

Developing  
**Media Literacy**  
in Public Education  
*A Regional Priority in a Mediatized Age*





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# INTRODUCTION

In an age when babies have their own digital footprints before being born and having the right to decide about their own privacy; when young kids become the teachers of their parents in handling the various smart gadgets while they lack the knowledge and critical thinking about the content they face in the digital world; and when traditional, good old pedagogical methods fail to convey the knowledge to students however professional the teacher is, there is no doubt about the need for dealing with the wise, conscious and responsible use of media.

The growing scientific discourse on media literacy in the last couple of years proves that the actors of science seem to have recognized this need: a number of publications and conferences on media literacy have emerged, discussing the benefits and dangers, changes and challenges of our mediatized age. Despite the scientific results, however, few decisive steps promoting media literacy have been made in educational policy and practice, either on national or European level. One of the possible reasons behind this delay is the lack of comprehensive, in-depth researches, providing an overview on the state of media literacy in public education on national levels. Our project *Developing media literacy in public education: A regional priority in a mediatized age* embarked on filling in the above hiatus and facing this challenge in the region of the Visegrad Group (V4) countries: Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

Funded by the International Visegrad Fund, the main aim of our project - lead by the Institute of Behavioural Sciences and Communication Theory at Corvinus University of Budapest - was to map the state of media literacy in the V4 region and develop an international knowledge base in this field. For this purpose, an academic research group was set in each of the V4 countries. The research teams - which consisted of teachers, scholars and experts on communication and media studies, media pedagogy and psychology - analyzed their national educational systems and conducted comprehensive desktop researches on the state of media literacy in their own countries. Subsequently, they shared their experiences in academic workshops and summed up their findings in comprehensive national reports. Each report ended up with national recommendations, based on the results of the researches. The scholarly

cooperation culminated in an international conference organized in Budapest on 9-11th June 2016, where researchers from the four national research teams presented their findings on various aspects of media literacy. The final outcome of the conference was the formulation of a list of joint international recommendations on media literacy with regard to the Visegrad region.

This volume stands as the imprint of both the conference and the year-long research. The first part embraces selected conference proceedings, where you will find studies discussing various questions related to media literacy from media didactics and media education to community media to the ethical concerns on media and information literacy. The second part presents the four national reports on the state of media literacy, including the national recommendations. The volume ends up with the joint recommendations of the V4 countries.

We hope that readers will find this volume an important collection of useful readings and essential findings, which can be considered as a step towards the development of new educational methodologies, in which media literacy has a more focused place. We cherish the hope that our findings formulate the view of educational policy-makers as well, to recognize the needs of the digital natives of our mediatized age and contribute to the raising of more media-literate future generations.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to our partners - University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland; University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia and Centre for Higher Education Studies in Prague, the Czech Republic - for the exemplary cooperation and diligent work of their research teams throughout the project. We also wish to thank to the International Visegrad Fund for recognizing the importance of our research and supporting our project. Without their financial contribution, our project *Developing media literacy in public education: A regional priority in a mediatized age* could not have been carried out.

**Petra Aczél, PhD and Veronika Pelle**  
the leader and the coordinator of the project

# CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

**Ewa M. Walewska**

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## **The problem of defining the concept of media education in Polish source literature**

### **Abstract**

The author conducts a review and an analysis of numerous Polish definitions and descriptions of the notion 'media education' in order to present definitional directions and specific goals of this particular discipline from the Polish perspective. On the basis of the bibliographical references, it is possible to observe three major pillars of media education, i.e.: "education about the media," "education through the media" and "education to the media". The author presents different concepts associated with the goals of media education, but also points to incorrect, sometimes even distorted, ways of understanding the notion and to its wrongly perceived roles.

### **1. Introduction**

In Poland, the research on media education is carried out in the framework of many scientific disciplines and specialties, including pedagogy (media pedagogy), didactics (media didactics), sociology, history of media, media psychology, political science, theology (media theology), cultural studies, media studies, film studies and communications studies. Different perspectives on media education are likely to enrich this new discipline, but they may also lead to the creation of various divergent ways of understanding the term: "the multitude of research traditions results in different definitions given by experts in media studies, IT specialists and teachers" (Lipszyc, 2012, p. 6).

Difficulties in the definition and the description of the discipline are also caused by the interdisciplinary character of media education, which results from a so-called symbiosis of knowledge in philosophy, psychology, sociology, pedagogy, semiotics, physiology, cybernetics, electronics, etc. (Karaś, Pęczkowski & Wrońska, 1998, p. 380).

The authors of the publication prepared by Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska (Modern Poland Foundation)<sup>1</sup> entitled *Cyfrowa Przyszłość. Edukacja medialna i informacyjna w Polsce – raport otwarcia* (*Digital Future. Media Education in Poland – Opening Report*) claim it is still debated, mostly for historical reasons, what the definition and the range of the eponymous term should be. Therefore, in the Polish public space “the terms of media, information, digital, audiovisual and IT education are used interchangeably” (Dąbrowska, Drzewiecki, Jasiewicz, Lipszyc & Stunża, 2012a, p. 10).

## 2. Definitional foundations

What are the definition and the range of media education in Poland? Due to a review of numerous Polish definitions of the term, three approaches, frequently combined or interweaving, emerge. The first approach is characterized by a tendency to define media education by referring to the description of its tasks and goals, including the competencies acquired thanks to it. The second approach is based upon an inclination towards defining the term by determining the areas of human activity which constitute the user’s activity in the media environment and which should be supported by adequate education. The third approach displays a tendency to define media education by underlining the question of developing a conscious, responsible and safe use of the media. It is difficult to mention any strict divisions or clear limits, because many definitions combine two or more of the aforementioned approaches.

1 Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska is a Polish foundation whose goal is to create tools enabling access to free cultural goods, to establish media education programs and to spread knowledge on copyright. Two of many initiatives of the foundation are specifically related to media education, i.e. Digital Future (completed) and Media Education (ongoing). For the project Digital Future, the foundation created three publications devoted to the topic of media education in Poland, which touched upon the question of the competencies in media education in Poland, the SWOT analysis of the information and media competencies’ level in the Polish society, the development of media and information competencies in the core curriculum prepared by the Polish Ministry of National Education, foreign examples of media education, the offer of a catalogue of media, information and digital competencies. The publications included: *Edukacja medialna i informacyjna w Polsce – raport otwarcia* (*Media and Information Education in Poland – Opening Report*) from 2012, *Katalog kompetencji medialnych i informacyjnych* (*Catalogue of Media and Information Competencies*) from 2012, *Katalog kompetencji medialnych, informacyjnych i cyfrowych* (*Catalogue of Media, Information and Digital Competencies*) from 2014. In the framework of the project Media Education, an educational website [Edukacjamedialna.edu.pl](http://Edukacjamedialna.edu.pl) has been created, where the user can find class scripts, exercises and other materials. The foundation online: <https://nowoczesnapolska.org.pl>.



The review of numerous definitions also allows to observe three dominating concepts in approaching the questions of media education: teaching, upbringing and didactics. The first one refers to knowledge and skills crucial for the functioning in the mediatized reality whereas, the second one stresses the evaluation of the media content. Finally, the third one is related to the use of the media as the means of education.

It is important to point to the fact that three vital terms, which underline three different dependencies between education and the media, surface in the descriptions provided by various researchers. These are: education about the media, education through the media and education to the media (or: education for the media) (Dylak, 1997, pp. 472-473; Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 17).

Undoubtedly, only a research of the definitions proposed by different authors and organizations preoccupied with this particular subject reveals the full meaning of media education in Poland.

### 3. Media education. Meaning, mission and comprehension

The problem of the simultaneous use of various terms in public space, such as media, information, digital, audiovisual and IT education led to researchers from Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska proposing to treat all the interconnected areas by using one common term, which is “media and information education” (Dąbrowska et al., 2012a, p. 10). In the opinion of the researchers, its goal is to create a high-level competencies which are called in Europe ‘media literacy’ and ‘information literacy’.

In the Anglophone sources, the terms of media literacy education and information literacy education are in use. The word ‘literacy’ meant initially an ability to write and read as well as a kind of erudition in the area of literature. Since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term has been extended, among others thanks to Marshall McLuhan, to the meaning which includes the ability to use the audiovisual media (audiovisual literacy) and, in the contemporary context, also the new media (new media literacies). The term ‘literacy’, which appears in the official European Union and UNESCO documents, is translated in the Polish language as ‘competence’ (*kompetencja*), which determines the media technology recipients’ and users’ fluency. Media and information education is to lead

to the achievement of a predefined level of these competencies (Dąbrowska, Drzewiecki, Górecka et al., 2012, p. 6).

The author of numerous publications touching upon the described discipline, Wacław Strykowski (2002), points to two goals of media education – technological and cultural<sup>2</sup>. The first goal “consists in acquiring competencies – knowledge, skills and fluency referring to the use of devices,” (p. 19) the other one involves preparing yourself to a conscious and evaluative reception of the media content and acquiring cultural and pedagogical competencies (p. 19).

In the publication *Pedagogika medialna. Podręcznik akademicki (Media Pedagogy. Academic Textbook)*, Bronisław Siemieniecki (2007) summarizes Strykowski’s conclusions: “the goal of media education is generally to prepare people to the reception of the media and to the use of the media as intellectual tools<sup>3</sup> of a contemporary man” (p. 137). It is related to preparing the recipient for a conscious and evaluative reception of the diverse media content. To do so, it is indispensable to acquire a great knowledge on the media perceived as communication tools as well as on the specifics of their content (Siemieniecki, 2007, p. 137).

Many Polish definitions seem to be focused on making the recipients aware of what they see and evaluate it. It has been observed in “Podstawy programowe obowiązujących przedmiotów ogólnokształcących”<sup>4</sup> (“The Core Curriculum of the Obligatory School Subjects”), published in 1997, that “the objective of media education is to prepare pupils for a conscious and evaluative reception of verbal and visual media content” (as cited in Gurbiel, Krupicka & Sysło, 1998, p. 357). According to the National Broadcasting Council (Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji, i.e. KRRiT)<sup>5</sup>, media education is “a process of shaping and

2 The word ‘cultural’ has been picked for Strykowski by Janusz Morbitzer (2011). Besides, Morbitzer thinks that the objectives described by Strykowski are characteristic both for media education and media pedagogy. He adds that these particular objectives correspond with two concepts of media pedagogy, namely: media in teaching and media in upbringing.

3 Piotr Drzewiecki observes that the media are by definition a means of doing something (lat. *Medialis* – intermediary). Hence, media education is based on tools – it “refers to the basic mental, decisive and communicational human competencies” (Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 65).

4 The publication “Podstawy programowe obowiązujących przedmiotów ogólnokształcących” is an attachment to the Ordinance No. 8 of the Ministry of National Education of 15<sup>th</sup> of May, 1997.

5 National Broadcasting Council (Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji) is a Polish constitutional organ whose mission is to guard the freedom of speech in Polish radio and television, to protect the independence of broadcasters and the interests of recipients as well as to ensure an open and pluralist character of the radio and television. KRRiT also deals with the question of laws regulating the use of the media (Krajowa)

spreading the ability to use the means of communication consciously and in an evaluative manner in all social and age groups” (Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji [KRRiT], n.d.). Stanisław Dylak states that “the development of an ability to analyze, assess, evaluate<sup>6</sup> and to create media content” as well as “education in reference to human activity and values” are the essence and the main objective of media education (Dylak, 2004, as cited in Siemieniecki, 2007, p. 137).

Nevertheless, how should “conscious and evaluative reception” be understood? Piotr Drzewiecki (2010), observes in *Media Aktywni. Dlaczego i jak uczyć edukacji medialnej* (*Media Active. Why and How to Teach Media Education*):

media education is...an art of using the media wisely, treating them as a form of assistance in the process of learning the truth about the world. ...[It is – E. M. W.] a way to shape the attitude of a conscious media recipient: active (searching the truth about the world), selective (capable of making choices) and evaluative (unsure about the credibility of the message and verifying it in different sources). These are three fundamental features of a good television viewer, radio listener of Internet user (p. 6).

When Drzewiecki describes the attitude of a conscious recipient, he refers to a monography published nearly a decade ago entitled *Media a postawy* (*Media and Attitude*) by Adam Lepa. Lepa enumerates certain attitudes in reference to “education to the media,” namely: evaluative attitude, selective reception attitude, creative activity attitude (Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 67). The indicated types of attitude constitute an ideal of a good media recipient, which should be strived for (Drzewiecki, 2010, pp. 67-69). It is important though that the aforementioned media activity be conscious and not apparent since “apparent activity may stand for the culture of clicking, the ecstasy of communication, which is the state of drawing pleasure from the message itself, or zapping” (Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 58). The conscious activity may be characterized by the tendency of a recipient to think about their own needs, motivations of using the media and the planned goals. Such a recipient becomes “the creator of choices.” On the other hand, if the recipient does not find what they need, the

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Radiofonii i Telewizji [KRRiT], n.d.).

<sup>6</sup> Gary D. Fenstmacher’s liberationist approach to education, about which writes Stanisław Dylak (1997), could constitute an interesting context for the missions of media education. It postulates the liberation of minds and the education which prepares the evaluative cognition, description and communication of the world (p. 466).

new new media give them an opportunity to create a message on their own (Drzewiecki, 2010, pp. 70-71). "In this particular meaning, media education is a form of encouraging the media creation. The order is being re-organized: this is the recipient who decides about the message they want to get according to their conviction. This is the recipient who stands in the center of the media communication" (Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 71).

The document *Paris Agenda or 12 Recommendations for Media Education* points to the importance of the ability to create or to co-create the media content (which constitutes, apart from the conscious and evaluative reception, the essence of information and media competence). Thus, one of the main objectives of media education is to encourage the creation of the media content and to shape a creative attitude (Ratajski, 2015, p. 19). The authors of *Cyfrowa Przyszłość. Katalog kompetencji medialnych i informacyjnych (Digital Future. Catalogue of Information and Media Competencies)* underline the fact that the information society member (who has an optimal level of the said competencies) is not only a person who uses the media, but is also able to co-create the media reality (Dąbrowska, Drzewiecki, Górecka et al., 2012, p. 9). It is extremely important to encourage creativity because – as noted by Agnieszka Ogonowska in the book *Współczesna edukacja medialna: teoria i rzeczywistość (Contemporary Media Education: Theory and Reality)* – the media user adopts not only the role of a recipient, but also the ones of a producer or prosumer and a media decision-maker (Ogonowska, 2013, p. 31).

The production of the media content may refer to school or professional practical tasks (such as: creation of websites, presentations or video materials) (Morbitzer, 2011), hobby or artistic activity as well as to occasional actions within the framework of the Internet user's everyday communication. By taking into account the specificity of the new media, the Polish Ministry of National Education replaced the word 'use' with the word 'reception' in the core curriculum (A. J. Dąbrowska, P. Drzewiecki, J. Jasiewicz, J. Lipszyc & G. D. Stunża, 2012b, p. 198).

The essence of the aforementioned selective choice reception is evaluation, which involves judging the credibility, quality, value and utility of the given content, on the basis of which the recipient decides to devote their attention to it or the other way around – refuses to continue the reception. By mentioning the ability to evaluate, the authors of the book *Edukacja medialna. Scenariusze zajęć (Media Education. Class Scripts)* say that the education media class is

to teach the recipient how to choose credible news sources and how to make a selection of the gathered information (Grzesiak, Janicka-Szyszkó & Steblecka, 2005, p. 7). On the other hand, the author of “Kompetencje medialne jako ważny nurt w edukacji humanistycznej” (“Media Competencies as an Important Thread of Education in Humanities”) Stanisław Dylak (2004, as cited in Siemieniecki, 2007, p. 137) claims that media education refers to the dimension of the man’s values and activities as well as it shapes the abilities to analyze, evaluate and create the media content (p. 99). Moreover, Janusz Morbitzer mentions the importance of shaping the sense of responsibility in the context of media education, because “not all that is technically possible should be morally acceptable” (Morbitzer, 2009). In the context of evaluation, Piotr Drzewiecki (2010) calls media education a “pure tool”: “Media education refers to axiology, which does not mean that it becomes a determined ideology. ...In media education, no particular values are imposed on the recipient, but their ability to evaluate is improved” (p. 70).

In the core curriculum of preschool education and general education (*Podstawa programowa wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół*) introduced in 2009 by the Polish Ministry of National Education (2009), the notion of media education was perceived as “educating pupils to teach them the right reception and use of the media” (p. 17, 21). “Schooling for the use of the media” (or: education to the media) is seen as “a widely understood pedagogical activity, focused on a man as a user of the media, ...supporting a competent, active and responsible reception” (Frana, 2013, p. 59). Piotr Drzewiecki (2010) even states that “educating a man to use the media, practice and methodology of this type of education” refers to the narrowly understood media education itself (p. 17). Schooling for the use of the media constitutes the third area of media pedagogy study, next to “education through the media, dealing with the educational function of the media and media didactics, which examines the media as a means of teaching” (Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 17). On the other hand, Stanisław Dylak (1997) uses the expression “education for the media,” which means introducing the pupil into the media culture, understood as the environment of creating artefacts and living. The purpose of this type of education is to prepare the evaluative reception of the media and the controlled contact with the media culture. Therefore, the detailed objectives of media education are, among others, the preparation of the pupils for making choices and for presenting a conscious

and active attitude towards the behavior patterns, standards or styles offered by the media (pp. 472-473).

Nevertheless, it seems that – contrary to Drzewiecki's viewpoint – media education is treated, defined and practiced holistically, taking into account "education about the media," "through the media" and "to the media." Furthermore, only this particular approach can bring the desired effects. Agnieszka Ogonowska (2003), the author of *Edukacja medialna – klucz do zrozumienia społecznej rzeczywistości* (*Media Education – Key to Understanding Social Reality*) follows the same line of thinking and concludes:

Media education constitutes a type of theoretical knowledge, which means a pool of specialist information as well as an ability to use this particular knowledge in practice. Hence, it may be also perceived as a domain of applied knowledge. It covers the education about the media and their use in education, but it is also to prepare a conscious (active) and evaluative media texts reception and to create one's own" (pp. 24-25).

Finally, one more question should be asked: who should be the subject of media education, what recipients should the process focus on? Bronisław Siemieniecki observes that different sources offer two approaches whereby the group of recipients is wide or narrow. The first one implies that the media education subject is the whole society, the other one suggests that school, pupils, parents and teachers are the subjects (Siemieniecki, 2007, p. 137). In the context of important goals assigned to media education, it seems however that the best social effects are brought by the process embracing all the citizens, included in the formal and informal education of life-long learning. This is the standpoint of the National Broadcasting Council: "The process of media education constitutes actions which should last the whole life, because forms and communication technologies are subjects to change as well as the society itself" (Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji [KRRiT], n.d.).

At this point, it would be necessary to determine whose task it is to conduct media education in Poland. Piotr Drzewiecki claims that it is a multi-subject social mission, which involves the participation of families, schools, institutions, social organizations (private and state-owned) and the State (the government). As education takes place within a family, parents play a very special role in the media education of children and teenagers, apart from teachers and outside

coaches (Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 10). Education in this particular area should then take place both in the framework of formal education (education system) and informal (family, non-governmental organizations, libraries or cultural institutions) (Polski Komitet Programu Informacja dla Wszystkich przy Polskim Komitecie ds. UNESCO, 2011, p. 2).

In his article *O potrzebie edukacji medialnej* (*About the Need of Media Education*), Janusz Morbitzer (2011) observes that nowadays school plays the main role not only in the formal media education, but also supports informal forms of education by assuming the controlling and complementing function.

In the period of industrial society, the media were used to support the education process and to increase its effectiveness. Hence, these were “the media for school.” Nowadays, in the times of information society, the media exist as a phenomenon parallel to school, or sometimes – in the sense of time, emotions, involvement and motivation – even dominating over the school. Therefore, the name “media next to school” seems to be in place (Morbitzer, 2011).

In this context, schools are obligated to face new challenges, such as completing or correcting the knowledge that pupils acquired from the media sources as well as changing the attitudes and behaviors shaped by the media (Morbitzer, 2011).

## 4. Social missions

Piotr Drzewiecki (2010) remarks that at present “sapiential society (lat. *sapientia* – wisdom) is its perfect version. It is built around knowledge and information, but also around values and skills which allow to understand, evaluate and use this particular knowledge in practice” (p. 66). It is hoped that media education will allow to create citizens aware of the political, social and economic processes, which constitute an important context for the analysis and interpretation of media coverage. Agnieszka Ogonowska (2003) ascertains that “the purpose of media education is ...to develop an ability to perceive mass communication processes with the use of a wider perspective, i.e. by paying attention to the selected political, economic and social processes. The enumerated processes constitute an interpretative framework for the media coverage” (pp. 24-25). In order to have a wider perspective, the media user

should use their knowledge from different areas and refer to the political, sociological, economical, communicational and media reflection.

Piotr Drzewiecki (2010) observes that media education is also a tool of social, cultural and economic change. The social dimension of such changes is to mean that an active, conscious and evaluative recipient will know how to search for valuable information, will be familiar with different standpoints and more inclined to the citizen's criticism, which consequently may be beneficial for the state of democracy<sup>7</sup>. The media assume in this context the role of tools which allow to participate in the democratic life and to increase the knowledge and awareness of the society. The author seeks benefits for the market of the media in the recipients' choices focused on valuable content (pp. 10-11). On the other hand, Drzewiecki (2010) claims that the cultural shift is visible in the fact that "media education breaks with the concepts of technological determinism and stresses the significance of the man's free will. In this particular context, the media, or technology in general, re-acquire the status of culture-creating tools, which replaces the role of cultural determinants" (p. 68).

The authors of the book *Media Education. Class Scripts* point to yet another social mission of the described discipline. They claim that media education classes are to make the recipients develop resistance to manipulation (Grzesiak et al., 2005, p. 7), thanks to which they will become more conscious citizens and consumers. Jan Dworak (2015), the chairman of National Broadcasting Council, mentions another extremely important competence, which constitutes a foundation of the conscious reception of the media content – it is an ability to understand the mechanisms used in the media to create and select information (p. 8) as they influence the choice, the form and the expression of the presented content.

In a form of a summary of the above-mentioned concepts, Janusz Morbitzer (2011) observes that people who do not understand the mechanisms of influencing the recipient by the media are the voters susceptible to populism who are easily-manipulated by the government. Besides, for the producers and service suppliers, they are perfect clients – succumbing without any reflection to the influence of advertisements. KRRiT points to the importance of the ability to evaluate the content, advertising and other types of commercial messages

<sup>7</sup> More information about the meaning of media education for the state of democracy is to be found in: M. Kaniewska, W. Strykowski, "Rola edukacji medialnej w społeczeństwie demokratycznym" ("Role of Media Education in the Democratic Society"), *Edukacja Medialna* 2000, No. 4.



included, and states it is one of the elements of the media competencies (Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji [KRRiT], n.d.).

The topic of security of users in the contact with the media, especially with the Internet, is connected with the problem of susceptibility to influence, particularly to manipulation.

Hence, media education is to increase the awareness of the existence of concrete dangers. The main tackled questions are, for example, information security, privacy protection, identity and anonymity in the Web as well as cyber-violence or cyber-crime. Public benefit organizations, which offer numerous educational programs on the security in the contact with the media, and give teachers and coaches access to the necessary materials (class scripts, didactic games, etc.), play a crucial role in this particular area of media education in Poland.

Media education is also to accomplish various tasks: mitigate social divisions created by people's competencies, give equal opportunities and to allow for a full-fledged activity in the mediatized reality of the present time. Agnieszka Ogonowska points to the important role of media education in counteracting mechanisms of the digital exclusion of people who do not have the appropriate competencies and, consequently, who in the mediatized and networked world have the status of media illiterates. Thus, the role of media education is also to eliminate differences in the users' competencies by raising the level of knowledge and skills of the excluded individuals, which would enable them to return to the full and active social functioning (Ogonowska, 2003, p. 14). The author of the book *Media w wychowaniu, dydaktyce oraz zarządzaniu informacją edukacyjną szkoły* (*Media in the Upbringing, Didactics and School Education and Information Management*), Tomasz Huk (2011), adopts a similar perspective by saying that media competencies "not only allow an individual to participate in the school education and lifelong learning in an effective and conscious way, but also counteract any form of exclusion from a fast-transforming society" (p. 39).

The aforementioned standpoints are in line with the declaration prepared in Fez with the participation of UNESCO, in which it is stated that at the time of the development of new technologies information and media competence is "an indispensable condition of increasing the quality of life and of a sustainable social, economic and cultural growth" (Murawska-Najmiec, 2012, p. 94).

## 5. Wrong directions

Not only do the experts who research the discipline of media education point to the possible readings of its role and significance, but they also underline the fact that the notion is frequently misunderstood since it has been assigned inappropriate roles as well as distorted meanings. It is often related to the very narrow understanding of the term, which limits it only to one topic. The ideal perception of media education is based on three aforementioned pillars: “education about the media,” “through the media” and “to the media.” In this context, all limitations of the discipline prove it is misunderstood in reference to its meaning and purpose.

The essential problem is to treat media education as a synonym for learning how to use computers and their software. Equally problematic is the viewpoint of media education being practiced when modern technologies are used as teaching aids in schools. Monika Frania (2013), the author of *Edukacja medialna a reklama. Studia teoretyczne i analizy empiryczne w kontekście środowiska szkolnego* (*Media Education and Advertising. Theoretical Studies and Empirical Analyses in the Context of School Environment*) writes:

Media education is sometimes identified with information technology or solely with media-assisted learning. Meanwhile, as noted by Agata Cudowska, it is a misunderstanding to associate media education with the introduction of computers into classrooms or with IT classes, which teach how to use computers. As suggested by the author, the idea of media education should be generally understood as making people sensible to the importance of the media in their lives (p. 58).

Piotr Drzewiecki (2010) also sees the problem:

We cannot identify media education with the computerization of schools nor with IT education, preparing recipients to the work with computers of the Internet. Certain elements of computer science and media education may seem convergent, but it is frequently forgotten that IT education is technical in nature whereas media education should be treated as a humanistic discipline. ...Media education cannot be a practical instruction or a course of how to use modern means of working with information (p. 6).

The topic is being further examined by Tadeusz Miczka (2015), who in his article “Edukacja do mediów i o mediach oraz z mediami i przez media, czyli osvajanie technocodzienności” (“Education to the Media, about the Media, with the Media and through the Media, or Taming the Techno-reality”) underlines that media education cannot be identified only with digital education (in the form of IT classes), which develops computer and information skills:

“Even if computer and information competencies are closely interrelated with media competencies, they still have to be distinguished. The first category refers to the skills necessary to operate technological devices and information management skills. The other category embraces the ability to understand the information and communication processes, with a particular emphasis on their cultural conditioning and consequences” (p. 28).

Drzewiecki hints at a yet another important question. The author observes that “media education is not so much knowledge about the media, but an art of using the media wisely” (Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 6). It indicates another problem, which is treating media education as a thematic scope, a range of knowledge, instead of treating it as a unity of knowledge, skills and attitudes. The author draws one more conclusion – despite the fact that one of the media education goals is to teach an independent creative activity in the media environment (artistic activity, media work production, citizen journalism, blogosphere contribution, etc.), media education should not be treated as a narrow discipline, as a new form of journalism course or the instruction of how to create texts in the framework of different media genres (Drzewiecki, 2010, p. 6).

## 6. Conclusion

Polish researchers of various areas of expertise focused on the questions related to media education prefer to treat the discipline in a very wide (but specific) manner. Undoubtedly, media education is associated with ambitious and far-reaching missions, which are to influence the society’s education so that its members become competent, conscious and responsible media users. Janusz Morbitzer (2011) summarizes the objectives of media education with the following words: “By achieving cognitive and educational goals, media education should strive for

shaping individuals who know how to use the media and IT tools, but do it with reflection, dignity and responsibility.”

Finally, all the mentioned definitions and descriptions allow to risk a conclusion that the media education programs should be constructed holistically, or with the consideration of different tasks and competencies, such as “the use of communications technologies, the comprehension, the evaluative reception and the creation of audiovisual and text information, the knowledge and the application of the law regulating the media, the information security and the privacy protection in the mediatized world” (Lipszyc, 2012, p. 6).

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## **Historical aspects of media education development in Slovakia**

### **Abstract**

This article offers the historical overview of media education elements with the focus on media education in Slovakia. The author deals with the media education elements (i.e. problems related to press, radio and television) in curricula, textbooks, methodological manuals and other school texts of Slovak language and literature. The article focuses mainly on the application of media education elements to teaching and it also notices the changes in perceiving the role of media in the educational process, in particular as regards the curricula and texts of the Slovak language and literature.

### **1. Media education elements and press in the first textbooks, curricula and texts in Slovakia**

Although media education is considered a relatively new discipline in school education programmes, the issue of media penetrated into schools much earlier. It is proved by the curricula of the Slovak language and literature where we find media education elements since the inclusion of Slovak language in school teaching. Indeed, we cannot speak about media education in today's sense when mainly the receptive media education oriented on a critical analysis of media comes to the forefront. In the oldest Slovak language curricula, rather work with media products and the use of media in teaching prevail. We definitely do not want to confuse media education with the inclusion of media products into education or with the use of media in teaching. We consider such an approach to this discipline as one of the most frequent errors of current teachers of media education. In spite of this, we think that it is important to examine the development related to media education and to record the

process of media education development since its beginning, i.e. including the period when media education elements just started to occur in teaching.

Technical progress and media progress were reflected also in teaching which started to use more and more often methods and strategies that served for student's gradual awareness of media. Although the influence and importance of media at that time were not as great as today, the authors of curricula and school materials made efforts to include e.g. reading of magazines, analysis of articles, publishing of own periodicals and later radio and TV broadcasting and producing of some journalistic genres into teaching. This article also briefly pays attention to the social context in which the media education elements started to occur.

The issue of media education in the Slovak school system is limited, due to the character of this article, by the beginning of the inclusion of the Slovak language into teaching. However, the school subject "Slovak language" was not the only element which was significantly influenced by the political situation. The development of our country was reflected also in the Slovak school system and in the development of the Slovak language. The Slovak language as a language of a small part of population of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was evolving gradually because Slovakia was just fighting for its rights, autonomy and cultural identity. Our education was characterised by stagnation at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. By the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the effort to introduce Czech language in teaching increased. It was the period of the national revival which is characterised by many reform proposals. The revolution requirements of the Slovak national movement related to the development of the Slovak education were expressed in the Demands of the Slovak Nation. In addition to other requirements, there was the intention to establish national schools with the Slovak teaching language. These courageous hopes of the Slovaks were not fulfilled by the subsequent revolution. The education system in Hungary was subject to the Vienna ministry when the revolution ended in 1849. Until the dissolution of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, we cannot really speak about the Slovak education because it did not practically exist. The first partial success came around 1914 when the first Czech curricula were issued. It was only a small indication of change which had not brought improvement to Slovaks yet, mainly because of the fact that the Czech curricula were applied only in Czech schools. The first more significant reform efforts in education occurred in 1918–1921, i.e. after the dissolution of Austro-Hungary.



The important role in this was played by the Martin Declaration of the political representatives by which Slovakia deliberately joined Bohemia and they created Czechoslovakia. Indeed, the development of education supported the elimination of illiteracy which was directly related to the development of press popularity. In conjunction with the technical progress which improved the availability of press, the number of Slovak newspapers and magazines was increasing quite quickly. At that time, the situation was completely different from the situation today because newspapers and magazines were associated with education and intelligence. One of the reasons was the fact that in spite of development, they were still not addressed to all people. The political aspect was strikingly evident in the newspapers of that time because most of the periodical press in Slovakia was the body of political parties or organisations. The instable situation was typical also for education of that time which had to face frequent changes of names, arrangement and division of schools.

The oldest curricula we managed to obtain come from this period, i.e. from 1933. They were published by Štátne pedagogické nakladateľstvo (State Pedagogic Publishing House) in Prague in the period of the first Czechoslovak republic under the title “Normální učebné osnovy pro obecné (ľudové) školy” (Normal curricula for national (people) schools) (1933, p. 69). In the curricula for the 5<sup>th</sup> year, we find out in the part (Oral) Composition that pupils had to learn how to create short reports on events and observations without preparation.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> year, the analysis and the reproduction of articles (later also the analysis of the formal aspect), records and short reports from meetings, the abstract of important information from texts, as well as learning how to make an interview and to write advertisements and notices are introduced. The majority of the school subjects is preferentially focused on the practical life. However, the curricula contain parts that should support the work of children with information, i.e. sorting, understanding and formulating information. In addition to the use of the reading books and other literature, it is recommended to work with magazines which are, however, not perceived as a necessary and common part of the children's life but as a supplement to teaching and a means of education.

After the creation of the Slovak republic in 1939, Štátne nakladateľstvo (State Publishing House) in Bratislava published “Dočasné normálne učebné osnovy pre školy ľudové, meštianske a jednoročné učebné náukobehy na meštianskych školách” (Temporary normal curricula for people schools, burgher schools

and one-year teaching courses at burgher schools) (1939, p. 120). The basic curricula for the Slovak language and literature for people school from this period contain recommendations to read from youth magazines. In the part dedicated to composition, it is highlighted that “it is important that pupils practice the analysis of articles as well”. In the curricula for the third year of people schools, the part dedicated to composition includes writing of short reports about what pupils heard or saw. In the following school year, pupils exercise quick understanding of magazines and the ability to choose main information from various parts of articles during lessons.

The similar exercises were carried out also in the other years and later, there are even exercises for improvised quick writing of short reports, e.g. about natural history themes and social themes and about the read text, i.e. requirements related to the treated topics increased. The teaching content for the 7<sup>th</sup> year of people schools contains practicing of interview. Although it is not the typical interview we know today, children learn to master communication and they learn rules for asking questions. There are even the suggestions for publishing a school magazine.

