emphasizing different topics such as international relations, global economy, etc.

Media ethics mainly focuses on the critical analysis of moral issues and values related to news reporting and writing. It describes the historical development of the establishment of Chinese media ethics studies, observes media ethics teaching in a global perspective, and analyzes some of the basic questions concerning media ethics and moral issues, especially media immoral behaviors in China, such as providing false information and "paid news".

Media law and regulations could be taught in the second semester of the first year. The course aims to strengthen students' acknowledgement of professional identity, journalism values and goals. The course is not necessarily taught by lawyers, but the teachers must have an education background related to law.

Core courses are compulsory module courses and should be placed on the journalism school course platform. Specific course content can be flexible to adjust to the needs of different schools. The key is to lead students to through basics of journalism, and gradually train their professional skills. The six core courses take up about 1/6 of all credits of student's journalism studies.

Hands-on training or internship: An internship should last at least eight weeks to be effective. An internship could be arranged during the holiday between the second year and the third year, or between the third year and the fourth year. Journalism schools should actively cooperate with the media industry. Schools and media organizations could host joint training programs, so that students could get guidance and suggestions from media professionals. The internship accounts for about 1/14 of the total journalism course credits.

Graduation project/thesis: The project/thesis is conducted in the second semester of the fourth year. Most universities in China require students to write a graduation thesis. Universities believe journalism students should study media phenomena from an academic point of view. Of course, some journalism schools have adopted new methods to evaluate a student's performance during their undergraduate studies. In these new methods, Students can use any kind of media to complete one news report or a series of news reports as their final project. This kind of change can be promoted only after obtaining permission from the State Council's Academic Degree Committee. A graduation project or thesis marks the end of a student's undergraduate study, and lays the groundwork for a student's future studies. It accounts for about 1/14 of the total credits.

Those four parts are compulsory modules, taking up about 40%-55% of the total course credits.

General elective courses: The general elective courses include economics, political science, sociology, law, medical science, physics and engineering, and agriculture (depending on what courses other schools in the university offer). These courses are often "platform courses" of the university. For example, universities of finance and economics could take advantage of available resources for the students to take elective courses of finance and economics. The general electives' credits should take up 30% -40% of the total.

This curriculum recommends that undergraduate journalism students should not only have the ability to engage in journalistic work, but also master

knowledge of another academic field. This goal may not be achieved in all the universities. Universities that have fewer resources could lower the requirement accordingly. However, efforts should be made to implement this policy consistently because the study of a second discipline could improve students' thinking ability and prepare them for their future professional career.

Journalism elective courses: These courses include press media (newspaper editing, commentary and column writing, investigation journalism), broadcasting media (television filming, television editing, broadcasting, television commentary), multimedia (photography, graphic design, website making, multimedia production), and industry journalism reporting (environment, health, culture, economy, physical science).

Courses related to press media include contents such as newspaper reporting, writing, editing, page layout and production. Students could learn the basic skills of news editing, reporting task design, commentary and column writing, and investigation journalism.

Courses related to broadcasting media should change the previous situation in which radio broadcasting and television were separated. Instead, the courses should integrate the two parts theoretically and practically. In theory, courses should introduce a broad range of new journalism research results, carry out the basic spirit of cultural criticism theory and maintain a new research vision. In practice, the courses should combine teachers' experiences of participating in media activities with the current development of media. These courses include television filming, television editing and broadcasting skills training, as well as theory and practice of television commentary.

Multimedia courses allow students to learn the latest Internet developments. Students should learn to write for multimedia or online media, including how to use links and databases, publish news reports and update them according to the development of the events.

Courses focusing on reporting teach students how to report different news topics according to the features of various industries and their audience. In these courses, students evaluate the importance and meaning of different news and reflect on their experience in certain fields, as well as their understanding of certain issues after they study relevant subjects.

These four course categories constitute the journalism elective course modules. It is recommended the students choose one or two from the first three types of courses, as well as courses focusing on industry journalism reporting. Journalism electives should account for 15%-20% of the total credits.

Model 1 and Model 2

Modular courses are mainly divided into compulsory and elective courses, with introduction of the courses provided inside the modules. However, modular courses do not include suggestions on the practical education work of Chinese journalism schools. This section introduces two typical models based on the “modular courses”, namely Model 1 and Model 2. There is no good or bad choice between the two models. They are different because of different self-positioning and teaching practices of the journalism schools.

The two typical models are not a quantitative description for the teaching activities of all journalism schools. The key to the two models is to rationally integrate educational resources and improve the quality of journalism education according to the development and problems specific to Chinese journalism education. Some media professionals even believe that journalism graduates can quickly adapt to journalistic work, but due to the narrow focus of their academic knowledge, their future career potential may not be as good as graduates of economics, law or political science. The two models discussed below are just examples. Specific courses and credits should be decided by the schools on the basis of their own needs.

Model 1

Model 1 is designed for journalism schools that have more experienced teachers and more teaching resources. The main features of the model are:

Compulsory modules (see Figure 2): Moderately reduce the proportion of general basic courses and core courses; if conditions permits, encourage students to learn a second foreign language; increase the proportion of hands-on practice and professional internship;

Elective modules (see Figure 3): Encourage educators to create innovative courses, while guiding students to choose general elective courses in order to prepare them for industry news reporting.

Figure 2. Model 1 Compulsory Modules

Compulsory Courses (40%)	General basic courses (10%)	Comprehensive courses of literature, history and philosophy, English language, basic computer skills, sports, etc.
	Core courses (10%)	Journalism basics, news reporting and writing (for two semesters), practice workshops (such as “Caravan Journalism Class”), journalism history, journalistic foreign language or news translation and editing (for two semesters), media ethics, media law and regulations.
	Hands-on training or internship (13%)	Students work as intern journalists and editors in media organizations, and are encouraged to publish their stories.
	Graduation project/ thesis (7%)	Conducted in the second semester of the fourth year. Reform of the form and the content should be encouraged.

(Note: Figures in the bracket represent ratios that the module takes up of the whole credits)

Core courses

Journalism basics: Designed for undergraduate journalism majors. The course includes the following modules: logics, evidence and research (including critical thinking); writing (including grammar and syntax; narrative, descriptive and expository writing); domestic and international systems (including domestic governmental, constitutional and judicial systems; political progress; systems of economics, society and culture; relationship with other countries; the importance of journalism in democratic politics); general knowledge (including basic knowledge of world history and geography; introduction to contemporary social issues such as gender, race, ethnic groups, religion, social classes, poverty and public health; training of reporting these issues with analysis and critical thinking). Through these four modules, students are expected to get more interested in journalism and master the basics of news writing skills.

News reporting and writing: This course aims at laying a solid foundation for industry news reporting. It is recommended that the course be taught for two semesters. Students are encouraged to combine what they learn in the general elective courses with a news writing class, so that they could practice reporting news related to their “second major”.

Journalistic foreign language, news translation and editing: Journalistic foreign language is not limited to English. In those journalism schools that have more extensive teaching resources, students could choose to learn a

second foreign language. In the context of globalization, the ability to translate and edit news is becoming more and more important. Therefore, students should have more training in translating and editing news. It is recommended that the course be taught for two semesters.

Graduation project and thesis: Students could use any kind of media to complete one news report or a series of news reports as their final project. This project is intended to prove that students have the ability to do in-depth research, gather, organize and present large amounts of data and materials. If possible, students should report on a topic related to their general elective courses. In addition, students should submit essays describing what they feel and what they have learned through their coverage of topics. Students must list their reporting sources in this essay, and more importantly, they must discuss ethical, legal, and other related topics reflected in their news reports from an academic perspective.

In general, the compulsory modules of Model 1 mainly aim to train interdisciplinary talents who have strong language ability, theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Figure 3. Model 1 Elective Modules

Elective Courses (60%)	General electives (40%)	Economics, political science, sociology, law, medical science, physics and engineering, agriculture, mathematics and other natural sciences (depends on what courses other schools in the University offer)
	Journalism electives (15%)	Press media (newspaper editing, commentary and column writing, investigation journalism); Broadcasting media (television filming, television editing, broadcasting, television commentary); Multimedia (photography, graphic design, website making, multimedia production); Industry journalism reporting (environment, health, culture, economy, physical science).
	Creative courses (5%)	Extended courses related to journalism

(Note: Figures in the bracket represent ratios that the module takes up of the whole credits)

The proportion that general elective courses take up is 40%, in order to narrow the gap between journalism graduates' knowledge database and the demands of the journalism industry. General elective courses should play the role of creating a "big platform" to expand students' knowledge scope and urge them to learn the "second major." In order to open good general elective courses, staff in journalism schools should communicate and coordinate with other schools.

In Model 1, the proportion of elective modules exceeds the compulsory modules, and the proportion of general elective courses takes up 40%. The content

of general electives should be a systematic, non-journalism curriculum, and belong to platform courses of the University. Students should be encouraged to learn the second discipline as their minor degree according to their own interests. Schools or departments that offer general elective courses should evaluate students' performance.

Model 2

Model 2 is designed for Chinese journalism schools that have fewer teaching resources. The model includes compulsory modules (see Figure 4) and elective modules (see Figure 5). Compulsory modules moderately increase the proportion of general basic courses and journalism core courses, and aim to consolidate students' knowledge of journalism basics and enrich the forms of hands-on courses. Elective modules encourage students to choose more journalism elective courses. Meanwhile, the journalism educators could develop new courses according to regional geographical features or other needs.

