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It's all about.... Media

Six partners from four European countries started their project on Media Education

The digitalization, the Internet and the broad availability of mobile devices have fundamentally changed the media world in the meantime. The convergence of old and new media, their universal availability and interactive media offerings, social online networks and media-based contents and services generate new opportunities for acquisition of information, but also lead to new challenges. On the one side, taking into consideration the benefit of the technology itself, media have a versatile didactical-methodological potential for teaching and learning, which include visual evidence, attractive contents and the formal quality.

It is able to support self-regulated learning regardless of temporal or geographical limitations, and cooperative learning through collaborative online platforms or educational tools as well. On the other side, the media world brings for the society and individual as well, risks and dangers. This means upon others, the increased potential of negligent use of media technologies and services, of reckless or irresponsible handling of personal data and of non-observance of copyright principles. Additionally, through the increased presence of the media in our everyday life, it has become a constant socialization instance. The increasingly networked media



Media offerings, with their dynamic symbolic and life-worlds, open up new experiences and adventure areas to youth but it has an influence on their personality too. Youth develop their moral standards, ethical orientations and aesthetic judgments in their personal and social environment, as well as in the media. Medial models, heroic figures and idols accompany childhood and youth; Self- and world pictures, argument and action pattern, role understandings and behaviors are often taken from media contexts. Therefore, the young generation need an adequate media education to critically and constructively reflect the growing media offers.



Teaching media literacy is essential

Ákos Cserháti is editor at the community radio *Civil Rádió* in Budapest, Hungary

In our “341” column we ask one person three questions related to his/her work in media sector.

MEWB: What is your organizations mission in regard to media education?

CSA: It is one of the most important missions of Civil Radio to fight against any type of discrimination and social exclusion. We consider community media as a tool that can raise the awareness of defenseless, marginalized people. We strongly believe that free, community media has a great role in improving mutual understanding, tolerance, inclusion or sensibility towards vulnerable social groups. In the last few decades media has changed a lot - with the appearance of social media phenomenon like hate speech, bullying, which are becoming increasingly part of our lives. That is why we think it is essential to teach - especially the younger generations - how to filter the content, how to select between the sources, how to conceive what they watch, read or listen to.

MEWB: What do you exactly teach people about the media?

CSA: Civil Radio's media trainings consist of two big modules - one is about the technical issues (how to use various equipment and software), the

other is about radio journalism (interview making, questioning techniques, presentation styles, etc.). During the technical training people can acquire skills and knowledge not only about audio recording and editing, but we also teach them how to manage the content, how to publish radio shows on various online platforms, podcast channels.

In the second module of our courses we develop journalistic skills, and by analyzing and discussing media products we teach media literacy, media ethics, critical approach, and consciousness.

MEWB: According to you opinion, who should do what (politics, education, media, society, NGOs, etc.) to be able to equip people with competences on critical media consumption?

CSA: Mass communication has always been a tool of power, it belongs to the nature of media. Different interest-groups use it to manipulate people, though it could become a great tool to educate people. We consider that there must be a common ground, a basic agreement in all societies what should not be in mass media, what is

unacceptable, like hate speech that might result open violence against minority groups.

The political power has important role in creating regulations, which can ensure the integrity of free press, and also can take actions against those who use public platforms to generate hate. Governments regulating education should reflect the importance of media studies.

Civil societies, NGOs need to check the effectiveness of this regulation and education giving feedback to governments and authorities about the negative media tendencies.

But we can not forget the responsibility of smaller communities, families in helping and guiding younger generations in media consumption - similarly as we pay attention to what food we give to our children, we must care what they watch and listen to.

MEWB: Thank you Ákos for the interview.



New Skills Training

In the face of progressive mediatization processes, teachers today are under increased social and professional pressure

Nadine Schaarschmidt is Research Associate at the Technical University of Dresden. We talked with her about Media Education of future teachers at the University.

MEWB: What exactly is taught to students in the field of media education at the TU Dresden during their studies?

NSCH: At the TU Dresden, there was a qualification offer which provided students in the teacher training courses with an in-depth training and focus on media education and media didactics. However, this qualification offer has not yet been compulsory in teacher training courses. The course enabled students to acquire skills in the fields of media education and media didactics, both theoretically and practically.

The certificate course was divided into a basic module and a practical module. The lecture series in the basic module initially dealt with introductory topics on media education and media didactics and also offered a wide range of insights into practice with external speakers. During the project seminar in the practice module, students were able to deepen their knowledge and design and carry out their own media education or media didactic project and reflect with other fellow students in the group.

In addition to these compulsory courses, courses were integrated into the course which dealt with various topics in greater depth. In order to obtain the certificate, it was necessary to attend a course offered by the professorships of Media Education or Educational Technology. In addition, there were three courses that are related to media pedagogy or media didactics and could be freely selected from the existing range of courses at the TU Dresden.

Accordingly, the basic content of media education is seen structurally in the educational sciences, while an interlocking of content with the specialist sciences and, above all, specialist didactics is also structurally required. Currently, the TU Dresden is working on a compulsory anchoring of the module "Media Education" in the scope of 5 credit points with the focus on "Media Education" and "Political and Media Education".

MEWB: What are the top issues related to media education?

NSCH: Current media-pedagogical and media-didactic challenges include the socializing significance of media, the everyday embedding of media use and the holistic improvement of media competence. From a media didactic point of view, the focus is on supporting teaching and learning processes by means of media-supported solutions.

The ability to "use media and information technologies in appropriate forms of teaching and learning and to develop them further" (Blömeke, 2000, p. 326) is considered as a core competence. The use of media and information technologies as a teaching tool can be seen as an example, but also the design of further developed forms of teaching and learning in schools. Furthermore, the improvement of media competence refers to the "ability to deal with media topics in the sense of pedagogical guiding ideas in class" (ibid.), which includes the realization of educational tasks in the area of media and information technologies and the use of theories.

MEWB: Why is it important to equip future teachers with media skills?

NSCH: In the face of progressive mediatization processes, teachers today are under increased social and professional pressure to devote themselves to the topics of media education and media didactics as well as related challenges such as digitization. In addition to developments in theoretical discourse within media education and media didactics, the changing circumstances and framework conditions also include developments in social discourse and developments in media technology. In addition, there are developments in education policy, such as the Digital Pact between the Federal Government and the States, which will ensure that schools are equipped with a wide range of media technology in the coming years

Teachers who are familiar with these developments and competences are an important prerequisite for making the education system and thus the next generation sustainable.

MEWB: Thank you Nadine for the interview.



Nadine Schaarschmidt is Research Associate at the Technical University of Dresden.



During our training activity at the TU Dresden we discussed with teachers and media representatives about “What makes a good e-learning course?”

Think. Create. Act. These are our guidelines for sustainable media education within the European Project “In Medias Res – Education without borders”. Together with professionals from Media and Education sector from Germany, Hungary, Spain and Ireland we aim to create innovative and attractive training offers on media education for teachers in various school and youth.

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