At that time, burgher schools were divided into Austrian and Hungarian schools and adopting the Czech model, they gradually reached the level of people schools. The government tried to deal with this situation in different ways – one of which was the publishing of new curricula for burgher schools in 1939 (*Dočasné normálne učebné osnovy pre školy ľudové, meštianske a jednoročné učebné náukobehy na meštianskych školách* (Temporary normal curricula for people schools, burgher schools and one-year teaching courses at burgher schools), 1939, p. 120). In these curricula, we find the critics of the choice of reading texts. Teachers of that time tried to compensate their poor quality by the articles in periodicals *Slovenský učiteľ* (Slovak Teacher), *Slovenská škola* (Slovak School), *Sborník profesorov Slovákov* (Proceedings of Slovak Professors) a *Pedagogický sborník* (Dictionary of Pedagogy). The curricula of burgher schools contain interview, asking questions, understanding of magazines, work with periodicals, publishing of own magazine and writing of short reports about social events or about read texts. This period is characterised by using newspaper articles in textbooks of the Slovak language and in reading textbooks. As having newspapers or magazines at home was not at all as common as today, it was a welcome attraction for pupils. The structure and the form of newspaper articles were different from traditional literary texts and newspaper

articles required a special approach so pupils were forced to deal with them in a different way than with common texts from the reading textbook. Although they were full of ideology and political intentions, pupils became familiar with journalistic products which were very important also from the point of view of education at that time. For example, the reading book and the reading textbook for burgher schools from 1942 (Dafčík, Klačanský & Rumpel, 1942, p. 278) contain various speeches, statements, rhetorical presentations and the articles from newspapers and magazines including e.g. Slovák (The Slovak), Slovenské pohľady (Slovak Views), Orol Tatránski I. (Tatra Eagle I.), Slovenské národné noviny (Slovak National Newspaper), Devín (Devín) a Ľudové noviny (People Newspaper). Here, we can also find transcriptions of the Slovak Radio broadcasting from 1941 about the topic of fairy tale and how newspapers are made. A. Kočiš, the author of the paper, is thinking about the reasons of the interest in journalistic production and he points out timeliness and rapidity in obtaining information by means of press including the information from abroad. The author also deals with the press offices, the profession of a reporter, so-called “press stunts”, editors of magazines and he even argues about the values of news. Thus, he characterises the whole process of newspaper production. This kind of information provided children with information about the media world more intensively. The media world did not have such a big impact on them in comparison with nowadays so neither the authors of the curricula probably realised that some decades later, media would be the integral part of the children’s and adults’ lives. It must be added that although media education elements we can observe here had only certain common features with present media education, already at that time pedagogues and authors of textbooks realised the need to get pupils familiar with media which were important not only from the point of view of understanding but also improving communication skills and formulating own opinions with critical evaluation.

Another change in the curricula for the Slovak language happened in 1945. The then disputes about the character of the school system were brought to an end by the February Law on the uniform school, which introduced the programme of the non-differentiated school and many changes in content in accordance with the ideology of that time. The curricula changed in 1948 and in 1954 (Ededy, 1970, pp. 32-36). Changes that were made in these curricula by their authors, however, spoke rather about the overall direction of schools than about the content of school subjects. Inadequate amount of teaching content

in the above-mentioned curricula tried to be resolved by the new curricula “Pokusné učebné osnovy pre dvanásťročné školy” (Experimental Curricula for 12-year Schools) from 1959 (1959, pp. 7-26). The elements of TV broadcasting are just in the phase of discussions. The basic media elements at schools are press and radio.

All changes in the schools system in that period affect also secondary schools which are differentiated in many fields and types. “Učebné osnovy slovenského jazyka a literatúry pre stredné všeobecnovzdelávacie školy” (Curricula of the Slovak language and literature for secondary general schools) in 1966 (1966, p. 28) recommend the visits of theatre and film performances, concerts and other cultural events, as well as the overview of TV and radio programmes. The curricula for composition contain some journalistic and other related genres: narration, characterization, assessment, scientific description, paper, discussion, speech, explanation, reflection, abstract and the products of the publicity style. Pupils should learn to understand the cultural situation by means of literary magazines and cultural columns of newspapers. A particular attention is paid to the education of film spectators where the emphasis is put on the theme of film as massive art.

“Učebné osnovy pre 6–9. ročník základnej deväťročnej školy” (Curricula for the 6<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> year of the primary 9-year schools) published by Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo (Slovak Pedagogical Publishing House) in Bratislava in 1960 (1960, p. 41) were affected, like other curricula from this period, by political interests and ideological efforts of the governments of that time. This fact was reflected in the teaching content, especially in the field of literature. The composition exercise underlines that pupils must learn to observe and discover facts, to assess them and to make a correct opinion on them. They have to learn to collect and select information and to use it in their practical life. The curricula for the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> year contain practicing of practical documents, such as description, narration, report, and notice in the school radio. In the 9<sup>th</sup> year, pupils should know to create their own CV, discussion contribution and critics where pupils’ own opinions and views are created. In the curricula for literature, the selection of texts is adapted to the themes of theatre and film and to public, radio and TV productions (in particular in the last year). The part of the curricula dedicated to individual reading of books recommends to read child and cultural magazines and attract children’s attention to the literary programmes in radio and TV and to discuss about them. In higher years, cultural

columns of newspapers and literary and cultural-political magazines are added to the above-mentioned types of periodicals. In the 9<sup>th</sup> year, the “education of the film spectator: basic knowledge of filmmaking, the analysis of the watched film, reflections about social role of filmmaking (theme, screenplay, picture, shot, main producers of the film)” is introduced. In the repetition of the 9<sup>th</sup> year, reportage, reports on read books and on theatre performances with pupils’ own assessment appear.

In this period, the curricula changed three times, i.e. in 1961, 1962 and 1964. The changes and modifications were just minor. TV gradually became a school aid and the need to improve language culture of children and young people was emphasized more and more.

## **2. Expansion of radio and television in teaching**

With the expansion of technologies which offered new possibilities of dissemination of information and accelerated the progress of media, these innovations found their application also in education. In 1940, the Ministry of Schools and National Education established the Advisory Council of School and Pedagogical Radio whose role was to prepare and approve proposals and programme directives and to supervise over the content and formal aspect of the school radio. At that time, radio transmitted programmes dedicated not only to children but also to pedagogues. Broadcasting for schools was run three times a week, i.e. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday during teaching hours from the station of Bratislava or Prešov. This broadcasting was aimed to be included in teaching and the plan of various programmes was published also in the magazine Slovenský rozhlas (Slovak Radio) (Päť rokov slovenského školstva (Five Years of Slovak Education), 1944, p. 161). The school radio was aimed to complement, diversify and enrich teaching. Especially fairy tale, legends, fables and dramatizations were broadcasted for pupils of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Pupils of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade could listen to programmes about homeland education, musical education, history, national legends, news reporting, school mail, Slovak proverbs and saying, musical guessing, military marches and active programmes. The programmes for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade were more complex and included biographies of important personalities, speeches, musical and singing programmes, reproduction of spectacles from the Slovak National Theatre, model recitations, children choirs, lectures, transmissions

from expositions, montages about art, adventurous travel documentaries, the courses of societal education and of the correct Slovak language. In this way, children got familiar with various genres of radio journalism. 7,600 minutes of the total broadcasting time were dedicated to children in 1942, out of which 4,707 minutes were dedicated to the programmes of the school radio (*Päť rokov slovenského školstva* (Five Years of Slovak Education), 1944, p. 164).

Ten years after television started broadcasting in Slovakia (1956), the TV studio in Bratislava broadcasted for children and schools regularly but the programmes for individual years were not continuous. More systematic school broadcasting was represented by the programmes for after-school facilities which did not address pupils directly at school (mathematic programmes, natural history and geographical programmes, e.g. the cycle *Krásna je naša vlasť* (Our Homeland is Beautiful)). The programmes for the students of the last year of the secondary schools and future university students were broadcasted as well (e.g. courses of English and physics, broadcasting for the students in the last year of the secondary schools, and later broadcasting for secondary school students), natural history series about animals, educational cycle *Matelko* (*Malý televízny kolotoč* (Small TV Marry-go-round); *Televízia a škola* (Television and School), 1976, p. 29) addressed to pre-school children. Other programmes *Kazeta a Lastovička* (Cassette and Swallow), transmitted at weekends, dealt with technology and hobbies. The beginnings of TV broadcasting were addressed to children of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. The cycles for pupils of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade were broadcasted since 1967 (topics from Slovak literature, history, civic education, musical education, fine-art education, chemistry, physics, natural history and geography, and later also the topics from humanities, life sciences and esthetical education). The educational programmes for secondary school students were transmitted after school and they lasted 45 minutes (*Televízia a škola* (Television and School), 1976, pp. 32-35).

In addition, there was so-called school television representing close broadcasting circuit of programmes related to the teaching content of the curricula. Television broadcasting for schools had mainly an educational function. Television was considered a school aid in teaching. It was not aimed to increase pupils' critical thinking related to media because the critics of media was not allowed at that time and the programmes for children were considered suitable. The broadcasted programmes of educational nature were divided into three groups in 1974:

- a) school programmes aimed to help school which are addressed to both, teachers and pupils, and are directly related to the curricula;
- b) educational programmes addressed to the general public which are not related to the curricula;
- c) teaching programmes which have the character of long-term courses (language course, social behaviour course etc.) and their following is connected with the further study.

The list of films which the authors of the publication *Pomôcky a didaktická technika v 1.-5. ročníku (Aids and Didactic Technics from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> year)* recommend to include in teaching: *Čistota* (Cleanness) – the film is addressed to younger pupils and it deals with the hygiene habits and rules; *Pohybová výchova dětí* (Movement Education for Children) – a cartoon film about the correct body posture; *Navrátený svět* (Restituted World) – a short film about school for children with vision impairment; *Zbytočná bolest* (Unnecessary Pain) – a doctor speaks with children about the causes of their injuries; *Deti na cestách* (Children on Roads) – rural children are getting familiar with the road traffic rules; *Deti na ulici* (Children in the Street) – teaching about the meaning of road signs, *Podťe s nami* (Come with Us) – comic cartoon programme trying to invoke children's interest in the physical education, *Na križovatke* (On the Crossroad) – a comic cartoon grotesque about the traffic discipline (Janus, 1974, pp. 168-173).

The broadcasted topics in that period were focused mainly on health, hygiene and safety. In spite of the great propagation saying that our education makes progress also in the technical areas, television broadcasting did not have much success at schools. However, there were various handbooks and publications speaking about specific impacts of television on the children's life. Indeed, it was still not the media education in today's sense. However, TV broadcasting in the school system became a new phenomenon after 1956. The effort of the government to use television in schools was definitely related to the possibilities which television offered for inclusion of political and ideological intents in teaching. There was the straightforward effort to improve reputation by the promotion of technical progress and television certainly represented such progress. Television was considered not only as an instrument of knowledge improvement but also as a means of education (school system in Russia), better understanding of cultural events and the sense of aesthetics

(school system in Poland), interpretation of knowledge acquired at school (school system in France) and finally, as a part of a modern life. The aim of school television was to give pupils knowledge about the present world, technological progress, international events and to provide them a certain level of entertainment (school system in Great Britain; *Televízia a škola* (Television and School), 1976, pp. 15-17). In Slovakia, television in teaching was considered rather a complement and a mass communication means which brings change to teaching; watching TV programmes should have even enriched vocabulary and language expression.

The importance of television broadcasting in this period is supported by the publication of various methodological letters for teachers related to their preparation for lessons with the use of TV programmes and the methodological principles related to the use of school television. These handbooks for teachers provided the detailed description of programmes with the didactic instructions. The broadcasting plans of Czechoslovak television for schools were published annually. A new cycle called Broadcasting for Teachers started to be produced since 1968. It was actually a pre-release of a school programme in a given week and it also involved the pedagogue's methodical speech. Teachers had methodical principles related to the use of school television at their disposal. The third part of the structure of the lesson with TV is dedicated to instructions how to process TV programmes. This process should have lied in evaluation, analysis and synthesis of the programme and knowledge which pupils learnt from it. In addition to the strong emphasis on the preparation of teachers, so-called television pedagogy (telepedagogy) occurred abroad. (*Televízia a škola* (Television and School), 1976, pp. 38-39). It examined and interpreted the function of television and methods and possibilities for its use in education. All programmes were controlled by the Main Editorial Office of Broadcasting for Children and Youth which was subject to the Main Editor Office of Educational Programmes.

The Editorial Office of Television Broadcasting for Schools prepared the following programmes in 1974: 1. The cycle for pupils of the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the primary 9-year school (its duration: 20 minutes), 2. The cycle for pupils of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year of the primary 9-year school (20 minutes), 3. The cycle of humanities for the pupils of the 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> year of the primary 9-year school (20 minutes), 4. The cycle of life sciences for the pupils of the 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> year of the primary 9-year school (30 minutes), 5. The enlarging cycle for the pupils of the 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> year of



the primary 9-year school (30 minutes), 6. Broadcasting for secondary school students (30 to 45 minutes), 7. Broadcasting for apprenticeship schools (30 minutes), Broadcasting for teachers (once a month the Pedagogical Magazine, in other cases pre-release of one of the programmes).

Specific programmes: *Archimedes' principle; Pythagorean theorem; Conducting of electric current in solids; Our Earth; Chemistry around us; Inside of atom; What children found in the wood; Signs of autumn nature and animal preparation for winter; How to behave at the table; About plants in our flat; Assistants of our mum; Animals in winter; Children's visit in ZOO; Pets; Long winter evenings* (practical teaching); *Preparation of presents for the International Women's Day; On the bed with heroes; Man - hero; Girl and flowers; Country I like; Nature of the Soviet Union; People govern the country* (participation of people in governing the state); *Advance quickly, my country* (industry development); *Fertile lands of the Soviet landscape* (development of agriculture); *Care about people* (social security of citizens); *Union of equal nations; Western Slovakia; Eastern Slovakia; Central Slovakia; Biology and pig rearing; Visit of ZOO, With the microscope in the empire of cells; Common home; Blood – miracle liquid; First aid; And we will be adult...; Laboratory in the human body; Life development; From the diary of the Earth; Formation and transformation of minerals; Blood of modern transport*, dramatizations of Jozef Gregor Tajovský's short stories... ) (Televízia a škola (Television and School), 1976, p. 35).

TV broadcasting should have been included in all school subjects. However, it was evident that the subject "Slovak language and literature" provided the biggest space for this purpose, also because of the fact that the particular position in the structure of TV broadcasting for schools pertained to literature. According to the records from 1970, 11 programmes out of 37 were dedicated to literature. The dramatizations of short stories were often used (Televízia a škola (Television and School), 1976, pp. 93-94). Well-applicable programmes were dramatizations of Jozef Gregor Tajovský's short stories: *Ženský zákon* (Women's law), *Ľudovít Štúr, Štúrov posledný zápas* (Last battle of Ľudovít Štúr), S. Chalupka: *Mor ho!, Hlásnik národa, Od vzdoru k boju* (From resistance to battle), *Umenie krásne pod nebom sa rodí* (Beautiful art is born under the sky), P. O. Hviezdoslav: *Ežo Vlkolinský, Hľadal pravdu* (He was looking for truth), *Človek hrdina* (Man – hero), *Iskra za iskrou nech letí, Kompas v nás* (Compass in us), *Výstavba dramatického diela* (Structure of a dramatic piece of art), *Základy filmovej reči* (Basics of film language) etc. The widest range of TV programmes

was dedicated to pupils of the 8<sup>th</sup> year (Televízia a škola (Television and School), 1976, pp. 93-94).

The modern trend to include television in teaching and the overall popularity of television provoked the discussion about its impact on children and about future development of this mass medium. “The influence of the mass means, such as film and television, on forming aesthetical feeling of pupils is without any doubt important today. According to national researchers and researchers from abroad, pupils at the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of the primary school watch television several hours a day and the favourite and the most watched programmes include sports reportages, films, adaptations of theatre plays and dramatizations of literary works. The role of the teacher of literature is therefore to lead and prepare pupils so that they are able to choose the correct programmes and to understand them. The teacher should attract pupils’ attention to valuable and age appropriate TV programmes and he/she should discuss their impressions from such programmes during lessons” (Televízia a škola (Television and School), 1976, pp. 93-94).

Various publications about television and school contain recommendations for pupils to write diaries (records) about films and TV programmes they watched. Such diaries should have contained: film or TV programme title, author’s and director’s name, names of main protagonists (cast), short content and the attempt to evaluate a work (Koblewska, 1969, p. 20). Authors of these proposals expect that similar “purposeful guidance will improve pupils’ taste, develop their capacity to understand and evaluate the idea, content, plot and construction of a work and that they will learn to distinguish trash from a piece of art and later they will choose themselves the programmes that will not only entertain them but also will give them the conscious aesthetical experience and will leave in them the permanent educational influence” (Televízia a škola (Television and School), 1976, p. 103). These are the examples of the fundamentals of media education whose role should be to advice and guide children in the world of media and to follow this role by means of improvement of communication skills. “As we teach a child to listen, so we teach him/her to know. Starting from the observation of a picture, we have to develop the children’ capacity to see and watch films systematically. The film has its own ways of expression – its own figurative language. It is necessary that pupils learn this language to be able to understand and evaluate the flexible means of the film consciously. It means that pupils in the higher years of the primary

school should acquire a certain idea of film and TV aesthetics. According to the curricula up to date for the Slovak language and literature, pupils should acquire such knowledge mainly in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of the primary 9-year school in the framework of film education. Indeed, artistic TV programmes can be used also in broader sense, i.e. in the framework of the so-called occasional education by literature and art.” (N. K. Krupskaja: Školský film (School Film). Súbtor článkov (Set of articles), Moskva: Isskutstvo, 1961).

One of the possibilities to improve the interconnection between school and television should have been the audiovisual centres with television which would have been able to manage the distribution of TV broadcasting for schools. In the ideal case, the TV monitors should have been directly on pupils’ desks. In addition, the specialised centres abroad dealt with this issue. In the Soviet Union, it was the Scientific Institute of School Equipment and Technical Means of Teaching at the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences in Moscow. In the German Democratic Republic, this area was governed by the Institute of School Aids at the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences which published a journal about its activity. In Hungary, it was the Committee for Audiovisual Aids in Budapest which published bi-monthly journal Audiovisual Information. In the German Federal Republic, it was the Institute for Film and Image in Science and Teaching in Munich (monthly journal Audiovisual Practice), in the Yugoslavia the Centre for School and Cultural-Educational Film (journal Film in Teaching), in Austria the Centre for Audiovisual Means in Teaching and Education in Vienna. In Japan, there was the Association of Audiovisual Education in Tokyo (it prepared the curricula for teacher training in audiovisual didactic technique in 1973). National audiovisual centres were associated in the International Organisation ICEM at UNESCO. This organisation sheltered more than 30 national organisations dealing with the use of audiovisual means in education (Televízia a škola (Television and School), 1976, pp. 183-184).

The huge popularity of the use of television in teaching decreased naturally after certain time and nowadays, television broadcasting no longer represents a modern dominant for enriching and complementing lessons. Television is an integral part of children’s life who come across with it mainly in their free time and they spend a lot of time watching it. Also for this reason, teachers include television in teaching only occasionally. Another reason is the decrease of TV production for children. School broadcasting has completely disappeared.

### 3. Period from the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century up to now

In 1973, Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo (Slovak Pedagogical Publishing House) published “Dočasné učebné osnovy pre odborné učilišťa an učňovské školy” (Temporary curricula for apprenticeship schools) (1973, p. 20) which put emphasis on writing notices, reports and advertisements and on creating advertisement posters. In the teaching content for later years, they also suggest a paper, discussion, explanation, search and basic forms of advertisements. They recommend the creation of wall newspaper. Osnovy pre stredné odborné školy (Curricula for Secondary Vocational Schools) (1973, p. 20) from the same year, like almost all curricula, recommend to work with press, radio and television, as well as the creation of wall newspaper and the programme in the school radio. They include genres like explanation, reflection, critics, paper, discussion, polemic and informative journalistic genres.

The curricula from 1978 (Učebné osnovy slovenského jazyka, literatúry a cvičení v slovenskom jazyku pre 5.–8. ročník základnej školy (Curricula for Slovak language and literature and exercises in the Slovak language for the 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> year of primary schools), 1978, p. 104) mention in particular narration, description, report, notice, letter, reportage, travel article and feature, which are more complex journalistic genres. According to the curricula, one of the basic target requirements of teaching the mother tongue is the capacity of “pupils to express themselves clearly and accurately and to think accurately and logically. Their rational thinking and intellectual abilities develop, especially the ability to analyse and synthesise, to abstract and to generate”. Genres mentioned are mainly narration, description, notice, letter, reportage, travel article and feature, which could be considered classical but more difficult journalistic genres. The report is studied in all years and the authors of the curricula consider it precise, logical and brief information about e.g. excursion, visit of a cultural event, about various school and public events, about watching the film etc. We can already speak about a certain kind of publicity values which, together with the data of the factual character, are the basic information component of such expressions. The inclusion of exercises for improving the capacity to collect and sort information is interesting as well. In the section “Exercise in collecting material and in its arrangement”, we can even find the tasks focused on “listing the advertising texts and the names of products and food products and their assessment from the aspect of linguistic correctness”. The emphasis is put on the ability to analyse and evaluate linguistic expressions, thus meeting the

basic requirement of media education, i.e. critical thinking improvement and the ability to form own opinion. All these objectives are supported by practical work, e.g. in the school radio or magazine. Pupils are supposed to examine information repletion according to the number of substantives and numerals (especially in higher years) when they write reports. Since the 5<sup>th</sup> year, there is the need in teaching to insert the expressions “used for evaluation”. The curricula for the 8<sup>th</sup> year mention the creation and comprehension of the genre of explanation, which is characterised by using technical terms. They include the discussion which develops and resolves a given problem in relation with which pupils try to adopt and express the opinion. In this way, they learn to discover the meaning of objective arguments which is important in publicity journalism of a rational type. The use of neutral words, the expression of an objection and the use of idioms, i.e. the elements belonging to the creation of journalistic outputs of various nature, is also interesting. The capacity to analyse can be used by children in group work with the problem questions which requires from pupils to provide reasoning.

The overview of the themes contains also the theme “Man in film, radio and television”. “A suitable film is the source of amusement and a lesson. The child film protagonist is with his/her thinking, acting and feeling often a model for thinking, acting and feeling of adults”. Children also learn how the film is produced, they read about the plot, screenplay, technical screenplay, shooting, actors, director and cameramen with the emphasis on the documentary film and the basic differences between the documentary film and the classical film. The curricula recommend also the use of language columns from press and radio and TV programmes which can be the motivation for language columns in school magazines and wall newspapers and for the creation of school radio or magazine. Teaching should form not only the reader but also the theatre, film and TV spectator by recommending him/her theatre plays and films and radio and television programmes.

In higher years, the recommendations related to print media include cultural columns of magazines, literary and cultural-political magazines, and finally, the daily press as well. It is also recommended to participate in school radio and to publish articles in the magazines for children and youth. As for the use of various school aids, the curricula recommend to use newspapers, magazines, radio records, gramophone records etc. for enriching lessons.

In 1976, the programme of mandatory 10-year education was declared with 8

years of primary education and 2 years of secondary education (apprenticeship schools, vocational schools and secondary grammar schools). This programme was implemented by Law No. 29/1984 on the system of primary and secondary schools. In that period, schools were divided into the 1<sup>st</sup> grade – national school (from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> year), the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade – secondary school (from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> year – compulsory schooling from the age of 6 to the age of 15) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade – compulsory vocational schools, higher vocational schools and secondary grammar schools. The same curricula existed at the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Law No. 63/78 shortened the 1<sup>st</sup> grade into the period of the 1<sup>st</sup> year to the 4<sup>th</sup> year. Until 1980, the network of higher vocational secondary schools almost tripled, the network of apprenticeship schools was extended and 13 universities with 41 faculties were established. Law No. 29/84 introduced 10-year education consisting of the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary education and two years of a chosen secondary school. The educational system involved also people schools of art, language schools and other schools. The educational system is uniform and consists of kindergartens (up to the age of 6), the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of primary schools (from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> year), the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary schools (from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> year), secondary schools, secondary grammar schools, secondary vocational schools and conservatoires (4-year study completed by the school leaving examination), apprenticeship schools (2, 3, 4-year without school leaving examination), universities (from 4 to 6 years of study).

In that period, the curricula changed (without the significant change in teaching content) in 1968, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1983, 1984 and 1987 (Učebné osnovy 2. stupňa základnej školy slovenský jazyk a literatúra (5.–8. ročník) (The curricula of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary schools for the Slovak language and literature (from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> year)), 1987, p. 124) and in all curricula, the elements of media production were concentrated in the literary and composition sections. The curricula of the secondary apprenticeship schools from 1984 (Učebné osnovy predmetu slovenský jazyk a literatúra pre učebné a študijné odbory stredných odborných učilíšť (Curricula for the subject of “Slovak language and literature” for various fields of secondary apprenticeship schools), 1984, p. 128) introduced the explanation, reflection, critics and some other journalistic genres (interview, reportage) in teaching. Pupils in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of 3-year secondary apprenticeship schools studied also journalistic genres (the commentary, editorial, satiric critics, humoristic critics, critical note,

review, annotation, feature, interview, reportage) but also the humoresque, anecdote, fable and joke. A part of teaching was dedicated to expressivity in sentence stylistics which needs to be distinguished, especially for the correct interpretation of journalistic expression.

The study content in individual years did not change significantly; there were just various minor modifications and suggestions and temporary curricula. All curricula emphasise the interconnection of the Slovak language and literature and the support by teaching of composition. Media education elements were concentrated mainly in the literary and composition sections of the curricula. However, frequent changes of curricula were related mainly to the complex political situation in Slovakia. The plenary session of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party elected Alexander Dubček as the first secretary in January 1968. The period from December 1967 to August 1967 was influenced by the democratic changes. In April 1968, the so-called *Action Programme of the Czechoslovak Communist Party*, which should have introduced “socialism with a human face”, was adopted. It contained the changes that the communist party wanted to introduce in the political sphere (especially in the area of human rights and political system), economic policy (the economic reform in the framework of socialism), cultural policy and foreign policy in the following two years. However, the efforts to introduce changes were destroyed. Under the previous agreements of individual socialist countries and under the *Brezhnev Doctrine*, the order to occupy the territory of Czechoslovakia was issued for the troops of the *Warsaw Pact* on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1968. Later, the law on federation was adopted. The curricula continue to be full of ideology which was seen mainly in the choice of texts for reading, exercises and topics for composition.

The curricula for secondary apprenticeship schools from 1984 (Učebné osnovy predmetu slovenský jazyk a literatúra pre učebné a študijné odbory stredných odborných učilíšť (Curricula for the subject of “Slovak language and literature” for various fields of secondary apprenticeship schools), 1984, p. 128) include explanation, reflection, critics and some journalistic genres (interview, reportage) into teaching content. In the 1<sup>st</sup> year, students study the fundamentals of information science which is, however, understood as the work with text. It includes comprehension of text, text processing, the tasks of speech in society, speech communication and information genres, such as news, flash reports and advertisements. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of 3-year secondary apprenticeship



schools, students also study journalistic genres, such as the commentary, editorial, satiric critics, humoristic critics, critical note, review, annotation, feature, interview, reportage, humoresque, anecdote, fable and joke. The part of teaching is dedicated to the expressivity in sentence stylistics which must be distinguished, especially for the correct interpretation of journalistic expression. The curricula contain teaching content about language as an instrument of information and about comprehension of the text (in scientific literature and in press). They recommend the regular records from broadcasting of radio language advisory service and language columns of daily press. For this reason, the publicity style and its forms are included in the teaching content. This section deals with the specific features of journalistic, radio and television publicity journalism. It includes these themes: Dominant position of press, Citizen contributors, Classification of publicity and journalistic genres and their dynamism, Function of typographical arrangement of titles and texts, Function and stylistics of titles, News report as a the most frequent form, Various forms of publicity critics (critics, feature, gloss) and its meaning, Comparison with the expert critics (review, assessment), interview, Specificities of journalistic, radio and television reportage, Composition and stylistic revision of news and adding the appropriate title to the news, Comparison between journalistic, radio and television sports reportage, Writing of critics, feature or other fiction form or interview, Compilation of a wall newspaper with own journalistic forms, Oral presentation of critical discussion contribution. All above-mentioned themes are mentioned in the teaching content for secondary vocational schools and secondary economic schools with the emphasis on the secondary vocational schools with the “bookseller” specialisation, but the quantity of teaching content differs only in terms of the number of lessons, not in terms of the reduction of themes. In this way, all above-mentioned themes are studied at all types of schools.

The curricula for secondary grammar schools from 1985 (Učebné osnovy gymnázia – slovenský jazyk a literatúra (1.–4. ročník) Curricula for secondary grammar schools – Slovak language and literature (from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> year), 1985, p. 65): teaching content for the 1<sup>st</sup> year contains the method of text comprehension (in scientific literature and in press), practicing the ability to obtain information and to process it. Regular records from broadcasting of radio language advisory service and language columns of daily and weekly press were required. Students learnt basic information about style, stylistics,



information forms, questionnaires and polls. There were also the themes closely related to media education, e.g. Influencing in communication, Obtaining information and its pertinence, brevity and neutrality. Students of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year studied publicity style and its genres and one of the educational objective was “to deepen theoretic knowledge of students about dynamism of journalistic genres and to deepen practical skills in creating those forms that can publish in newspapers as ordinary citizens: news, critics, feature”. The auxiliary subject was the Slovak Language Workshop where students should have exercised the production of specific genres more intensively. It functioned also as the editorial board of the school magazine or contributions to school radio or regional newspapers. One of the parts of the teaching content was the analysis of daily press and the characteristics of publicity style in a chosen newspaper with the emphasis on the use of television, radio and newspapers and their analysis, assessment and interpretation.

Media were introduced in the textbooks as well. The textbook “Slovak Language and Literature” for the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Special Apprenticeship Schools (1985, p. 184) has the chapter “Notices and News”. It encourages students: „to read the latest news and notices in newspapers (such as Smena (Shift), Pravda (Truth), Práca (Labour), and district or factory newspapers). Summarize the content of the news you have read. Write a news report or notice about the life of your apprenticeship school, your village or town. Write a news report according to these questions: who? what? where? when? and, if appropriate, how? why?” By means of check questions we find out why we follow the latest news, what the various kinds of news inform about or according to which questions the news is produced. The chapter about advertisement deals with the roles of advertisement, radio and TV advertisement and the ways in which it can attract attention. In relation to our theme, it is interesting that one chapter advises how to read newspapers correctly and how to understand them. There is the division of genres into news genres, analytical genres and fiction genres, noting that there is no clear border between genres. The tasks are focused on practicing genres, their functions, meaning and the ability of students to produce some of them. Slovak Language for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year of Secondary Schools (Slovenský jazyk pre 1.–2. ročník stredných škôl (gymnáziá, stredných odborných škôl, stredných odborných učilíšť štúdia popri zamestnaní), 1985) involves the theme “Books and Journals”, in which the authors, besides other things, recommend some newspapers and journals: *Kultúra slova* (Culture of

Word), *Nedeľná Pravda* (Sunday Truth), *Smena na nedeľu* (Shift for Sunday), *Večerník* (Evening Journal) in Bratislava, *Smer* (Direction) in Banská Bystrica, *Východoslovenské noviny* (Newspaper of Eastern Slovakia), weekly journal *Nové knihy* (New Books). The chapter “Means of Mass Information and Propaganda” deals with the means of press, radio and television. The textbook contains the space for importance of information and communication as such. Students study about the types of information and administration style and its forms (genres). One chapter is dedicated to publicity style and its functions. The textbook speaks also about automation and updating in publicity style and, indeed, about some genres (news report, title, paper, interview, critics, feature, reportage). There is even the section which advises how to read newspapers correctly and how to understand their structure. There is the division of genres into news genres, analytical genres and fiction genres. However, the authors emphasize that there is no clear border between individual genres. The exercises focus on tasks exercising the comprehension of individual genres, their functions, meaning and the ability of students to produce some genres practically. The work with newspapers and magazines is emphasized everywhere.

Media education elements occur also in *Slovenský jazyk pre dvojročné a trojročné učebné odbory SOU* from 1987 (Slovak Language for 2-year and 3-year study fields of secondary apprenticeship schools) (Ballay, Geisbacherová & Dostálová, 1987, p. 219). The textbook deals with the speech communication situations, production of wall newspapers, broadcasting in school radio, text comprehension and its processing, content and stylistics of these genres: news report, advertisement, editorial, commentary, critics, review, annotation, feature, interview, reportage and entertaining genres (humoresque, caricature, anecdote, fable, parody, joke, epigram, and aphorism). *Učebné osnovy druhého stupňa* (Curricula of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) from 1987 characterized the Slovak Language and Literature as subjects contributing also to the education of the theatre and film spectator. Pupils learnt, in addition to other things, to collect, sort and evaluate language material and to create texts. The curricula contained also the discussion and the discussion contribution based on factual arguments. The bases: briefness, pertinence and clarity – the values considered as primary values of the news journalism. The emphasis was put on the use of short sentences and neutral words and on argumentation. The curricula also included publicity genres and their functions (to inform, explain and persuade). The new teaching element is the scientific description which children practice by

analysing scientific texts. This teaching content is at the same time connected with practicing scientific-popular description. As for the description of a piece of art, children learn to express their own impressions and opinions. Later, they learn to write the characterization, subjective description, extract and reflection, i.e. the genres that are more related to evaluation and expression of the opinion. There is the text analysis, the explanation of a certain problem on the basis of pupils' own logical thinking. This is based on the generally known facts that lead to logical generalization, i.e. procedures used also in publicity journalism. The curricula contain the discussion and the related discussion contribution based on factual arguments. The basic characteristics are briefness, pertinence and clarity which are considered also the primary values in publicity journalism. The emphasis is put on short sentences and neutral words and on argumentation. The curricula contain also the publicity genres and their functions (to inform, explain and persuade). The features of the publicity style should be explained by the teacher by means of the analysis of short texts (articles from the periodical press). Again, the emphasis is put on objectivity, pertinence, timeliness, promptness and persuasiveness. The specific genres which should be studied by pupils are reportage and sport reportage. Here, it is recommended to use practical examples from press, radio and television. "Comprehensive language analyses of texts are very important. They help to understand language as a system, they invoke the interest in it and they deepen and consolidate language knowledge and skills. It is important to draw attention to phenomena that are important for language practice. They help to develop logical thinking and they strengthen the ability of reading comprehension". The teaching content also includes the facultative subject "Slovak Language Exercises" focused on practicing collection, sorting and evaluation of language material, improvement of language culture by various discussions and speeches and the analysis of various types of texts. Again, there are tasks where pupils are supposed to collect advertisement texts related to various products and to evaluate their language level, which foresees the work with all types of media.

With the development of technology, the greater emphasis was put on press, radio, television and film in teaching the Slovak language and literature. The chapter "Človek vo filme, v televízii a v rozhlasе v učebnici literatúry pre 6. ročník základnej školy" (Man in the film, television and radio in the textbook of literature for the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the primary school) from 1986 (Krpčiar & Juríčková,

1986, p. 2016) underlined the important position of these means in education and it was focused on the education of spectators' and listeners' habits by the recommendations of films and TV and radio programmes. The textbook deals not only with film but also with television and its specific characteristics, its influence on spectators and with the types of TV programmes. In a practical exercise, pupils were supposed to distinguish individual types of programmes.