Figure 4. Model 2 Compulsory Modules

Compulsory courses (60%)	General basic courses (18%)	Literature, history, philosophy, college English, basic computer skills, sports, etc.
	Core courses (28%)	News reporting and writing (for three semesters), journalism theory, journalism history, media ethics, media law and regulations, media and society, etc.
	Hand-on training or internship (7%)	Students work as intern journalists and editors in media organizations, and are encouraged to publish their stories.
	Graduation project/thesis(7%)	Conducted in the second semester of the fourth year. The major form is graduation thesis.

(Note: Figures in the bracket represent ratios that the module takes up of the whole credits)

The proportion that core courses take up is 28%. Since courses of journalism theory and journalism history are relatively mature and have more textbooks and monographs in China, the proportion of these courses could be increased. The course of Media and Society could be added into the fourth year's curriculum, depending on students' actual knowledge. This course mainly analyzes media functions from the sociological point of view. If conditions permit, other related courses could be added to develop students' professional perspective.

Considering that journalism students in China generally do not have good practical skills, the proportion of hands-on training or internships is increased in Model 2, but it is still less than the proportion of Model 1. Under general circumstances, hands-on training or an internship requires more human labor and material resources, as well as a certain amount of social capital. Therefore, it is recommended that journalism schools strengthen their cooperation with media organizations, and ask them to evaluate students' internship performance independently.

Figure 5. Model 2 Elective Modules

Elective courses (40%)	General electives (10%)	Economics, political science, sociology, law, medical science, physics and engineering, agriculture, etc. (depends on what courses other schools in the University offer)
	Journalism electives (20%)	Press media (newspaper editing, commentary and column writing, investigation journalism); Broadcasting media (television filming, television editing, broadcasting, television commentary); Multimedia (photography, graphic design, website making, multimedia production); Industry journalism reporting (environment, health, culture, economy, physical science).
	Characteristic courses (10%)	Depending on the University's advantaged resources

(Note: Figures in the bracket represent ratios that the module takes up of the whole credits)

For general elective courses, students are required to demonstrate an understanding of knowledge from another non-journalism discipline. The proportion of journalism elective courses is 20%, in order to mobilize journalism teachers and improve students' theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Characteristic courses are based on the university's characteristics and advantages. An example of this is the Global Journalism and Communication School at Southwest University of Political Science and Law. The School adopts an education mode of "journalism as major and law as minor", and forms a unique interdisciplinary advantage by combining journalism and law. Another example is that in Yunnan province, some journalism schools have opened courses such as "Reporting on Yunnan Ethnic Groups," taking full advantage of the regional characteristics.

In Model 2, compulsory modules exceed elective modules, to encourage student's grasp of basic professional knowledge in journalism. In the general elective modules, the proportion of journalism electives is more than the general electives, which aims at training high-level media professionals that

have solid professional knowledge and can work for newspapers, magazines or multimedia agencies.

These two models were born under the credit system of Chinese Universities and Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Academic Degrees. They are the practical application of "modular courses" and "package combinations." It is hoped that this concept of designing different teaching models could provide guidance to the practice of journalism education reform in China.

Diploma in Journalism (Two-year Post-secondary)

Education in secondary school varies from country to country and from school to school. Those wishing to train as journalists, however, should be able to demonstrate an aptitude for journalism that includes an ability to read, write and speak correctly in their own language and in the language(s) they would be using as journalists, as well as an interest in the civic, cultural and other mechanisms of their own community and society. Students should emerge from a diploma program well versed. They need to be practiced in the basic techniques and forms of journalism reporting and writing (presentation and performance in the broadcast media), and also in the ethics and laws that circumscribe the practice of journalism. University-based schools of journalism may, as part of their admission procedures, establish a credit system in which working in a diploma course would be assessed and weighed for credit towards a bachelor's degree. In that case, the following program could serve as a bridge between secondary school and a bachelor's program in journalism.

First year

First term

- Foundations of journalism, with units in:
 - Logic, evidence and research** (incorporating critical thinking)
 - Writing** (incorporating grammar and syntax, narrative, descriptive and explanatory methods)
 - National and international institutions** (incorporating a basic understanding of one's own country's system of government, its constitution, system of justice, political process, economy, social and cultural organization, its relations with other countries, and the place of journalism in the architecture of democracy)
 - General knowledge** (incorporating basic knowledge of national and international history and geography and an introduction to contemporary social issues and other issues of importance to journalists, including gender, cultural diversity, religion, social class, conflict, poverty, development issues, and

public health issues, with training in applying analytical and critical techniques to news coverage of these issues)

- **Arts/science courses**

Schools should decide whether to specify which arts/science courses, individually or packaged, students should be required or encouraged to take. This will depend, among other things, on the level of education in the various disciplines students attained from high school and courses accessible to diploma students.

Second term

- **Reporting and writing (Tier 1):** Basic news and feature stories.

- **Media law**

Schools may choose to offer a media law course in the second year of the program. However, it should be offered before students' work is published or broadcast.

- **Media and society**

- **Arts/science courses**

Between first and second year

Placement/internship/work experience

Four weeks is the minimum length of an effective placement. A longer placement would be more instructive. Work experience should be supervised and evaluated by a field supervisor.

Second year

First term

- **Reporting and writing (Tier 2): In-depth journalism**

- **Broadcast reporting and writing (radio and television)**

- **Journalism ethics**

- **Arts/science courses**

Second term

- **Reporting and writing (Tier 2) (continued)**

- **Multimedia/online journalism and digital developments**

- **Newspaper workshop:** reporting, editing, design and production, with instruction in photojournalism

OR

- **Broadcast workshop:** radio and TV editing, production, and performance

Schools that wish to require students to take both newspaper and broadcast workshops could offer these workshops as shorter units or offer workshops in both semesters of the second year.

- **Arts/science courses**

Diploma in Journalism (One-year Mid-career)

First term

- Reporting and writing (Tier 2): In-depth journalism
- Media law
- Journalism ethics
- Arts/science courses coordinated with Tier 3 specialization

Second term

- Reporting and writing (Tier 3): Specialized journalism
- Media and society
- Multimedia/online journalism
- Arts/science courses coordinated with Tier 3 specialization

Adapting to Changes

Communication and media in higher education

Sherri Hope Culver

Schools of higher education focusing on communication are in a transition globally. Definitions of media are broadening to include scores of new technologies. Methods of sharing messages, providing breaking news and enjoying entertainment have become at once more personal, and more international. Colleges and universities offering degrees in communication that once focused exclusively on television or film are now dealing with the realities of a field and an industry in transition. The lines between radio, TV, film, journalism, advertising, etc are not so firmly drawn. How do these changes impact institutions conducting research and training students for media-related careers?

Temple University is one institution facing these challenges. Exploring its programs, research centers and innovative approaches to education highlights some of the possibilities for higher education in this new environment. Some of Temple University's innovations reside within the newly named School of Media and Communication; others may be found throughout the institution, in a wide range of programs and activities. Although found in different departments and schools within the university, themes of media literacy, information literacy and civic engagement are consistent.

Keywords: journalism, communication, media literacy, development communication, technology

Introduction

Schools of higher education focusing on communication are in a transition globally. Definitions of media are broadening to include scores of new technologies. Methods of sharing messages, providing breaking news and enjoying entertainment have become at once more personal, and more international. Colleges and universities offering degrees in communication that once focused exclusively on television or film are now dealing with the realities of a field and an industry in transition. The lines between radio, TV, film, journalism, advertising, etc are not so firmly drawn. How do these changes impact institutions conducting research and training students for media-related careers?

Temple University's School of Media and Communication is one institution

facing these challenges. Exploring its programs, research centers and innovative approaches to education highlights some of the possibilities for higher education in this new environment. Some of Temple University's innovations reside within the newly named School of Media and Communication; others may be found throughout the institution, in a wide range of programs and activities.

School of Media and Communication

The mission of the School of Media and Communication is to advance the role of communication in public life. The School of Media and Communication (SMC) was named in 2012, after a realignment that shifted several departments out of the previously titled School of Communication and Theater and into a newly named College of Performing Arts. SMC offers cross-disciplinary programs in advertising; communication studies; journalism; media studies and production; and strategic communication. The school is one of the largest in the country, with three thousand undergraduate and graduate students and over sixty full-time faculty. (The full university enrolled forty-five thousand students in 2013.) The realignment also brought a new Dean to SMC in September 2013; David Boardman, former Executive Editor and Senior Vice-President of the Seattle Times newspaper.

SMC has its own music label (Owl Recording), local news website (AxisPhilly.org) and digital cable channel (TempleTV.net) which provide professional-level opportunities for students.

Within the School of Media and Communication professors and students engage in programs highlighting the need for and value of media and information literacy skills. Numerous courses require students to reflect on their own media use, deconstruct media texts, create media content, and analyze the influence of media on particular audiences. While some of these practices may be fairly common in higher education communication programs, other initiatives reflect new approaches and methods of student engagement. A new degree program combines the strength of a well-respected communication school with the realities of our global economy.

Globalization and Development Communication

<http://smc.temple.edu/gdc/>

Recognizing the immense impact of media in affecting social change, during summer 2014 the School of Media and Communication will unveil a new masters degree program in Globalization and Development Communication

(GDC). The program is designed to meet the challenges of the 21st century in areas such as public health, peace and conflict, food security, human rights, gender equality, and sustainability. The program approaches communication as a tool for development and social change. Media literacy and information literacy are critical skills for such citizen empowerment, whether through government institutions, nongovernmental institutions or directly to citizens. The GDC program acknowledges the influence of messaging in informing and educating a citizenry and explores how persuasive messaging can be used to empower or disenfranchise. The one-year intensive program draws from a long history and vast body of theory and research on the practice of development communication, and aims to promote responsible, ethical social change.