Changes in our society after 1989 required the reform of the school system. Changes had to be focused on the needs of the present society and its basic principles had to be in accordance with the principles of nationalism, humanity and democracy. It was necessary to change the structure of the school system and gradually innovate the content of education and the educational process. The system of primary and secondary schools was amended in 1990 and it involved the following school reforms:

- primary education attendance is prolonged to 9 years,
- establishment system and financial and material resources of secondary apprenticeship schools and the centres of work education are modified,
- the activity of political parties and political movements is forbidden at schools,
- it is possible to establish private and church schools,
- duration of study at some secondary schools is modified,
- the names of some types of schools are modified.

Later, 8-year compulsory schooling was introduced but 9-year compulsory schooling was re-introduced in 1998. The set of curricula for primary schools was adopted by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic on 6 May 1991, in force since 1 September 1991. Later, Amendment No. 3791/1993-30 was published on 22 June 1993, in force since 1 September 1993.

In this period, the competent have already noticed the negative influence of television on children. Various pedagogical materials from this period emphasize that one of main objectives is to encourage the activity and autonomy of pupils. "It might be possible to paralyse the negative influence of some TV programmes if pupils worked more with the watched performances at school (e.g. tell a fairy tale you watched on TV). However, the implementation of these methods of the teaching content face the lack

of time or the unwillingness of teachers to reflect how it would be possible to use these TV programmes at school.” (Komenský 113, 1988/89, No. 10, p. 597). The teacher should teach pupils to obtain and look for information and he/she should recommend them what TV programmes are suitable.

Učebné osnovy pre 8. ročník (Curricula for the 8<sup>th</sup> year) (Ihnátková & Krpčiar, 1995, p. 28) introduce the publicity style and its forms (reflection, critics, feature, commentary and reportage). Teachers should use the illustrations according to specific copies of newspapers. According to the curricula, check dictates should contain common continuous text, preferably from press. Thematic groups of the 5<sup>th</sup> year contain the topics like “Cartoon film” and “Fairy tales in television and radio” and magazines for children and youth are recommended. Sections “Child hero in film” and “Visit of the theatre play with a child hero” inform about filmmaking (plot, literary screenplay, technical screenplay, shooting, actors, director, cameramen) and about synthetic art. At the same time, the classical film and the documentary film and their specific means of expression, film genres (fairy tale, historical film, adventurous film and sci-fi film) are defined. Another section is the theme “Television and modern life of a man”, “Radio educates” and “Comparison of means of expression in film, television and literature”.

Topics focused on mass communication means and their use in education thus appear in all years of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. At the same time, there is the emphasis on the need to teach pupils to choose from media production and to realise positive and negative characteristics of media. The curricula of all years recommend using newspapers, magazines, various columns of press, radio programmes and appropriate TV programmes.

## 4. Summary

Media education elements accompany the curricula in various forms already from the integration of the Slovak language into teaching. Although the perception of media in children’s life was interpreted in different ways in different periods, pedagogues were always aware of the fact that the media world had the potential to influence not only teaching itself but also the development of children. Efforts to use media in teaching suggest that newspapers, radio, television and Internet have the special characteristics that can be used positively in the teaching process if they are used correctly. Although teachers

had the tendency to educate children to be readers, listeners and spectators with good taste at the beginning of the existence of mass communication means, they did not manage to realize this intention in a broader sense. Finally, the role of the school is not to cover this issue by its competences because it requires much more substantial means of forming, including institutions ensuring leisure activities for children but especially families. "If we ask what is the relationship between television and the teaching process, we will probably reply that television with its emphasis on participation, dialogue and deepness invoked new demand for quick reform of schooling in America. It does not depend much whether there will be a TV set in each classroom. The revolution has already happened at home" (McLuhan, 1991, p. 306).

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## **The dispute over media education in Polish schools**

### **Abstract**

In a dynamically changing reality, evolution touches both media and the spheres of life that are influenced by new technologies and their development. Therefore media education is a precious form of education, however, it is still imperfect and requires constructive changes. The research on media education in Poland points to the low level of media literacy among young and adult Polish media users. Meanwhile, in Polish education system there is no clear definition of media literacy, of what should be called media education and to what objectives that education should lead. The misunderstandings linked with media education have a complex character and result from a lack of dialogue between the government and the scientific sphere, which have different scientific approaches, practical and ideological attitudes. The article provides an overview of the history of media education in Polish educational system and of the practices in developing media education and media literacy in Poland.

### **1. Introduction**

Media education should strive to shape an attitude of active creativity which ought to become a desired alternative for the passive way of experiencing the media. Moreover, through proper actions it should form positive attitudes towards the media. One of such attitudes is without a doubt the critical approach that assumes the knowledge of the main mechanisms of the media, emotional distance towards their proposed coverage, and researching the desired information in numerous sources and making comparison, that is estimating their credibility (Nowakowska-Buryła, 2003).

In short, the best way to characterize the state of media education in Poland is to say that the policy makers, people who decide about its popularization in

schools and media, prefer to be conservative about the whole concept. They also point to the difficulties of implementing media education to schools as a separate subject, sometimes they even do not distinguish between media education and information technology, or education through media.

The so-called “educational path” was removed from the current core curriculum by the ordinance from December 23rd, 2008 (The Ordinance of the Ministry of National Education). The result of this is the duality of media education in Polish schools: on the one hand, it is not mentioned in the general education goals, but on the other, it is noticeable in all of the aspects of the core curriculum. However, presenting the fragmentary information instead of the process of building up knowledge, as well as not having the ability of critical interpretation, cannot lead to forming media literacy – the only real goal in such a situation is to simply provide the pupils with basic skills as media users. Moreover, treating media and informational education jointly is reducing media education simply to a matter of technical training (Siemieniecki, 2002).

On the other hand, there is a noticeably growing interest in media education, the result of which is a series of postulates and endeavours taken up by the academic communities and organizations interested in the issue.

## 2. Main developmental milestones of media education in Poland

In the nearly 25 years the Polish educational system was reformed, and therefore the core curriculum at all educational levels was modified. At present, the educational system was defined by the Act on Education of 1991 (Ustawa o systemie oświaty z dnia 7 września 1991) and the structure of educational institutions was radically reformed in 1999.

The relevance of media education in Poland was explicitly recognized in the first decade of the 1990's in connection with significant political and economic changes. Polish media educators began to actively implement foreign, and first of all, the European experience. From now on, the problems of media competence development got on the agenda.

Seven years after the political turnover of 1989, one of the Polish pioneers of media education Wacław Strykowski called for general and curriculum based media education as required by the new social order, to support (and enhance) the educational process and to keep the youth secure, both in their choice and use of media. He pointed to three main goals to be accomplished:

- use of media for intellectual and professional ends
- developing a critical understanding of media messages as means of value transmission and attitude formation
- appropriate use of media for entertainment (Strykowski, 1997).

Since 1998 media education in Poland was integrated with the humanities, the scope of published media education programs, training manuals, monographs and articles extended. It was then understood as media pedagogy, education *through* media, but mostly education *for* media (Drzewiecki 2010b, p. 35). At the same time, one could often hear in the society the opinions underlying the necessity of introducing autonomous media studies or courses as well.

Media education movement spread both at universities and at schools. As a result media literacy education was introduced to schools of primary and junior high level in 1999 as part of the core curriculum. Its aims focused on developing competences of critical media content reception and responsible media use.

In 2005, the Polish Film Institute (PFI) was established. It carried out a number of projects connected with media education. Thus packets with 50 DVDs containing games, documentary and animation films were sent to 14,000 polish schools. Each of them was selected by experts according to their training programs (Lipszyc, 2012).

In the following decade, this first programme of media education was criticised and the problem was soon taken up by the Polish media regulatory authority - the National Broadcasting Council (KRRiT: Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji), which began to supervise the development of media education at national level. The ideas concerning a complex development of media education in Poland including the appropriate training of teachers and the involvement of public organizations, libraries and local authorities in media education were put forward. Therefore KRRiT was an extremely important Polish entity interested in institutional activities for promoting media education. Back in 2000, KRRiT commissioned a report on the state of media education in Poland, written by scholars from the Institute of the Audio-Visual Arts of the Jagiellonian University under the supervision of professor Wiesław Godzic. The authors of the study emphasized that the importance of media education was being downplayed and neglected, and that the consequence of that was a badly written core curriculum, decision-making disarray, the lack of contemporary

role models and the lack of proper teaching resources (Godzic, 2000). That same year KRRiT organized a conference for scholars “Media Education – the Need and the Challenge for the Future”, which started a debate on the issue of media education.

In the years 2003-2008 media education was more of a social movement than a policy of the government. Numerous initiatives grew out of European-based programmes, for example *Media Programme* or *Safer Internet*. Websites devoted to education for the media were set up, e.g. *EdukacjaMedialna.pl*, *Edunews.pl*. However, there was no coordination at the national level of these initiatives, neither was media education extensively promoted (Drzewiecki, 2010b, p. 38).

The entry of Poland into the European Union enabled Polish media educators to rely on such solutions as the European Commission Communication on media literacy of December 2007 (COM(2007)833 - A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment) invited member state governments to coordinate and regulate the activities of all parties involved in media literacy development.

Therefore, the Polish National Broadcasting Council initiated a series of conferences which gathered media education experts. On May 7th, 2008 the first session of the Media Education Forum commenced, with numerous representatives of culture, education, work and science sectors in attendance, as well as media representatives, members of various colleges and universities, social institutions and associations (Media Education in KRRiT). Since then the Forum gathered, during its plenary meetings, distinguished experts in the field who have been promoting for many years the need to introduce media education in Poland. Each of those meetings saw a number of lectures on specific issues and problems, leading to some heated debates. Participants of the Media Education Forum could attend the speeches by prof. Bronisław Siemieniecki from the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, dr Piotr Drzewiecki from the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, and dr Lucyna Kirwil from the University of Social Sciences and Humanities. A team of experts on media education was put together under KRRiT. In 2002 its members met with Tomasz Goban-Klas, at that time the secretary in the Ministry of National Education and Sports (MENiS). MENiS began its preparations to introduce the new subject to schools. Unfortunately, after 2003 the involvement of KRRiT in promoting media education became weaker, and it finally began to resemble something

more akin to a social movement. The activities linked to introducing media education as a separate school subject were also suspended. The breakthrough came at the end of 2007 when the European Union's new audiovisual directive (Directive 2007/65/WE) called the membership countries to cope with the issue of media education. However, all the work put into writing the new core curriculum did not meet expectations because representatives of the Ministry of National Education raised the issue of the lack of professionally trained didactic staff. Despite the postulates of media pedagogues and media experts, expressed openly during numerous events, including the sessions of the Media Education Forum organized by the National Broadcasting Council in the years 2008-2010, it was not possible to implement "media education" subject in Polish schools (Drzewiecki, 2010b).

Also the European Parliament resolution of 16 December 2008 on media literacy in a digital world (2008/2129(INI)) urged the relevant member state institutions to make media education an important and relatively independent component of education. In this connection it was asserted that media education should be part of lifelong learning and should involve not only preschool children, school and university students, the under-age audience as a whole but also teachers, parents, adults, pensioners.

In spite of these initiatives on the part of the Council as well as various non-governmental organisations, the Ministry of National Education decided against the extensive presence of media education as an integral part of school programmes. The new core curriculum, issued in 2009, drastically limited media education by restricting it severely. Significantly, the integrity of the initial media education programme was effectively eliminated, with merely some aspects remaining in teaching selected school subjects.

In reality, the teaching of media competences was restricted to IT skills and reception of ICT messages, in other words, passive skills rather than active and creative use of media (Boroń, 2010).

Therefore, in 2012 the Polish Association of Media Education was created at the initiative of academics as well as practitioners concerned with media education. Its main aim is to spread knowledge of media and media education, and to support research in this area. The organisation is headed by prof. Agnieszka Ogonowska of the Pedagogical University in Cracow.

Media education in Poland has not become compulsory at schools yet. The

Ministry of Education agreed with the general conceptions about the necessity of media education but would not introduce special courses in media culture thus having integrated the media education component in different school subjects. At the same time, media studies are available in the form of autonomous elective courses.

### 3. Media education in international and national strategic documents

The documents of European Union institutions have for many years now formulated priorities and guidelines for its member states, including Poland. According to them media literacy is increasingly becoming an important component of European and national policy agendas in the media and communication sectors. The most important ones for media education policies have been as follows:

1. *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (2006/962/EC)* – defined the digital competences, which included the ability to search, collect and process information and use it in a critical and systematic way, assessing relevance and distinguishing the real from the virtual while recognising the links.
2. *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – A European approach to media literacy in the digital environment (12 December 2007, COM(2007)833)* – underlines the importance of media literacy and image education initiatives in order to access European audiovisual works and to enhance Europe's cinematographic and audiovisual heritage.
3. *European Parliament Resolution of 16 December 2008 on Media Literacy in a Digital World 2008/2129(INI)* – indicates that media education is essential to achieving a high level of media literacy, which is an important part of political education.
4. *Social Capital Development Strategy in Poland 2020 (2013)* – focuses on ICT in education and in non-formal education, development of digital competences of the groups at risk of social exclusion, adapting the offer of the training courses to the needs of the labour market as regards the fundamental ICT competences.

The development of information society in Poland is being monitored by the Ministry. Its recent report is an example: *Information society in numbers* (Szymanek, 2013) summarizes the current state of affairs with respect to Poles' digital competences, Internet access, the use of new digital tools for social and educational ends. The coherent programme of the development of information society was indicated in the *Long-term National Development Strategy. Poland 2030. The third wave of modernity* (2013), adopted by the Council of Ministers at the beginning of the year 2013. The document defined the fundamental courses of interventions, including developing digital competences of teaching personnel (e.g. teachers, employees of other educational and cultural institutions, employees of NGOs) and implementing common digital education as well as establishing modern infrastructure and educational resources

#### 4. The international and national conferences

Due to lack of indication in Polish core curriculum concerning media education there are series of initiatives to change this situation. Problems associated with media education has become a subject of discussion of many scientific conferences. Among them are media education conferences organized mostly by state institutions, universities and academics. This is a great opportunity to debate over the importance of media and information literacy for social, economic and cultural development and also to share experiences concerning research on the state of media and information literacy. The most popular conferences organised each year are listed below:

1. Polish Research Symposium "People – Media – Education" organized from 1991 by Pedagogical University of Cracow, Department of Educational Media and Technology.
2. International Conference on Media Education organized from 1997 by Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Department of Education Technology.
3. International Conference on "Communication – Media – Language – Education" organized from 2002 by Civitas Christiana in Toruń.
4. National Conference "Computer Science in Education" organized from 2003 by Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science.

5. Media Education Forum organized from 2008 by National Broadcasting Council.
6. The Media Education Congress organized from 2014 by The Polish Association of Media Literacy.

The primary goal and mission of these conferences is to encourage and promote research in the theory and practice of media education at the school, college and university levels of education. Members focus on media education theory and practices and research relating to 'knowledge societies' and critical analysis of strategies and policies.

Additionally, media education is a wide discussed during single event conferences organized by Polish university and state institutions such as the Polish Film Institute or Center for Citizenship Education. Although the issue of the media education is raised more and more often, the results of this debate hardly influenced the shape of education in Poland.

## 5. The practices for media education and media literacy in Poland

Although media and information education has for years been the subject of academic debate and one of the priorities of the state, present in documents such as Social Capital Development Strategy 2020, there is still lack of answers to the question of what the media and information literacy is, what is the scope of its content and what specific skills should be developed. Therefore, the Modern Poland Foundation in cooperation with media and information literacy experts prepared Media and Information Literacy Competencies Catalogue. It was approved by the Polish National Commission for UNESCO as a significant input into the *Information For All* international program. The first version of this catalogue was published in May 2012, as part of the Digital Future programme (Cyfrowa przyszłość: Katalog kompetencji medialnych i informacyjnych), and includes topics ranging from information literacy, media discourses and internet safety to economic, ethic and legal aspects of media competence. The competencies catalogue is a tool that will allow for the construction of a comprehensive and coherent set of teaching materials for media and information education at different educational stages in the field of lifelong learning. The catalogue lists the following eight thematic areas in which competences are to be considered:



1. Use of information
2. Relations in the media environment
3. Language of media
4. Creative use of media
5. Ethics and values in communications and media
6. Safety in communications and media
7. Law in communications and media
8. Economic aspects of media functioning. (Cyfrowa przyszłość: Katalog kompetencji medialnych i informacyjnych, 2012, pp. 12-23).

The Catalogue is based on the structure of a pyramid. It assumes that the person entering a given level of education already has the skills of the previous one, for example high junior school student has already mastered the knowledge and skills suggested for the primary school level in grades 4-6. Thus it was possible to focus only on new competencies, characteristic for a given level. It should be also highlighted that the catalogue indicates the competencies of students leaving school of a certain level, for example, in the category of high school we put the competencies of a student leaving the 3rd, final grade. In 2014 was published a reviewed version of the Catalogue: "Media, information and digital competences catalogue" (2014).

## 6. Conclusions

The Analysis of the history of media education in Polish educational system has shown that Polish schools still need media education, which is encapsulated in three slogans: learning about, through and for media (Dylak, 1997). It is also difficult not to agree with Piotr Drzewiecki who perceives media education as "seemingly an integral element of educating an advanced society; at the same time it takes up the issue of how all interpersonal forms of communication do function" (Drzewiecki, 2010a).

In relation to the proposed changes in the core curriculum, various groups trying to exert pressure, and discussions in different ministries, the issue of media education in public school system still seems to be an open matter. That is precisely why the comments of Mirosław Filiciak are so on point – since the European Commission's directive on media education is not able to force MEN to commit to actively implementing the media topics in schools, the only thing that remains are guerrilla-type measures, acted outside of the mainstream (Filiciak, 2008).

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## **Media education in formal education in Slovakia**

### **Abstract**

The focus of this article is on the current state of media education in context of formal education in Slovakia. We analyse media education as an integral part of the curriculum and forms of its implementation. We pay attention to three specific areas: media education as a crosscutting topic integrated into the curriculum of suitable study courses, media education as an independent subject and media education implemented in the form of a project, course and other practically aimed activities. The ambition of this paper is to point out the analytical view on the current status and trends of media literacy development in different stages of formal education in Slovak republic.

### **1. Introduction**

The media education in Slovakia context is defined as a multidisciplinary concept that integrates knowledge and scientific apparatus of the wide range of social sciences (in particular mass media communication, sociology, psychology, pedagogy, information and library science, etc.) and that contributes to their application in the process of lifelong learning and the current needs of social practice. The main legal document framing media education policies is the Concept of Media Education in the Slovak Republic within the context of lifelong learning valid since 2009. The document presents the following principal goals of media education within the lifelong learning process:

- Media literacy improvement within all age groups among the population;
- Update of media competencies, responsible and critical approach to media, effective use of media and new communication technologies;
- Teaching the individuals to learn and make use of possibilities offered to

them by media and new communication means to their own benefits;

- Protection of children and adolescent youth against threats presented by media and new communication technologies in the content offer and way of communication;
- Protection of specific groups (specific groups of adult population, seniors) against contents and service which might threaten them by their nature and those which they are not able to assess due to the insufficient level of media literacy;
- Prevention of all forms of generation 'communication and information stagnation' (Ministry of Culture, 2009).

The Concept of Media Education in the Slovak Republic in the context of lifelong learning is the response, in addition to other legislative instruments, also to European Audiovisual Media Service Directive (Directive 2007/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007) establishing the obligation for EU member states to submit regular reports on the level of media literacy in the country concerned. Under this directive, the Slovak Republic is obliged to submit regular evaluation reports on the current state and the level of media literacy in the Slovak Republic. Fulfilment of this task in the conditions of the Slovak Republic has not been systemically solved yet and due to insufficient funds it has not been realized in effective way.

The obligation to submit reports on the state of media literacy was, in conditions of Slovak republic, transposed to the Act No. 308/2000 on broadcasting and retransmission , as amended, while Art. 5 Sect. 1 (j) thereof establishes the obligation for the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission to submit documentation related to evaluation of the state and level of media literacy in the Slovak Republic. Given the fact that the Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission does not have sufficient capacities to fulfil these tasks, it delegated this task on the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. To implement the project of evaluation of media literacy levels in Slovakia, university received a grant from Slovak Research and Development Agency. The objective of this research activity was to implement, in the Slovak conditions, the most appropriate research strategies enabling to measure and evaluate the level of media literacy in the whole range of age categories, levels of education, residence and other social and demographic indicators.

At the Faculty of Mass Media Communication there is the IMEC – Centre of Media Literacy which is the coordinator of all educational, research, development and advisory activities in the area of media and information education in Slovakia. The Centre also ensures the support in the methodological, technical, research, advisory and promotional area and in other areas for teachers and other interested parties.

## 2. Media education as part of curriculum

Media education became part of the curriculum for the first time on the basis of school content reform implementation of which began in 2008–2009. In relevant school legislation it is defined as compulsory part of education and individual schools have the right to decide about the form of its implementation into curriculum. They can choose from three basic forms of integrating media education into educational programmes:

- (A) Media education as a cross-cutting topic integrated into the curriculum of suitable study courses;
- (B) Media education as independent subject;
- (C) Media education implemented in the form of a project, course and other practically aimed activities.

### 2.1. Media education as a cross-cutting topic integrated into the curriculum of suitable study courses

According to the research focused on the current state of media education integration into curriculum “...primary schools integrate media education mostly into courses such as Slovak language and literature (259 schools), informatics (179 schools), civic education (140 schools), ethics (131 schools) and art and culture into which we have included also courses such as music, art and aesthetics (123 schools). Other courses into which schools admitted integrating topics of media education were natural science (or basics of humanities and natural science), foreign language, history, debate lessons and religion” (Kačínová, Kolčáková, and Tinka, 2013, p. 26). A follow-up research carried out by the same research team at secondary schools showed that the schools “...integrate media education mostly into study courses such as Slovak language and literature (156 schools), civic education (153 schools), ethics (121

schools) and art and culture (103 schools)” (Kačínová & Kolčáková, 2013, p. 30).

The efficiency of integrating media education as cross-cutting theme within the curriculum of individual courses is relatively low. This was proved also by the results of both above mentioned researches according to which the representatives of numerous schools did not have sufficient knowledge in the issue and they chose some topics to be part of media education, even though they were not related to media education at all (teaching national anthem, my village, etc.) or they thought media education meant using overhead projector, computer or other technical devices used for didactic purposes.

## **2.2. Media education as independent subject**

A school can include media education courses into its educational programme as an independent subject. However, the subject is not compulsory but voluntary. The decision whether to offer such course or not is left up to the school management. When making the decision the most important is the fact whether there is a willing and capable teacher among the teaching staff who is able to teach the subject. According to the research on the state of media education integration into curricula, “283 primary schools teach media education as independent subject which makes 23 % out of the sample of primary schools where data collection was done” (Kačínová, Kolčáková & Tinka, 2013, p. 18). “Media education as an independent subject is taught at 153 secondary schools which is 29 % out of the total number of 631 secondary grammar and vocational schools in the research” (Kačínová & Kolčáková, 2013, p. 22). According to the database of the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education there were 753 secondary schools in Slovakia when the research was carried out.

## **2.3. Media education implemented in the form of a project, course and other practically aimed activities**

“Within this procedure schools are allowed to include short-term course or project focused on the development of media literacy into their school educational program. Pupils can work on a particular media project (e.g. production of a short video about a school event), organize a seminar with a journalist from a regional medium, etc.) This category includes also practical media activities of pupils, e.g. work on a school magazine, student programmes

for school radio, video production for school website, etc. It is this practical form of developing media literacy among children and youth that is most common at Slovak schools and has relatively long tradition” (Vrabec, 2013, pp. 39-40).

### 3. Media education in nursery schools

In the National educational programme ISCED 0 – pre-primary education (in Slovak štátny vzdelávací program ISCED 0 – predprimárne vzdelávanie, ŠVP ISCED 0) is media education part of the curriculum and it is included as one of nine cross-cutting topics within pre-primary education. The curricula for the pre-primary aged children consist of content and performance standards by the use of which the individual competencies should be developed.

“The goals of media education are included in the profile of pre-primary education graduate in particular in communicative competencies – he or she is able to listen actively and comprehend ideas and information from various media, in learning competencies – he or she learns how to work with toys, book, teaching aids and in information competencies – he shows joy about independently acquired information; he or she uses various sources of acquiring and collecting information also outside nursery school (from books, magazines and encyclopaedia for children, people round him, from various media, by means of ICT). Individual components of media education are included in various thematic and educational areas” (Paleschová, 2014, p. 15). More and more attention is focused on media education in nursery schools mainly thanks to the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre that implements an extensive national project called Activating methods in education. A wide set of interactive didactic tools designed for various types of schools (primary art schools, special schools, school clubs, etc.) has been created within this project. Nursery schools were one of the target groups. Teachers attended the educational programme focused on media education as well as other cross-cutting themes. Participating nursery schools obtained interactive boards and interactive didactic aids, methodologies and other materials that could be used when working with children (available at: <<http://www.amvprojekt.sk/>>).

### 4. Media education at 1<sup>st</sup> grade of basic schools

In the National Educational programme ISCED 1 – primary education (ŠVP ISCED 1) is media education included in curricula and it is one of the cross-



cutting themes. Within the school educational programme it can be integrated as part of the curricula in selected areas (e.g. language and communication, art and culture, mathematics and work with information, etc.) as an individual subject or course (mainly in upper classes at the first grade of primary school). When implementing media education the National educational programme recommends us to build up on pupils' personal experience with individual types of media. When formulating the aims of the subject it is recommended to focus on following abilities:

- “Basic knowledge about media types, functions and their products and their impact upon child recipient (listener, viewer, reader...). A pupil should be aware of the media he comes into daily contact with, their impact upon him – be aware of their positive effects but dangers as well (manipulation, excessive violence, etc.);
- Shaping one's own opinion about media and their messages (based on knowledge, interpretation, assessment and production of simple media products)” (Štátny vzdelávací program – Mediálna výchova, 2011, p. 2).

To illustrate this approach we could mention a lesson including a topic called: What is a medium. According to the performance standard defined in the relevant national educational programme a pupil should be able to:

- “Identify basic types of media he is in contact with daily;
- Distinguish between a medium and mass medium;
- Characterize individual types of media;
- Describe which spheres of life interfere with media and how media can shape us;
- Understand how media influence everyday life (individual, family, social life, etc.);
- Be aware of media impact upon the structure and organization of daily activities and the day as such;
- Assess favourite film or book;
- Communicate, answer questions (developing communication abilities)” (Štátny vzdelávací program – Mediálna výchova, 2011, p. 3).

A problem in teaching media education at the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of primary schools is

in the lack of suitable methodological materials and teaching aids that would take into consideration development specificities of the children age group. There is only a brief methodical guide elaborated by the National Institute of Pedagogy at our disposal. Teachers who would like to deal with media literacy development have to rely mainly upon own creativity when preparing for a lesson or materials from abroad or they share methodical materials with other teachers via the Internet.

## 5. Media education at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary schools

Media education at this grade is implemented in the form of a cross-cutting theme, individual voluntary (optional) subject or projects, courses or other practically focused activities (e.g. work on a school magazine).

According to relevant educational documents media education as cross-cutting theme aims to develop:

- “the ability to apply strategies of a competent approach to various types of media and their products;
- the ability to purposefully, critically and selectively use the media and their products (i.e. teach pupils to understand and know the principles by which “media world” is run, have general overview and selectively use media and their products depending on how well they carry out their functions, mainly the educational and moral);
- the ability to have an own opinion about media based on received information;
- the ability to critically assess media messages disseminated by media, look for the valuable and positive that shapes their personal and professional growth and also the ability to be aware of the negative media impact on one’s personality a try to eliminate them by a responsible approach” (Štátny vzdelávací program pre 2. stupeň základnej školy v Slovenskej republike, 2008, p. 21).

The above mentioned objectives of media education may be reached by several ways and methodology. One of them is working with existing media products with various specializations which pupils analyze and interpret. Various activating methods of teaching are used (discussion, role plays, etc.). Another option is to engage pupils in practical production of media products

(short videos, sound recordings, photographs, blogs, preparing school magazine, school radio broadcasting, etc.). Media education as a cross-cutting theme can be applied also by less time-consuming forms such as short-term activities – e.g. visiting regional TV, discussion with a journalist, discussion with a professional about safer Internet use, etc.

The National educational programme and its appendices for teachers at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary schools states that media education as a cross-cutting theme should develop mainly media competencies improving three levels of pupil's personality development – cognitive, psychomotor and affective.

The course content of media education as a cross-cutting theme at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary schools covers five basic thematic areas. Their performance standards are precisely defined in the relevant national educational programme, i.e. it describes the abilities that a pupil should have after completing educational activities.

In case a school includes media education into the school educational programme as optional and voluntary subject, it can use experimentally verified curricula for the 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade at primary schools and 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade at 8-year secondary grammar schools (Kačínová, 2008).

The curricula for schools are recommendatory. Considering that the curricula date back to 2008, teachers preparing for their classes can adapt, modify and supplement them according to current needs and latest trends in media sphere development.

Curricula result from the project of experimental verification *Media education as optional and voluntary subject at primary schools and 8-year secondary grammar schools* implemented by the National Institute of Pedagogy in Bratislava in 2005 – 2007. Teaching texts and methodical materials were part of experimental verification. They represent teaching aids for media education considerably used by teachers also in present days (Kačínová, 2007a, 2007 b).

Curricula for media education as individual subject "...are processed on the principle of the priority medium in each year. However, not exclusively. In the 5<sup>th</sup> year it is television, in the 6<sup>th</sup> film and video, in the 7<sup>th</sup> audio media (radio, CD), in the 8<sup>th</sup> year print media (newspaper, magazines), in the 9<sup>th</sup> year digital media (the Internet, CD-ROM, DVD, digital TV). The advantage of such content organization is the possibility to focus on one medium. During five years of study (four years in case of 8-year secondary grammar schools) pupils should

acquire the competence to deal with all types of media provided they choose the subject in each year of their study. The curriculum is organized in a way allowing its continuity in individual years considering the priority content and set objectives respecting the principle of periodical returns to basic topics on a higher, more elaborated level“ (Mediálna výchova – Voliteľný predmet, 2009, p. 2-3). The curriculum continuity – even if it is presumed, is not so strong that a year could not be seen as a separate sample. Pupils do not have to choose the subject in every year. Thus, each year includes topics, sub-topics and specific goals representing a planned, relatively independent set of knowledge, intellectual abilities, skills and attitudes.

## 6. Media education at secondary schools

Media education is integrated into the secondary school curricula (those of primary schools as well) in the form of cross-cutting theme, independent optional subject or as a course, project or other practically focused educational activities based on the learning-by-doing principle. The aim of media education at secondary grammar schools is to “enable pupils to acquire strategies of competent dealing with various types of media and their products at the same time develop their ability – media competence, i.e. purposefully, critically and selectively use the media and their products. That should make pupils understand and be aware of the principles by which ‘media world’ is run, have general overview and use media and their products selectively considering the fact how they fulfil the functions, mainly educational one. It strives to: educate pupils as citizens with own opinions based on received information, work on the ability of children and youth to assess critically messages disseminated by media, discover the valuable and positive aspects with impact on both personal and professional development and also the ability to be aware of negative media impact on own personality and try hard to eliminate them by a responsible approach” (Štátny vzdelávací program pre gymnáziá v Slovenskej republike, 2008, p. 22).

Media education – either as a cross-cutting theme or independent subject – is in Slovakia taught at secondary vocational schools even though it is not explicitly included in relevant educational programmes as compulsory curriculum. However, issues of media education are included in relevant educational documents for this type of schools in subjects such as informatics,

Slovak language, civic education and some specialized subjects. „It is a fact that secondary vocational schools include media education into curricula similarly to secondary grammar schools, within a defined specialization of a school or more precisely to complete curricula in school educational programmes. As we know they also rely on binding educational legislation for secondary education and react to current social need to include media education into curricula. In some cases they respond directly to the requirements of school authority (e.g. Secondary vocational school of St. Jozef Robotník in Žilina) or teachers of selected subjects are initiative in this area (they react to educational offers of selected institutions, participate in courses on media education and later teach the issue within their classes – e.g. Secondary nursing school in Považská Bystrica where media education is integrated with Slovak language and literature)” (Kačínová, Kolčáková & Tinka, 2013, p. 22).

## 7. Media education at universities

One of the many problems that media education in Slovakia has is the insufficient capacities for preparation of future media education teachers. The reality is that not a single faculty of education offers the possibility of either bachelor or master study of this subject. Some faculties of education included media education into their study programmes (e.g. The Faculty of Education at the Constantine, The Philosopher University in Nitra). However, it is only an individual optional course. The Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava tries to improve this unfavourable situation in the preparation of professionals for media literacy development. The faculty gained accreditation for a new study programmed called applied media studies in 2012. During bachelor and master studies students acquire complex knowledge about media literacy issues, development of media competencies and theoretical and practical aspects of mass media communication. The student has also the possibility to complete so called pedagogical minimum which allows him to work as a qualified media education teacher after graduating from the university. The graduate from the study programme is a professional and can prepare a wide range of media messages, mainly with public and educational nature, programmes for children and youth and educational materials and aids focused on the development of media and information literacy. The faculty offers a two-term course called media education also to the students of the 1<sup>st</sup> year of master studies in the

### study programme mass media communication

The Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava is engaged in preparing teachers who are already in educational practice and are interested in improving their qualification. In 2010 the faculty gained accreditation by the Slovak Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport in the area of educating teachers of media education. The faculty offers an accredited educational programme of continuous learning for teachers called *Qualifying study of media education for secondary school teachers*. The mentioned educational project is the only one in Slovakia allowing the secondary school teachers to acquire the full qualification for teaching individual subject – media education.

One or two-term course focused on media literacy development among graduates is included also in the study plans of other universities, e.g. *Greek-Catholic Theological Faculty at Prešov University, Faculty of Philosophy at Catholic University in Ružomberok, Pan-European University in Bratislava* and others.

## 8. Conclusion

Past experience has also shown that existing reserves and weaknesses in the area of the media competencies of teachers are a much deeper and more complicated problem. The dynamic development of the Internet and new technologies, as well as the time and professional demands of the teaching profession itself, have meant that teachers have not always been able to keep pace with their students, in particular in terms of user skills and dealing with new technology platforms and services. These facts are one of the reasons why teachers need to have an excellent overview, self-confidence and requisite professional skills with regard to using media literacy skills. As a result, there is a need to intensively develop their information and media competencies in order to effectively bring to bear the tremendous potential and thought-capacity of the global information society within educational processes and structures. This includes a whole spectrum of competencies that can be fully exploited in media education. In particular new media, their diverse platforms and user applications can be used in education, the development of key competencies, value-based education and work on improving relations, coexistence and governance. As one example, social networks have the

potential to help people with similar interests and opinions become a part of a group or movement that can be of assistance in communication between different cultures. Teachers should therefore learn to apply work with new media and related media literacy skills in an effective and efficient manner.

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## **From media didactics to media education: The case of the Czech Republic**

### **Abstract**

In given text we present the results of research on the development of media literacy in formal education of the Czech Republic. We summarize the outcomes of research probe based on our careful reading of the available texts and documents dealing with the problem of media literacy in the Czech educational environment. Our research is an analytical and multi-method qualitative probe of the situation of the Czech media education in primary and secondary schools. A part of research was based on the discussion with eminent Czech media education experts. The conclusion of our paper is a proposal of recommendations for the Czech media education policy.

### **1. Introduction**

Currently, media education or media literacy doesn't seem to be the hottest topic within the Czech educational environment. Different issues such as state maturities, inclusive education or teacher salaries are more prominent. Nevertheless, it is possible to understand media education in the sense of media literacy improvement as one good example of general substantial issue of the Czech education: on one hand, what should be the form and on the other what should be content of teaching and (formal) learning? In a very simplified form, the Czech situation seems to be indecisive: one "conservative" stream is still focused on traditional ways of education with emphasis on quantities of knowledge; another "progressive" stream is more focused on interconnection with "real life" and its contextual understanding. These two educational streams are somehow reflected also in media education.



In the following text we would like to present the results of our research on the development of media literacy in formal education of the Czech Republic. We will summarize the outcomes of research probe based on our careful reading of the available texts and documents dealing with the problem of media literacy in the Czech educational environment. In fact, we found many theoretical studies about media education and also practical materials and methods/tool kits/manuals for media education. Our text also presents the most significant results of the discussion of the problems with eminent Czech experts – Jan Jirák, Markéta Pastorová and Zdeněk Sloboda on this topic. Some recommendations towards different public policy actors are stated in the final part of the paper.

## 2. The general context of media education in the Czech Republic: how pupils use media

Marek Šebeš, the Czech expert on media, states in his e-lecture at educational webpage “Média pod lupou” (Media under magnifying glass): „Today’s young generation spends more time with media than doing other activities except of sleeping. Children and adolescents use media more and more intensively, because they consume more kinds of media together. Youngsters spend most of their time with media by watching TV, but in older age groups (11-16 years of age) internet plays more important role.”<sup>1</sup> According to international survey “EU kids online” (2011-2014)<sup>2</sup> Czech children belong as compared with other countries amongst those who are the most active and familiar with online media. This stands for average number of online skills and activities, and consequently exposure to risks as well. So, there is a clear positive correlation between number of skills and activities and probability to be exposed to risks connected with using internet (Vincent, 2015).

1 <http://www.mediapodlupou.cz/lekce/deti-a-mladez-v-kyberprostoru>

2 “EU kids online” is the international research network in which more than 30 European countries including the Czech Republic participate. Three waves of survey (2006 - 2009, 2009 - 2011 and 2011 - 2014) were conducted, respondents of the survey are children between 9-16 years of age. The main theme of the survey is risks of online activities. (for more information see <http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx>)

Children and teenagers use internet the most often at school for learning (for more than 85 %); other popular online activities are playing games, watching videos, and communication via social networks.<sup>3</sup> This finding is important to illustrate the Czech formal education, and it shows that technical equipment (PC, interactive tables, internet connection) of Czech schools is on very high level.

Children's reading is seen as very important activity which has strong influence on personal psychologic development (e.g. Mertin, 2004, and many others). Research of children's reading done by National library in the year 2013 shows that there are about 25 % of pupils between 9-14 years of age who are "non-readers" (they don't read at all + they read only once in one quarter of the year). There are gender and age differences: girls are more passionate readers than boys (they devote more time to reading, they read more often and they consider reading to be fun and source of knowledge) and older pupils don't read as often as younger ones. Another research which monitors children's activities in time assumes that there is a decline of reading between 2003 and 2013, especially in reading of journals. Nevertheless, there is a high probability that part of reading activities moved to internet. (Prázová, 2014).

### **3. Methodology of our research: what is the knowledge base for our recommendations?**

Our research is an analytical and multi-method qualitative probe of the situation of the Czech media education in primary and secondary schools.

Firstly, we searched the relevant literature in the area of 1) official governmental documents, 2) curricular documents, 3) scientific papers. In parallel, we focused on projects and surveys which dealt with media literacy of children. On the basis of these analyses we prepared our expert discussion with three Czech experts<sup>3</sup> on media education. This discussion was held in January 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Our previous research probe (which was not representative) showed similar findings. (For more see Beseda, Machát, Šmídová, 2014)

<sup>4</sup> Prof. J. Jiráček is one of the most respected experts on media within the Czech academic sphere. He is an author of many publications which deal with theoretical and practical aspects of media education and literacy. Markéta Pastorová is an employee of National institute for education where she coordinates FEP. Zdeněk Sloboda is sociologist of media and lecturer at University of Palacky in Olomouc.

### **Main suggested topics of expert discussion:**

- 1) Current state of media education within public educational system in the Czech Republic
- a) System level
- b) Practice level
- 2) The most urgent problems and challenges of media education
- 3) Generation gap – digital immigrants and natives?
- 4) System of teacher's education in media education
- a) Pedagogical faculties
- b) Further education
- 5) What should be done in media education and how should be media education taught at different school types and levels?
- 6) How to reconcile media education and media didactics? (E.g. project „Tablets into schools”)

## **4. Theoretical-practical framework of media education and media literacy in the Czech Republic**

First of all, we would like to characterize the current situation of Czech media education and media literacy, which are two closely interconnected fields. The media education is closely connected with the definition of media literacy. The media education should result into improvement of media literacy.

### **4.1. Media education definition**

The most common framework for media literacy in the Czech Republic is based on the definition of prof. Jan Jiráček. He wrote that media literacy should maintain the basic skills - information search, media content retrieval, understanding the meaning, communication abilities to analyze and compare media content with past experience, the ability to critically evaluate them (Šebesta & Jiráček, 1995).

Media education in the Czech formal education should provide students with a basic level of media literacy. This includes familiarizing oneself with certain

basic knowledge about the functioning and social role of contemporary media (history, structure, functioning), and acquiring skills in support of informed, active and independent approach of individuals to media communication. Furthermore, the orientation of the media content and the ability to choose the proper medium for meeting various different needs - source of information, education, leisure time (Jeřábek, 2005, p. 78). It has three receptive thematic circles: critical reading of media; the interpretation between media messages and reality; functioning and impact of the media in society. (Jeřábek, 2005, p. 79).

## 4.2. Media didactics and media education: Historical development of using media in education in the Czech Republic

We might claim that there are two basic streams of media education in the Czech educational environment. One stream is based on question “How to use media?”, i.e. media are tools/instruments within school education. We call this stream as *media didactics*. The other is connected with the question “How to understand media?”. In fact, this is *media education* itself.

The Czech Republic has a long tradition of using different kinds of media as tools within education (i.e. media didactics). Media in education, specifically newspapers, had been used by Jan Amos Komenský already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Movies are a particular example of this approach. According to Sloboda (2015) movie has been used as educational tool since 1930s. In 1960s there were efforts to establish film as a part of formal education. This intention was not carried out due to occupation by the Soviet Union in 1968. In conclusion, film and audio-visual education have been adopted in 2010 as a complementary educational study field for cross-cutting theme “Arts and Culture” of the national Framework Educational Programmes (FEP) which are the main national curricular documents (Sloboda, 2015).

The concrete example of the media education stream in historical context seems to be critical reading. Since the 1930s there was effort to learn critical reading of newspapers in schools (Jirák, 2004). But only since the 1990s media education in the form of understanding media is starting to be implemented into the Czech educational system (Jirák & Kuchař, 1997). Officially, from 2004/2005 media education is part of Framework Educational Programmes (FEP) as cross-cutting theme for primary education (Jeřábek, 2005) and also

for secondary education (gymnasium – high school, but not for secondary vocational schools) (Holasová, 2004). The author of media education for FEP has been Professor Jan Jiráček from the Media Studies, Faculty of Social Science of Charles University.

It is not possible to entirely separate both streams; they coexist together although it is usual that one of them is preferred in practical conditions of the educational process. Preference is connected with individual attitude or interest of teacher or focus of school.

### **4.3. Fragmentation of media education? Teaching of teachers, projects on media education**

Media education has been taught as subject but not as a whole study programme on a few pedagogical faculties of the Czech universities (e.g. Charles University, University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, Palacký University in Olomouc, University of Ostrava etc.). From this perspective, systematic preparation of (future) teachers how to teach media doesn't exist yet. Teachers, if they are interested in, have possibility to take specific and partial courses on media education.

Some conferences, courses and many materials about media education emerged as outputs of projects funded by the European Union (e.g. Labišová, 2013; Obrátil, 2013). However, the quality of materials varies significantly. Since 2007, the educational course dedicated to media education for primary and secondary school teachers by the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University obtained the official accreditation of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The official state/governmental materials have been published by the Institute for Pedagogical Research (e.g. Jiráček & Pavlíčková, 2011). There were also held courses about media education for teachers.

There is a relatively high number of websites which are focused on media education (e.g. <http://www.medialnivychova2015.cz/>; <http://medialnivychova.fsv.cuni.cz>, [www.medialnigram-otnost.cz](http://www.medialnigram-otnost.cz), <http://www.mediasetbox.cz>, [www.medialni-vzdelavani.cz](http://www.medialni-vzdelavani.cz), [www.medialnipedagogika.cz](http://www.medialnipedagogika.cz).)

Partial materials that work with media education have been published by many non-governmental organizations, but the quality of these varies very much and teachers have only limited opportunity to choose the appropriate/relevant ones. E.g. non-governmental organization “Člověk v tísni” (People in Need)

published audiovisual materials for teachers including instructions for them (Strachota & Valůch, 2007). Didactical-methodical book has been published also by Aisis (Růtová, 2008). The publications mentioned above belong to the better part of the productions (Wolák, 2011). Other good methodological instructions could be found in Pastorová & Jiráček (2015).

As this short overview indicates we might conclude this chapter with the statement that media education in the Czech Republic is fragmented and this has big impact especially at the practical level, i.e. in the educational process.

## **5. Workshop with experts on media education and media literacy in the Czech Republic**

With leading experts on media education (Jan Jiráček - author of media education for FEP; Markéta Pastorová from National Institute for Education, the coordinator of FEP; Zdeněk Sloboda – a sociologist focusing on media education) we discussed the development and current state of media education in the formal education system in the Czech Republic.

### **5.1. Actual situation of media education in the Czech Republic**

The media education is implemented in the state curricular documents – FEP – since 2004. The curricular documents fall into the national educational strategies. Media education is a crosscutting theme in FEP for primary schools (new version since 2013) and gymnasiums (high schools) on the secondary school level, but they are not included into FEP for vocational secondary schools. That means that media education is obligatory only for all students of primary schools and gymnasiums. It is also not included in FEP for preliminary school education. Media education is not a crosscutting theme for students of secondary vocational schools, only some topics from media education are included into the introduction of social sciences. The problem is that media education has not defined learning outcomes in FEP (Pastorová & Jiráček 2015, p. 74). Because learning outcomes had been missing in FEP (Pastorová & Jiráček, 2015, p. 74), the recommended learning outcomes (Jiráček & Pavlíčková, 2011) were published in 2011. The recommended learning outcomes interlink receptive and productive activities and safety of media use.

However, there is no representative research about the real state of media education in primary and secondary schools.<sup>5</sup> There is some partial research about practicing media education, which was done for bachelor and master theses. From the perspective of experts, we do not have holistic view on media education in formal education and we can see only fragments about the state of formal media education in the Czech Republic.

We know that media education for schools is obligatory. According to the discussion with the experts during the workshop, we could structure the applied media education as follows:

- a) Media education occurs only formally in official school documents. The school declares teaching of media education, but this does not happen in practice. However, this situation is probably not common in the Czech educational system.
- b) The main implementer of media education in schools is an enthusiastic teacher. Prof. Jiráček noticed that the weakness of an enthusiast is that (s)he is like an amateur archaeologist. Metaphorically said (s)he can find Pompeii, but (s)he can also destroy the treasure, because (s)he does not notice that (s)he trampled it. Usually the enthusiast makes some movie or newspapers with the students, it is however not an improvement of media literacy in the sense of the improvement of individual control of using media content.
- c) The third way is a project education – e.g. one project could be web publishing or preparing a journal or newspaper. Again, the problem is that students learn about how to prepare media content, but not how to reflect our relationships to the media.
- d) The best method is to teach media education as a crosscutting theme. When somebody coordinates activities of different teachers (e.g. teacher of history, biology), the risk is that a student is not fully aware of the fact that he was educated about media literacy, although his media literacy really improved. There is no evidence how often does this actually work, but individual schools use this method.

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5 Actually there are representative surveys concerning the Czech pupils: earlier we mentioned “EU kids online” and International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS), but these are about media use rather than understanding. So we have only partial evidence of the state of media literacy among Czech children.

According to the workshop participants, what is missing is an evaluation system of media education in the Czech Republic. There is for instance no possibility to find out if media literacy – seen as the result of media education – is improving among the Czech pupils and students.

Media education has not yet been fully developed in the Czech educational system. The different levels (national strategy, curricular documents, methodical materials and didactic materials) of the media education system are not yet consistently linked to each other. The time allocation for media education, teacher and student books and materials for teacher's preparation are still not systematically interconnected (Pastorova & Jiráček, 2015, p. 18). However, some instructions on how to do media education can be found in "Manuál pro tvorbu školních vzdělávacích programů v základním vzdělávání" (Instructions for making primary school educational programmes, 2005).

Another important issue closely connected with the quality of media education in the Czech Republic is the fact that it is not taught as a degree programme at Czech universities. Nevertheless, media education is present on many Czech universities as an individual subject.

Generally speaking, the positive sign is that Czech teachers seem to be open to media education. And in this context more systematic preparation of teachers is even more desired and needed.

## 6. Conclusions: media education and media didactics - recommendations

The expert discussion was ambivalent with regard to implementing media didactics in media education. Focusing only on media as technical tools and suppressing critical understanding of media and their use could be a risk. Media education should contain stronger participatory part, however it has to be interconnected with theoretical background.

What should be done? As the result of the expert discussion we can propose several recommendations:

- a) On the national level: The national media literacy strategy should be prepared and one institute (organization) should be responsible for (coordination and implementation of) this strategy. This strategy should reflect the European Commission's recommendation for media



literacy (2009) (e.g. to monitor and to measure the progress of media literacy). Czech School Inspectorate should do or coordinate national research about media education. The advisory group (board) for media education should be established under the government. Members of this group should be also people who have prepared the National strategy for digital education. Strategies are the layer superior to the curricular documents.

- b) On the level of FEP: Media education in FEP should be updated, because the media sphere is changing rapidly and dynamically (eg. SNS, Web 2.0 since 2004). Media education should also be obligatory for students of vocational secondary schools, because students of these schools have fewer opportunities to learn critical thinking.
- c) On the level of teacher's education: Media education should have stronger position as a programme or become part of mixed programme on universities.
- d) On the institutional level: The position of coordinator(s) of media education in primary and secondary schools should be established and supported. It should ensure media education and media didactics to be systematically included into learning process. The systematic approach to implementing media education is missing in the Czech Republic now.

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## **The development of media skills among children and youth in the school and out-of-school environment in Poland**

### **Abstract**

There is a strong need to develop media literacy among the members of Poland's contemporary civil society, and it has been visible for a long time now. The discussion about the media education of children, adults and elderly citizens goes on but there are still many doubts. This study is a result of numerous scientific analyses, researching the existing literature and studying the reports and documents that were available and chosen purposefully by the authors. It also stems from a discussion, as well as its conclusions, that took place during the scholarly seminar *The Intricacies of Media Education in Poland – Chosen Perspectives* ("Meandry edukacji medialnej w Polsce – wybrane perspektywy"). Authors present the history of media education in Polish formal education and show the content of the modern core curriculum in that context. They also identify the activities connected with media literacy that are implemented by public institutions and NGOs. The purpose is to show the great potential of some sectors but also the still existing need for change in many areas.

### **1. Introduction**

The development of media skills, media education and media literacy education among children and youth – but also adults – is a challenge in the media-dominated reality, which is nowadays part of the environment for education and development, and which Poland has been facing for a dozen or so years now (Ratajski, 2015). In this context, the question that should be raised is no longer "if" but "how" to provide media education. Up till now, the

development of media education in Poland has been sinusoidal, just like the interest among policy decision makers in the area of education. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that this subject has been present all the time in academic discussions in many notable research institutions, as well as in a bottom-up approach activities by teachers themselves in specific educational institutions (e.g. [medialni.mateja.edu.pl](http://medialni.mateja.edu.pl)) (High School named J. Matejko, n.d.).

The beginning of 2016 saw a renewed growth of interest in media education in the context of school teaching, which can be reflected by the letter by the Polish Society of Media Education (Polskie Towarzystwo Edukacji Medialnej – PTEM) to the Minister of National Education concerning the need to pay attention to a proper place of media education in the planned new law on a core curriculum (2016).

At the beginning of deliberations on media literacy and media education in Poland the specific nature of providing definitions should be mentioned in this respect. The notions of media education and media literacy, as well as media literacy education tend to be used interchangeably in educational practice and in the literature. Media literacy, translated into Polish as “alfabetyzacja medialna” (literally “media alphabetization”), is very often understood as the act of education, not its result. The notion of media literacy is not the same as media competences. Media literacy is not always regarded as a result of media education; very often both terms are used alternatively. The purpose of media education is to acquire generally understood media competences. In 2012, the Modern Poland Foundation in cooperation with the Polish Film Institute, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in Poland and the National Audiovisual Institute in Poland, published a co-authorship catalogue of media competences, which later served as the basis to prepare practical original curricula (Dąbrowska et.al., 2012).

At the earlier stages of the investigation and deliberations on media education, there was also a discussion on making a distinction between a medially competent person, meaning a person who has gained technical skills of using media instruments, and a person treating media communication in a critical, conscious, active and creative way with regard to the wide cultural context. In school practice, media competence was sometimes identified as IT competence, because of computer classes presence at schools with no media classes at the same time. As Cudowska (2005) notices, it is a misunderstanding to identify media education with introducing computers to school classes or

with IT lessons, which are training courses on using computer software. As the author suggests, the idea of media education should be understood, in a broad sense, as raising awareness of the importance of media in human life.

In the Polish environment, Lepa (2003) distinguishes five key objectives to be pursued by media education. These are:

- build a positive attitude towards media;
- experience media with the view of personality development;
- develop an active attitude to media;
- raise sensitivity to presence of the truth in media;
- provide enhanced knowledge on media.

In addition, media education should, in its basis, lead to the development of creativity, responsibility, independent thinking and making choices (Krzesińska-Żach, 2005). Media education is also a result of activities in three spheres, so as to fully develop media and information competences one has to speak of teaching about media, through media and for media, because a media user is in most cases a receiver, producer or prosumer and media decision-maker. Additionally, media serve the media user to influence others (Ogonowska, 2013). A. Ogonowska (2015) points also to a pyramid of competences, which is based upon: competences linked to access to media and their use; next: competences including critical media receipt; and, at the top of the pyramid: competences concerning communication and creative production.

The authors of this article understand media education as activities directed to raising and educating, which aim to develop the media literacy level and media competences considered in a broad sense, and to build an attitude which is open, critical, analytical and creative regarding media messages from traditional and so-called new media as well.

This article is an attempt to look at the condition of media education in the context of its presence in formal public and non-public education. We based our deliberations on an analysis of legal documents, school curricula and the literature. These explorations are part of larger international research conducted in Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia under the Visegrad project led by a team of scholars from the Corvinus University in Budapest. The situation of media literacy and media education in Poland is very dynamic, and for this reason this article should be treated only as an outline of the topic.

## 2. Media education in public school system – the first phase

When analysing the presence of media education in the Polish system of public education and the broadly defined extracurricular sphere of pupils' life, the attention needs to be focused on the activities implemented after 1989. Admittedly, Poland did gather quite an experience in so-called film education during its socialist period of Polish People's Republic (PRL), but when talking about the development of media literacy in its modern meaning, the research should be done in regard to the period after 1989. As for the context of public school system, the research ought to be conducted even ten years later, when inter-subject path (called also educational path) was introduced in Polish schools. The measures taken before that were undoubtedly linked to the political agenda of the Polish socialist system. The same could be said about the dynamic process of treating the media and new technologies as tools (especially computers and internet after 1991), which resulted in a strong desire of people to be active in this new field. As K. Skoczylas (2014) notes, in the beginning Poland also enjoyed "some successes in the development of media education. In 1995 Polish Society for Technologies and Educational Media [Polskie Towarzystwo Technologii i Mediów Edukacyjnych] was established. A number of magazines dedicated to such topics were being published, e.g. "Media and Education" [„Media i edukacja"]. There was a great impact of big academic centres specializing in pedagogy of the media (Toruń, Katowice, Rzeszów, Gdańsk, Szczecin, Zielona Góra, Lublin, Warszawa)" (p. 225). As noted, various measures were used, but first and foremost different kinds of research and treatises (before that period prepared in multiple academic centres and by numerous teams lead by distinguished professors, too many to mention all of them individually), as well as activities undertaken by the policy makers who introduced media education in schools in 1999. What was the result of those actions and how does the situation look like now?

As A. Ogonowska (2013) notes, there is a noticeable lack of a consistent policy in terms of media education in Poland, and the intersubject path of "reading and media education", introduced by MEN [Ministry of National Education] in 1999, did not meet the expectations. The same could be said about the school subject named "knowledge about culture" which was introduced

three years later. Its implementation was put mainly upon teachers of Polish classes and librarians. To help them complete those duties in a competent manner, MEN grants were used to establish postgraduate studies in reading and media education, in Rzeszów, Kalisz, Olsztyn and Poznań, among many other. Intersubject didactic and pedagogical specializations were introduced, supplementing school subjects and blocks of subjects, ranging from the second educational stage, that is from the 4th grade of primary school. School principals were responsible for introducing the issue of educational paths into schools' curricula, though teachers of given subjects were responsible for including the necessary content in their teaching programmes (the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 15th February 1999 (Rozporządzenie, 1999) on the core curriculum of general education, as well as the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 26th February 2002 on the core curriculum of preschool and general education in the respective types of schools (Rozporządzenie, 2002)). Thus, authorial programmes of reading and media education began to be developed, including the one by J. Kąkolewicz and J. Pielachowski (1999), or the programme of J. Andrzejewska (2003).

In curricula one can find elements of a popular model in the world, according to which curricula are developed in other countries, and which is based on six questions:

- Who is the sender? Who communicates and why?
- What are the characteristics of the message? What is its nature?
- How was the message produced?
- How do we discover the meaning of the message?
- Who receives the message and what meaning does he/she give to the message? How to characterize the receivers?
- In what way do media describe reality? (Lemish, 2007)

Issues were not structured according to the subject presented. Issues are outlined in a way enabling creation of various initiatives, e.g. original programmes or workshops. Issues of the lower level of education were used as a starting point for the following ones. Unfortunately, the content was treated in a way selectively, which is – from one point of view – an advantage of the path; however, on the other hand, it is also a disadvantage due to the fact that a student or pupil absorbs partial knowledge, which may prevent students

from acquiring all the required competences.

In practice the educational path of media education was not always successful (e.g. Frania, 2013; Repko, 2003). There were schools in which it was implemented perfectly, and the number of teachers' initiatives surpassed the initial estimates. However, other schools realized the media education path only "on paper", which was a result of many different reasons, e.g. the lack of necessary school equipment, teachers' unwillingness or their lack of competences, the lack of financial means, or the didactic and organizational overload experienced by pedagogues.

Over time the policy makers decided to abolish the path of media education, choosing instead the idea of integrating its content into the different subjects. This law, as well as the way of developing media literacy within public school system, is still very similar in 2016. Below, we will try to present in short the way and the scope of how this content was integrated into teaching.

### **3. Media education content in the core curriculum of general education at different stages of educating and teaching**

The Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23rd December 2008 on the core curriculum of preschool and general education (Rozporządzenie, 2008) in the respective types of schools did not create a separate school subject of "media education". Content connected with media literacy was "divided" and integrated into various existing subjects. The analysis presented below reveals the way media literacy is being formed from kindergarten, through primary school, to the last grade of upper-secondary school. It is characterized by individuality in terms of adjusting media literacy to the level of human development (Musioł, 2007).

In the current core curriculum the content of media education programme is implemented at every stage of education, that is at the preschool education stage, the integrated teaching in grades 1st-3rd of primary school stage, as well as the teaching in grades 4th-6th of primary school stage, the secondary school stage, and the upper-secondary school stage (the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23rd December 2008) (Rozporządzenie, 2008). In the literature, expert analyses and reports it is possible to find a more thorough examination of these issues by, among others, the following authors: Huk (2011), Stunża (2012), Jasiewicz (2012); Biedrzycki, (2015).



## **a) Kindergarten**

The preschool education stage involves children from three to five years of age. This period of child's development covers the first phase of socializing a child, including the growth of child's curiosity about the outside world, yet estimated and understood by a child in a way that is still subjective and incomplete (Skórzyńska, 1975).

As a part of education through art – child is a viewer and an actor. Child should know how to behave during celebrations and official events, such as concerts, fetes, stage shows, at the theatre or cinema.

As a part of helping children with understanding the essence of atmospheric phenomena and avoiding dangers. Child should be aware of what is a radio or television weather forecaster talking about. Thus, those are skills connected with visualizing and receiving information.

Forming the readiness to acquire reading and writing skills is a group of competences which should help a child who is finishing the preschool period to start being interested in books.

Presented pieces of information about preschool education are also related to media education, but they certainly do not exhaust all the possibilities or cover the scope of issues connected with this topic.

## **b) Primary school**

The first stage of general education starts with primary school and involves children aged six [seven] to nine.

Primary school is an educational stage during which media education has more meaning than at the preschool education stage (Gajda, 2008). In the core curriculum of this stage we can read that “means of social expression play progressively larger role both in social and personal life, each teacher should therefore devote much attention to the concept of media education, that is educating pupils to receive and use media in a proper way” (the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 23rd December 2008) (Rozporządzenie 2008).

During the first phase of the stage, that is the first three grades of primary

school, the content of media education can be found in Polish education, computer classes, technical classes, visual arts classes, and ethics.

Apart from acquiring the proper way of experiencing media coverage, as well as the right way of using a computer and the internet, it is also crucial to learn the proper manner of using media devices (Kron & Sofos, 2008). A third-grader earns such competence in technical classes, during which he learns how to recognize IT devices, such as computer, laptop, or mobile phone.

It has long been known that media can present the same information from different points of view. Distinguishing truth from falsity in media coverage describing reality is a crucial skill, more of an intuition even, which is formed as a part of the third grade ethics or religion classes.

When analysing the way media education content was implemented during the first stage of primary school education, we can state that the content is implemented through:

- Polish education,
- visual arts education,
- computer classes,
- workshop classes,
- religion and ethics classes.

The second educational stage covers the fourth, fifth and sixth grade of primary school, and it involves children aged nine to twelve, developing their skills and competences. This is a stage of balance, it is characterized by both child's interest in its surroundings and its tendency to define itself and forming a skill of being able to see its deeds in a critical light. During this age a child develops an extremely important ability of consciously "claiming its own" certain attitudes and moral norms (Skórzyńska, 1975).

At the second stage of primary school education a pupil forms media literacy by participation in Polish, visual arts, music, technical, family life education, and ethics classes. Multiple school subjects present the media education content from the perspectives of different fields of knowledge.

### **c) Secondary school**

The third education stage covers secondary school (middle school). Pupil gets

to know new kinds of situations, as secondary school is most often a separate educational institution attended by pupils from nearby primary schools. Youth attending secondary school discovers “the new world” by going through a difficult adolescence period. The first among many changes in this period is the discovery of the psychical world; it happens when a child is 12-13 years old. It is accompanied by reaching one’s own psychic autonomy, individuality. During the adolescence period the ability of self-assessment is formed, with its basic rules being gradually determined. Self-assessment starts to play progressively more important role in motivation to be active (Tyszkowa, 1977). What is more, the media start to play increasingly important role in the life of a secondary school pupil, their importance becomes even stronger when they facilitate interacting with one’s peers, whose acceptance is sought by each pupil. Media are essential in publicizing cases of teenagers’ antisocial attitudes, as well as creating a false impression that such attitudes are more common than they are in reality (Huk, 2011). It would be enough to follow closely, week after week, television programs with teenagers acting as main characters, to understand how symptoms of real pathological states are becoming treated by adults as normal (Bryant & Colman, 1997). In secondary school, in which education was divided into very specific subjects, media education is implemented during such classes as Polish, foreign language, music, visual arts, social science, geography, physics, information technology, technical classes, and family life education.

#### **d) Upper-secondary school**

Philosophizing, as well as youthful idealism, are characteristic of young people attending upper-secondary schools (Tyszkowa, 1977). For them this is a period of choosing their own life’s paths, a decision that is quite seminal and leads to many other decisions, shaping the entirety of their subsequent lives. All this put together makes a child prone to experiencing a state of vulnerability and feeling mental pressure, especially in terms of the need to be concentrated and not be unfocused. The clarity of one’s perspective on what the future should hold (as well as the fact of noticing a number of worthy prospects in life) eliminates the agonizing uncertainty and makes a teenager feel more mentally secure (Tyszkowa, 1977).

Upper-secondary school at the fourth stage of education continues with the content introduced in the third stage’s curriculum (the Ordinance of the

Minister of National Education of 23rd December 2008) (Rozporządzenie, 2008). Polish language becomes the basic school subject which provides a pupil with the opportunity to carefully explore different kinds of knowledge from other fields. Media education's content is noticeable both on a basic and an expanded level of teaching.

Curricula of upper-secondary schools are based to a great extent on the media. That is why they include a large number of subjects through which media literacy is formed indirectly, during classes such as: Polish, foreign language, knowledge of culture, introduction to business, geography, information technology, family life education, ethics, biology, history and society.

It is difficult to estimate the real degree to which the media education content is implemented during given school subjects. Thus far, there has not been any extensive nor comprehensive research in this matter. Though observation of every day educational practices can give the idea that "the division of the content" may lead to a certain kind of dilution of responsibility for the concept's implementation, as well as the permission for errors in a healthy and effective media education process.

#### **4. Entities that initiate and implement activities in the field of media education and media literacy**

Shutting down the interdisciplinary path caused a shift in responsibility for media education in Poland to other entities, including public institutions, which pursued their ideas and programmes in a way "beside" the official school curriculum. It was not formally planned, but became a natural consequence of changes in the educational law.

A. Ogonowska (2013) indicates some exemplary projects/programmes of developing media education, implemented by the mentioned public institutions:

- Ministry of National Education: Digital School [Cyfrowa Szkoła];
- Ministry of Culture and National Heritage: Cultural Education Programme [Program Edukacja Kulturalna], Pact for Culture [Pakt dla Kultury];
- National Audiovisual Institute: didactic materials on media education published on the website;

- Polish Film Institute [Polski Instytut Filmowy]: School Film Library: report on the condition of media education, academic conferences devoted to these issues;
- Media Desk Poland: organizing academic conferences on media education;
- NASK – Research and Academic Computer Network: Safer Internet Programme.

On the one hand, we have a lot of initiatives and programmes for children and youth, with a potential of being very attractive, as well as regularly developed Internet resources on media education which can be used by teachers (e.g. subjects related to Internet safety). On the other hand, there is no thought-out and consequent strategy in these activities.

The issue which deserves special attention was is the priority of “Media and Informational Education” within the “Education” programme of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. National Audiovisual Institute [Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny] took upon itself the implementation of the project and set its sights on organizing coalition of initiatives for the development of media and information education in Poland. Another goal was to create systemic solutions favourable to the popularization of this field.

There were many interesting activities of the National Broadcasting Council [Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji KRRiT], but one of them is especially worth noticing: “Media Signpost” [“Drogowskaz medialny”], that is an information service about media education (Drogowskaz medialny, n.d.). This public institution initiates development of numerous reports, meetings with the participation of various expert groups, or e.g. creation of the base of media education specialists.

Quite helpful is also the implementation of such programmes as “Active Education”. This programme was carried out during 2012-2015 period by the Centre for Education Development [Centrum Rozwoju Edukacji] and the Centre for Citizenship Education [Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej]. Its activities were directed towards teachers and primary and secondary school principals who wanted to expand their knowledge and refine their competences of using modern technologies in their work (the programme covered such elements as interactive e-learning course, exchange of experience, programme conferences, good practices, information and communication technologies and self-teaching

textbooks, book publications).

According to our estimate, due to a certain stagnation in the implementation of media education in public school system, the year 2003 saw the activation of the so-called third sector, that is non-governmental organizations. Despite the fact that foundations and associations are not the main topic of this study, which is supposed to focus on the education in public schools, we cannot forget to mention a crucial part NGOs have had in forming media literacy in Poland. The intensification of activities was particularly noticeable in the last five years. Their offer is directed towards Poles of different ages, ranging from the youngest to the elderly citizens. Many of these initiatives are based on co-operation with schools, which means that they start overlapping with formal education. Groups of teachers and pupils can participate in workshops, classes and various competitions during their activities in classes or after school. The third sector also gathered many entities that participate in sharing source materials, lesson scripts and didactic aids to broadly defined lessons about media or with the use of media.