The GDC program was developed through the collaboration of Dr. Patrick D. Murphy and Dr. Thomas Jacobson, both of whom have strong backgrounds in communication for social change. Jacobson, who will serve as the program's inaugural director, states "development communication specialists can help raise public understanding, build consensus, and generate change by effectively using the range of communication alternatives available, whether through facilitating processes of dialogue among stakeholders or through media campaigns" (personal interview 2014). A core component of the program is the field experience that each student must engage in as a requirement for the degree. Spending time researching and working within nonprofits, NGO's, and organizations in national and international locations encourages empathy for the cultural realities that deeply impact social change.

The valuing of service learning is reflected throughout the university in a wide-range of activities, courses and programs and was a core value of the university's founder, Russell Conwell (Hilty, 2010). Two programs described below specifically seek to combine service learning with media literacy goals. Service learning courses often combine assignments, readings and class discussions with projects connecting course topics to community needs. Service learning has become a frequent practice in higher education as universities seek to bring real-life experiences to their students and improvements to neighboring communities. (Stoecker and Tryon, 2009)

Prime Movers

<http://www.primemoversphiladelphia.org/>

The Prime Movers Philadelphia program brings journalism and communication students from Temple University to inner-city high school classrooms in Philadelphia to help teachers and students create newspapers and podcasts in places where school newspapers were long forgotten or never existed. The initiative includes a course ("High School Journalism Workshop"), special work-

shops for high school teachers, field trips for high school teachers and students to the university, and a four-week summer program for high school students. Since 2007 the program has reached 19 schools throughout Philadelphia.

The mission of Prime Movers is to “create pathways for staff diversity and the next generation of journalists.” Students create media products for television, radio, newspaper and online media. Through the program, students improve their writing, critical thinking, and other 21st century skills, including media and information literacy.

Acel Moore, a former award-winning columnist at the Philadelphia Inquirer, started the Prime Movers Philadelphia program. The program is run through Temple University under the leadership of journalism professor Maida Odom as part of the journalism department’s Scholastic Journalism Initiative. Odom worked as a reporter for over twenty years, including reporting for the Boston Globe and the Philadelphia Inquirer, before joining the faculty of Temple University. Dorothy Gillam, an award-winning journalist and columnist for The Washington Post, started the national Prime Movers program in 1997 at George Washington University in Washington, DC. It was the nation’s first journalism mentorship program targeting urban schools.

The program develops media and information literacy skills within the three major participant groups; university students; high school students, high school teachers. Rather than simply sitting in a classroom and reading chapters about the value of journalism in developing an informed citizenry, this community-based learning initiative uses experiential education to provide a hands-on challenge. University students develop the skills necessary to reflect on the messages media provides and the responsibility of journalists in shaping those messages. High school students grapple with the ethical questions and professional issues that arise when trying to provide news that informs, but also attracts an audience. High school teachers learn new methods of news gathering and how social media is changing the news business.

In many high schools, the program takes the shape of an afterschool media club. Students learn skills in the areas of newsgathering, research, critical thinking, writing, and innovative uses of state-of-the-art technology. Civic engagement often grows as students learn more about the Constitution’s Bill of Rights, particularly as it relates to the First Amendment and freedom of speech. Professor Maida Odom has seen the impact first hand, stating that

“offering urban teenagers an opportunity for empowering self-expression through journalistic discourse encourages public-engagement and appreciation for the responsibilities of citizenship. The value of these neglected young people as citizens and future practitioners and consumers of media has been embraced by our Journalism Department, our students and outside funders ” (Odom 2012).

The program is especially important in Philadelphia; a large, urban school

district where many specialty programs have been eliminated due to budget cuts and lack of resources.

The program is influencing future journalists, future college journalism students, and future engaged and informed citizens. Whether or not the students involved in the program pursue careers in journalism, all will be future consumers of news and information.

High School Advertising Workshop

Inspired by the success of Prime Movers and its High School Journalism Workshop, professor Dana Saewitz started the High School Advertising Workshop. In this program, undergraduate students majoring in advertising at Temple University serve as mentors and instructors in afterschool advertising clubs at Philadelphia public high schools. The college students teach high school students basic advertising concepts and skills, including market research, creative development, public relations and public speaking. They conduct activities that encourage reflection on the role of advertising in a culture, and the influence of advertising in citizens lives (Saewitz 2013).

The success of the project hinges on the integrated goals of each participating group to the larger project. For university students, the project provides an opportunity to put into practice their newly learned advertising skills and leadership skills. For the high school students, the project provides an opportunity to engage in activities that help them understand career possibilities in advertising and media, while gaining an understanding of the power and influence of advertising on society. A key partner in the program is the Philadelphia Ad Club, an association for advertising, marketing and media professionals (www.phillyadclub.com) and the Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters. (<http://www.pab.org>) For these partners, the project helps to develop a pipeline of ethnically diverse local talent. Through their involvement students are able to network with professionals within the city-wide communications industry.

Each workshop focuses on a particular “client” for a full semester. Focusing on a client’s needs (rather than a student’s own creative ideas) helps students experience the realities of an industry that targets specific media audiences and the financial bottom-line. The High School Advertising Workshop launched in Fall 2011 with the city’s major league baseball team, the Philadelphia Phillies, as its client. The following year, advertising campaigns focused on the local food bank.

Service-learning programs such as this High School Advertising Workshop lean heavily on an individual faculty member’s desire and commitment to bring such programs to life. This was certainly reflected in the actions of assistant professor Dana Saewitz, who started the program. She states “The High School Advertising Workshop created a connected-learning experience in an academic

framework. This created a unique environment for learning.” (2013) Saewitz spent fifteen years working in advertising before coming to Temple University. Her approach to curriculum development and course development has been shaped by those years working in the advertising industry and has led to creating courses with deep experiential learning opportunities.

Center for Media and Information Literacy

www.centermil.org

The Center for Media and Information Literacy (CMIL) was established in 2011 as a hub for research, outreach, education, and professional development on issues involving media literacy and information literacy locally, nationally, and internationally. Whether working with classroom teachers, students, parents, administrators, or the media industry, the CMIL approaches each project as an opportunity to deepen understanding about media literacy and the evaluative tools necessary to bring a critical eye to media’s influence and ability to both educate and entertain. This balance is perhaps most clearly realized in the production of its monthly TV series, *Media Inside Out*. This series approaches media with an appreciation for its potential as entertainment, and even as an educational tool, but balances that with an understanding of its impact and influence. Each episode digs deep into a specific media theme or media property with panelists representing education, research and the media industry. Past episodes of *Media Inside Out* have covered the influence of celebrity culture; reflections of diversity in commercials; the audience shift from consumer to author; the digital divide; and the growth of explicit lyrics in popular music.

Analyzing and evaluating representations of media literacy in children’s media is the topic of a research project currently underway at the CMIL titled “Media Literacy in Children’s Television”. Students are screening numerous episodes of popular children’s television programs and analyzing them against a rubric of media literacy terms and situations. Analysis of the information will help the CMIL provide insight into the ways in which children are being introduced to concepts of media use, media deconstruction, media analysis, media literacy and the media industry, and will highlight the places in which deeper information is possible and necessary. This information will be helpful to media producers interested in integrating these concepts into their content.

Providing professional development for K12 teachers is at the center of a project in development with the School District of Philadelphia. Recently adopted Common Core State Standards specify several areas in which media and information literacy is a vital component, including English and Language Arts. The challenge for schools is to find a way to help teachers obtain the training they need to weave the topic into discussions and curriculum already

taking place in their classrooms. The CMIL is working with the Office of Curriculum and Assessment to analyze the needs of Philadelphia teachers and recommend methods for improving their understanding of media and information literacy. It is hoped that these professional development workshops will take place during the 2014-2015 school year.

While the focus on media and information literacy is most readily seen in the School of Media and Communication, there are activities throughout the university reflecting a strong focus in these areas. The selection of examples below serves to highlight a few of those activities.

Teaching Learning Technology Roundtable

Recognizing the cross-departmental impact of technology at the university, the Provost instituted a faculty committee to address this growing focus. The “Teaching Learning Technology Roundtable” (TLTR) was developed to promote the effective use of technology to enrich teaching and learning. Members of the TLTR come from a wide range of departments and research areas, including both administration and faculty. Objectives of the TLTR include 1) advising administration on technology policy and strategy; 2) developing initiatives that encourage best practice for faculty and academic units in their use of technology in teaching; 3) assisting with initiatives developed by other university administrative departments connecting to teaching with technology; 4) encouraging best practice in online education and any other teaching in technology goals in alignment with Provost’s goals; and 5) encouraging sharing between faculty and among faculty. During the 2013-2014 academic year the TLTR advised on selection of the university’s learning management system(s), developed and advised on grant programs to encourage faculty use of technology and e-textbooks, and promoted the use of a newly developed online portal (“the Commons”) as a method for sharing methods and ideas supporting technology and learning.

During Spring 2014 the university held a “Teaching with Technology Symposium” (<http://sites.temple.edu/tts>). The Symposium was a collaboration of the TLTR committee, the Instructional Support Center, the Teaching and Learning Center, and the General Education program. Designed to inspire faculty and administration in their efforts with teaching and technology, the Symposium successfully brought together over 230 participants. Presentations encouraged peer collaboration, a sharing of best practices, and information on new innovations facilitating teaching and learning. Keynote speaker, Dr Donald Marinelli, co-founder of the Carnegie Mellon Entertainment Technology Center, pushed attendees to consider the impact of cognition on teaching with his keynote “Left Brain/Right Brain: One Brain/Whole Brain”. Although this symposium was open only to university faculty and staff, future

events will likely be open to the community, and faculty and staff at other institutions of higher education.