Numerous entities are involved, among them (Analyzed non-governmental organizations, n.d.):

- Fundacja Dzieci Niczyje - Nobody's Children Foundation (Child in the Web) [Dziecko w sieci]; Webbers [Sieciaki]);
- Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska - Modern Poland Foundation (i.a. Media Education, "Free Reading Matter" ["Wolne Lektury"], MediaLog, Digital Future – report and catalogue of media competences);
- Fundacja Nowe Media - New Media Foundation (Youth Multimedia Action I HAVE Media, I KNOW Media [Młodzieżowa Akcja Multimedialna MAM Media, ZNAM Media]; news-sheets Qmam, media contest);
- Fundacja Media Evolution - Media Evolution Foundation (journalistic apprenticeships);
- Fundacja ABCXXI Cała Polska czyta Dzieciom - ABCXXI Foundation Whole Poland Reads to Children [Cała Polska Czyta Dzieciom];
- Stowarzyszenie Nowe Horyzonty Edukacji Filmowej - New Horizons Association – New Horizons of Film Education (film materials for educational use);
- Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej CEO - Centre for Citizenship Education,

CEO (Turn On. Youth and Media [“Włącz się. Młodzi i Media”]);

- Fundacja Dobrego Odbioru - Good Reception Foundation ;
- Fundacja Panoptykon - Panoptykon Foundation;
- Towarzystwo Inicjatyw Twórczych Ę - Association of Creative Initiatives “ę” (WarszawaLab, Flying Digital Animators [Latający Animatorzy Cyfrowi]);
- Fundacja Piąte Medium - 5th Medium Foundation ;
- Fundacja Evans - International Evans Foundation – the Warsaw Office.

During 2015 some of the above-mentioned entities established the Coalition of Media and Digital Education [Koalicja Edukacji Medialnej i Cyfrowej], with the goal of introducing comprehensive measures for promoting various kinds of activity in favour of media literacy. You can find more information on the Coalition’s website: [kemic.org.pl](http://kemic.org.pl) (KEMIC, 2016).

## 5. Examples of good practices in the area of cooperation between NGOs and schools

Media education is not a separate school subject, though in the core curricula teachers are encouraged to spend much time on mass media and media education, that is educating pupils to receive and use media properly (Rozporządzenie, 2008).

Education on media, for media and through media should be, according to the legislator, integrated with other subjects at school. The content of these subjects is listed above. In a school curriculum teachers find very general tips. They have to make specific proposals of scenarios and teaching materials themselves. Another idea is to use the offer prepared by third sector organizations. Materials for teachers, parents and students themselves are published online as open educational resources (OER) and are often subject to Creative Common licences.

“Turn On. Youth and Media” [Włącz się! Młodzi i media] programme introduced guidelines for using traditional and new media during classes (Włącz się!, n.d.). The programme has been run since 2012 by the Centre for Citizenship Education [Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej] and the Evans Foundation. As a part of it the pupils will:

- be acquainted with the language of the media, research and analyse internet, press, radio, and television content,
- learn a critical and conscious reception of media content, get to know the broadcasters' strategies, learn how to "filter" information and images they receive,
- try to participate responsibly in the communication process on social media, create their own materials, articles, films, animations, photos, or audio materials, about the school life, local community, or global phenomena.

The programme is aimed at pupils and teachers of fourth, fifth and sixth grade of primary schools, secondary schools and upper-secondary schools from all over Poland. It is a supplement to the school's curriculum, as well as a proposal to spend free time on something creative. It can be implemented during classes of, for instance, Polish, history, social science, or extracurricular activities such as Polish language groups, journalistic groups, working on a school paper, school film societies, active library groups, etc. During media education classes of 2015/2016 school year, pupils supervised by teachers plan social campaigns. Teachers will conduct a series of classes about the media, with the use of materials from the website (films, scripts, exercises, articles). Pupils will take part in "media activities", that is short assignments covering the media on the official blog of "Turn On. Youth and Media" programme. Each "activity" will consist of introduction, expert's opinion, task for the participants, and solution, that is the pupils' work. The themes of the "activities" in 2015/2016 school year are as follows: *What language do the media use?*; *Informational vertigo*; *About privacy and safety on the web*; *Open resources on the internet*; *Can media change the world?* More information about the project can be found on: [www.ceo.org.pl/pl/media](http://www.ceo.org.pl/pl/media).

Another example can be "Media Olympics" ["Olimpiada medialna"], a test of media knowledge and skills made for pupils from upper-secondary schools. It is an initiative of the New Media Foundation, organized yearly since 2011, and together with partners such as the University of Social Sciences and Humanities and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. The winners will receive in-kind prizes and a student book (that is, a qualification without the competitive process) of the two universities. Each year the Olympics consists of three stages and a finale. Its participants' task is to get the best possible



score in the internet test, write essays, prepare multimedia presentation, and take part in an Oxford-style debate. Thus far the main topics were: digitization of television (2011/12), public media (2012/13), new libraries of knowledge – digital and audiovisual repositories (2013/14), and culture interfaces after the Google revolution. How do we communicate today with others through media? (2014/15) In addition to that, each edition of the Olympics includes the same core programme with such themes as: 1) the art of information, 2) receiving and creating media coverage, 3) transforming the media, 4) the art of presentation and debating, 5) film (Pięta edycja Olimpiady Medialnej, n.d.). In 2016 the main theme is: Citizen 2.0. Participating in political and social life through new media. More information on the project can be found on: <http://olimpiada-medialna.edu.pl/>.

Another example are resources made available online by the Modern Poland Foundation (Edukacja Medialna, n.d.). With respect to the Media Competence Catalogue (Dąbrowska et.al., 2012), the core curriculum and split according to educational phases, this organization gives teachers a ready-made collection of lesson scenarios in the form of full or shortened courses. Conspectuses are complemented by infographics and glossaries for children, but also for youth and adults. Cycles of lessons correspond to the following stages:

- preschool;
- primary school (grades 1–3);
- primary school (grades 4-6);
- lower secondary school;
- upper secondary school.

During the proposed lesson scenarios the following methods can be found: brainstorming, interview, text analysis, quiz, webquest, mind mapping, briefing, play, individual and group work. At each stage, lessons were grouped in bigger thematic units:

- using information;
- relations in media environment;
- media language;

- creative usage of media;
- ethics and values;
- security;
- law;
- economic aspects of media operation.

At later education levels, the programme is enriched by the following units: mobile security, digital competences and projects.

When analyzing examples of good practices of NGOs' activities for media education, it should be also emphasized that they have an input to the diagnosis of the situation in Poland. The most noteworthy example of this being the following documents:

- The report from 2012 prepared by Modern Poland Foundation that was supposed to collect in one place all of the most important issues connected with media education in Poland: Lipszyc, J. (Ed.). (2012). *The Digital Future. Media and Information Education in Poland – the Opening Report* [„Cyfrowa Przyszłość. Edukacja medialna i informacyjna w Polsce – raport otwarcia”] (Lipszyc, 2012);
- The catalogue prepared by Modern Poland Foundation describing and categorising media competence and media literacy.: Dąbrowska, A. J. et.al. (2012). *The Digital Future. Catalogue of Media and Information Competences* [„Cyfrowa Przyszłość. Katalog kompetencji medialnych i informacyjnych”] ((Dąbrowska et.al., 2012);
- The research report prepared by Urban Culture Institute from Gdańsk [Instytut Kultury Miejskiej – Gdańsk: The Children of the Web – communication competences of the children [“Dzieci Sieci – kompetencje komunikacyjne najmłodszych. Raport z badań”] (Dzieci Sieci, 2013);
- Conclusions and recommendations after the First Congress of Media Education organized by the Polish Society of Media Education (PTeM) in 2014 (Wnioski i rekomendacje, 2014).

Activities of non-school entities are divided into multiple actions.

## 6. Summary

Developing media literacy among students and pupils should be the main goal of media education. In public education there is no separate subject dedicated to these issues. Also the education path present for some time in the Polish education was eliminated from the education law. According to Biedrzycki (2015), we cannot speak of a total lack of media education in teaching, as – although it is difficult to unequivocally define the form, scope and the goal indicated by teachers and students’ expectations – its elements are present in other subjects didactics and in lessons on building IT competences.

Analyzing their content, arrangement and sequence at certain stages corresponding to students’ development, we can speak of the potential of knowledge and skills growth in the topic discussed. However, the vision presented in the document is dangerously far from its practical implementation in specific school activities.

The core curriculum, in its present version, has a great potential. Unfortunately, scattering the issues may lead to the situation in which teachers will not see the need of continuity of education on this subject, treating this knowledge selectively and acting with various intensiveness. Topics related to media do not have to be prioritized in the case of most subjects, because content of media education is intertwined with the syllabus, and defined by specific goals of the given subject (Biedrzycki, 2015).

It follows logically that there is a need for a change. Changes can go in two directions, or they can be achieved at the same time. The first direction aims at putting a greater focus on expanding the presence of media literacy in formal documents and core curriculum in a more tangible way (e.g. separated from the whole in a reasonable way). The second direction should concern specific educational institutions, or rather individual teachers and educators. Their awareness of the need to introduce a pupil to the world of media from an early age, as well as a positive approach to media and media education content are the priorities of effective actions. J. Morbitzer (2012) says that in the era of the Internet we need a “different” teacher, focused on interpretation and reflexive analysis of information and concentrated on meta-teaching, meaning not only giving the student knowledge that quickly becomes outdated, but rather the ability of an individual to learn and gain new information. This searching for, analyzing and structuring information and messages cannot be thoughtless.

As we showed above, media education is also present in institutional activities of the state, which is visible in the engagement of public entities. None of the institutions, however, treat media education as a priority and, as Murawska-Najmiec (2015) indicates, there are no adequate tools for coordination of the state policy in this regard.

Very promising activities can be seen in the third sector. The priority of media education is nowadays more visible outside school, than inside it. Activities and proposals in this area are aimed at an individual student, but also a teacher and whole school communities.

A good television viewer, radio listener, reader or Internet user should be an aware media receiver, meaning active and searching for truth, selective and being able to choose reliable information, as well as critical, examining reliability of messages (Drzewiecki, 2010). In order to help citizens become this kind of media users, there is a need to further integrate activities of all three spheres that were mentioned in this article, simultaneously taking into account a huge dynamic of the phenomena in the world of media, the world trends, regional priorities and local conditions.

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## **The promotion of media education in the Slovak context by means of digital media**

### **Abstract**

With broadening digitalisation, the barriers to spreading and using diverse contents are disappearing. These contents are of an informative character. For a younger generation, digital media are more than a means of information exchange and young people are more skilled at using modern technology than their parents or grandparents. A platform for young people to freely express themselves and execute their right for information is created by media education, the principle of which benefits personal development and therefore enhances the participation and interaction of young people in a society. In Slovakia, the mutual interconnection and intersection of activities in the area of media education does not exist. Projects and activities related to media education are mainly oriented on children and youth. That is why propagation of media education via digital media offers more than information about possible uses of media education. Although in many aspects we perceive media education as a process of educating and learning about media and their contents, the emergence of numerous web projects enables an active participation in acquiring knowledge about media and their contents in an interactive way.

### **1. Introduction**

Media education helps children cultivate their curiosity, learn to assess number of questions and situations in various contexts and levels, accept diverse opinions and think about them. Restraints in spreading and the use of various types of content vanish with the development of digitalization and communication via computers. These contents have informative character –



blogs, advertisements, commentaries, clips – shared on social networks and platforms such as YouTube.

“Demonstration of communicative abilities by means of media content is most typical for young population. The introduction of media education features as key competencies and skills aims to introduce these activities also the rest of society through the initiatives of lifelong learning. One of the possibilities is the development of didactic aids and professional preparation of media education teachers” (Šupšáková, 2016, p. 34).

For younger generation digital media, the Internet mainly, is much more than just tool for information exchange. Young people are mostly more competent in operating technologies than their parents and grandparents. We witness new generation conflict between digital natives and digital immigrants. Media and their consumption is what adults worry about – children spend more time with media than with their parents and traditional direct contacts in families and at school are reduced. Due to these reasons it is good that media education has become part of curricular and extracurricular education. It is a paradox that the generation gap became even more serious with the arrival of media education to schools. Ideally, young people are able to think critically and in context thanks to media education. On the contrary, it is typical for older generation to limit their relationship to digital media by little courage and ability to operate them and accept them as common part of their lives. Media education should focus on children, teachers and adults. It should become a lifelong educational process, educational phenomenon during the whole life of an individual. “Media have also become objects and at the same time tools of education and media competence does not lie in the acquisition of instrumental and cognitive work management with new media but it is based on the inclusion of taught mediated contents into our individual ideas about the world around us” (Jirák et al., 2013).

Media education creates space for young people where they can express themselves freely and apply their right to get information. This principle is beneficial to the personal development and supports their participation and interaction in a society. Media education helps to define future civic attitudes of individuals and the ability to combine basic procedures in the area of collecting media contents analysis. Even though the education starts in a classroom, it is really applied on the basis of creative participation of individuals in cultural and social environment and it leads to personal and political transformation from

passive participation to active one.

“In the intentional educational process people should acquire critical thinking and the ability to solve problems creatively in order to become reasonable and careful consumers and authors of information. In the process of media education an individual should improve his critical thinking and the ability to solve problems independently and creatively. It is a long-term process characterized by systematic character and purposefulness in acquiring media competencies and raising the level of media literacy” (Petranová, 2015, p. 13).

## **2. The possibilities of promoting media education in Slovakia by means of digital media**

In Slovakia the mutual interconnection between activities in the area of media education does not exist. Projects and activities dealing with media education focus mainly on children and youth. They are implemented by independent institutions and professionals, civic associations, religious associations. However, they do it individually and independently (OZ Žabky, [www.zodpovedne.sk](http://www.zodpovedne.sk), Salesians, IMEC FMK UCM).

“On the Internet a user or a potential customer of an educational institution perceives the content more through the added value offered to him. The information function is often not sufficient and it is necessary to add entertainment or another form of attracting a visitor. The strategy of online communication starts with the selection of suitable communication channels and social networks. For each of them another type of content is suitable since each of them has another type of audience” (Černá et al., 2015, p. 112). Many web projects focused on the promotion of media education mainly among young people require interaction. Their aim is not only to inform but also to teach in an unobtrusive and entertaining way, to offer possibilities of creating media production either by using the Internet or by direct participation.

They are often not informed about activities done by other institutions or professionals and their results. The results of individual partial projects are not compared; they are not used in broader contexts and in nationwide context. Subjects and their activities dealing with media education and media literacy in Slovakia significantly contributed to the creation of the concept on nationwide level. Out of numerous projects and activities we could mention some of them as positive examples distinguished by a target group, type of medium or nature

of activity.

All of them are connected by an original promotion idea in relation to their content, form or carrier – the medium. Their main idea content is an adequate original solution being it a text, image, format, etc. They try to be not only original but also unique. “The principle of social benefit builds on it – it also belongs to the basic principles of promotional action. It presents the ideal so that the promotion provokes not only the attention and interest of a recipient.” (Horňák, 1998, p. 49).

The anchoring of media education in the conditions of Slovakia was supported by the Strategy of media education in the context of lifelong learning from 2009 which is the basic document about media education. It does not neglect the informatization and digitalization of schools in the country with the emphasis on continuous development of educational system focused on lifelong learning.

The systematic development of media education in Slovakia started only short time ago. The issue of media in social and pedagogical contexts has already appeared in the past. Print media were important educational and educative means and newspapers and magazines were used also within educational process. IMEC, the Centre of Media Literacy at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication, the University of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, deals with the coordination and promotion of information level and further development of media education activities. Besides other things, it deals with organization of information campaigns and services focused on the development of media education, media literacy and media education among public.

The civic association eSlovensko has the widest spectrum of activities in the area of informal media education. It implements a long-term project focused on raising the awareness of a safe use of the Internet and mobile phones. The main aims of the projects are: to establish and run a national centre [Zodpovedne.sk](http://Zodpovedne.sk), raise the awareness of a safe use of the Internet, mobile communication and new technologies.

The non-profit organization eSlovensko, o.z. in cooperation with partners manages the educational project for children and youth called “OVCE.sk”. “One of the project outcomes is the publication *Deti v sieti* (Children in the net) focused on the promotion of the awareness of safe and responsible use of the Internet and mobile phones, the dangers of virtual space and the possibilities of getting consultancy and help.” (Gregussová & Drobný, 2013).

In 2009 the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic awarded the civic association Žabky with the accreditation of educational activity in the area of media education called “Being able to read does not mean to understand.” Nowadays, children can become familiar with media education in an informal way by using entertaining techniques. Children work in smaller groups and deal with topics such as rhetoric, print media, television broadcasting, etc. In 2008 they finished the implementation of the project called Media Bridge of the Young. The project gave rise to the Internet television and TV Žabky Television which informed mainly about volunteering, human rights, discrimination, organizations working in the third sector in Slovakia, etc. It also offers accredited educational programmes of media education designed for teachers and pupils. Its website offers professional publications for parents and teachers.

The informal education in the area of media called Media school is prepared also by the Salesian media school. Telecommunication operator Orange Slovakia runs the website e-deti.sk. It offers promotional and consulting materials for children, youth, parents and teachers.

To include media education successfully into social life the engagement of media themselves in the area of promoting media education is also important. The Radio and Television of Slovakia prepared for children and youth a programme cycle about media education called Media spies. However, this cycle does not have its digital archive a thus it is not accessible as necessary.

The press agency of the Slovak Republic in the cooperation with the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic has made all its services accessible for all schools in Slovakia since February 2009. The aim of the project called “TASR at school” is to support media education at all levels of schools, enable work with real agency product and support the production and distribution of non-commercial information. The project provides access to the most updated agency service, the use of news from the service that can be used by schools and teachers in education and also for school magazines and Internet sites.

### 3. Conclusion

The basic principles of promoting media education could be summed up into four points: idea originality, veracity, scientific quality and social utility. Digital projects focused on media education and media literacy try to keep these aspects. Promotion of media education by means of digital media offers

more than informing about the possible use of media education. Even though in many aspects we understand media education as a process of educating and learning about media and their contents, the establishment of many web projects enables us to acquire knowledge about media and their contents through active participation in an interactive way. It includes the development of critical thinking and motivates also parents to participate e.g. in prevention of risks connected to virtual world. Digital media also teach us to produce our own media contents, to interpret them and assess them. The most vulnerable group in virtual world is children and youth. However, the adults, parents and teachers should be interested to know how to protect children against the dangers of the Internet. We should keep in mind that it is important to talk about this topic in a way comprehensible and appropriate for the children.

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## **The place of community media within the development of media literacy**

### **Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to point out the correlation between community media as part of the third sector of electronic media systems and media literacy. Community media are a one-of-a-kind entity in the field, defined by the basic principles of access, participation and non-profitness. The paper indicates that it is community media which influence the development of media literacy, either directly or indirectly. The paper will also try to prove the necessity of defining community media in the Slovak legislature by showing that this step would lead to an overall increase of media literacy in the country.

### **1. Introduction: Community media and their place in today's world**

Community media, which are also called the media of the third sector, are the third type of media, existing alongside of the two established players - public and private media. Due to the terminology problems between multiple authors, community media are best portrayed through their inherent properties - they are a non-profit class of media, which has the goal of serving the respective community the medium is created by. Many authors define this property as "giving voice to the voiceless" because community media provide service to the minorities, which are usually defined through some specific symbol (e.g. various health disabilities, religions) and which usually are not given enough spotlight in the mainstream media. Jankowski defines the role of community media as *"To provide news and information relevant to the needs of the community members, to engage these members in public discussion, and to contribute to their social and political empowerment."* (Jankowski, 2003, p. 8) Although

many authors believe, that community media should hold a contraposition to the established media, after having a thorough look through the many categories of community media, it becomes clear that this simply is not possible for each community media out there. One of the reasons being, that most of the community media simply serve as a platform for content which does not get enough spotlight in the mainstream media. To illustrate on an example, let us consider religious media. These media often do not stand in direct conflict with their public or private counterparts, they simply provide content, which is of interest to their respective community (i.e. christians, jews etc.), thus providing simply an alternative source of information. On the other hand, there is plethora of communities, who reflect an opposition to the established media landscape, if for example, the aim of the community is to enforce criticism on the current state of the society, this obviously creates a binary relationship between the community and established media. “The increasing attention given to alternative media and journalism is, to great extent, married to the rising chorus of voices critiquing mainstream media news practices, and which naturally extends to concerns about the future of robust democracy.” (Forde, 2011, p. 3).

Media literacy is a very important aspect of community media. It is mostly strengthened through acquired media competencies throughout a human lifetime. These competencies offer a huge variety of opportunities for people to develop media literacy, not only during the educational period in a human’s life, but also afterwards. Additionally, community media provide a platform for self-representation, due to the content creation being done by community members themselves. In this case, one could easily compare community media to a school magazine. It is made up entirely by students, who practice actual journalistic work by running the magazine, which in turn increases their own media competencies. The content created by them is much closer to the recipients (i.e. other students), because the content creators in this case know exactly what are the interests and problems of their target audience. This is because the recipients are the part of the same community as the content creators and vice versa. Additionally, the recipients tend to gravitate towards content created by their peers. This also encourages the recipients themselves to partake in the content creation.

## 2. The nature of community media

The different facets of the nature of community media spring up from all the different perspectives people view them, e.g. personal structure, hierarchy, the methods of financing, relationship to the established media and legislature etc. This paper will only deal with those properties, whose content directly influences media education and media literacy. These examples will help us define the exact correlation of these fields. Additionally, this should prove the importance of the existence of community media within the media systems.

**Content** - The first characteristic is the content, which is probably the most divisive one as well, as there is a vast plethora of content types among community media. There is no single "template" for creating and managing a community medium, by which every other medium would abide. There are multiple reasons for this. First of all, there is a great variety of media forms which can exist. Jankowski distinguishes between community radios, community televisions and community networks (Jankowski, 2003, p. 7), although considering the technology boom in the past decades, various hybrid media forms should be considered as a form by themselves as well. This diversity dictates the further specialization of the respective medium. This also depends on the recipient base - the community - itself, which is brought together by one defining property, whether it being a hobby, an opinion, a religion, etc. Therefore, one must always look at the form of the medium from a broader viewpoint, because community media adapt to the recipient not just by the type of content and structure, but form as well. To illustrate, it is pretty obvious, that a community medium aimed at the elderly will not use the form of an internet radio, but will rather try to broadcast using conventional radio or television. On the other hand, a community medium bringing content to students will probably work on the basis of a community network or on a hybrid basis, because this community culminates mostly on the internet. Form usage is therefore directly bound to media literacy of the respective community and their expectations from said medium. The adaptation process of the medium works as a form of "symbiosis", because the community media hierarchy is usually created from the bottom to the top, and not the other way around, as is the case with other established media. Last but not least, the typology of community media can also be differentiated based on the content the community produces, which is again based on their behavior and interests. Mistrík stipulates that there are 8 different types - philosophical/ideological,



professional, psychological/biological, communities consisting of people with a health impairment, communities of socially disadvantaged groups, cultural and art activity based communities, national heritage, geographical, regional and language communities (Mistrić, 2014, p. 90). This, combined with the various forms of community media, makes for a broad spectrum of possible specialized media. If we go one step further and take all the possible community specializations into account, we get an infinite amount of options, how community media could look like, function, relate to the recipient, meet the expectations of the recipient and improve the media literacy of the recipient.

**Personal structure** - The personal structure of community media is one of their defining properties, and helps to clearly distinguish them from the established private and public sector. Additionally, this is also one of the most important aspects, when considering media literacy, because community media are always managed by amateurs without proper journalistic education or experience, both in content creation and journalism as a whole. Forde sees two possible factors as the incentive for people to work in community media. The first is the workplace itself, which provides experience and education for novice journalists, which is especially important when these people are planning to move on to a mainstream medium later on in their career. The second and most important factor is the fact, that community media enables full freedom and autonomy in content creation (Forde, 2011, p. 56). Furthermore, Carpentier also stipulates that one of the main goals of community media is optimizing human resources in the document "Proč komunitní média v České republice?" of the Council for Radio and Television Broadcasting of the Czech Republic, with the reasoning, that these media provide the possibility of self-realization for the average human being. Carpentier defines average humans as the majority of the population, ergo the people who are not the part of the social elite within the country, whether them being celebrities, politicians, scholars, etc. (Carpentier, 2012, p. 5). Atton sees this minority as specific social groups, which affect economic and social conditions etc. (Atton, 2002, p. 10). Community media offer a platform for their members to create and share their opinions through the medium, which in turn increases their potential critical thinking, with relation to both creating and receiving media content. The direct participation in content creation helps to increase the media literacy for the content creators, recipients as well as the community members, due to the fact, that content producers are also part of the community and the community

members share their views.

Hierarchy - The hierarchy of community media is the third most important facet. Professional media make use of a vertical power structure within the organization - the people on the top decide which content is to be broadcasted and when, what the form of the content will have etc. However, in the case of community media, this decision making process is democratized, as community media tend to use a horizontal internal structure. Each member within the organization has a say concerning the running and the content broadcasting in the medium. The final decision is usually taken by a consensus of multiple content creators, who are community members as well. This means that the figurative distance between community media and their recipients is almost non-existent in some cases. This also ensures that community media content almost always reflects the thoughts and expectations the recipients have from the medium. Carpentier, Lie and Servaes describe this entanglement of media and recipients as one of the four basic pillars of community media - the rhizome (Carpentier, Lie & Servaes, 2002, p. 1). Rhizomatic behavior also explains the way community media are at the same time both dependent and independent on the media market, as community media categorically function as a media form, but not in the same sense as the other two media sectors. Same goes for content creation - broadly speaking, community media work as a news outlet, but the horizontal power structure and the fact, that there are almost no professional journalists in the organization, make community media stand out from the established media landscape. The analogy to a democratic state is on point here, as like in community media, state members also have a right to vote about the way the country should be run, whether directly or indirectly. Traditional media do not offer this reflexion of its recipients, as they are ran top-down - the managing person has to make an educated guess about the interests and views of his audience and act accordingly. Community media literally offer freedom of speech in a way, which is simply unprovidable by the established media.

The nature of community media is unclear and it is only possible to define it using broad terms. The inner workings of community media also require time and quite a bit of self-denial from the content creators themselves. Their participation in content creation is crucial, because only then can community media reflect the views of their recipients without fault. The option of taking part in content creation without prior knowledge or experience in media systems or content enables community members to develop a competent level of media literacy. The recipients profit from

this model as well, because when they realize, that it is indeed someone they know who works in that organization, they start to think of other media workers they see in the television or hear on the radio as actual people, and not write them off as some sort of untouchable elite minority. This process influences a creation of their own healthy scepticism.

### 3. The situation in Slovakia

The electronic media system in Slovakia acknowledges two different types of media - public and private. Their coexistence in a single system, which is also called the dual media system, is anchored in the respective judicature. Specifically, it is the Act No. 532/2010 on Radio and Television of Slovakia and the Act No. 308/2000 on Broadcasting and Retransmission. Together with other supporting law codes, these laws define the rights and obligations of all electronic media broadcasters in Slovakia, as well as regulate the type of content these broadcasters can air, among other things. However, this system does not encourage any form of recipient media literacy development at all, quite the contrary - the tendency is that there is a high increase of content pointed towards the recipient over time.

Community media cannot exist in the dual media system. The first step in the right direction would be a change of the media code in Slovakia (i.e. the aforementioned laws). Their existence is not possible without it for a variety of reasons.

1. The first and foremost reason is the non-profit clause of community media. While the media code does not specifically concern itself with financing of media, it also does not acknowledge the fact that media in the dual system could indeed exist purely on a non-profit basis. In the case of community media, any profit they would make stays within the confines of the organization and is used to further improve it, in contrast to traditional media, where profits are divided between the partners and managing directors as dividends. This has ramifications on human resources as well. Whereas in traditional media, employees have an actual salary, their colleagues in community media do everything in their own free time without a being able to demand salary. This approach is tightly bound with the hierarchy and decision-making process

within community media, as mentioned above.

2. The second issue is that their existence can only be sustained in the long term by the state. Usually the financing of community media comes from 3 sources. The first one are voluntary donations from the community, although due to their inconsistent nature, they can never be considered as the main source of income. The most important source are state-sanctioned subventions. These serve for the sole goal of providing the highest quality content possible within the confines of the system. Additionally, the state subvention system differs from country to country. The last source of income is the selling of broadcasting time or enabling advertisements within the broadcasting time. Hallet also mentions various sponsorship opportunities, which could also serve as income for community media, but it would still not make them commercial broadcasters (Hallett, 2009, p. 37).
3. The other huge issue is that community media are simply unable to fulfill some of the broadcasting obligations due to their nature. This problem arises especially when talking opinion bias, content regulation, etc. While some of the requirements are possible to keep in the short term, if the organization wants to be truly run on a community basis, it is usually unsustainable in the long run, whether from the personal or financial standpoint.

The solution to this problem is obviously a change in the Slovak legislature, either by defining a triadic media system, where community media form a third pillar of the whole media system, or an update to the dual media system, which would have to acknowledge community media either as a subset of commercial or public media. In either case, an update to our media code is long overdue.

Another proof of the importance of a legislature change is also the Report on Community Media in Europe, which was adopted by the European Parliament in 2008. This report includes lengthy explanations on various advantages of establishing community media and their influence on the media activism of the inhabitants also touches upon the topic of media literacy: "6. Considers that community media contribute to the goal of improving citizens' media literacy through their direct involvement in the creation and distribution of

content and encourages school-based community outlets to develop a civic attitude in the young, increase media literacy, as well as build up a set of skills that could be further used for community media participation” (2008, online). The conclusion of this report that not only community media and media literacy coexist, they actually go hand in hand. 8 years have past since the EU Parliament has adopted this motion, yet community media are still seemingly just a pipe dream in Slovakia.

## 4. Community media and media literacy

The demand for media education and literacy in today’s world is at an all-time high. Recipients are literally bombarded with huge volumes of content every day. It is safe to say, that nobody could be possibly prepared for this. Although media education has since caught up and is now incorporated into the educational process within the human life, there is currently no way an individual can further his media competencies after graduating high school. There is no substitute for community media in the dual media system, which would support the process of advanced media literacy development of people through direct participation on running a medium. This advanced level of media literacy simply cannot be learned through memorizing definitions verbatim, it has to be experienced - hence the method has the name *learning by doing*. Anderson claims that there people need to build a „*Model of activist media characterized by direct action through engagement in critical education and activism in both content and production.*” (Anderson, 2015, p.23).

Community media offer an irreplaceable and unique opportunity here - community members, which actively participate on the decision-making process gain critical thinking as both the creators of their own medium and recipients of other, mainstream, media. They get accurate feedback from the recipients, which in turn makes them iterate on the final product with the feedback in mind. This cycle of production, broadcasting and feedback then does not stop. However, even through countless iterations, Fuchs stipulates, that it is not possible to reach the ideal product and perception from the recipient: “The ideal case for journalism is a different societal framework, which allows all citizens to have the time, skills, and resources so that they can all act as a critical journalists and critical recipients at the same time...” (Fuchs, 2010, p. 180). Although the goal may be unreachable, media literacy offers a

good starting line for the unending road ahead.

## 5. Conclusion

Gaining a high level of media literacy is by no way easy, and it becomes even harder with rising age. This paper pointed out to the potential community media have to be used as a learning framework for media competencies. It is only possible because of the main aspects of community media

- the content it left, the personal structure, the hierarchy and the unique relationship to its audience, which intertwines both the content creators and the recipient by enabling them to participate on content creation. It was also pointed out, that using community media as a tool in developing media literacy is not possible in countries like Slovakia, because there is no third sector developed yet. Despite the pressure from the European Union, Slovakia still did not adopt community media in its legislature, contrary to most of the other EU member states, thus making it impossible to use community media to further develop media literacy of individuals so far.

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## **Film education in Poland as a means of forming media literacy – Polish case studies**

### **Abstract**

In Poland, there are a number of programs in the field of film education, which are addressed to pupils, students and teachers. It is interesting that due to the large number of organizations involved in media education, Polish Film Institute created in September 2011 the Coalition for Film Education. This is an agreement of institutions, NGOs and universities active in the field of cultural education and teacher training for the film education of children and youth. Polish Film Institute since 2009, runs a special program of film education in lower secondary school and secondary schools - School FilmLibrary. School Film Library Program has been expanded to four projects under the cooperation of several organizations, which should be regarded as an example of good practice, in which each of these organizations may have their sub-goals that make up the common goal, and instead of competition we are dealing with make-up of several projects. Significant issues that were articulated during the seminar „Meanders media education“, which was held on 15 January 2015 at the University of Silesia in Katowice, were firstly the fact that the implementation of film education depends largely on the commitment of the teacher. Secondly, it drew attention to the shortcomings in the preparation of teaching teachers to conduct film education.

### **1. Introduction**

Among the goals of film education we can find: forming the skills of critical film reception and evaluation, learning the art of dialogue, and discussing a given film's range of issues and emotional reactions it evokes. Film education can also encourage using films as a means of expression and taking advantage of

one's imagination, therefore it also involves learning the way films are being made. Furthermore, one of the less obvious results of media education is giving people better access to films (Chojna, 2015). When discussing the definition of media education, what needs to be mentioned is the classic division into three aspects this type of education involves: about film, for film, and through film. Its main subject is a piece of film itself (Nurczyńska, 1981).

From the early 70s people who were using film as a tool in teaching, have encouraged the adoption of this method by other educators (Champoux, 1999). It should be noted that "among audio-visual teaching aids film has undoubtedly an exceptional position" (Skrzypczak, 1985, p. 5). Film is also "an important cultural factor that shapes the consciousness of modern man, molds his cognitive structures and a way of experiencing reality" (Faron, 1989, p. 15). It is recognized as a powerful tool to illustrate certain aspects and applications of different fields of knowledge and the source of pedagogical material more stimulating than conventional methods (Huczynski & Buchanan, 2004). Moreover, film improves the learning process thanks to the possibilities that are inaccessible to other media - in fact it can be used as a case study, problem-solving, presentation of historical events and their context, and show the metaphors to communicate in a symbolic way or as a satirical exaggeration. Film also allows to transmit the essence of abstract concepts and allows the so-called substitute experience. Presenting of concepts through a variety of scenes from the film gives a chance to observe their use in different situations (Champoux, 1999). Empirical studies conducted in the social sciences have shown that the use of films increases the interest and satisfaction of students in the classes, and at the same time improves the understanding and integrating the content of the subject, attracts attention and stimulates memory (Tyler, Anderson, & Tyler, 2009).

## 2. The present condition and examples of good practice

There is a number of film education-oriented programmes which are most often aimed at pupils and teachers, various types of educators, tutors. For the most part, however (if not always), teachers become participants of media education process and at the same time a kind of middlemen between education programmes and pupils. Moreover, some film education programmes function in cascade manner – teachers who are suitably trained in



this field can pass on their knowledge and skills as leaders of media education. It is important to emphasize that there are many publicly available didactic materials for this topic, well-prepared in terms of content. The internet is full of well-prepared lesson scripts, films, video lectures. There are also stationary, as well as electronic courses and trainings. The essential problems for this issue, articulated during the “Intricacies of Media Education” seminar that took place on the 15th of January 2016 at the University of Silesia in Katowice, are, firstly, the fact that the implementation of film education relies mainly on the commitment of a teacher, and secondly, as it was noticed, teachers lacking pedagogic training to conduct classes on film education.