Digital Scholarship Center

Digital technologies are reshaping the modes and methods of scholarly inquiry and producing new forms of scholarly output beyond journal articles and books. Libraries, notably libraries within research institutions, are rising to meet this challenge by developing new data management services, data curation methods, mapping systems, and visualization techniques to digital objects of study in a broad range of disciplines. These changes reflect the evolving field of information literacy.

To facilitate this expanded role, Temple University is developing a Digital Scholarship Center within Paley Library under the leadership of Joe Lucia, Dean of Libraries. The Center will serve as an interdisciplinary and inter-college center of gravity to facilitate digital scholarship and the digital arts at the university.

The Center will support the work of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates who aim to push their scholarly activities to integrate new digital resources and approaches. Disciplines in fields as disparate as literary studies, art history, sociology and communication studies will come together in collaboration on new digital projects. The Center will provide project management expertise to help faculty and students foster innovation and creativity in their digital scholarship. Plans are to open the Center in January 2015.

Information Literacy Cross Teams

Seeking to integrate information literacy into student's experiences on campus, Temple Libraries and the General Education Program jointly sponsor Information Literacy Cross Teams (ILCT). The teams collaborate to create new activities and approaches that will integrate core concepts of information literacy into the university's general education courses. The teams consist of a faculty instructor, a librarian and a student. A showcase is held during the year to highlight success stories.

According to the American Library Association Information Competency Standards (2000) Information literacy is a "set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information." The Information Literacy Cross Teams regard information literacy as a lifelong learning skill that crosses all learning environments and disciplines.

Digital Literacy in the College of Engineering

The College of Engineering includes a heavy emphasis on digital media literacy and youth construction and control of media for social change through its STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) initiatives. Undergraduate students are involved in several programs in which they work with high school and middle school students on projects requiring an understanding of digital literacy and how to manage it responsibly as future leaders, ethical hackers and social change agents. For example, students participating in the Mathematics, Engineering & Science Achievement initiative (MESA) integrate both engineering and computer science skills to program mobile apps, write code to control prosthetic devices, and storyboard marketing campaigns to engage other undergraduate and K-12 students in future STEM careers. In addition to their local impact, students engaged in digital literacy are extending their peer to peer outreach through upcoming digital exchanges with undergraduate and high school students in the STEMbees program in Accra, Ghana and the Steve Biko Institute in Salvador de Bahia.

Conclusion

Once relegated to a specific school or college, media and information literacy is increasingly seen as a skill that crosses academic areas and industries. Students are creating videos in their sociology courses; blogs in their education courses; and researching the media industry in their business courses. Faculty committees, such as the Teaching Learning Technology Roundtable at Temple University, while focused on technology in classrooms, are actually building on to the case for media literacy and information literacy skills as a basic component of a strong education in higher learning.

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Strategic Promotion and Expansion of Information Literacy Education

Professional development and outreach programmes

Paulette A. Kerr

While information literacy (IL) has increasingly become a core area in many Library and Information Science (LIS) programmes, courses taught in these programmes are geared specifically for an academic audience in formal credit bearing agendas. Drastic changes in information technology as well as differences in what constitutes information literacy demand changes in approaches to IL training and education.

Is there a role for LIS programmes to address information literacy needs of information professionals outside the formal academic environment? Should LIS programmes address workplace information literacy needs? What should the content of these programmes include to be relevant to workplace needs? Further should LIS programmes aim at developing information literacy among high school students? Or is this role restricted to school librarians and teachers?

Beginning the 2012/13 academic year, The Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS) at the University of the West Indies (UWI)¹, Mona, Jamaica, significantly expanded its offerings in IL education and training beyond courses in its formal degree programmes.

This article outlines the work of the DLIS in strategically positioning itself as a key player in promoting and offering information literacy education outside its core courses. The DLIS also seized an opportunity afforded by UWI outreach to high schools, to create and offer IL workshops for high school and community college students. The article details recent workshops designed and presented for these communities. It also brings to the fore information literacy research intended to inform practice.

Keywords: Information literacy; workplace learning; LIS education; professional development; high schools, MIL

Introduction

While information literacy has increasingly become a core area in many Library and Information Science (LIS) programmes (Ishimura & Bartlett, 2010; Jiyane & Onyancha, 2010; Stewart & Bravo, 2013), courses taught in these programmes are geared specifically for an academic audience in formal credit bearing situations. It seems, however, that as higher education diversifies worldwide, there is a need to adapt and diversify information literacy initiatives to meet the needs of new populations (Lange, Canuel & Fitzgibbons, 2011), and the changing requirements of existing populations. Gadagin (2012) extends this argument and notes that with new learning experiences which have come about from the explosion of knowledge and information technology, there is a need for drastic changes in educating Library and Information Science professionals beyond the classroom. The author advocates for workplace learning as part of continuing education for these professionals. Weiner (2011) states however that while it is important to address the differences between academic IL and workplace competencies, the question of who should assume the responsibility for teaching information literacy as applied to the workplace is unresolved.

Is there therefore a role for LIS programmes in information literacy education and training outside the formal academic environment? What of the workplace information literacy needs of information professionals? Further, should LIS programmes aim at offering IL training to high school students? While researchers like Fraser, Shaw & Rustin (2013), among others speak to collaborative initiatives between academic librarians and school librarians in offering IL training to students, there is little about the role of LIS faculty in schools.

At the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona, Jamaica, the Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS) took the initiative in 2013 to design and offer a range of IL workshops to information professionals as well as high school students.

Information Literacy Education at UWI

Information literacy has been in the curriculum of the Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS) at the University of the West Indies (UWI) since 1997/98 when Dr. Cherrell Shelley Robinson, then a member of the fulltime Faculty in the DLIS, developed LIBS 3602 Information Literacy: Concept and Practice. The course, a first among LIS Programmes worldwide, was developed primarily to equip future librarians with requisite IL competencies and became a popular choice for teachers-in-training in the School of Education, UWI. Increasing demand for the course has resulted in it being offered in a number

of off-campus sites. In 2012/13 as part of the DLIS curriculum review and enhancement process, the fare of formal IL courses was increased to include LIBS3604 Teaching Information Literacy; and LIBS6003 Information Literacy Instruction to ensure that all graduates (undergraduates and postgraduates) were equipped to assume teaching of IL (Stewart & Bravo, 2013).

A formal programme of information literacy training is also offered by the Mona Information Literacy Unit of the UWI, Mona Library (<http://myspot.mona.uwi.edu/library/information-literacy-0>). The MILU has made significant strides in ensuring that graduates of the UWI, Mona are equipped with information literacy attributes (Kerr, 2012).

DLIS and professional development

As part of its mission in developing information professionals equipped to deal with constant change in the information environment, the DLIS has been very involved in offering continuing education programmes to information professionals on wide ranging topics. Most recently its annual Summer Institute and workshops have examined areas including information technology, business information resources, advanced cataloguing and metadata as well as legal information sources. However this suite of workshops did not include information literacy teaching.

This decision by DLIS, UWI to offer professional development training and education in IL was informed by i) the growing importance of information literacy education in all levels and types of educational institutions in Jamaica; ii) an absence of structured IL initiatives in some of these institutions; iii) the institution's central role in promoting and delivering IL education as part of the UNESCO MILID UNITWIN² Chair; iv) a resulting need to change its offerings to incorporate issues of media literacy as part of UNESCO'S thrust at a combined concept of media and information literacy (MIL). In addition, as Weiner (2011) indicates, there is evidence that the information needs and information-seeking behaviours of those in the workforce are different than those of students.

Professional development workshops in Media and Information Literacy

The Department of Library and Information Studies at UWI, Mona, significantly expanded its offerings in IL education and training beyond courses in its formal degree programmes based on a number of events. Firstly, there has been an increased demand for information literacy training by graduates of the

DLIS, UWI who had not benefited from the formal IL courses. Many of these graduates were placed in higher education institutions, including community and teachers colleges, and with the growing importance of information literacy in these institutions, were required to provide instruction and training. Other members of teaching staff in these institutions are also expected to assume responsibilities for teaching IL. Unfortunately no structured programmes existed for equipping these professionals as teachers of IL. Further many of these persons expressed the inability to appropriate the formal courses offered by the DLIS because of time constraints. Summer workshops were therefore designed to meet the workplace needs in IL teaching. Other IL and Media and Information Literacy (MIL) workshops were delivered to promote the DLIS and its work.

Summer workshops

During summer 2013, the DLIS offered the following workshops.

1. Information Literacy for Teachers and Information Professionals. June 2013

This workshop included 20 participants from a range of educational institutions including teachers colleges, community colleges, high schools, and research and academic libraries.

2. Information Literacy for HEART Trust/NTA Library and Information Personnel. July 2013

This workshop was requested by the HEART Trust/NTA³ to address a need for IL training among library and information personnel who are responsible to provide IL instruction throughout the multi-level educational institution. Twenty-one participants from HEART Trust/NTA institutions across Jamaica attended.

These were intense, hands-on, two-day workshops which were tailored to the specific target groups. It was decided to include a module on media literacy especially as teachers and information personnel were expected to offer media literacy training. The workshops examined the following areas:

- Information Literacy: Concept, Standards, Models & the Curriculum
- Approaches to Teaching Information Literacy
- Teaching Media Literacy: Definition, Content and Strategies
- Model Lesson: “How to Search for Information”
- Practical Lesson Planning, Implementation and Evaluation
- Teaching Information Literacy: The research Process
- Teaching Information Literacy: Challenges and Strategies
- Teaching Information Literacy using Web2.0

In summer 2014, the DLIS will deliver a workshop in St Lucia on media and information literacy to library and information professionals from the Caribbean. This is part of the strategic objective of the DLIS to provide professional development initiatives in the Caribbean region.

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Curriculum Workshop

In February 2014, as part of the MILID UNITWIN Exchange Programme⁴, the DLIS offered a workshop to teachers and information professionals on aspects of the UNESCO *Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers* (2011) in partnership with the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), UWI. This workshop which was geared primarily for high school teachers and college lecturers, represents part of the thrust of UNESCO via members of the MILID UNITWIN Chair to adapt, promote and integrate the curriculum in educational institutions, especially teacher training colleges. Participants included librarians, college lecturers, primary and high school teachers and graduate students in the MILID Exchange Programme from across the island. Select areas of the MIL curriculum addressed during the workshop included:

- Core Teacher Competencies
- Deconstructing Media
- Teaching Information literacy: the Curriculum
- Internet Opportunities and Challenges

Information Literacy workshops to public librarians

As part of a National Information Literacy Initiative of the Jamaica Library Service⁵, Dr Cherrell Shelley Robinson, adjunct lecturer in the DLIS conducted a series of workshops to train senior staff members to develop online tutorials for teaching library patrons, information literacy skills.

UNESCO MIL Caribbean workshops

The UWI through the Department of Library and Information Studies was also a key player in two UNESCO led workshops on media and information literacy to policy makers and information professionals in the Caribbean.

Workshop 1, held in Castries, St Lucia, July 2013 was developed for Policy Makers from OECS territories and examined i) overview of MIL as separate and combined concepts; designing strategies for national and region MIL Policy deployment ; the MIL Assessment Framework and building national MIL Assessment Strategies.

Workshop 2 held in Tortola, BVI, December 2013 targeted journalists and information professionals in the British Virgin Islands. The workshop included sessions on MIL as a 21st century competency framework; importance of MIL for personal, professional development and for lifelong learning; Strategies for MIL development at national and institutional levels; strategies for MIL Policy and MIL assessment strategies.

Head of the Department of DLIS, author of this paper was as a key presenter in both workshops delivering in various areas towards assisting participants to understand theoretical MIL concepts and develop strategies for moving MIL from theory to practical policy development.

Sharing IL research

As part of its mission to promote and deliver IL education, the DLIS is committed to provide the highest standard of research to inform teaching and practice in LIS. Research projects in information literacy provide avenues for promoting the work of the DLIS to a larger audience, as well as updating LIS Professionals.

The public forum “Achieving Media and Information Literacy: The Challenge to the Education System” was held in March 2013 to share findings of the award winning UNESCO funded Research Project carried out by Dr Cherrell Shelley-Robinson on media and information literacy among in-service and in-training teachers in four Caribbean countries (Shelley-Robinson, 2013). Over 50 participants comprising lecturers, library and information professionals and students shared with two discussants from higher educational institutions the implications of the findings for educational initiatives.

Award- winning information literacy research by the Head of DLIS and the author of this paper has examined the implications of IL education and training in academic institutions on developing university graduate attributes (Kerr, 2012).

The research on media and information literacy among teachers, conducted by Shelley- Robinson, has been ‘extended’ via a UWI Principal’s funded project in the DLIS aimed at examining the media and information literacy levels of students at the exit stages of schools in the Jamaican education system (exit stages relate to grades 6; 11 and 13: grades at which students may ‘leave’ if they are not moving to another grade). The in-depth study now being conducted will inform policy towards information literacy education in schools in Jamaica and possibly the Caribbean region.

Outreach to high schools and community colleges

As part of its strategic initiatives for the 2012-17 period, the DLIS placed outreach to high schools high on its agenda. This was partly to promote its programmes to potential incoming students in an environment of decreasing student intake and increasing institutional competition. As part of this thrust, a new staff member was assigned responsibility for outreach initiatives and the result was the development of varied tools to market and promote not only the Department's programmes but one of its key areas of research and teaching specialization, information literacy.

One such tool developed in the 2012/13 academic year was an information literacy workshop targeted to equip high school students with research competencies using the Marland's 9 Step Model (Marland, 1981 as cited in Pickard, Shenton and Johnson, 2012). Conceptualization for the workshop came from the new staff member Kerry Ann Rodney Wellington and was developed by Dr Cherrell Shelley-Robinson, IL expert and consultant in the DLIS. The Workshop, *Maximising SBA Scores: Mastering Research Skills* was piloted in November 2012 as part of the UWI promotion to high school and community college students in the Western parishes of Jamaica. The positive impact of the workshop on students resulted in it being requested by the UWI outreach team for presentation in January 2013 to over 700 high school students from a leading secondary school as part of UWI's outreach programme.

The decision to design and offer this workshop to high school students was indeed a strategic one since it afforded the DLIS an opportunity to include a workshop in the suite of SBA⁶ workshops being presented by departments and schools in the Faculty of Humanities and Education at the UWI. This was one way of promoting the DLIS to incoming students. In addition, the workshop represented an avenue to provide information literacy competencies to these high school students, especially as research skills are offered in an ad-hoc manner in schools. Another positive outcome was the reach of the workshop. While the workshop was developed primarily for high school students, it also became popular among community college students pursuing CAPE courses. In addition, teachers accompanying students to these outreach activities participated in the workshops. To date the workshop has been delivered in multiple outreach programmes of the UWI and the DLIS including UWI Research Days 2013 and 2014 and has benefitted over 500 high school students and teachers.

Conclusion

Is there a role for LIS programmes to address information literacy needs of information professionals outside the formal academic environment? Should LIS programmes address workplace information literacy needs? What should the content of these programmes include to be relevant to workplace needs? Further, should LIS programmes aim at developing information literacy among high school students?

The Department of Library and Information Studies at the University of the West Indies Mona has answered these questions with a resounding “yes” via the varied programmes towards promoting information literacy research, education and training.

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Notes

- 1 UWI is a regional university serving the English speaking Caribbean with campuses in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago as well as the Open Campus. For details see <http://www.uwi.edu/index.asp>
- 2 UNESCO and UNAOC (United Nations Alliance of Civilizations) created the UNESCO-UNAOC UNITWIN Global Chair on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (“UNESCO-UNAOC MILID UNITWIN”) of eight universities who have responsibility to among other things promote Media and Information Literacy. For details see <http://www.unaoc.org/communities/academia/unesco-unaoc-milid/>
- 3 HEART Trust/NTA is a national institution for developing technical and vocational competencies. For detail see <http://www.heart-nta.org/>
- 4 MILID UNITWIN Student Exchange Programme 2014 was facilitated by UNESCO and the University of Sao Paulo and included graduate students from 5 of the MILID UNITWIN universities.
- 5 Jamaica Library Service provides a network of public and school libraries at service points throughout the 13 parishes of Jamaica. The service has responsibility for 124 public libraries and 926 school libraries.
- 6 SBA, School-based Assessment is part of the CSEC and CAPE programmes are the official secondary school programmes and examinations of the Caribbean offered by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). For details see <http://www.cxc.org/>

Information Literacy in the Digital Age: Morocco as a case study

Abdelhamid Nfissi

The Digital Age is characterized by the free flow of information and the ability of individuals to transfer this information freely, and to have instant access to knowledge that would have been difficult or impossible to find previously. This free access to information and knowledge leads to sustainable and equitable opportunities for growth and progress, but many cases of defamation, mistakes and misinterpretations are reported. Besides, Internet ethics are violated by information providers and organizations, which may have a big impact on people if they are not information literate consumers.

Information Literacy emerges as a set of skills and competencies to equip digital citizens to effectively access the Internet and information communication technologies. The aim of this article is to examine the role Information Literacy (IL) plays in successfully integrating citizens into the digital age and to evaluate the measures taken by Morocco to integrate Moroccans into the digital age.

Key words: Digital age, Information Literacy, citizenship, Information communication technologies

Introduction

The Digital age brings forth a rapid global communications system and opportunities for networking. The Internet and other information providers are great mediums of information for all people in the world.

The digital age aims to improve the standards and the quality of living of citizens. It aims to bring benefits to them such as economic growth, better health, participation and good governance, and creates enlightened and responsible citizens.

Digital citizens can be defined as those who use the Internet and other information providers on a daily basis for political, social and economic purposes. But these citizens can achieve these goals more effectively only if they are infor-

mation literate, equipped with information literacy skills and competencies.

However, the information digital citizens are exposed to on the Internet may determine and shape their attitudes, understanding, interpretation, beliefs, and their views about the world. There are unprecedented amounts of mistakes, prejudice, stereotype, propaganda, defamation, manipulation, misinformation, and many types of distorted information online.

To know how to access, analyse, and evaluate these influences and to know how to distinguish between reliable, trustworthy information and unreliable information is the concern of every one, but especially of youth who become more and more Internet and ICT dependent.

Many people are not information literate, especially in the developing world: some people are not vigilant when they surf the Net, and they do not know how to locate the required information they are looking for. They do not know how to discriminate facts from opinions. As a result they are too often influenced by the information they encounter in their academic, personal and social life.

In this context, Information Literacy becomes imperative to empower audiences to be more critical and discriminating in their reception, evaluation and use of information and to develop high critical and analytical skills in order to be active and responsible information consumers.