Due to a large number of organizations active in developing film education, on September 19th, 2011 the Polish Film Institute created the Coalition for Film Education. This is an agreement of “institutions, non-governmental organizations and institutions of higher education dealing with cultural education and pedagogy for film education of children and teenagers. The Coalition’s mission is to join forces and bring young people, as well as people working with them, closer to practical, theoretical, historical, and film-oriented topics, and achieve it in an attractive and innovative way. (...) The creation of the Coalition for Film Education is a measure that is supposed to make people notice the importance of film education and amend the process of its inclusion within the schools’ curricula” (Coalition for Film Education, 2015).

Since 2009, the Polish Film Institute runs a special programme of film education in secondary and upper-secondary schools – School Film Library (Filмотeka Szkolna). It is financed by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Polish Film Institute and Polish Audiovisual Publishing Company. Presently, the program is under the supervision of the Polish Film Institute in co-operation with the Centre for Citizenship Education, Warsaw Film School, Generator Foundation, and New Horizons Association, while Polish Filmmakers Association is the programme’s official partner. The programme was initiated with presenting all Polish secondary schools with free-of-charge film packs, with 55 selected Polish feature, documentary and animated films inside, together with their treatments and the scripts for film analysis. The films were chosen by a committee of teachers experienced in the fields of film studies, culture studies, media studies, psychology and pedagogy (About School Film Library, 2015). The programme’s good practices include its constant development and maximizing its availability – educational portal [www.filмотekaszkolna.pl](http://www.filмотekaszkolna.pl).

pl is not only a source of complimentary materials for teachers and pupils, but also a platform of exchanging contacts and experiences (About School Film Library, 2015). Apart from that, the School Film Library has also its own festival, which sixth edition, organized in June 2015, gathered 150 pupils and 50 pedagogues from all over Poland. This event is a joint endeavour of the Polish Film Institute, the Centre for Citizenship Education and Warsaw Film School. During the festival's two days its participants had a chance to attend the award ceremony during which the winners of the festival competitions for five-minute-long student etudes, film posters, and written or video film reviews were announced. During the workshop section they could also sit at the so-called World Cafe – each table represented a different topic, making it possible for young participants to talk with the invited experts about such issues as the process of making a film and the secrets of their profession (6th Festival of School Film Library Wrapped Up!, 2015).

School Film Library programme was expanded as a part of the co-operation of several organizations with four new projects, making it a great example of a good practice in which each of the organizations may have their own goals that work for the overall purpose; and instead of competing, the projects supplement one another. The first one is called "School Film Library. Action!" – it is carried out by the Centre for Citizenship Education in co-operation with the Polish Film Institute, with the aim of popularizing the whole programme, supporting teachers, promoting good practices in the field of film education, giving pupils and teachers an opportunity to establish contacts on a national level and exchange experiences. The real results of the project are school film clubs, festivals, reviews, papers, information portals, film reviewers' clubs, and films themselves. The second project is called "School Film Library. Academy", and constitutes a series of on-line lectures and meetings directed at teachers, with the goal of facilitating transfer of knowledge and practical skills in the field of media education. This project is carried out by the Warsaw Film School in co-operation with the Polish Film Institute. Another project, "School Film Library. The Cinema Therapy", carried out by Generator Foundation with the co-operation of the Polish Film Institute, offers a support in conducting didactic classes with the use of film. Lesson scripts and teaching aids were prepared by a committee consisting of a psychologist, a pedagogue, and a teacher of Polish, and they are available for downloading on the website. The fourth project is carried out by the New Horizons Association, therefore it is called "School Film

Library. New Horizons of Film Education”. It has quite a wide appeal as it is dedicated to schools of all levels; they can take part in film-oriented cycles consisting of screenings, lectures, discussions and visual arts classes. Teachers are also provided with didactic materials (About School Film Library, 2015).

Since 2009 New Era publishing house and the New Horizons Association run a free educational project “I Work With My Class.” It is a series of meetings at the cinemas, the main goal of which is to improve the teachers’ skills as educators. Each year one film is chosen that is subsequently screened in 10-12 Polish cities. After each screening there are workshops with psychologists, and the teachers receive a paper with articles concerning relevant topics and fully prepared lesson scripts. Until February 2016 as much as 15 thousand teachers from all over Poland participated in the programme (bdz, press information, 2016).

Other interesting activities dedicated to developing film education include the establishment of the first and so far the only film lyceum in 2013 in Warsaw, and the creation of educational programme “Star Wars: The Force Awakens,” introduced simultaneously with the film’s premiere. Based on the classic movie saga, New Era publishing house prepared a special film magazine and lesson scripts, available for free at [www.nowaera.pl/gwiezdne-wojny](http://www.nowaera.pl/gwiezdne-wojny) website. As it turns out, “Star Wars’ themes could be used for various topics, like pros and cons of different political systems, including totalitarian, presenting the causes for different conflicts, or to discuss the films’ scientific inaccuracies, and the way the saga’s themes have become a part of culture” (bdz, press information, 2016). It is worth emphasizing that New Era publishing house has already prepared a number of different exercises, including the fully prepared lesson scripts for developing media literacy.

The website <http://legalnakultura.pl> also makes lesson scripts available. It should be added that they refer to legal and free audiovisual materials available on the internet, and that they are intended to be used during such classes as: Polish, knowledge of culture, library lesson, general education class. Another project that deserves attention is “a portal for educators and young cinephiles” <http://edukacjafilmowa.pl/> which was created under “Education +” programme of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The website’s content was enriched during the subsequent programmes of the Ministry: “Cultural Education” as a part of “Between Us Authors – [www.edukacjafilmowa.pl](http://www.edukacjafilmowa.pl)” project and “The Film Map of Generations.” The first Polish non-commercial video game “My

First Film”, as well as the internet application “The Film Map of Poland,” were also introduced thanks to those projects. The website’s aim is to encourage exchanging experiences and educational needs, but above all “to provide film-oriented knowledge and information about the latest educational tendencies, as well as to integrate the many activities of the representatives of various environments engaged in developing film education (About the Project, 2016). The before-mentioned educational game “My First Film” is free of any charge, its action takes place on a movie set and in a virtual film studio. Its target group are young people – in the game, they can become an aspiring filmmaker who sets to make his first film (My First Film – a Game Dedicated to Film Education, 2015). The year 2010 saw the publication of a book “Poland in Film. Where were popular films and TV shows shot”, under the patronage of the National Film Archive, which was called “the first such national guide of the places in which cult Polish (and not only) films and TV shows were shot” (Poland on Film, 2010). At the same time, website <http://www.polskanafilmowo.pl> offers a section entitled “Tourism and Film Education” directed at each age and peer group. The offer includes “school trips and green schools with film as a main theme, with the idea of broadly defined education of children and teenagers through film. Sightseeing of the places where a given film was shot, the film’s screening preceded by an introduction, discussion after its end, film workshops – critical and practical. Team building trips with film themes for companies (combined with things such as shooting a music video with the employees)” (Tourism and Film Education, 2016).

In addition to the above mentioned programmes, projects and websites we should also mention the Film Education Program “Lessons in Cinema,” organized by the Centre for Film Education, which covers “a series of multimedia education activities combined with film screenings, directed towards pupils of Polish schools on every stage of education” (Chojna, 2015), as well as the film-and-media education programme CinemaSchool, supported by 25 cultural institutions from the south of Poland and directed “towards pupils on all levels of continual education – ranging from kindergarten to upper-secondary school” (Chojna, 2015). Additionally, numerous other diverse activities are organized on a regional level, such as Film Discussion Clubs, or institutional activities such as those conducted by the Film Museum in Łódź (Chojna, 2015).

### 3. Analysis of the report “Film education in the polish school (...)”

Polish studies on the implementation of film education in school pay attention to a number of problems and concerns. One of the articles which discussing these issues provides a summary entitled „The sad conclusion“ confirming that „no one would dare to deny the legitimacy of the learning of young people how to navigate in the world of audiovisual culture, that possessed the minds and even souls. Therefore subject matter of the media is present to the greater or lesser extent in each program. The problem is that perhaps even the authors of programs and textbooks are aware that, the implementation actually does not exist (...)“ (Kastelik-Herbuś, 2015). Attention is drawn to that who would be responsible for the implementation of such education and on which classes it should be implemented. There are voices that it is difficult to implement film education on the lessons of the Polish language. Some say outright that Polish language teachers can rarely act as an ambassador for culture and art in the school with a clear conscience. The truth is that because of the intensive teaching programme the teacher usually does not have enough time for such a task (Kastelik-Herbuś, 2015).

Interesting conclusions can be drawn from the report “Film education in the Polish school based on the opinions of teachers participating in School Film Library workshops”. It was prepared for the Polish Film Institute by Aleksandra Litorowicz and Piotr Majewski in consultation with Jacek Wasilewski. Respondents have been selected purposely from teachers who participated in the workshops held in the framework of the project. Researchers have tried to collect the teachers’ opinions of different fields , at all levels of school education (from elementary to high schools, vocational and technical schools), and working in various Polish regions (both in large and small towns and rural areas). The report discusses the competence of teachers to use the film as an educational tool, the competence of students, psychological barriers, time constraints and failure curriculum and ways of thinking related to the use of the film as an educational tool (Litorowicz & Majewski, 2011). In this report, in the chapter on the competence of teachers, there has been highlighted deficiencies in knowledge about the use of the film as a means of education. A small number of participants in the study declares the acquisition of such knowledge during their studies and even then they conclude that this knowledge is insufficient and the possibility of training in this area are

very limited. On the other hand, in the chapter discussing the competence of the students, the main problem appears to be the lack of understanding of historical and social context in which the film takes place. Pupils are not prepared to interpret and analyze the film, which follows from the fact that they have not been taught this before. The report indicates the differences between classes of humanities and arts where films are much more frequently used than in the classes of science profiles. In classes of science profiles the film is rather used as a form of illustration or a substitute for required reading. It sits in stark contrast to what is described in the report. The report mentions the need for pupils themselves to discuss movies. Meanwhile, there is usually no time for discussion (Litorowicz & Majewski, 2011).

## 4. Summary and recommendations

Recommendations in the field of film education should be preceded by focusing on the challenges that relate to the use of film in education. These challenges can be grouped into three categories relating to the content, form and mentality (Brol, 2013). Since 1950 we can observe an increase in the amount of information at a rate of 8-10% per year, while demand for it falls by about 3%. Knowledge grows much slower. Our society acquires information slower and less complete. There is more fragmentation and less context and reflection. The message contain a shorter and stronger stimuli. Therefore, experts predict further reduction of the depth of content and at the same time the form is supposed to become more complex. The main problem arising from the replacement of printed texts by audiovisual transmission is increased complexity, not simplicity. (Dijk, 2010).

The aspect of the form and content affects feedback from the observed trends in the area of mentality. Teresa Sikora defines contemporary mental profile of people belonging to Western culture "as a set of patterns of automatic cognitive-emotional response towards fast, easy and unambiguous solutions instead of slow, difficult and ambiguous (i.e. the right thumb mentality)" (Brol, 2014). This analysis can deduce the first group of recommendations relating to the viewer and issues shaping the skills of reflective moving in world of media. The promotion of active reception, which includes the necessity of selecting content becomes an important matter (Bernasiewicz, 2010).

Moving on from the aspect of the recipient to the institutional one and at

the same time combining these two together, it is necessary to include voices saying that "contemporary Polish school [...] is not sufficiently prepared for the use of film and other media as equal educational tools" (Litorowicz & Majewski, 2011, p. 5). Therefore, there are recommendations giving strong reasons for the careful use and inclusion of film in an educational workshop. One can make them versatile, as they can relate to different audiences. These recommendations include:

- breaking the existing vicious circle in which those who do not understand more complex messages get increasingly lighter and less demanding forms,
- the need of change in perception of the film and appreciation of its educational value (an adequate attitude towards film as a teaching tool, in opposition to recognizing it as a "time filler"),
- prevention of education gap and disconnection from the part of culture that is the movie,
- the need to protect young people from thoughtless and uncritical reception of the media (Litorowicz & Majewski, 2011).

Despite all the obstacles, film education is an important aspect in Polish public school system, which should not be surprising taking into account the fact that "pieces of information that are crucial in development and decision-making of young people are coming mostly from the screen – film takes up its greater part. Moving images educate and facilitate. Modern Polish school youth spends approximately 4-5 hours daily in front of a screen. 10-30%, depending on age, of the information that shapes up their concepts of reality come from film" (Adamczyk, 2015).

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## **Media literacy of seniors**

### **Abstract**

Children and young people are considered an at-risk group in discussions as to the influence and effects of media on people. This is primarily due to the fact that they lack an effective system of values and learn through imitation (of reality and the media's portrayal of reality) and are unable to differentiate between fiction and reality at an early age. Seniors are another vulnerable group but are discussed much less frequently. National and international standards and legislation exists that enshrine and emphasise the need to educate seniors or appeal to the need to improve their media literacy. Specific forms and methods of media education for the senior population are minimal in Slovakia, if not absent completely. Courses and training activities, as well as expert debate on the level of media literacy and the competencies of the senior population are absent altogether. The main aim of the paper is to provide a conceptual theoretical framework based on the development of media literacy and critical thinking skills of the senior population.

### **1. Introduction**

The full integration of seniors into the media education process anticipates the formulation of basic theoretical and methodology assumptions, followed by study into the level of media literacy in the senior population to define an education and training program for increasing the level of media literacy among older people. (Petranová, 2013a, pp. 12-13). Media education and the development of media literacy are often considered that what they are not. The most common mistake is confuse it with the use of computer and digital technologies in education (i.e. using the Internet to locate information, using PowerPoint for presentations and essays, working with computers

and interactive boards), education through the media (e.g. instructional educational programs with different focuses on national television stations: natural science, history, language, etc.), e-learning, theoretical learning about the establishment and history of media and creating media products (learning photography, making videos, films, writing texts, etc.)

The goal of media education is to increase individual and social awareness of media, how media works, its influence and exploitation. Such education can take place at informal and formal (school) levels. In both cases, there is an intentional educational effect on the individual to give them the tools to receive medial content and decode, analyse and evaluate this content. Through media education, individuals come to recognise the forms of media communication and should learn how to responsibly communicate in these formats. Responsibility in this case involves their own self, their surroundings and the society in which they live. In addition to responsibility, the goal of media education is to develop critical thinking skills and the ability to creatively resolve problems to transform these individuals into judicious and sober media consumers and the creators of information and media content. Media literacy is the ability to understand and decipher media content received through information channels. It anticipates having the ability to read and write and the ability to master audio-visual and digital literacy. Media literacy involves access to all media and communication technologies. An individual who understands media is able to control them and receive their content; those who are able to stay informed, learn and find entertainment through media and communication technologies are considered to have media literacy. Media competencies represent a set of knowledge and skills that the participants master during the media education process. Developed media competencies represent the highest level of media literacy. A media-competent individual is able to actively select relevant content from a range of media options, differentiate their interests from the interests of the media owners and is able to critically examine media content and the information they provide. In addition, a media-competent individual is able to create media content and messages, has an increased level of awareness of the effects media has on culture, tastes and consumer behaviour, perception and the way that free time is used. Media competencies help people orient themselves in a flood of information that they receive through media and information channels, help them in form their own opinions about this information, form and opinion about such information

and expose and resolve problems that arise from their contact with media (Petranová, 2013a, pp. 14-15).

Two dimensions of media literacy are generally recognised (Buckingham, 2003): a knowledge-attitudinal dimension, which involves acquiring knowledge about the principles of media operations, awareness and formation of attitudes towards their influence and effects, financing, ownership, etc.; and a skill dimension, specifically the active acquisition and development of practical skills during work with media and the production of media products. Implementation of both dimensions in media education is conducted differently in various countries. Some prefer a theoretical approach, while others see value in practical work with media. A balanced combination of both approaches is the preferred method in Slovakia. In addition to these two approaches, a teleological approach to medial education has recently come into the fore within the European legislative contextual framework, which is related to the expansion of digital technologies. Media education in this sense involves examining, analysing and perfecting the new opportunities that communication technologies open in education.

## **2. The most common problems seniors encounter in contact with media**

One of the problems that seniors experience in contact with the media is their portrayal by the media. Many studies have shown that media depict seniors using negative stereotypes. The Socio Foundation recently completed a questionnaire-based study of seniors. Vladislav Matej, the foundation's director, talked about the way in which society views seniors, which is largely attributable to and assisted by the media. "Media often depict seniors as people who are always ill, overly trusting and naive and their physical appearance is a long way from general standards of beauty. From our perspective, it is simply unacceptable and degrading for society to perceive old people in this way," he said. The term "stereotype" was used by Lippman, an American theorist and journalist, in the Public Opinion study (1922), defining it as a simplified reflection of reality. Lippman recognised that people react to the social reality through an intermediary, specifically their own experience and the beliefs that they have received from others. With the rise of mass communications, media themselves may even be the primary source of these beliefs (Petranová

& Plencner, 2008, pp. 24-25). Given that seniors spend a great deal of time with media, and television in particular, media portrayals may have a negative effect on them. According to Korzeny and Neuendorf the stereotypes of “useless”, “incompetent”, “sickly” and “socially burdensome” seniors may decrease the self-confidence of older people because the media reinforce this self-image in themselves. Most media are insensitive to depictions of ageing they present, even though seniors are among the largest groups of media consumers. In particular, if seniors perceive media content as a self-fulfilling prophecy, i.e. actions within the bounds of what is “expected” of them. Investigating the context of a stereotype is a reliable way to weaken it. Within the process of increasing media literacy, seniors should learn how to: (a) decipher stereotypes, i.e. to be able to recognise and name the characteristics of the stereotypes that they encounter, including social stereotypes on the basis of age, (b) understand the functions of stereotypes in society and the stereotyping process in media, (c) identify stereotypes in media and be aware of their potential hidden meaning (in particular negative), (d) understand the superficial nature of age and gender-based sexist stereotypes (discrimination on the basis of age and gender), (e) recognise the social danger posed by stereotypes based on nationalities and ethnicities that support xenophobia and racism, (f) understand that information in media does not match reality and is rather a simplified, biased version of reality, and (g) know how to take into account the context of the situation and expose that which the media did not mention in connection with specific information (by using a stereotype).

Another issue is the amount of time media devote to older people and the intermediation of a perception of reality. Watching television is one of the most popular free-time activities for seniors. A number of studies have shown that they watch 5 hours of television per day on average. Gerbner from the University of Pennsylvania determined how media, and in particular television, influence the perception of the world around us and how television cultivates perspectives of the world in a certain direction. He created the theory of cultivated analysis that predicts media are an important factor in the process of enculturation. The closed, symbolic world they produce radically cultivate beliefs in the audience. It weakens their perception of reality and replaces the objective perception of facts through the adsorption of media portrayals and constructs. Interpreting this theory in relation to seniors, it can be said that the more time an older person spends watching television, the more their ideas

about the world are derived from media's version of reality and the less the person relies on personal experience with unadulterated reality (Reifová et al., 2004, p. 18). Gerbner's theory of cultivation was advanced when he compared data on the representation of violence on television screens during in-depth discussions with viewers. He defined a cultivation differential (Gerbner, 1980, pp. 53-69), which highlighted an increase in notions of imminent danger in direct proportion to rising television consumption/watching. Viewers were then divided on the basis of the results into: (a) low level media consumers (watch television 0 to 2 hours a day), (b) medium level media consumers (2 to 4 hours a day), and (c) high level media consumers (4 or more hours a day). Based on this cultivation differential, Gerbner demonstrated that high level media consumers consider the outside world to be ten-times more dangerous than low level media consumers and a thousand-times more dangerous than it actually is. The development of media competencies in terms of a critical-hermeneutic approach to media education means teaching older people to (Valentovičová, 2008, pp. 129-130): (a) understand the terms "reality", "social reality" and "media reality", (b) recognise that media reality is a media construct, (c) understand the importance of interpersonal communication in construing the meaning of media reality, (d) be aware that media are institutions with their own interests that define their own versions of reality, (e) recognise that media reality and its products are guided by social and economic impact, (f) recognise the technical and technological strength of media in creating media reality, and (g) be aware and control their own personal level of media consumption.

Media are partners for seniors, in particular those who live alone or simply feel lonely as a result of their advanced age. Some studies have confirmed that they are even more willing to leave their place of residence and move into assisted living facilities for seniors if they know they will have access to their favourite media and media programs. Media represents a kind of symbolic lifeline for seniors in a complicated world. For older people, television means a new alternative for building contact with the outside world and helps suppress the feeling of social isolation that people feel in a mass society. Moreover, television is easy to comprehend and understand its contents; it does not need highly educated viewers to survive as its content and messages are easily deciphered by individuals in all age categories. Studies have shown that an elevated level of consumption is connected to the massive amount of free time seniors are left with once they leave the workforce. Media education should

teach seniors to (Pravdová, 2008, pp. 56-58): (a) understand the relationships between society and media, (b) see how media influence their time and space, (c) understand the phenomenon of free time and the function it fulfils in modern society (d) note how individual programs are structured for different groups of viewers in terms of their interests, age, professions and gender, (e) be aware that television media are interested in attracting and keeping the attention of the largest group of viewers as they are potential consumers of a host of goods and services produced by advertisers, (f) understand that the goal of all producers is to keep the viewers from changing the station, i.e. to make them dependent on their programs and to cultivate cultural habits and needs (Pravdová, 2009), and (g) be aware that watching television gives the audience the illusion of innate contact or the ability to live vicariously as an observer in these fictive events.

A majority of adults is convinced that their personal media literacy skills are good. They know the names of the favourite television and radio shows and films, know about the different focal points of magazines and new books, can easily recite the names of media “celebrities” and are able to follow the story lines in films and television serials. Despite this, the real level of media literacy among most of them has not changed since the time they were in puberty. Only a few percent have actually expanded their knowledge since their youth with regards to the manner in which media content is produced and modified, who owns individual media, the economics of media and the effects media have on individuals and society as a whole. According to Potter (Potter, 2005) there are four problems that can occur through contact with media: information over saturation, a false sense of awareness, a false sense of control and false convictions. The International Media Education Centre in Trnava summarises the essence of these four problems on its website: Information over saturation occurs as a result of the tremendous crush of information that flows out from information channels. The natural reaction is to succumb to a habit of automatic, mindless behaviour in contact with media. The false sense of awareness is caused by the fact that media bombard us with a tremendous quantity of information, the same as in the case of information over saturation. Their continuous production gives people the biased feeling that they know everything they need to know. The tremendous quantity of information does not translate into diversity and variety of information. Conversely, the more information that media process, the more homogeneous

the range of information they provide. According to Potter, this situation does not change when people follow several media as most of them actually share information and publish nearly the exact same thing as the others. This effect is accurately captured by the term “the game of reflecting mirrors” (Bourdieu, 2001, pp. 156-165). The false sense of control is a paradox because it arises thanks to rapid technological advancements. The quantity of communication and information technologies facilitates a significant increase in control over everything the recipients receive from media. Despite this, some studies indicate that the public is less able to direct their own media consumption. The surplus of media content conditions a passive stance and an automatic response, which ultimately means that neither the public or its members are those who regulate the process of media communication; rather it is more those who offer media content. False convictions are the result of the fact that the audience assumes the opinions and stances that they see in media or create their own convictions on the basis of insufficient or incomplete information from media. False convictions may occur when an individual trusts information that is superficial and incomplete. The false aspect of these convictions is based on the fact that they do not reflect reality or are logically faulty. Media education is the tool that can help older people overcome the undesired effects of media, in particular if they learn to: (a) differentiate between information that is important and trivial for their lives, (b) understand the level of exchange of information between media themselves, (c) actively search out the context of reports or information and verify their objectivity and veracity, (d) understand the influence of negative, violent and catastrophic news on their lives, their psychological condition and perception of reality, (e) gain the ability to interpret information and facts presented in media, and (f) identify the occurrence and principles of operation of the media agenda.

Older people in general are characteristic for being more trusting people in general, who are easier to manipulate and deceive in comparison with young people. Taylor from the University of California, Los Angeles came out with an interesting experiment at the end of 2012, the results of which were published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The study sample included 119 people between the ages of 55 and 84 mixed with young adults aged 20 to 42. The researchers presented them with sets of photographs that depicted trustworthy, neutral and untrustworthy faces (in the opinion of the authors of the study). The untrustworthy faces had signalling characteristics

such as a distant look, a clearly insincere smile, arrogant pouting of the lips, etc. The participants in the study were asked to evaluate the faces using a seven-point scale ranging from “completely untrustworthy” to “completely trustworthy”. It was determined that the seniors considered more faces to be trustworthy than the young adults. The experiment continued with magnetic resonance imaging, during which the brain activity of those who had just evaluated the trustworthiness of faces was examined. It was shown that the brains of the older people showed different activity. The anterior area of the insular cortex of the brain was activated in young people and showed more activity when exposed to the least trustworthy faces. Almost nothing at all occurred in the same area of the brain in older people. According to Taylor, this portion of the brain is used to evaluate internal feelings, including hunches and subconscious reactions to surroundings. It appears that this warning system does not work or is not working at full strength for some reason in response to misleading and untrustworthy signals in seniors. Taylor’s experiment was pioneering in the field but it needs to be backed up by more precise results in further studies. Individuals encounter a tremendous quantity of persuasive and manipulative techniques in contact with the media (Petranová & Vrabec, 2013) in the context of: (a) relations between media professionals and the public, (b) gaining and maintaining the attention of the public, (c) measuring (quantification of) the public’s attention, (d) performativity and communication with the public, (e) spreading stereotypes, (f) the absence of authentic experience, (g) inducing non-critical perception, (h) controlling the majority’s opinion, (i) emotional pressure, (j) expressive communication, (k) opinion makers, (l) moral panic, (m) the selection and construction of media content, (n) editorial level (the selection of topics, news values), (o) attractiveness, (p) ripping facts out of context, (q) updates and updating, and (r) via negative and positive associations. Within this context, it is expected that seniors will learn the following in the process of developing media education: (a) the ability to recognise persuasive and manipulative techniques, methods and means in media, (b) the ability to work with advanced independent, analytical and critical thinking, (c) the ability to consider media information in an objective and sober manner, and (d) the ability to analyse and convert conditions that influence communication relationships, create and influence information and reports, etc.

The problem for older people is also that they may feel like “digital immigrants”



in contact with media. The creation of media content and presentations is altogether common that children, youths and young adults today. They take pictures and shoot audio-visual materials using their mobile phones, share them in groups of their peers, public digital photos online, write blogs, publish videos on websites and more. Learning the skills to use computers, the Internet and mobile phones at a very young age are the very argument that Tapscott uses as the basis for his book “Growing Up Digital: The Rise of the Net Generation”. Tapscott popularised the idea that the traditional power structure in the family has been interrupted by children for the first time in history as they have overtaken their parents in terms their knowledge, overview and interaction with new technology. Children teach their parents and grandparents, not the other way around as was previously the case. According to Tapscott, adults must change their approach towards the next generation (children born between 1977 and 1997) so that they are not left behind in the new conditions that this generation is creating.

The term “digital natives” was coined by Prensky in 2001, and is connected to Tapscott’s idea of generational differences and separates the generation who were born into the age of computers, video games and the Internet from those generations who were born before and into whose lives media entered and were forced to come to terms with the reality of the digital world and its conveniences. Seniors belong to the generation of “digital immigrants”. While the new media culture comes naturally for digital natives, the immigrants must learn and experience varied levels of success in these efforts. Digital natives are not different in terms of values or lifestyle; the difference lies in a different way of thinking, processing and searching for information and learning new things.

Physiological barriers in perception and understanding media content also come into play with respect to problems seniors experience in contact with media. For instance, a survey conducted by the World Health Office country office in Slovakia in cooperation with the Socia foundation found that three-quarters of seniors indicated that media are too rapid and incomprehensible for them to understand. The findings showed that seniors would appreciate bolder titles, larger print and slower communication and expression from the hosts on television. This specific area does not concern media literacy. Media education can give older people the tools they need to learn how to search for information online, find the information they need, covert it into the format they want (e.g. making the text larger) and find and replay a television report that they didn’t understand for some reason.

### 3. Media literacy of seniors

The fact that the population is ageing is confirmed by forecasts and official statistics. Older people are often challenged by the fact that they need to adapt to new technologies and the development of media given the needs and demands of modern society. It is generally known that older individuals show lower levels of usage of new media technologies compared to the younger generation. Reasons may be based on impediments in their efforts to use new technologies. Some are given by demographic characteristics, such as income, education, location and potential health complications. Others are related to the complexity of new technologies, a lack of stimuli, economic impediments, a lack of media or digital skills and the absence of appropriate training. The situation involving increasing the media literacy of seniors is currently dismal. Many media and media products are unusable or unsuitable for seniors and do not reflect the needs of this groups of users; they may even have negative effects on seniors, which deepens their frustration and increases their dependency on others. This chapter attempts to provide several ideas as to how the competent usage of media can have a positive impact on the lives of the older population.

Becoming a senior and leaving the workforce on a pension is generally associated with problems such as a significant reduction in financial income, a loss of energy, a change in social standing, empty nest syndrome, i.e. when children leave the house, the loss of parents, the loss of a life partner, illness, dependency on outside assistance and a fear of death. Problems, the feeling of one's own ineptness and efforts to combat the ageing process are often suppressed and become passive at advanced ages or conversely, result in aggressiveness turned inwards or outwards. Older individuals may feel limited in their ability to meet their day-to-day needs and to fulfil their plans or maintain control over their lives to the same extent in which they previously could. Quality of life decreases significantly if this occurs. Impediments to leading fulfilling lives may be psychological and social. A disability in one area may induce another disability in a different area, causing a spiral of incapacity or a conditioned sense of incapacity. One of the reasons for increasing media literacy in seniors and a goal of developing their media competencies is to help older individuals escape the circle of being "unable" and help them increase their quality of life.

The development of media literacy in seniors is more than simply teaching them photography, creating videos, knowing how to write messages and sending emails with attachments. This means, for instance, seniors have to gain these skills from media practice, recognise the commercial mechanisms of the media industry, know how to differentiate between important and trivial information, evaluate the trustworthiness of reports and logically and safely use media. Another element in the development of media literacy is the fact that it involves both new and traditional media. At the same time, it also means that media literacy must be continuously developed together with the development of new media. Media competencies are not something that an individual masters once and forever. Media competencies require consistent and long-term development. As such, improving media literacy has a place in life-long education and is important in the lives of seniors. A high degree of media competency or highly developed media literacy is fundamental for all age categories.

Evaluating the medial literacy of seniors involves a typology of three levels of media literacy according to the international “Study on Assessment Criteria for Media Literacy Levels” conducted under the leadership of Paolo Celot by five important European institutions: European Association for Viewers’ Interests, Ministère de l’Éducation nationale française, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Université Catholique de Louvain and the University of Tampere. According to the provided categorisation, a senior with a basic level of media literacy possesses a set of abilities that facilitate basic media usage. Such a senior knows their function, deciphers their basic codes and is able to use them for defined, specific purposes. They have a limited ability to analyse and think critically about the information they receive and are likewise limited in their communication skills involving media. A senior with a moderate level of media literacy has a set of competencies that enable a moderate level of media usage. This means they have an in-depth recognition of their function and are able to conduct more complex operations via the media. Such a senior knows how to obtain and evaluate information and is able to evaluate means and strategies for locating information. This senior as user is an active media producer and is involved in social and civil activities. A senior with an advanced level of media literacy is a professional in the use of media who knows and is interested in legal conditions with an impact on the use of media. The senior has in-depth knowledge about the techniques, methods and means of

communication, knows how to analyse and convert conditions that influence communication relationships and the creation and influence on reports. In the public sphere, this senior functions as a media user who is able to activate cooperation between groups able to resolve social or civil issues.

Increasing media literacy among seniors should primarily focus on preventing a generational gap and social exclusion while protecting disadvantaged groups. Its objective should be refreshing the abilities and skills of individuals in connection with the development of media, new communication technologies and communication systems.” In addition to the skills aspect (i.e. the learning by doing concept), which results in a creative producer, i.e. authorship of media products (photos, films, audio recordings, etc.) the critical-hermeneutic concept is another prerequisite involved in media education for seniors. It is expected that they will become “educated consumers” able to individually, independently and critically interpret media content and will be able to use media to their personal benefit. Seniors, on the other hand, are an at-risk group who need to improve their level of media literacy in relation to protection from media content and services that could pose a hazard and cause many different types of harm to them. In addition to increasing the level of media literacy and updating media competencies in seniors, another specific aspect of media education is a system of consulting on media “consumption” and the usage of new communication technologies by their grandchildren. As a part of multi-generational households and families, they need to know the resources and means available to protect children from unlawful and harmful media content.

## 4. Conclusion

The system of media competencies comprises a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Media literacy in seniors should be implemented from three perspectives: (a) using media independently and actively recognising their opportunities, benefits and risks, (b) thinking about media in a conscious manner with a deep understanding of history, economics, politics, legislation, ethics, etc., and (c) recognising media influence and effects, their intensity and the level to which they influence our behaviour and actions. The development of media competencies in the process of media education in the ideal case would be implemented in the spirit of positive education theory and not an approach based on fear of media. Two phases cyclically alternate throughout

the history of media education: (a) efforts to democratise cultural forms in society, and (b) efforts to protect against harmful cultural content. The alternation of these phases is strongly based on the circumstances of the time, place and factors in the specific environment, as well as the interests of the governments and legislators, technological transformations, historical events, the activities of special interest groups, public opinion and research into social studies (McQuail, 1999, p. 360). The trends in media education are currently moving away from “censorship approaches” or a “consulting approach”. The protective approach has proven ineffective in practical use. Modern media education is not about protection; rather, it is about preparation. Seniors should not be targeted with specific recommendations along the lines of avoiding media at all costs due to some inherent problem; rather, they should be encouraged to remain in contact with media so they can stay informed and knowledgeable with the ability to decide for themselves how to use it to their benefit (Buckingham, 2003, p. 13). The key in educating seniors is to respect their interests, their needs and their preferences and not to induce fear in them of the negative effects of media. The role of media education is to encourage seniors, some of whom are completely alone, to be independent and to take an active and critical approach to media with which they already spend a large portion of their day.