Being aware of these challenges, many states, governments, schools, and associations have found it necessary to equip individuals, pupils, students, individuals and all citizens with the skills to be integrated into the information age.

The aim of this article then is to examine how IL emerges as a strong tool to equip citizens with the skills to cope with the challenges of the digital age. This article is divided into two parts. Part one examines the importance of Information Literacy in the digital age. Part two deals with the action plans taken by Morocco and Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University in the field of Information literacy to better prepare Moroccan citizens for the digital age.

Information Literacy and its importance in the digital age

What is Information Literacy?

Traditionally, literacy means the ability to read and write. But Information literacy is quite different. The concept of Digital Literacy, emerging with the birth of the Internet and information providers in the early 1980s, has rapidly developed and been recognized as a critical thinking skill and competency for the twenty-first century. It becomes the main tool to help citizens to cope with the challenges of what we call today the information age. It provides the framework for all citizens to learn how to find, critically evaluate, seek, check

and use information in a variety of forms and in different contexts to become responsible viewers, creators, readers and users of different media and information contents.

There is a general consensus forming that information literacy can be understood as an umbrella that encompasses library skills, computer literacy, thinking skills, media literacy, visual literacy and culture literacy, in addition to research skills and evaluation of print and online sources.

Bruce (1997) has defined several components to be included in information literacy.

1. Computer literacy
2. IT literacy
3. Library skills
4. Information skills
5. Learning to learn

Ilene.F. Rockman and associates (2004: 3) states that an information literate individual is able to:

- Determine the extent of information needed
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its source critically
- Incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Understand the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally

A. Nfissi and D. Chouit (2014) provide a comprehensive definition for information literacy. They note that Information Literacy empowers citizens to:

1. Access information efficiently and effectively;
2. Evaluate information critically and competently;
3. Use information accurately, creatively and ethically;
4. Be an independent and autonomous learner, reader and viewer;
5. Opt for excellence in information seeking;
6. Be a critical thinker by interpreting information objectively and scientifically;
7. Be a responsible and active citizen in society by defending the right to access information, which is a priority target of democratic countries and a requirement to better prepare citizens for the information age;

8. Be culturally literate by understanding the cultures of the other, including proverbs, idioms, customs as information is given in a specific context and governed by a set of cultural rules and norms.

To sum up, Information Literacy is the set of competencies, tools and skills absolutely required to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information effectively, efficiently and ethically. The twenty-first century has been identified as the information age. Due to the explosion of information and information sources, citizens cannot and will not realize their scientific, economic and social goals without being information literate.

So, Information Literacy does not equip citizens with the ability to read and write or find a piece of information but with the ability of critical thinking skills necessary to become an independent information researcher in the digital age.

Why is Information Literacy so important?

Information Literacy is necessary in our life due to the amount of information that is available in our media and information- saturated world. Because of the digital age, there is an explosion of information and a convergence of communications. Citizens are exposed to a great amount of information but they need to learn how to use this information effectively to be informed and responsible citizens. The Internet and information providers bombard citizens with information, which is not controlled and not evaluated. Thus, the authenticity, validity, accuracy and reliability of this information is in doubt. (Nfissi, 2013)

It is evident that too much information can create an obstacle, especially for students and youth who require information literacy skills to better deal with this increasing information in order to achieve personal, academic and social development. Information literacy may be considered a solution for *data smog*. In the same vein French experts in Information Literacy state that “trop d’information tue l’information”. (i.e too much information kills information)

Information Literacy is the key element to cope with the data smog, by empowering all citizens with the critical thinking skills to recognize when they need information, where to locate it, and how to use it effectively and efficiently.

Action plans taken by Morocco in the field of information and communication technologies and Information Literacy

Actions taken by the government of Morocco

Information Literacy is still in its infancy in Morocco and has not yet been integrated into schools, institutions and universities.

However, aware of the importance of the Internet in our daily lives, and aware of the challenges posed by the information age, His majesty Mohamed the Six called for huge investments into ICTs in all domains for the prosperity and the progress of Morocco and the integration of all Moroccans in the digital age. He states that:

[...] In parallel, we invite the government to adopt a new strategy for the industry and service sector and for the development of new technologies. This strategy should be focused on the optimal use of opportunities created by the globalisation in terms of investment flows. In addition to the reinforcement of Moroccan companies and the promotion of added-value industrial investment, this strategy should also chart new ways for the Moroccan economy to invest in new industrial sectors that require innovative technologies and open up promising markets to export its products and services.

We have both the ambition and the determination to ensure the insertion of Morocco, through its companies and universities, in the international economy of knowledge. [...]

This is an extract from the full speech addressed to the Nation by His Majesty the King on the occasion of Throne Day – 30/ 07/ 08. (Digital Morocco, 2013, p.1)

From this extract, one can conclude that King Mohamed the Six considers that access to information is essential in the digital age to achieve political, economic and social progress.

The “Digital Morocco” plan (2013) aims to position Morocco among emerging and dynamic and leading countries in the field of Information Technologies. The ‘Digital Morocco’ plan (2013) notes the following:

- The use of Information Technology (IT) is an essential factor for the emergence of the knowledge of a society, and can actively contribute to human development, improved social cohesion, and national economic growth.
- Indeed, all around the world, the access to information and its appropriate and effective use have an impact on progress and development. Modern and

prosperous nations enjoy a high index for their capacity to produce and use information. (p.8)

- IT is a key factor in human and economic development, based on:
- effective and efficient use of information, the main factor in the production of added-value, after capital and labour;
- the achievement of significant productivity gains, by creating new opportunities to produce, process, record, store and share information, as well as by providing easier access to information.
- Thus, developing an efficient use of IT in all areas of economic and social life in Morocco is a priority to ensure sustainable national growth and competitiveness. (p.11)
- IT and access to the Internet facilitates communication and provides access to knowledge. Besides providing easy and quick access to information, the Internet enables individual citizens to save considerable time, especially with the availability of online services.
- It is essential to introduce the benefits of IT to individual citizens, to provide them with opportunities to access these technologies and purchase equipment, and enable them to acquire the necessary skills for the appropriate use of these technologies.
- In this context, after progress is made regarding individual citizens' access to mobile phone technology, the next stage should be to accelerate the process of democratisation of home Internet (access and use), and to encourage individual citizens to take up and use new technology on a daily basis. (p.13)
- Make IT a source of productivity and added value for other economic sectors and for the public administration.
- Position Morocco as a regional technology hub. (p.18)
- The information and knowledge society will be only developed if the younger generation acquires the know-how of technology at an early stage. Computers and the Internet are powerful educational tools which can speed up human, economic, and social development. (p.30)
- To further promote computer equipment and Internet use by actors in the education sector, the Moroccan government will implement a leader action to provide engineering students and their similars with subsidised laptops and Internet access.
- This initiative will supplement the 'Génie' program for the equipment of primary and high public schools, and the Nafid@ program to subsidise mobile computers and Internet access for teaching staff, launched respectively in September 2005 and May 2008. (p.30)

From all the statements mentioned above, it can be seen that the focus was on the effective and efficient use of IT in all domains, and to provide Internet facilities to all citizens in Morocco. But, no reference was made to Information Literacy skills in dealing with the ICTs. As it has been stated above, Information Literacy is not only about using ICT effectively and efficiently, but about equipping citizens with the skills as to how to use these ICTs. The use of ICTs is very mechanical but the way to handle specific information obtained from the Internet is not mechanical; it requires a specific information skill, which is in fact relatively unknown to the developing countries. Although e-literacy may be a prerequisite to Information Literacy, e-literacy alone is a barrier to personal, social and economic progress. The Digital Morocco, then, will create citizens who are able to use the Internet, but it will not create critical thinkers and informed and responsible citizens. In the developing countries, there is a strong need to make a distinction between the technological instruments to access information and the competencies required in evaluating and using the content of that information. Additionally, developing countries are often more illiterate, and suffer from poverty and from a lack of modern living conditions. Citizens in the developing countries spend hours on the Internet a day, exposed to the Internet messages in one day through online videogames, online newspapers and magazines. This may have an impact on them by shaping their values and points of view. It is unquestionable that digital information experiences exert a significant impact on the way citizens understand, interpret and act in this world. Information Literacy helps citizens understand and evaluate those influences.

Initiatives taken by Sidi Mohamed Ben University

As suggested above Information Literacy is a set of skills required by a person to find, retrieve, analyze and use information. Information Literacy is directly linked with lifelong learning, critical thinking, and learning to learn concepts of education. Many Moroccans are badly handicapped with a lack of essential skills to enter the information literate society. There are many reasons for this inadequacy, and the lack of Information Literacy skills has been identified as one of them. To achieve an improvement, activities were organized to raise citizens awareness of the importance of Information Literacy.

Workshop on Media and Information Literacy for future and current educators organized with the collaboration of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and Moulay Ismail University, Meknes, Morocco

The research group on “Mass Communication, Culture and Society” affiliated to the Laboratory of “discourse, Creativity and Society: perception and Implications” organized two workshops for future and current educators on 18-19

February, 2013 and on 26-27 March, 2014 at the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences Fez, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Morocco.

First workshop

It is evident that, today, students live and learn in a world that is drastically changing. This workshop provides support for teachers to help students think critically about using and evaluating the vast amounts of information available to them in the twenty-first century.

The objective was to train teachers in order to be able to teach Media and Information Literacy for primary and secondary school students. This workshop aimed to:

1. show current and future educators the importance of Media and Information Literacy in the media-saturated world of the 21st Century;
2. explain to them the basic media processes;
3. introduce them to the world of media and information providers and the world of Information communication technologies for a better understanding of how media impacts individuals and society, and how it shapes attitudes and behaviours;
4. focus on analysis and critical thinking in order to make current teachers informed citizens, active users of mass media;
5. make them aware that Media and Information Literacy is important owing to the amount of information that is available in contemporary society. Being exposed to a great deal of information will not make people informed citizens; they need to learn how to use this information effectively;
6. make them aware that a society that is able to access, evaluate, use and communicate information in an effective and efficient manner is called a media and information literate society. When we educate our children with the necessary information literacy skills, consequently, the society becomes information literate.

The papers presented in the event were extremely diverse in subject matter, theoretical orientation, and methodological approach; a number of key common themes and issues were raised and discussed by different speakers and members of the audience.

Second Workshop

The rapid growth of media and information and communication technologies and the explosion of information make it imperative that Media and Information Literacy be taught at schools as young people are very fragile to media and information content.

Enhancing MIL among students requires that teachers become media and information literate. In this context, the second workshop was devoted to explore the main modules of the *Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers* published by UNESCO in 2011. This publication is designed to equip teachers with the skills and methodology to teach MIL in class.

Study day on Information Literacy in the information age

The research group on “Mass Communication, Culture and Society” affiliated to the Laboratory of “discourse, Creativity and Society: perception and Implications” organized a study day on *Information Literacy in the Digital Age* on 20 February, 2014 at the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences Fez, Morocco.

The study day gathered teachers, researchers, activists, information specialists and librarians to raise people’ awareness of the importance of information literacy in the digital age.

The Internet and other information communication technologies are great mediums of information for all people in the world. The information we are exposed to on the Internet determines and shapes our attitudes, our understanding, our interpretation, our beliefs, and our views about the world. Although the Internet and ICTs are a means for social and economic development, there are equally unprecedented amounts of mistakes, prejudice, stereotype, propaganda, defamation, manipulation, misinformation, and many types of distortion of information.

In this context, Information Literacy becomes imperative to empower audiences to be more critical and discriminating in their reception, evaluation and use of information and to develop highly critical and analytical skills in order to be active and responsible information consumers. The study day tackled important issues such as, key aspects of Information Literacy, integrating Information Literacy in the classroom, the citizen’s role in the digital age, Cultural Literacy, Computer Literacy, Cinema Literacy and News Literacy.

Study day on Cultural Literacy

The growing use of information technology is increasing the demand for programmes that address information and culture literacy. Such programmes in the West are developed as the rate of literacy in these countries is high. Besides, these countries enjoy greater economic and political stability than developing countries, which provides a healthy platform for MIL.

However, the use of ICTs in the developing countries is very complex and suffers from many drawbacks. Today, in the Arab world, the rate of illiteracy, lack of political security, and lack of economic stability are a handicap for the Arabs to be media and information literate as the programs of MIL cannot be easily implemented.

The objective of this study was:

1. to examine how to use effectively and efficiently the ICTs in the Arab states;
2. to raise awareness of the right to access information, the value of information and the right of freedom of speech;
3. to foster media and information literacy for development of local and world cultures and as a platform for intercultural dialogue, mutual knowledge and understanding.

Conclusion

In recent years the Internet and other network technologies have emerged as important key elements for development all over the world. They proved their capacity to increase productivity in the economy, to create new ways and methods to provide education and health services, and to be driving forces to improve the life of every citizen. They also facilitate easy access to information. Information Literacy helps citizens handle and tailor this information to his personal, academic and social benefits. This article focuses on the importance of Information Literacy in the digital age and highlights the plans and the actions taken by the Moroccan government and Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University to promote information literacy in Morocco. Morocco and other developing countries, which suffer from many challenges, need the help of the developed countries to promote Media and Information Literacy in the world.

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Contributors

David Baines is Senior Lecturer at Newcastle University, United Kingdom, where he heads the graduate program in International Multimedia Journalism.
david.baines@newcastle.ac.uk

Catherine Bouko is Associate Professor at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium. She works on communication and culture, on cultural semiotics and on media literacy. She published *Théâtre et réception. Le spectateur postdramatique* (Brussels, Peter Lang) in 2010 and *Corps et immersion* (Paris, L'Harmattan) in 2012. cbouko@ulb.ac.be

Sheena Johnson Brown is a Commissioner of the Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica and heads the Communication Arts and Technology programme at the University of Technology, Jamaica. sheena.johnsonbrown@gmail.com

Christine Bruce, PhD is a senior member of the School of Information Systems, in the Science and Engineering Faculty at Queensland University of Technology and is a member of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia, and the European Association of Research into Learning and Instruction. She is Convenor of the QUT Higher Education Research Network and Higher Degree Research Director for the Information Systems School. c.bruce@qut.edu.au

Amy Marczewski Carnes, PhD is the Associate Director of Education – Evaluation and Scholarship at USC Shoah Foundation – the Institute for Visual History and Education at the University of Southern California, USA. Dr. Carnes also teaches in the department of International Relations at USC. amy.carnes@usc.edu

Esther Chin, PhD teaches in the Media and Communications Program at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Her PhD explored how Singaporean university students in Melbourne construct social spaces in globalized experiences of media and migration. She specialises in research on media and migration, globalization and cosmopolitanism, and qualitative interviews. ywechin@unimelb.edu.au

Sherri Hope Culver is an Associate Professor at Temple University, USA, in the School of Media and Communication. She also serves as director for the Center for Media and Information Literacy. Sherri is currently serving her third term as president of the National Association for Media Literacy Education. shculver@temple.edu

Michael Dezuanni, PhD is a Senior Lecturer and researcher in the fields of digital cultures and arts education, with particular interest in digital media literacies. He is Deputy Director of Queensland University of Technology's Children and Youth Research Centre in Australia, and is a joint appointment in the Creative Industries and Education Faculties. m.dezuanni@qut.edu.au

Hopeton S. Dunn, PhD is Professor of Communications Policy and Digital Media at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. He is also Director of the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC, UWI) and Chairman of the Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica. hopetondunn@gmail.com

Ehab H. Gomaa is a lecturer of mass communication at Alexandria University, Egypt. He is a fellow of the Ford Foundation, the Hiekal Foundation for Arab Journalism, and Reuters Institute for the study of Journalism and has received numerous awards for his academic contributions in journalism and mass communication.
ehab_jrmc@yahoo.com

Alton Grizzle, Programme Specialist, Communication and Information Sector (CI), UNESCO. a.grizzle@unesco.org

- Usha Harris*, PhD teaches in the Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies at Macquarie University, Australia. As a scholar of participatory media and social change, she has trained Pacific Island communities in the use of participatory video to better understand climate change impacts. Her current project “Virtual Partnerships” is a remote engagement initiative which uses online technologies to enable communication students to develop campaigns with NGOs in developing countries on the Millennium Development Goals. usha.harris@mq.edu.au
- Michael Hoechsmann*, PhD is an Associate Professor and the Chair of Education programs at Lakehead University, Orillia, Canada. With Stuart Poyntz, he is author of *Media Literacies* (2012) and with Bronwen Low, *Reading Youth Writing* (2008). He is the former Director of Education of Young People’s Press, a national news service by and for youth. mhoechsm@lakeheadu.ca
- Matthew Johnson* is the Director of Education for MediaSmarts, Canada’s center for digital and media literacy. He is the designer of the comprehensive digital literacy tutorials Passport to the Internet (Grades 4-8) and MyWorld (Grades 9-12). He has contributed blogs and articles to websites and magazines around the world. Matthew is an educator with nearly ten years’ experience teaching media education, film-making, English and special education among other subjects. MJohnson@mediasmarts.ca
- Paulette Kerr*, PhD is currently Head of the Department of Library and Information Studies at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica. Her research interests coalesce around issues of information literacy and teaching/learning in academic institutions. paulette.kerr@uwimona.edu.jm
- Vedabhyas Kundu* is a Programme Officer in Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti in New Delhi, India, and has been involved in promoting media literacy training amongst young people for the past decade. His area of interest is to promote media literacy for peace, nonviolence and intercultural dialogue. He is a Volunteer with the Peace Gong Media and Information Literacy programme. vedabhyas@gmail.com
- Alice Y. L. Lee*, PhD is an Associate Professor at the Department of Journalism, Hong Kong Baptist University, China. Her research interests include media education, online news media, media and information literacy (MIL) and Net Generation. She is also the vice-chairperson of the Hong Kong Association of Media Education. alicelee@hkbu.edu.hk
- Naomi Lightman* is a PhD Candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, Canada. She is the senior quantitative researcher on The Dynamics of Social Exclusion for Immigrants and Racialized Groups in Canada research team (led by Prof. Luann Good Gingrich) and a member of the Transnational Social Support international research network. Her work has appeared in Canadian Ethnic Studies and the Transnational Social Review. naomi.lightman@mail.utoronto.ca
- Fatimata Ly-Fall* is the President of the Center for Democracy, Media literacy and Multilingualism (CEDEM), in Senegal. She is also Assistant Professor at ISSIC (Institute of Information and Communication Sciences). cedem2000@yahoo.com
- Ed Madison*, PhD is an Assistant Professor at the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon, USA. At age 22, he was recruited by CNN to join its management team as a founding producer shortly after graduating from Emerson College in 1979. He has produced projects for CBS, ABC, A&E, Paramount, Disney, and Discovery. madison2@uoregon.edu