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## **Ethical concerns on media and information literacy**

### **Abstract**

In this paper we cite some examples of new media which all show the importance of media awareness. After committing ourselves to a normative approach instead of a descriptive one, we draw up a triangle for media and information literacy (MIL), centering the model around the question: whose interest is to foster MIL? Observing the role of media and technology companies, statutory and legislative institutions as well as the personnel's individual responsibilities from an ethical point of view, our summary is that ethical media use only can be created by media and information literacy institutions combined by developing civic self-awareness and educating the use of critical thinking and attitude.

### **1. Introduction**

During an informal conversation between the author and a CEO of a little startup IT company in Budapest it turned out that the leading programming expert left public education with a bad mood after maturity. When he was 12, he visited one of the biggest Hungarian universities to get a taste of the academic information technology specialization, but just right at the moment he saw he was more prepared for programming and solving mathematical problems than the professors of IT and mathematics at the faculty, he finally decided to create his own venture without any graduation. Now he's developing e-learning platforms and tries to get his first diploma at the age of about 40 – of law...

New media researchers and pedagogy experts are absolutely convinced about the fact that such examples provide plenty of proofs for some kind of disorder in the 'field of force': continuously enhancing technical background, millions of devices and a great deal of information on the one side, a traditional education system, an academic approach with natural distrust towards new

technologies and various questions about the impact of IT development on society on the other. Media and information literacy (MIL) remains mainly a problem conglomerate for teachers and parents while IT sector and younger interest groups are pleased to reveal new opportunities of the digital world. Meanwhile, the exact outcomes of this process for different social groups are not clarified yet, mainly because of the short time of this phenomenon's existence.

Under this set of circumstances, an important question is given: who has the responsibility to assure people and institutions to be up-to-date in terms of media development? Is it a state mandatory? A personal interest? An ethical issue of media institutions, developers and media owners? In this paper, connecting to other team members of the project 'Developing Media Literacy in Public Education: A Regional Priority in a Mediatized Age' we formulate some crucial questions on the ethics of digital literacy and –based on some actual examples– we urge to emphasize the sensitivity of the balance between personal interest, institutional task and statutory regulation in terms of developing MIL.

## 2. Examples on the need for new media awareness

Talking about media literacy, there are two main approaches, just like in social sciences in general, e.g. in business studies (Werhane, 1994). The descriptive one can only point out the past and current situations: what is happening with us and what is expected? The normative approach, by contrast, can go further, depicting what should or would be the most ideal set of circumstances in the field of media use and attitudes towards media in certain target and interest groups. Hereby we narrow our perspective to the latter one, observing the paper's topic from an ethical point of view.

During May 2016, a great deal of attention was drawn to a sweet-shop in a little city of Hungary, Gödöllő. After controlling this company, the National Food Chain Safety Office (NÉBIH) sentenced the owner, Illés Barna, to close the shop due to health concerns. The news occurring in old and new media depicted an old man over his 70s, with a traditional business which had been serving sweet-toothed people for over 50 years, and now an anonymous state office accused him to constraint rest. As the heartbreaking pictures of the teary-eyed old man toured the press, several online protest movements got settled addressing



themselves to the idea ‘let uncle Illés work on in his traditional shop’, relating to some kind of nostalgia. The most popular online petition got more than 30 thousand signatures, accompanied by serious defamations. A few days later, a broadcasting company with country-wide evening news presented a TV report about the pastry-shop at issue. The scenes speak for themselves: the owner served ice cream in a rather dirty undervest from a rusty mixing bowl, industrial ice-cream powder boxes were hidden under the desk was covered with old advertising papers. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that most of the supporting petitioners simply vanished after they had realized the truth about their – mostly personally unknown – nostalgic confectionery (Csíki, 2016).

This example is only one among many thousands which illustrate the unconsciousness of the crowd of new media users. It is easy to commit ourselves on an impressive basis to sympathetic people, affairs or institutions. This commitment is often combined with a two-pole ethos, in which the subject of commitment automatically hates the ‘other side’, i.e. the power which jeopardize the protégée’s worldview.

Another significant example shows the possibility of social media for both hating and loving in an extremely polarized and uncritical manner. A guy living with Down syndrome had been attending a fitness center for weeks the loss some weight and to keep himself in a proper physical condition despite his problems until he was banned from the sport center. After a longer time, the owner of this fitness club advised him to avoid trainings. According to the Facebook post of the man’s brother, the chief, Szabolcs Csavajda firstly claimed that other guests don’t like to see a disabled man among them and his apparently aggressive tokens were harmful to the atmosphere as well. This sentence was enough for the internet people to start a whole hate campaign against the owner and all the intolerant weightlifters, claiming their blood because of discrimination and inhumanity. Only after several days of bashing he had the opportunity to release a longer post about the real reasons. As he enlightened it on behalf of all the other colleagues of the venture, a training for disabled sportsmen requires specially planned program which they could not provide in the fitness center so they better decided to send down the guy. It is not necessary to say that this post had a much narrower audience than the first one by the Down syndrome guy’s brother (Mikó, 2016).

The above-mentioned ‘blockade’ is also not the only one in the history of internet anti-campaigns, firestorms, or –as in German literature stands:

shitstorm—, however it illustrates the uncritical power of public opinion quite well. The most dangerous part of such situations is inevitably the biased growing of antipathy which is hard to tackle due to several socio-psychological factors (group pressure, opinion leadership, the dominant impact of firstly presented information etc.). Social media itself is like a knife: you can kill with it, or you can cut a slice of bread as well. Media critic and media awareness, like critic towards the justice of a Facebook post, a second thought about the content of it, might be able to moderate the process and decide which of these functions predominates.

A third and most interesting ethical problem is delivered by the Hungarian public administration itself. In Hungary, every pensioners are entitled to demand a discount ticket for baths and wellness centers under a certain (but low) income limit. The dedicated aim of this warrant is quite social: to help poor pensioners having quality healthcare. The only problem occurs by the demanding process. If a pensioner would like to have a discount ticket they have to have a registration for the national online public administration system, otherwise the ticket cannot be demanded. This registration moreover requires a functioning e-mail address and some kind of ICT skills as well. The small amount of demands is no surprise: digital divide (including access and use gap) appears among elder generations acutely in Hungary, just like in other countries in general.

In this case, the state's decision itself results in injustice: an unreasoned criteria of demanding is presented. If we take the possible motivations in consideration, two ways are likely. Firstly, decision makers have only few experiences about the habit and potential of a pensioner in terms of ICT access and skills. In this case, we cannot speak in flattering terms about the state and its servants. The second possible reason for narrowing the demanding process to an online surface is to give older generation a hard motivation for using computer and for the registration to the public administration system. Insomuch as the warranty is given to the pensioners with the poorest income, this consideration remain likely inefficient.

### 3. Three poles of MIL

All the examples —combined with several similar cases— excellently depict the importance of a critical, literate media use in terms of both old and new

media both from the provider and consumer side. It is crucial, moreover, to fix that there are at least three main fields where criticism, responsibility and justice can occur. It is possible that other fields would be worth to take into consideration, however in this paper –regarding the above-mentioned three examples– we narrow ourselves to the following ones.

1. The level of individuals and individual media use;
2. Media institutions in an abstract sense (in line from media owners and social media startups to editorial boards, newsrooms, and advertising houses);
3. State institutions which are directly or indirectly responsible for citizens' literacy and IT skills as well as media consumption habits.

As we previously committed ourselves to a normative approach, instead of certain data-driven descriptions, we will now concentrate on the following question: whose interest is the developing of media and information literacy and the facilitation of formal and informal media and information education?

## 4. The institutional side

At first we observe some considerations about media literacy development fostered by media institutions. These are based on the presupposition that if a media provider (owner, editor, journalist etc.) creates media content they are interested in how these goods are perceived, elaborated and understood, i.e. how the provider can affect the recipients' behavior.

Big media firms are mainly under the ownership of other types of businesses or at least they are parts of a wider portfolio. (Disney, which is one of the top 5 media company, has launched transatlantic shipping services, not to mention Viacom, the owner of one of the largest real estate company in the USA etc.) This way, they confront many questions in terms of investment priorities. This is also true to IT companies whose lobby can either foster or distort MIL development.

An interesting example of statutory and business cooperation is given by China where the three biggest social media provider – Google Inc., Facebook and Twitter – is out-of-the-line and is superseded by Chinese companies, e.g. Baidu. Behind the reason of practical economical discrimination there is another consideration: content censorship can only be fostered in national businesses,

while it's an almost impossible task to rule and monitor every international social media surfaces. Ultimately the official Chinese viewpoint about the lack of these three providers is based on the protectionist statement that the 'national' social sites are fair enough for the huge Chinese market and internet users with all their needs.

Talking about the companies' responsibilities, another significant consideration was presented by the two biggest IT CEO, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg. Both are known as a symbol of philanthropy, not independently from the fact that when Zuckerberg was growing up, Bill Gates was his hero (Newman, 2015). Several news announced these two men to give hundred million dollars for charity including anti-poverty programs, education system development in the Third World and ICT infrastructure building in poor countries. However, while Gates mainly aims finding a cure for malaria and other similar healthcare and well-being problem solutions, Zuckerberg rather believes in increasing ICT and internet spread as a means of human dignity and wellbeing. One thing is common: the financial profit which accumulates in big ICT companies is recycled into users' societies. Beside philanthropic considerations there are of course some practical reasons as well to do so: the emblematic figures of Microsoft and Facebook as faces of the companies and their goodness raise attention to their firms, mixing corporate social responsibility, public relations and marketing communication together.

## 5. Role of the state

It is often cited that state institutions have a mandatory to regulate media indeed to promote a self-aware and conscious media use. The necessity of statutory regulation does not come into question in this paper: we are of the opinion that the whole society is ultimately jeopardized with an excessively liberal and non-regulated media environment where anything goes, while a modest regulation (including media law and systematic economic incentives as well) makes a strongly mediatized society richer. However, for the regulation in terms of the statutory system can only be described as a legal one, an effective and reasonable order can only be built if a sound consensus is given between decision-makers and media users about what exactly to regulate and to what extent.

Many considerations show the difficulties of new media regulation: new

media, a naturally decentralized, democratic (and often anarchic) structure with technically anonymous users and freely roaming contents in terms of its origin is almost unable to be suited to a positivistic legal system. Due to institutional imperfections, a gap between legal rules and real-life happenings cannot be totally eliminated. Exactly this is why we always have to count with other factors in media regulation as well, namely the self-moderation of social media content providers (both persons and institutions), or – to put it out with a stricter word – self-censorship. According to Luhmann (1996), a social system like political system (based on the code of politically useful/useless) or law (based on the code legal/illegal) cannot execute direct operations inside another system, e.g. in media (which works with the code of newsworthiness) (Bokor, 2014).

According to this, legal system can influence media system at best in an interpenetrative way where codes ultimately don't merge, only impacts are transferred from one system to another. In other words, media law can influence the behavior of media with legal tools, sanctions and gratifications, hence legal paragraphs have a fostering power on editors and content creators in terms of their decisions and formulations. However, the native logic of media remains untouched by the law: the guideline for media experts in selecting among news, cases and happenings is whether the information is newsworthy, disregarding its legal concerns. It may occur for only two main reasons: due to market interest or editorial laxity. Though words maybe, but several cases appear to certify this statement. On the one hand, the mere existence of illegal websites (including the vast part of the so called 'deep web') shows the economic ratio of illegal online presence. On the other hand, laxity can also result in unintentional law-breaking. (A few years ago, for example, a short video of a decapitated woman was available for a longer time both on Facebook and YouTube, on the 'surface web' where users cannot face with illegal upsetting content in principle, although it was reported by thousands of outraged users. After these two providers deleted the video, it turned out that they apparently simply omitted the incriminated content despite the rigorous operational and community control.)

Another crucial role of the state in terms of media use is to foster the infrastructure's development by initiations like giving free internet access, launching programs for promotion and financial help of computer acquisition, and make a pressure on stakeholders to turn towards internet-based solutions

like electronic public administration. In terms of the latter, Hungary and the whole CEE area shows a slowly but constantly increasing rate of using e-governmental services, with an also increasing amount of using mobile tools for this. An interesting question is whether the spread of IT devices can lead to an increasing civic activity, citizen awareness or any other factors regarding public life and critical political thinking. As an observation showed (Juhász, 2016), the comparison of IDI (information and digital development index) and CPI (corruption perceptions index) in V4 countries don't directly merge, therefore one cannot point out any significant correlations between the two lines of results during the exam years. Therefore development of information technology *per se* cannot widen the range of corruption perception. Further researches are expected to reveal whether the mere number of IT tools can make an influence on social skills, cooperation and citizenship.

## 6. Media using personnel's role

The third pole of the MIL's 'Bermuda Triangle' is the personal viewpoint. Living constantly connected, a vast majority of internet users are bound to the FOMO phenomena (fear of missing out). Moreover, the often cited other impacts of frequent internet use (overuse, addiction, immersion, etc.) also increase the importance of developing media awareness, especially new media awareness (Aczél, 2014).

A person's media and information literacy depends on several factors, including what kind of family and educational environment they grew up in, what type of media platforms they use, how often they are contacted with media productions and –among others– in what way they discuss and elaborate these contents. As it can be seen, education is only one (but one of the most important ones) among these considerations. In an epoch where students likely have much more exact technical, quantitative (and perhaps qualitative) knowledge about media than the teachers themselves, a crucial question is given: are teachers as persons and as members of the educational institutions prepared enough to develop their students in MIL (Aczél, Andok & Bokor, 2015)? The answer is not so obvious.

The recommendations of the project 'Developing Media Literacy in Public Education' not only assume that self-aware media use and developing media skills (or as it is recently formulated: media wisdom) is a responsibility of

educational and policy institutions, but has to emphasize that each members of the participative media system (including content producers and people who rather consumes media contents as well) have an urging call to come into play and have a liability in self-awareness.

## 7. Summary

As we saw above, policy makers and media companies per se cannot foster the individuals' necessary critical attitude enough, so civic organizations and the media users themselves have a crucial role in forming their future with media, especially with new media environment. To sum up, ethical media use only can be created by media and information literacy institutions combined by developing civic self-awareness and educating the use of critical thinking and attitude.

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# **NATIONAL REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE STATE OF MEDIA LITERACY IN THE V4 REGION**



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## **Polish national report on the state of media literacy**

### **1. Introduction**

There is a strong need to develop media literacy among members of the Poland's contemporary civil society, and it has been visible for a long time now. The discussion about the media education of children, adults and elderly citizens goes on within various groups – ranging from teachers, educators, pedagogues and community workers to NGO representatives, members of the academia, researchers, experts and media institutions themselves. The results of these discussions reverberate more or less strongly in the society. The sinusoid of what is being done in that field makes it possible to assume that, as time goes by, the issue has become to a greater or lesser extent significant for policy makers and educational institutions.

This need exists, however, the question remains whether the present activities will lead to satisfying it in a substantial manner. The study we hereby present is a result of numerous scientific analyses, researching the existing literature, and studying the reports and documents that were available and chosen purposefully by the authors. It also stems from a discussion, as well as its conclusions, that took place during the scholarly seminar *The Intricacies of Media Education in Poland – Chosen Perspectives* („Meandry edukacji medialnej w Polsce – wybrane perspektywy”) science seminar. That meeting was a part of a project being realized by a group of researchers from the University of Silesia in Katowice: *Developing Media Literacy in Public Education: A Regional Priority in a Mediatized Age*. The authors of this study are one of this project's partnering teams, though its main beneficiary is the Corvinus University of Budapest (Hungary).

This study was not intended to be a comprehensive coverage of the issue, nor does it claim any right to be so, given the subject area and the nature of the conducted analyses, especially the timeliness and enormous variability of the described phenomena. It is, however, a detailed look at how the concepts of media education and media literacy are perceived in Poland, and also at the status of the present activities in both of these fields. It includes pieces of advice, suggestions and recommendations in relation to the presented issue. It also lays the groundwork for a comparative study of Polish regional priorities in this area with the ones existing in Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic.

## 2. Polish people versus media and new technologies

The systematic growth in the area of popularization of the information and communication technologies (ICT) in Poland, as well as the increase in the percentage of Poles who use traditional and new media, and in the lengthening of the amount of time they use it on a daily basis, justify the necessity of promoting media education through a number of activities. When analysing how the whole concept has been developed in Poland throughout the 21st century, and until now, it is important to take a closer look at some of the information documenting and summarizing its scale and nature.

As it was stated in the report entitled *Social Diagnosis 2015. The Living Conditions and the Quality of Life of Poles* („Diagnoza społeczna 2015. Warunki i jakość życia Polaków”), “an average Pole spends over four hours per day using media” (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2015). This amount of time is divided among different types of media, or even spent using a number of different media at the same time.

Television is still the most essential and wide-ranging medium in the country. The popularization of computers and the internet did not lead to a widespread retreat of Polish viewers from television in favour of the newer media. For several years there was also noted “[...] a growth in the number of households equipped with LCD or plasma TV. There was also an increase in the percentage of households with the paid satellite or cable television. The number of such households is still larger than of those with access to the internet” (Czapiński, Panek [ed.]). On the other hand, it is also quite noticeable that the web-based media are gradually taking over the functions of the traditional television

(Public Opinion Research Center CBOS research statement no. 82/014 “Internet Users” 2014, 2014 [„Komunikat z badań CBOS nr 82/014 Internauci 2014”, 2014]).

For more than a dozen years Poland has enjoyed “[...] a dynamic growth in the number of people using the information and communication technologies (ICT), as well as a constant decrease of the number of people that do not use such technologies” (Hatałska & Polak, 2012). What is more, there is a systematic growth in the number of households equipped with computers (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2015), and the increase in the percentage of people using a computer (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2014). There is also a noticeable growth in the percentage of people connected to the internet (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2014).

“It is without a doubt that the biggest factor in the way people access the internet is a popularization of its wireless version” (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2011), as well as devices which make it possible to use the web through a wireless connection, such as laptops, tablets, smartphones, smartwatches, etc. The popularity of desktop computers is in decline, while simultaneously the number of households equipped with laptops (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2015) and tablets (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2015) increases.

This current year over half of the internet users declared that they connect to the web via a telephone or a tablet, though the majority of them uses wireless networks, whereas only a third of the internet users (that is, 17.5% of Poles) uses data transfer from mobile networks (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2015).

*Social Diagnosis 2015* („Diagnoza społeczna 2015”) report also contains the information on the topic of the degree of popularization of personal mobile communication devices, such as mobile phones, smartphones, or tablets. Over 90% of Poles are already in possession of mobile phones, but it has to be mentioned that the number of smartphone users steadily increases – that is, 45% of Poles over 16 years old use them (Czapiński & Panek [ed.], 2015). Additionally, the report *WIP: Poland 2013* („WIP: Polska 2013”) states that almost 100% of smartphone users are at the same time active users of the internet (*World Internet Project. Poland 2013*, 2013).

There has also been an increase in the number of Poles who use three communication channels during their daily routines jointly, that is computers, internet, and mobile phones, sometimes even at the same time (*multiscreening*) (*World Internet Project*.

Poland 2013, 2013). More and more Polish internet users are also reaching for dual-screening, that is using laptop and smartphone alternately or simultaneously.

The above mentioned growth in the degree of popularization and frequency of using the information and communication technologies (ICT) in Poland justifies the necessity of introducing the activities from the field of media education.

### 3. The problem of defining the concepts of media education and media literacy in Polish reference books

The authors of the publication *The Digital Future. Media and Information Education in Poland – the Opening Report* („Cyfrowa Przyszłość. Edukacja medialna i informacyjna w Polsce – raport otwarcia”), prepared by Modern Poland Foundation, state that due to historical reasons there are still definitional disputes over the essence and scope of the titular concept. And that is why within Polish public space “[...] we can find interchangeable terms for media, information, digital, audiovisual, and information technology education” (Lipszyc [ed.], 2012).

How is media education defined in Poland, and how far does it reach? When looking at numerous definitions of this concept, made by Polish scholars, it seems that during the very process of reaching its definitions, three different approaches became evident, quite often intertwining and merging with themselves. The first is characterized by the tendency to define media education by describing the goals and purposes ascribed to the concept, as well as specific competences that can be acquired from it. The second one consists in the inclination to define the concept through marking the areas of human activity that make up user’s activity in media environment, and that should be supplemented by a proper education. The third, however, is the tendency to define media education by putting the emphasis on matters of developing a conscious, responsible and safe way of using the media.

The authors of *The Digital Future. The Catalogue of Media and Information Competences* („Cyfrowa Przyszłość. Katalog kompetencji medialnych i informacyjnych”), published by Modern Poland Foundation, state that the main goal of media and information education is to develop *media literacy* and *information literacy* (Dąbrowska, Drzewiecki, Górecka, Gruhn and others, 2012). On the other hand, in his publication *Media in Pedagogy* („Media w pedagogice”) prof. Bronisław Siemieniecki states that “[...] all things considered,

the purpose of media education is to prepare people to: experience the media and use them as intellectual tools of a modern human being. Preparing a human being to a conscious and critical reception of diverse media coverage requires an extensive knowledge of the media as a means of communication, and of the content it transmits" (Siemieniecki, 2007 op. Cit.: Lipszyc [ed.], 2012).

As Agnieszka Ogonowska writes in her book *Media Education – a Key to Understanding the Social Reality* („Edukacja medialna – klucz do zrozumienia społecznej rzeczywistości”), the purpose of media education is to counteract the mechanisms of media and digital exclusion of people who do not possess the required competences, hence they have the status of media illiterates in the mediatized, networked world. Therefore, another goal of media education has to be the elimination of the differences in users’ competences by means of increasing the level of knowledge and competences of the excluded people, and by this including them once again in the process of full social activity and capability (Ogonowska, 2013).

The authors of *The Digital Future. Media and Information Education...* („Cyfrowa Przyszłość. Edukacja medialna i informacyjna...”) propose treating media, information, digital, audiovisual and information technology education as overlapping fields which should be defined under one joint term – “media and information education” (Lipszyc [ed.], 2012).

Some authors remark that there are incorrect ways of defining the concept. As Monika Frania writes, “sometimes media education is equated with information technology, or strictly with a process of learning through the use of media.” However, as Agata Cudowska observes, it is a big misunderstanding to link media education with the process of implementing computers in schools, or with IT classes which are simply courses that teach the ability to use computer software. As the author suggests, the whole idea of media education should be understood generally as teaching people to be more aware of the meaning of the media in their lives (Frانيا, 2013).

Media education is inextricably linked to the concept of *media literacy*. As Grzegorz D. Stunża writes, media literacy is the objective and the result of activities covered by the process of media education (Stunża, 2012). By contrast, the authors of the before-mentioned Modern Poland Foundation’s “Opening Report” state that by “literacy” they mean “[...] a category far wider than a purely technical skill of using a given technology” (Lipszyc [ed.], 2012).

They also add that this literacy should consist of: attitude, knowledge, and skills we use for social communication as well as constructing modern culture (Lipszyc [ed.], 2012). “Such way of presenting the whole concept makes it possible to defy reducing literacy only to the field of technology, and provides the socio-cultural context of the various ways in which it will be applied. It is especially noticeable in the incorrect understanding of the information literacy as an ability to use computer applications skilfully, yet the concept includes using various sources and means of expression in order to gain knowledge” (Lipszyc [ed.], 2012).

A group of experts from Modern Poland Foundation, working on the “Digital Future” programme, declared that what is nowadays essential is the convergence of different kinds of literacy, following convergence of the media in the modern world. Therefore, the postulate is to treat jointly such fields of literacy as: information, information technology, audiovisual and film, critical, reading, and creative. Hence that kind of broadly defined convergence is being promoted by the Foundation as the most suitable path for the subsequent media education and information activities (Lipszyc [ed.], 2012).

The authors of the before-mentioned “Opening Report” postulate that media education programmes should be set up in a holistic manner (Lipszyc [ed.], 2012), that is, they should jointly take into consideration such issues as: “[...] using communication technologies, understanding, critical reception and creating the information both in written and audiovisual form, and also familiarizing with and using the media law, or the law dedicated to information safety and security of privacy in a mediatized world (Lipszyc [ed.], 2012).

To sum up, it is therefore necessary to state that there is a lack of consensus in terms of how both media education and media literacy should be defined. Thus, constituting one general definition could influence negatively the practical activities the concept covers. However, this kind of inconsistency leads to much consistency in various other fields.

It is important to notice that it is quite harmful to equate media literacy with technical capability to use the media for informational, commercial, and even educational purposes. This is decidedly not enough; however, it was only a few years ago that media education was identified with teaching information and communication technologies in school. That is precisely why the IT classes did become a good explanation for the lack of eagerness to take decisive action in

the field of deepening the media literacy of pupils from public schools.

This lack of definition, or maybe even more the lack of understanding of media education goals among teachers, leads to a kind of dilution of the responsibility and the avoidance of taking any action in this area, simply on behalf of an old principle “this is an issue for an IT teacher.”

The authors of this study suggest that reducing media education only to the technical and technological spheres of life has to be evaluated in a decisively negative manner. A wider take on media education in relation to culture, communication, information and civil society seems a far more suitable and valuable option. In this context, we can talk about three kinds of school education: about media, for media, and through media.

In our opinion, media education should lead to forming pupils (or citizens, generally speaking) into people who are aware, critical, active, selective, and creative in relation to each and every type of media coverage.

The ambiguity in understanding media education also arises from the way the concepts were translated out of the English literature. Media literacy, defined as media alphabetization, is sometimes understood in reference books as an action/activity/measure leading to deepening all types of media competences. Although, sometimes it becomes the result – an attitude/literacy which can be developed through media education. Therefore, media education becomes an activity when it leads to gradual development of media literacy.

As for any international comparisons, one has to be constantly aware of the before-mentioned ambiguity in defining and understanding the essence of both media education and media literacy.

#### **4. Media education in public school system – the first stage**

When analysing the presence of media education in the Polish system of public education and the broadly defined extracurricular sphere of pupils’ life, the attention needs to be focused on the activities implemented after 1989. Admittedly, Poland did gather quite an experience in so-called film education during its communist period of Polish People’s Republic (PRL), but when talking about the development of media literacy in its modern meaning, the research should be done in regard to the period after 1989. As for the context of public school system, the research ought to be conducted even ten years later, when

inter-subject path, or educational path, was introduced in Polish schools. The measures taken before that were undoubtedly linked to the political agenda of the Polish communist system. The same could be said about the dynamic process of treating the media and new technologies as tools (especially computers and internet after 1991), which resulted in a strong desire of people to be active in this new field. As K. Skoczylas notes, in the beginning Poland also enjoyed “[...] some successes in the development of media education. In 1995 Polish Society for Technologies and Educational Media (Polskie Towarzystwo Technologii i Mediów Edukacyjnych) was established. A number of magazines dedicated to such topics were being published, e.g. “Media and Education” („Media i edukacja”). There was a great impact of big academic centres specializing in pedagogy of the media (Toruń, Katowice, Rzeszów, Gdańsk, Szczecin, Zielona Góra, Lublin, Warszawa)” (2014). As noted, various measures were used, but first and foremost different kinds of research and treatises (before that period prepared in multiple academic centres and by numerous teams lead by distinguished professors, too many to mention all of them individually), as well as activities undertaken by the policy makers who introduced media education in schools in 1999. What was the result of those actions and how does the situation look like now?

As A. Ogonowska notes, there is a noticeable lack of a consistent policy in terms of media education in Poland, and the intersubject path of “reading and media education”, introduced by MEN (Ministry of National Education) in 1999, did not meet the expectations. The same could be said about the school subject named “knowledge about culture” which was introduced three years later. Its implementation was put mainly upon teachers of Polish classes and librarians. To help them complete those duties in a competent manner, MEN grants were used to establish postgraduate studies in reading and media education, in Rzeszów, Kalisz, Olsztyn and Poznań (2013), among many other. Intersubject didactic and pedagogical specializations were introduced, supplementing school subjects and blocks of subjects, ranging from the second educational stage, that is from the 4th grade of primary school. School principals were responsible for introducing the issue of educational paths into schools’ curricula, though teachers of given subjects were responsible for including the necessary content in their teaching programmes (the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 15th February 1999 on the core curriculum of general education, as well as the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education and



Sport of 26th February 2002 on the core curriculum of preschool and general education in the respective types of schools). Thus, authorial programmes of reading and media education began to be developed, including the one by J. Kąkolewicz and J. Pielachowski (1999), or the programme of J. Andrzejewska (2003).

This was all in theory, while in practice the educational path of media education was not always successful (e.g. Frania, 2013). There were schools in which it was implemented perfectly, and the number of teachers' initiatives surpassed the initial estimates. However, other schools realized the media education path only "on paper", which was a result of many different reasons, e.g. the lack of necessary school equipment, teachers' unwillingness or their lack of competences, the lack of financial means, or the didactic and organizational overload experienced by pedagogues.

Over time the policy makers decided to abolish the path of media education, choosing instead the idea of integrating its content into the given subjects. This law, as well as the way of developing media literacy within public school system, is still very similar in 2016. Below, we will try to present in short the way and the scope of how this content was integrated into teaching.

## **5. Media education content in the core curriculum of general education at different stages of educating and teaching**

The Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23rd December 2008 on the core curriculum of preschool and general education in the respective types of schools did not create a separate school subject of "media education". Its content was "divided" and integrated into various existing subjects. The analysis presented below reveals the way media literacy is being formed from kindergarten, through primary school, to the last grade of upper-secondary school. This method is characterized by individuality in terms of adjusting media literacy to the level of human development (Musioł, 2007).

In the current core curriculum the content of media education programme is implemented at every stage of education, that is at the preschool education stage, the integrated teaching in grades 1st-3rd of primary school stage, as well as the teaching in grades 4th-6th of primary school stage, the secondary school stage, and the upper-secondary school stage (the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 23rd December 2008).

## 5.1. Kindergarten

The preschool education stage involves children from three to five years of age. This period of child's development covers the first phase of socializing a child, including the growth of child's curiosity about the outside world, yet estimated and understood by a child in a way that is still subjective and incomplete (Skórzyńska, 1975).

As a part of education through art – child is a viewer and an actor. Child should know how to behave during celebrations and official events, such as concerts, fetes, stage shows, at the theatre or cinema.

As a part of helping children with understanding the essence of atmospheric phenomena and avoiding dangers. Child should be aware of what is a radio or television weather forecaster talking about. Thus, those are skills connected with visualizing and receiving information.

Forming the readiness to acquire reading and writing skills is a group of competences which should help a child who is finishing the preschool period to start being interested in books.

Presented pieces of information about preschool education are also related to media education, but they certainly do not exhaust all the possibilities or cover the scope of issues connected with this topic.

## 5.2. Primary school

The first stage of general education starts with primary school and involves children aged six [seven] to nine. At this age school has enormous influence on both the intellectual and emotional development of a child. The child learns to reason and estimate the reality in a more objective manner. Its relation to the surroundings is being enriched and expanded, it often starts to compete with its peers (Skórzyńska, 1975).

Primary school is an educational stage during which media education has more meaning than at the preschool education stage (Gajda, 2008). In the core curriculum of this stage we can read that “means of social expression play progressively larger role both in social and personal life, each teacher should therefore devote much attention to the concept of media education, that is educating pupils to receive and use media in a proper way” (the Ordinance of

the Minister of National Education of 23rd December 2008).

During the first phase of the stage, that is the first three grades of primary school, the content of media education can be found in Polish education, computer classes, technical classes, visual arts classes, and ethics.

Apart from acquiring the proper way of experiencing media coverage, as well as the right way of using a computer and the internet, it is also crucial to learn the proper manner of using media devices (Kron, Sofos, 2008). A third-grader earns such competence in technical classes, during which he learns how to recognize IT devices, such as computer, laptop, or mobile phone.

It has long been known that media can present the same information from different points of view. Distinguishing truth from falsity in media coverage describing reality is a crucial skill, more of an intuition even, which is formed as a part of the third grade ethics or religion classes.

When analysing the way media education content was implemented during the first stage of primary school education, we can state that:

a) the content is implemented through:

- Polish education,
- visual arts education,
- computer classes,
- workshop classes,
- religion and ethics classes.

The second educational stage covers the fourth, fifth and sixth grade of primary school, and it involves children aged nine to twelve, developing their skills and competences. This is a stage of balance, it is characterized by both child's interest in its surroundings and its tendency to define itself and forming a skill of being able to see its deeds in a critical light. During this age a child develops an extremely important ability of consciously "claiming its own" certain attitudes and moral norms (Skórzyńska, 1975).

At the second stage of primary school education a pupil forms media literacy by participation in Polish, visual arts, music, technical, family life education, and ethics classes. Multiple school subjects present the media education content from the perspectives of different fields of knowledge.

### 5.3. Secondary school

The third education stage covers secondary school (middle school). Pupil gets to know new kinds of situations, as secondary school is most often a separate educational institution attended by pupils from nearby primary schools. Youth attending secondary school discovers “the new world” by going through a difficult adolescence period. The first among many changes in this period is the discovery of the psychical world; it happens when a child is 12-13 years old. It is accompanied by reaching one’s own psychic autonomy, individuality. During the adolescence period the ability of self-assessment is formed, with its basic rules being gradually determined. Self-assessment starts to play progressively more important role in motivation to be active (Tyszkowa, 1977). What is more, the media start to play increasingly important role in the life of a secondary school pupil, their importance becomes even stronger when they facilitate interacting with one’s peers, whose acceptance is sought by each pupil. Media are essential in publicizing cases of teenagers’ antisocial attitudes, as well as creating a false impression that such attitudes are more common than they are in reality (Huk, 2011). It would be enough to follow closely, week after week, television programs with teenagers acting as main characters, to understand how symptoms of real pathological states are becoming treated by adults as normal (Bryant & Colman, 1997). In secondary school, in which education was divided into very specific subjects, media education is implemented during such classes as Polish, foreign language, music, visual arts, social science, geography, physics, information technology, technical classes, and family life education.

### 5.4. Upper-secondary school

Philosophizing, as well as youthful idealism, are characteristic of young people attending upper-secondary schools (Tyszkowa, 1977). For them this is a period of choosing their own life’s paths, a decision that is quite seminal and leads to many other decisions, shaping the entirety of their subsequent lives. All this put together makes a child prone to experiencing a state of vulnerability and feeling mental pressure, especially in terms of the need to be concentrated and not be unfocused. The clarity of one’s perspective on what the future should hold (as well as the fact of noticing a number of worthy prospects in life) eliminates the agonizing uncertainty and makes a teenager feel more mentally secure (Tyszkowa, 1977).