- Kelli McGraw*, PhD is a Lecturer in the School of Curriculum at Queensland University of Technology, Australia, teaching Secondary English curriculum and Cultural studies: Indigenous education, as well as units in the Master of Education (Teacher-Librarianship) on youth, popular culture and texts. kelli.mcgraw@qut.edu.au
- Patrícia Moran*, PhD is a Professor at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, School of Communications and Arts, and vice-director of CINUSP. Patricia is a film and video director who has won several awards in Brazil and abroad. Her research focuses on live audiovisual performance. With several published articles on the topic, she is currently planning and writing a book on it as well. She organized the first book about Machinima in Brazil. Her research is supported by Sao Paulo Research Foundation – FAPESP. patriciamoran@uol.com.br
- Yosuke Morimoto*, PhD is a Junior Associate Professor in the Department of Pedagogy at Hirosaki University, Japan. Morimoto is the author of What Ability Students Could Acquire Through Creating Moving Images with Analyzing Media Text?: The Case of X Junior High School, Osaka Prefecture in the Journal for Educational Research, published by the Faculty of Education, Hirosaki University. yosuke-morimoto@nifty.com
- Kyoko Murakami*, PhD is the Director of the Asia-Pacific Media and Information Literacy Education Centre; Program Manager, CultureQuest Japan, and Lecturer, Hosei University in Japan. mkyoko520@yahoo.co.jp
- K V Nagaraj* is a senior media educator having taught in Universities both in India and abroad. Presently, a Professor in Assam Central University, India, he has inspired a large number of researches on media education and is one of the founding members of the Peace Gong Media Literacy programme and the children's newspaper. nagarajkv2000@yahoo.com
- Ashes Kr. Nayak* is a Research Scholar in Assam Central University, Silchar, Assam, India. nayakashes@gmail.com
- Anamaria Neag* is a PhD student at Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary. Her research interests include media literacy programs in Eastern Europe, specifically in Hungary and Romania, as well as media history. She holds a master's degree in Global Studies with a Major in Media and Communication Studies from Lund University, Sweden. anamaria.neag@gmail.com
- Abdelhamid Nfissi*, Professor of Comparative Linguistics and Media Studies, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Fez, Morocco. nfissichouit@gmail.com
- Chido Onumah* is a Nigerian journalist and coordinator of the African Centre for Media & Information Literacy. He serves as vice-chair of the Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media & Information Literacy (GAPMIL). Onumah is currently a doctoral candidate in communication and journalism at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. He is the author of two books of essays on Nigeria: Time to Reclaim Nigeria: Essays 2001-2011 and Nigeria is Negotiable: Essays on Nigeria's Tortuous Road to Democracy and Nationhood. conumah@hotmail.com
- Manisha Pathak-Shelat*, PhD is an Associate Professor at MICA, Ahmedabad, India. She has taught and worked as educator, media consultant/trainer and researcher in India, Thailand, and the US. Recent projects include an Academy of Finland sponsored multi-country youth media participation project, and a study on digital youth cultures in India. Awards and fellowships include The Soviet Land Nehru Award, Shastri Indo-Canadian Faculty Research Award, Salzburg Seminar Fellowship, and TATA Fellowship for the Study of Contemporary India. manishashelat@gmail.com

Devadas Rajaram is an Assistant Professor in the New Media Programme at the Asian College of Journalism in Chennai, India. devadas.rajararam@gmail.com

Ibrahim Saleh, PhD is the Convenor of the Political Communication Programme at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Saleh is a Fulbright Scholar and Chair of Journalism Research and Education Section at the International Association For Media and Communication Research (IAMCR). Saleh edits the Global Media Journal, African Edition and is a fellow of the African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI). ibrahim.saleh@uct.ac.za

Daniel Schofield is a PhD candidate at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Department of Education. His primary fields of interest are media education, media literacy and media ethics. He lectures in Media Education on Bachelor and Master's level at the Department of Education and has a background as a teacher in the programme for Media and Communication in high school. daniel.schofield@svt.ntnu.no

H. Leslie Steeves, PhD heads the graduate programs at the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication, USA. She also directs the UO's Media in Ghana study abroad program. Much of Steeves' research centers on two areas and their intersection: communication and information technologies in developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, and gender and communication. She has had two Fulbright grants for teaching and research in Africa. lsteeves@uoregon.edu

Kori Street, PhD is the Director of Education at USC Shoah Foundation- the Institute for Visual History and Education, USA. Her most recent publications include "Storytelling in The Digital Age: Engaging Learners for Cognitive and Affective Gains," in International Journal of Technology, Knowledge and Society (2013). kestreet@usc.edu

Samy Tayie is a Professor and Head of Department, Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University. Cairo, Egypt. stayie@link.net

José Manuel Pérez Tornero is Director of the Department of Communication and Education at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain and the Chair of MILID UNESCO-AoC UNITED NATIONS, Barcelona. josepmanuel.perez@uab.es

Jordi Torrent, Project Manager, Media and Information Literacy, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. jordit@unops.org

Ingrid Volkmer is an Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne, Australia. She has held international visiting positions such as at the London School of Economics and Harvard. She has widely published in the area of transnational political communication and implications on societies and cultures. She is the Editor of The Handbook of Global Media Research (Wiley) and has published the monograph The Global Public Sphere (Cambridge: Polity, 2014). ivolkmer@unimelb.edu.au

Masato Wada, PhD is a Professor at the Center for the Research and Support for Educational Practice, Tokyo Gakugei University, Japan. Wada is the author of Mass Communication and Environment for Socialization, in Eds. Sumida, M. and Takashima, H., Developmental Sociology of Children, Hokuju Shuppan, Tokyo, Japan. mwada@u-gakugei.ac.jp

Melissa Wall, PhD is Professor of Journalism at California State University – Northridge, USA and creator of the Pop-Up Newsroom. She is the editor of Citizen Journalism: Valuable, Useless or Dangerous? melissawall@gmail.com

Claudia R. Wiedeman, PhD is an Associate Professor at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA. She is also the Associate Director for Educational Technologies and Training at USC Shoah Foundation- the Institute for Visual History and Education. Dr. Wiedeman came to USC from Whittier College, where she served as an Associate Professor in the Education and Child Development Department. crwiedem@usc.edu

Richardo Williams is Economist at the Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica and a former Researcher at the Mona ICT Policy Centre, University of the West Indies.
richardo.wllms@gmail.com

Carolyn Wilson is an Instructor at the Faculty of Education at Western University, and an online Instructor in Media Literacy for Athabasca University, Canada. Carolyn serves on the Boards of MediaSmarts (Canada), MENTOR Association for Media Literacy (Spain) and is the Past President of the Association for Media Literacy in Toronto, Canada. Carolyn is a co-author of UNESCO's Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers. Carolyn has received the Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award from the University of Toronto, as well as the Canadian Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence. cwils66@uwo.ca

Guo Xiaoke is the Associate Professor of the School of Global Journalism and Communication in Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Chongqing, China.
gxiaoke@gmail.com

Li Xiguang is the Honorable Dean of the School of Global Journalism and Communication in Southwest University of Political Science and Law, and the Director of Tsinghua University International Center for Communication, China. xiguang@tsinghua.edu.cn

Melda N. Yildiz, EdD is global scholar in the School for Global Education and Innovation at Kean University, USA. From 2009-2010, Melda served as a Fulbright Scholar in Turkmenistan. As a teacher educator, she taught Media Literacy Education, Multi-media Production, and Educational Technology to P-16 educators and pre-service teachers and published and presented featuring Media and Information Literacy, Semiotics, and Global Education in national and international conferences.
Melda.Yildiz@Fulbrightmail.org

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 *reports*. Several *bibliographies* and a worldwide *register of organisations* concerned with children and media have been compiled. This and other information is available on the Clearinghouse's *web site*:

www.nordicom.gu.se/clearinghouse

The International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, at

Nordicom
University of Gothenburg
Box 713
SE 405 30 GÖTEBORG, Sweden
Web site:
www.nordicom.gu.se/clearinghouse

DIRECTOR: Ulla Carlsson

SCIENTIFIC CO-ORDINATOR:

Ilana Eleá
Tel: +46 706 00 1788
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
ilana.elea@nordicom.gu.se

INFORMATION CO-ORDINATOR:

Catharina Bucht
Tel: +46 31 786 49 53
Fax: +46 31 786 46 55
catharina.bucht@nordicom.gu.se

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 UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue (MILID) is based on an initiative from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). This Network was created in line with UNESCO's mission and objectives, as well as the mandate of UNAOC, to serve as a catalyst and facilitator helping to give impetus to innovative projects aimed at reducing polarization among nations and cultures through mutual partnerships.

This UNITWIN Network is composed of eight universities from different geographical areas. The main objectives of the Network are to foster collaboration among member universities, to build capacity in each of the countries in order to empower them to advance media and information literacy and intercultural dialogue, and to promote freedom of speech, freedom of information and the free flow of ideas and knowledge.

Specific objectives include acting as an observatory for the role of media and information literacy (MIL) in promoting civic participation, democracy and development as well as enhancing intercultural and cooperative research on MIL. The programme also aims at promoting global actions related to MIL and intercultural dialogue.

In such a context, a MILID Yearbook series is an important initiative. The MILID Yearbook is a result of a collaboration between the UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue, and the International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media at NORDICOM, University of Gothenburg.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNITWIN Cooperation Programme on
Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue



United Nations Alliance of Civilizations



The International
Clearinghouse
on Children, Youth
and Media

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Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research
University of Gothenburg
Box 713, SE 405 30 GÖTEBORG
Tel. +46 31 786 00 00. Fax +46 31 786 46 55
www.nordicom.gu.se



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