Upper-secondary school at the fourth stage of education continues with the content introduced in the third stage's curriculum (the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 23rd December 2008). Polish language becomes the basic school subject which provides a pupil with the opportunity to carefully explore different kinds of knowledge from other fields. Media education's content is noticeable both on a basic and an expanded level of teaching.

Curricula of upper-secondary schools are based to a great extent on the media. That is why they include a large number of subjects through which media literacy is formed indirectly, during classes such as: Polish, foreign language, knowledge of culture, introduction to business, geography, information technology, family life education, ethics, biology, history and society.

It is difficult to estimate the real degree to which the media education content is implemented during given school subjects. Thus far, there has not been any extensive nor comprehensive research in this matter. Though observation of every day educational practices can give the idea that "the division of the content" may lead to a certain kind of dilution of responsibility for the concept's implementation, as well as the permission for errors in a healthy and effective media education process. Media education should strive to shape an attitude of active creativity which ought to become a desired alternative for the passive way of experiencing the media. Moreover, through proper actions it should form positive attitudes towards the media. One of such attitudes is without a doubt the critical approach that assumes the knowledge of the main mechanisms of the media, emotional distance towards their proposed coverage, and researching the desired information in numerous sources and making comparison, that is estimating their credibility (Nowakowska-Buryła, 2003).

In short, the best way to characterize the state of media education in Poland is to say that the policy makers, people who decide about its popularization in schools and media, prefer to be conservative about the whole concept. They also point to the difficulties of implementing media education to schools as a separate subject, sometimes they even do not distinguish between media education and information technology, or education through media.

The so-called "educational path" was removed from the current core curriculum by the ordinance from December 23rd, 2008 (the Ordinance of the Ministry of National Education). The result of this is the duality of media education in Polish

schools: on the one hand, it is not mentioned in the general education goals, but on the other, it is noticeable in all of the aspects of the core curriculum. However, presenting the fragmentary information instead of the process of building up knowledge, as well as not having the ability of critical interpretation, cannot lead to forming media literacy – the only real goal in such a situation is to simply provide the pupils with basic skills as media users. Moreover, treating media and informational education jointly is reducing media education simply to a matter of technical training (Siemieniecki, 2002).

On the other hand, there is a noticeably growing interest in media education, the result of which is a series of postulates and endeavours taken up by the academic communities and organizations interested in the issue.

## 6. Media education – policy makers and the academic world

National Broadcasting Council (KRRiT: Krajowa Rada Radiofonii i Telewizji) was an extremely important Polish entity interested in institutional activities for promoting media education. Back in 2000, KRRiT commissioned a report on the state of media education in Poland, written by scholars from the Institute of the Audio-Visual Arts of the Jagiellonian University under the supervision of professor Wiesław Godzic. The authors of the study emphasized that the importance of media education was being downplayed and neglected, and that the consequence of that was a badly written core curriculum, decision-making disarray, the lack of contemporary role models and the lack of proper teaching resources (Godzic, 2000). That same year KRRiT organized a conference for scholars *Media Education – the Need and the Challenge for the Future* („Edukacja medialna – potrzeba i wyzwanie przyszłości”), which started a debate on the issue of media education. On May 7th, 2008 the first session of the Media Education Forum (Forum Edukacji Medialnej) commenced, with numerous representatives of culture, education, work and science sectors in attendance, as well as media representatives, members of various colleges and universities, social institutions and associations (Media Education in KRRiT). Since then the Forum gathered, during its plenary meetings, distinguished experts in the field who have been promoting for many years the need to introduce media education in Poland. Each of those meetings saw a number of lectures on specific issues and problems, leading to some heated debates. Participants of the Media Education Forum could attend the speeches by prof. Bronisław Siemieniecki from the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, dr Piotr Drzewiecki from the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw,

and dr Lucyna Kirwil from the University of Social Sciences and Humanities. A team of experts on media education was put together under KRRiT. In 2002 its members met with Tomasz Goban-Klas, at that time the secretary in the Ministry of National Education and Sports (MENiS). MENiS began its preparations to introduce the new subject to schools. Unfortunately, after 2003 the involvement of KRRiT in promoting media education became weaker, and it finally began to resemble something more akin to a social movement. The activities linked to introducing media education as a separate school subject were also suspended. The breakthrough came at the end of 2007 when the European Union's new audiovisual directive (Directive 2007/65/WE) called the membership countries to cope with the issue of media education. However, all the work put into writing the new core curriculum did not meet expectations because representatives of the Ministry of National Education raised the issue of the lack of professionally trained didactic staff. Despite the postulates of media pedagogues and media experts, expressed openly during numerous events, including the sessions of the Media Education Forum organized by the National Broadcasting Council in the years 2008-2010, it was not possible to implement "media education" subject in Polish schools (Drzewiecki, 2010b).

That is precisely why the comments of Mirośław Filiciak are so on point – since the European Commission's directive on media education is not able to force MEN to commit to actively implementing the media topics in schools, the only thing that remains are guerrilla-type measures, acted outside of the mainstream (Filiciak, 2008). Thus, Polish schools still need media education, which is encapsulated in three slogans: learning about, through and for media (Dylak, 1997). It is also difficult not to agree with Piotr Drzewiecki who perceives media education as "seemingly an integral element of educating an advanced society; at the same time it takes up the issue of how all interpersonal forms of communication do function" (Drzewiecki, 2010a). In relation to the proposed changes in the core curriculum, various groups trying to exert pressure, and discussions in different ministries, the issue of media education in public school system still seems to be an open matter, what is more – a matter growing in popularity.

## **7. Entities that initiate and implement activities in the field of media education and media literacy**

The elimination of the intersubject path made it possible for different entities to become responsible for media education in Poland, including public institutions

such as: Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, National Audiovisual Institute, National Broadcasting Council, Polish Film Institute, Media Desk Poland, or NASK – Research and Academic Computer Network. A. Ogonowska indicates some exemplary cases/measures of developing media education, implemented by the before-mentioned public institutions (2013), as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Entities working on developing media education in Poland.

| Type of institution | Name of institution                           | Exemplary educational projects/measures in developing media education                    |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Public institutions | Ministry of National Education                | Digital School   |
|                     | Ministry of Culture and National Heritage     | Cultural Education Programme, Pact for Culture   |
|                     | National Audiovisual Institute                | Didactic materials on media education published on the website                           |
|                     | National Broadcasting Council                 | Report on the condition of media education, academic conferences devoted to these issues |
|                     | Polish Film Institute                         | School Film Library  |
|                     | Media Desk Poland                             | Organizing academic conferences on media education                                       |
|                     | NASK – Research and Academic Computer Network | Safer Internet   |

One programme which deserves special attention was “Digital School” – “Cyfrowa Szkoła”; it was run between 04.04.2012 and 31.08.2013 by the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Administration and Digitization and subordinate entities, and supervised by the Ministry of National Education: Centre for Education Development and Educational Research Institute.

The program covered four areas:

- 1) “e-teacher” – developing teachers’ skills in the field of teaching with the use of information and communication technologies, and, what is more, in the areas of communication with pupils and parents, and keeping school records with the use of information and communication technologies,
- 2) “e-teaching resources”, including “e-textbook” – a supplement to the public electronic teaching resources offer, giving also the access to free “e-textbooks”,
- 3) “e-school” – providing schools with the necessary infrastructure in the area of information and communication technologies, especially modern didactic aids,



4) “e-pupil” – providing pupils, especially those endangered with digital exclusion, an access to modern didactic aids, although two of these areas, “e-teacher” and “e-teaching resources”, were carried out as a part of systemic projects co-financed from the means of the European Social Fund, and were finalized in 2015 (Ministry of National Education with the co-operation of the Ministry of Administration and Digitization, 2014).

Also worth mentioning is the priority of “Media and Informational Education” within the “Education” programme of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. National Audiovisual Institute took upon itself the implementation of the project and set its sights on organizing coalition of initiatives for the development of media and information education in Poland. Another goal was to create systemic solutions favourable to the popularization of this field.

There were many interesting activities of the National Broadcasting Council, but one of them is especially worth noticing: “Media Signpost” (“Drogowskaz medialny”), that is an information service about media education ([www.krrit.gov.pl/drogowskaz-medialny](http://www.krrit.gov.pl/drogowskaz-medialny)), as well as a profile on Facebook.

Quite helpful is also the implementation of such programmes as “Active Education”. This programme was carried out during 2012-2015 period by the Centre for Education Development and the Centre for Citizenship Education. Its activities were directed towards teachers and primary and secondary school principals who wanted to expand their knowledge and refine their competences of using modern technologies in their work (the programme covered such elements as interactive e-learning course, exchange of experience, programme conferences, good practices, information and communication technologies and self-teaching textbooks, book publications).

Another interesting initiative of using media for educational purposes was the project “Libratus – Polish Online School”. It was designed to help the children of Poles living abroad to stay in touch with their homeland. Educational materials, made available via Online Learning Platform, were prepared by teachers with many years of pedagogic experience, they were also adjusted to the nature of so-called homeschooling.

According to our estimate, due to a certain stagnation in the implementation of media education in public school system, the year 2003 saw the activation of the so-called third sector, that is non-governmental organizations. Despite the fact that foundations and associations are not the main topic of this study,

which is supposed to focus on the education in public schools, we cannot forget to mention a crucial part NGOs have had in forming media literacy in Poland. The intensification of activities was particularly noticeable in the last five years. Their offer is directed towards Poles of different ages, ranging from the youngest to the elderly citizens. Many of these initiatives are based on co-operation with schools, which means that they start overlapping with formal education. Groups of teachers and pupils can participate in workshops, classes and various competitions during their activities in classes or after school. The third sector also gathered many entities that participate in sharing source materials, lesson scripts and didactic aids to broadly defined lessons about media or with the use of media.

Numerous entities are involved, among them:

- Fundacja Dzieci Niczyje - Nobody's Children Foundation (Child in the Web [Dziecko w sieci]; Webbers [Sieciaki])
- Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska - Modern Poland Foundation (i.a. Media Education, "Free Reading Matter" ["Wolne Lektury"], MediaLog, Digital Future – report and catalogue of media competences)
- Fundacja Nowe Media - New Media Foundation (Youth Multimedia Action I HAVE Media, I KNOW Media [Młodzieżowa Akcja Multimedialna MAM Media, ZNAM Media]; news-sheets Qmam, media contest)
- Fundacja Media Evolution - Media Evolution Foundation (journalistic apprenticeships)
- Fundacja ABCXXI Cała Polska czyta Dzieciom - ABCXXI Foundation Whole Poland Reads to Children [Cała Polska Czyta Dzieciom]
- Stowarzyszenie Nowe Horyzonty Edukacji Filmowej - New Horizons Association – New Horizons of Film Education (film materials for educational use)
- Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej CEO - Centre for Citizenship Education, CEO (Turn On. Youth and Media ["Włącz się. Młodzi i Media"])
- Fundacja Dobrego Odbioru - Good Reception Foundation
- Fundacja Panoptykon - Panoptykon Foundation
- Towarzystwo Inicjatyw Twórczych Ę - Association of Creative Initiatives "ę" (WarszawaLab, Flying Digital Animators [Latający Animatorzy])

Cyfrowi])

- Fundacja Pięte Medium - 5th Medium Foundation
- Fundacja Evans - International Evans Foundation – the Warsaw Office

During 2015 some of the above-mentioned entities established the Coalition of Media and Digital Education, with the goal of introducing comprehensive measures for promoting various kinds of activity in favour of media literacy. You can find more information on the Coalition's website: [kemic.org.pl](http://kemic.org.pl).

## 8. Film education in Poland as a means of forming media literacy – Polish case studies

Poland has also a variety of programmes dedicated to developing film education, implemented somewhat simultaneously in the activities and theoretical analyses of the broadly and generally defined media education. Polish film education has its roots in 1970s, despite the then-ruling political system. The goals of modern film education are complementary to the goals of media education, understood as a broader concept, and because of its essential place in Polish public school system this issue is also crucial to this study.

Among the goals of film education we can find: forming the skills of critical film reception and evaluation, learning the art of dialogue, and discussing a given film's range of issues and emotional reactions it evokes. Film education can also encourage using films as a means of expression and taking advantage of one's imagination, therefore it also involves learning the way films are being made. Furthermore, one of the less obvious results of media education is giving people better access to films (Chojna, 2015). When discussing the definition of media education, what needs to be mentioned is the classic division into three aspects this type of education involves: about film, for film, and through film. Its main subject is a piece of film itself (Nurczyńska, 1981).

There is a number of film education-oriented programmes which are most often aimed at pupils and teachers, various types of educators, tutors. For the most part, however (if not always), teachers become participants of media education process and at the same time a kind of middlemen between education programmes and pupils. Moreover, some film education

programmes function in cascade manner – teachers who are suitably trained in this field can pass on their knowledge and skills as leaders of media education. It is important to emphasize that there are many publicly available didactic materials for this topic, well-prepared in terms of content. The internet is full of well-prepared lesson scripts, films, video lectures. There are also stationary, as well as electronic courses and trainings. The essential problems for this issue, articulated during the “Intricacies of Media Education” seminar that took place on the 15th of January 2016 at the University of Silesia in Katowice, are, firstly, the fact that the implementation of film education relies mainly on the commitment of a teacher, and secondly, as it was noticed, teachers lacking pedagogic training to conduct classes on film education.

Due to a large number of organizations active in developing film education, on September 19th, 2011 the Polish Film Institute created the Coalition for Film Education. This is an agreement of “institutions, non-governmental organizations and institutions of higher education dealing with cultural education and pedagogy for film education of children and teenagers. The Coalition’s mission is to join forces and bring young people, as well as people working with them, closer to practical, theoretical, historical, and film-oriented topics, and achieve it in an attractive and innovative way. (...) The creation of the Coalition for Film Education is a measure that is supposed to make people notice the importance of film education and amend the process of its inclusion within the schools’ curricula” (Coalition for Film Education, 2015).

Since 2009, the Polish Film Institute runs a special programme of film education in secondary and upper-secondary schools – School Film Library (Filмотека Szkolna). It is financed by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Polish Film Institute and Polish Audiovisual Publishing Company. Presently, the program is under the supervision of the Polish Film Institute in co-operation with the Centre for Citizenship Education, Warsaw Film School, Generator Foundation, and New Horizons Association, while Polish Filmmakers Association is the programme’s official partner. The programme was initiated with presenting all Polish secondary schools with free-of-charge film packs, with 55 selected Polish feature, documentary and animated films inside, together with their treatments and the scripts for film analysis. The films were chosen by a committee of teachers experienced in the fields of film studies, culture studies, media studies, psychology and pedagogy (About School Film Library, 2015). The programme’s good practices include its constant development

and maximizing its availability – educational portal [www.filmotekaszkolna.pl](http://www.filmotekaszkolna.pl) is not only a source of complimentary materials for teachers and pupils, but also a platform of exchanging contacts and experiences (About School Film Library, 2015). Apart from that, the School Film Library has also its own festival, which sixth edition, organized in June 2015, gathered 150 pupils and 50 pedagogues from all over Poland. This event is a joint endeavour of the Polish Film Institute, the Centre for Citizenship Education and Warsaw Film School. During the festival's two days its participants had a chance to attend the award ceremony during which the winners of the festival competitions for five-minute-long student etudes, film posters, and written or video film reviews were announced. During the workshop section they could also sit at the so-called World Cafe – each table represented a different topic, making it possible for young participants to talk with the invited experts about such issues as the process of making a film and the secrets of their profession (6th Festival of School Film Library Wrapped Up!, 2015).

School Film Library programme was expanded as a part of the co-operation of several organizations with four new projects, making it a great example of a good practice in which each of the organizations may have their own goals that work for the overall purpose; and instead of competing, the projects supplement one another. The first one is called “School Film Library. Action!” – it is carried out by the Centre for Citizenship Education in co-operation with the Polish Film Institute, with the aim of popularizing the whole programme, supporting teachers, promoting good practices in the field of film education, giving pupils and teachers an opportunity to establish contacts on a national level and exchange experiences. The real results of the project are school film clubs, festivals, reviews, papers, information portals, film reviewers’ clubs, and films themselves. The second project is called “School Film Library. Academy”, and constitutes a series of on-line lectures and meetings directed at teachers, with the goal of facilitating transfer of knowledge and practical skills in the field of media education. This project is carried out by the Warsaw Film School in co-operation with the Polish Film Institute. Another project, “School Film Library. The Cinema Therapy”, carried out by Generator Foundation with the co-operation of the Polish Film Institute, offers a support in conducting didactic classes with the use of film. Lesson scripts and teaching aids were prepared by a committee consisting of a psychologist, a pedagogue, and a teacher of Polish, and they are available for downloading on the website. The fourth project is

carried out by the New Horizons Association, therefore it is called “School Film Library. New Horizons of Film Education”. It has quite a wide appeal as it is dedicated to schools of all levels; they can take part in film-oriented cycles consisting of screenings, lectures, discussions and visual arts classes. Teachers are also provided with didactic materials (About School Film Library, 2015).

Since 2009 New Era publishing house and the New Horizons Association run a free educational project “I Work With My Class.” It is a series of meetings at the cinemas, the main goal of which is to improve the teachers’ skills as educators. Each year one film is chosen that is subsequently screened in 10-12 Polish cities. After each screening there are workshops with psychologists, and the teachers receive a paper with articles concerning relevant topics and fully prepared lesson scripts. Until February 2016 as much as 15 thousand teachers from all over Poland participated in the programme (bdz, press information, 2016).

Other interesting activities dedicated to developing film education include the establishment of the first and so far the only film lyceum in 2013 in Warsaw, and the creation of educational programme “Star Wars: The Force Awakens,” introduced simultaneously with the film’s premiere. Based on the classic movie saga, New Era publishing house prepared a special film magazine and lesson scripts, available for free at [www.nowaera.pl/gwiezdne-wojny](http://www.nowaera.pl/gwiezdne-wojny) website. As it turns out, “Star Wars’ themes could be used for various topics, like pros and cons of different political systems, including totalitarian, presenting the causes for different conflicts, or to discuss the films’ scientific inaccuracies, and the way the saga’s themes have become a part of culture” (bdz, press information, 2016). It is worth emphasizing that New Era publishing house has already prepared a number of different exercises, including the fully prepared lesson scripts for developing media literacy.

The website <http://legalnakultura.pl> also makes lesson scripts available. It should be added that they refer to legal and free audiovisual materials available on the internet, and that they are intended to be used during such classes as: Polish, knowledge of culture, library lesson, general education class. Another project that deserves attention is “a portal for educators and young cinephiles” <http://edukacjafilmowa.pl/> which was created under “Education +” programme of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The website’s content was enriched during the subsequent programmes of the Ministry: “Cultural Education” as a part of “Between Us Authors – [www.edukacjafilmowa.pl](http://www.edukacjafilmowa.pl)” project and “The

Film Map of Generations.” The first Polish non-commercial video game “My First Film”, as well as the internet application “The Film Map of Poland,” were also introduced thanks to those projects. The website’s aim is to encourage exchanging experiences and educational needs, but above all “to provide film-oriented knowledge and information about the latest educational tendencies, as well as to integrate the many activities of the representatives of various environments engaged in developing film education (About the Project, 2016). The before-mentioned educational game “My First Film” is free of any charge, its action takes place on a movie set and in a virtual film studio. Its target group are young people – in the game, they can become an aspiring filmmaker who sets to make his first film (My First Film – a Game Dedicated to Film Education, 2015). The year 2010 saw the publication of a book “Poland in Film. Where were popular films and TV shows shot”, under the patronage of the National Film Archive, which was called “the first such national guide of the places in which cult Polish (and not only) films and TV shows were shot” (Poland on Film, 2010). At the same time, website <http://www.polskanafilmowo.pl> offers a section entitled “Tourism and Film Education” directed at each age and peer group. The offer includes “school trips and green schools with film as a main theme, with the idea of broadly defined education of children and teenagers through film. Sightseeing of the places where a given film was shot, the film’s screening preceded by an introduction, discussion after its end, film workshops – critical and practical. Team building trips with film themes for companies (combined with things such as shooting a music video with the employees)” (Tourism and Film Education, 2016).

In addition to the above mentioned programmes, projects and websites we should also mention the Film Education Program “Lessons in Cinema,” organized by the Centre for Film Education, which covers “a series of multimedia education activities combined with film screenings, directed towards pupils of Polish schools on every stage of education” (Chojna, 2015), as well as the film-and-media education programme CinemaSchool, supported by 25 cultural institutions from the south of Poland and directed “towards pupils on all levels of continual education – ranging from kindergarten to upper-secondary school” (Chojna, 2015). Additionally, numerous other diverse activities are organized on a regional level, such as Film Discussion Clubs, or institutional activities such as those conducted by the Film Museum in Łódź (Chojna, 2015).

Film education is an important aspect in Polish public school system, which

should not be surprising taking into account the fact that “pieces of information that are crucial in development and decision-making of young people are coming mostly from the screen – film takes up its greater part. Moving images educate and facilitate. Modern Polish school youth spends approximately 4-5 hours daily in front of a screen. 10-30%, depending on age, of the information that shapes up their concepts of reality come from film” (Adamczyk, 2015).

## **9. Education and self-education of media literacy using the elements of e-learning – Polish case studies**

In forming the society’s media literacy there is also a place for more “modern” methods and formulas. Among them we can include courses published on e-learning platforms. We deliberately put the word “modern” into inverted commas, as e-learning is a continuation of the distance education, which was implemented before the popularization of the access to the internet services. The same can be applied to the way the didactic materials are presented on these platforms, as most often it has roots in curriculum-based teaching (branched or in a block form). E-learning can assume a form of long-distance modules supplementing the traditional education, implemented during or after traditional classes, as well as a form of blended-learning, that is a mixed education combining traditional education with on-line education, and also a form of comprehensive courses or on-line studies (Penkowska, 2012).

Materials that are uploaded to e-learning platforms, with the sole purpose of forming media literacy, are targeted at the beneficiaries of different ages - at children, teenagers, their parents – it is called media e-pedagogisation of parents (Musioł, 2013) – and also at the elderly, e.g. as a part of studying at universities of the third age. “Safer Internet” can be set as an example of a free e-learning course for children. This programme is carried out by the Safer Internet Centre – Nobody’s Children Foundation. The same Foundation has introduced an e-learning course “Internet! A course for pupils of fourth to sixth grades of primary schools.” The aim of the course is to present various forms of internet dangers: cyber violence, contacting people met virtually, posting photos, plagiarism, computer and internet overusing. The course lasts 45 minutes (7 modules). Another example is an e-learning course for secondary school pupils called “Familiar – Unfamiliar,” prepared by the same Foundation in co-operation with Orange Foundation, and dedicated to the issue of internet



safety. The course was prepared in response to the growing popularity of internet societies and the dangers for children and teenagers that arise from that fact. Secondary school pupils – the course’s intended users – get to act as the administrator of a social networking website, and they solve various problems of its users. They are supported in this endeavour by the Boss, with whom they contact via a video-communication device. Tomasz Sobczak, a renowned film and theatre actor, agreed to play this part. E-learning platforms for pupils are listed on [www.edu.fdn.pl](http://www.edu.fdn.pl). These platforms’ promotional materials include a disclaimer that “the prepared materials use interactive education methods. Users learn about the issue of harming children not only through posting different forms of written text, but also by means of high-quality films, images and animations.” In reality, however, most of these materials are presented in the form of a lecture, which is interrupted by various inserts, e.g. social media advertisements. Moreover, using these courses on such platforms is available only after completing the registration process, which is not a simple matter for persons that use the internet sporadically: you have to go to the website, choose an appropriate course, fill in the required data, including e-mail address. After a short while the person gets a message via e-mail with an activation link. A problem can arise when, for instance, there happens to be some kind of error after clicking on the activation link. The subsequent retries of the registration process are pointless because the system remembers the provided e-mail address. The solution is this, then: open another e-mail account and repeat the whole procedure all over again – thus, it can be quite overwhelming to digital immigrants.

Public and non-commercial e-learning platforms containing materials in the field of media education, that are available for children and teenagers, are far more useful in shaping the knowledge of the media, its threats and the possibilities of counteracting them, than in developing media literacy in its broader meaning – that is, because they contain various information but do not have the skill-improvement blocks, or the knowledge-estimation blocks. Such courses are organized without any instructor, whose presence, commitment, and creativity condition a successful learning via the internet (Kwiatkowska, 2015). A number of such courses is dominated by content depicting cons and threats, and the ways of dealing with them, especially for young receivers of media coverage. Cartoonish, negative image of the media is not very convincing for their young users, people who use them even for several hours per day –

they do think about themselves as normal people who are not threatened in any way by the media. As early as in 2005 Igor Borkowski appealed to reevaluate such content and shape it in a way which can show the positive media values, their nature of bringing people together and consolidating communities.

E-learning materials intended for developing media literacy are also created for specific occupational classes, e.g. for pedagogues, especially candidates for teachers and active teachers who will attempt to reach the goals of media education with their pupils. As in the Pedagogy College of the Silesian University of Technology, where there is a subject called "Introduction to E-learning." And Polish Virtual University runs courses on both distance education platform and in its headquarters, offering its graduates a diploma of the University of Humanities and Economics in Łódź.

Accessing e-learning platforms containing professionally made materials to develop media literacy in its broader definition is significantly limited – it is available to the participants of a given course, and only after paying an obligatory fee. The process of using e-learning platforms requires itself a certain level of media literacy, that is why media literacy is an indispensable element of e-learning, which uses new multimedia and mediatized communication, which in turn is a basis of learning (Goban-Klas). Unfortunately, too often user interfaces of e-learning platforms are designed by IT specialists. When they create them without previous consultation with their future users – both people uploading the gathered materials and course participants which will use these materials – navigating the platform may be quite often difficult for users.

Despite the fact that individualization of pupils' work, or the work with the course's participants with various degrees of intellectual skills, needs constant interaction with an instructor (teacher), also on-line (Osmańska-Furmanek, Jędrzykowski, 2012), the self-education nature of the work (Antczak, 2011), including the possibility of choosing its time frame, is a great advantage of running a course, not only on the issue of media literacy, on e-learning platforms.

The criteria of evaluation of e-learning platforms can include, as follows:

- user interface
- quality of uploaded materials
- course access

- cost of such an access.

Internet resources may be very helpful during self-education process of forming media literacy. Taking into account the diversity of such resources and the possibilities of manipulating their content, the ability to use them requires a certain degree of media alphabetization from a user. Those resources may be also used by teachers conducting classes on the issue of media literacy, as in <http://www.szkolnictwo.pl/index.php?id=PU7310> website that contains *A Guide for Teachers of Media Education (A Study)*, while <https://edukacjamedialna.edu.pl/lekcie/> website offers scripts for this kind of education and for all the stages of education, beginning with kindergarten.

We count e-books among more “modern” forms of self-education. Unfortunately, the majority of such books is presented in pdf, mobi (kindle), or epub (iPad) formats. They are, therefore, scanned books without multimedia inserts or hyperlinks sending to proper websites, photos, films, other electronic documents, etc.

Modern education requires diverse working methods that include elements of entertainment, playing, or rivalry. Quizzes are one of many forms that meet such requirements. They are prepared by teachers, for instance as a part of programmes dedicated to creating multimedia presentations. When they refer to media education, they can develop media literacy both in terms of theoretical knowledge and practical skills; moreover, they can include materials helping a pupil realize what error he or she made when answering one of the quiz’s questions (Musioł, 2008). Though the quizzes solved on on-line programmes (such as Kahoot!) are more often akin to a game show – they count the number of mistakes, they are able to choose the participants who made the smallest number of mistakes, they limit the time for giving a proper answer, etc.

## 10. Non-governmental organizations’ activities for schools – Polish case studies

Media education is not a separate school subject, though in the core curricula teachers are encouraged to spend “much time on media education, that is educating pupils to receive and use media properly.” Media education content appears during many subject lessons. “Turn On. Youth and Media” programme introduced guidelines for using traditional and new media during classes ([blogiceo.nq.pl/wlaczsie/o-programie/](http://blogiceo.nq.pl/wlaczsie/o-programie/)). The programme has been run since

2012 by the Centre for Citizenship Education and the Evans Foundation. As a part of it the pupils will:

- be acquainted with the language of the media, research and analyse internet, press, radio, and television content,
- learn a critical and conscious reception of media content, get to know the broadcasters' strategies, learn how to "filter" information and images they receive,
- try to participate responsibly in the communication process on social media, create their own materials, articles, films, animations, photos, or audio materials, about the school life, local community, or global phenomena.

The programme is aimed at pupils and teachers of fourth, fifth and sixth grade of primary schools, secondary schools and upper-secondary schools from all over Poland. It is a supplement to the school's curriculum, as well as a proposal to spend free time on something creative. It can be implemented during classes of, for instance, Polish, history, social science, or extracurricular activities such as Polish language groups, journalistic groups, working on a school paper, school film societies, active library groups, etc. During media education classes of 2015/2016 school year, pupils supervised by teachers plan social campaigns. Teachers will conduct a series of classes about the media, with the use of materials from the website (films, scripts, exercises, articles). Pupils will take part in "media activities", that is short assignments covering the media on the official blog of "Turn On. Youth and Media" programme. Each "activity" will consist of introduction, expert's opinion, task for the participants, and solution, that is the pupils' work. The themes of the "activities" in 2015/2016 school year are as follows: *What language do the media use?*; *Informational vertigo*; *About privacy and safety on the web*; *Open resources on the internet*; *Can media change the world?*

More information about the project can be found on: [www.ceo.org.pl/pl/media](http://www.ceo.org.pl/pl/media).

Another example can be "Media Olympics", a test of media knowledge and skills made for pupils from upper-secondary schools. It is an initiative of the New Media Foundation, organized yearly since 2011, and together with partners such as the University of Social Sciences and Humanities and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. The winners will receive in-kind prizes and a student book (that is, a qualification without the competitive process) of the two universities. Each year the Olympics consists of three stages and a

finale. Its participants' task is to get the best possible score in the internet test, write essays, prepare multimedia presentation, and take part in an Oxford-style debate. Thus far the main topics were: "digitization of television (2011/12), public media (2012/13), new libraries of knowledge – digital and audiovisual repositories (2013/14), and culture interfaces after the Google revolution. How do we communicate today with others through media? (2014/15) In addition to that, each edition of the Olympics includes the same core programme with such themes as: 1) the art of information, 2) receiving and creating media coverage, 3) transforming the media, 4) the art of presentation and debating, 5) film." (<http://olimpiada-medialna.edu.pl/article/show/132-Pita-edycja-Olimpiady-Medialnej>). In 2016 the main theme is: Citizen 2.0. Participating in political and social life through new media.

More information on the project can be found here: <http://olimpiada-medialna.edu.pl/>.

## 11. Summary, conclusions and recommendations

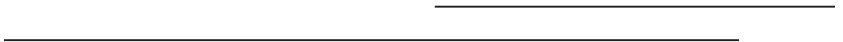
Poles of all age groups use media and new technologies to a considerable degree. Television is still a strong presence in an average Polish household, though one can observe constant increase of interest in mobile devices – especially mobile phones. The proper way of functioning in the world dominated by media requires dedicating much more attention to media education.

We understand media literacy as being active in the field of education that is supposed to lead towards deepening media alphabetization. It is an education of conscious, critically-oriented, selective media users, who are also active and creative in what they do. It is an education about media, for media and through media, essential in the cultural, social and communication context. Media education cannot be limited only to the area of technology, because above all it concerns the media coverage.

In Poland, there is still a certain ambiguity about the way of defining and using such terms as: Media Education, Media Literacy (they are equated with each other), Media Information Literacy, Digital Literacy. It can have consequences in such areas as international dialogue and practical activities.

Despite the fact that media education began in Poland in the previous century, when it was implemented as something akin to film education, in reality we can talk about modern media literacy in schools only since 1999. In the beginning,

it was implemented as an educational path (intersubject), later it became integrated with other school subjects in a core curriculum. The unsatisfied need combined with social transformations made some entities more active in this area – mainly institutional entities other than schools. Currently non-governmental organizations play a particularly important part in this field.



*of Media and Information Competences („Cyfrowa Przyszłość. Katalog kompetencji medialnych i informacyjnych”)* Modern Poland Foundation Online: <https://nowoczesnapolska.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Cyfrowa-Przyszlosc-Katalog-Kompetencji-Medialnych-i-Informacyjnych1.pdf>

- (2012) *The Children of the Web (Dzieci Sieci)* – communication competences of the children. The research report. Urban Culture Institute, Gdańsk. Online: [http://ptem.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/raport\\_IKM\\_dzieci\\_sieci.pdf](http://ptem.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/raport_IKM_dzieci_sieci.pdf)
- Conclusions and recommendations after the First Congress of Media Education organized by the Polish Society of Media Education PTEM in 2014. The report is available on-line: <http://ptem.org.pl/wnioski-i-rekomendacje-po-i-kongresie-edukacji-medialnej/>

It is also worth mentioning that PTEM ([www.ptem.org.pl](http://www.ptem.org.pl)) is at the same time an initiator of the Second Congress of Media Education, scheduled to October 2016, as well as an active entity associating scholars and media education practitioners from all over Poland.

In January, 2016, PTEM (four of the authors of this study are members of the organization) made a valuable initiative: it submitted an official letter to the Ministry of National Education in support of media education in the context of the scheduled changes in the core curriculum.

## 12. Recommendations for further activities in developing media education and media literacy:

- Based on the conclusions from the implementation process of the pilot programme “Digital School” it can be stated that the subsequent activities dedicated to the digitization of schools should be done according to the holistic concept that allows the integration of activities dedicated to the continuation of equipping schools with modern didactic aids, while taking into account the situation of each individual school, with the activities increasing the teachers’ competences and implementing an innovative teaching model – learning with the use of electronic education resources (Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Administration and Digitization (2014). *Report on the implementation of the Government’s “Digital School” programme of*

*developing the pupils' and teachers' competences in the field of using information and communication technologies („Sprawozdanie z realizacji Rządowego programu rozwijania kompetencji uczniów i nauczycieli w zakresie stosowania technologii informacyjno-komunikacyjnych Cyfrowa Szkoła”)*. [https://men.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/sprawozdaniecyfrowaszkola-przyjeteprzezrm25\\_02\\_2014.pdf](https://men.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/sprawozdaniecyfrowaszkola-przyjeteprzezrm25_02_2014.pdf)).

- Methodical broadening of the activities of public institutions in developing media education, such as organizing conferences, workshops, media Olympics, collecting and publishing materials dedicated to media education, etc.
- Implementing programmes aimed at developing media education, such as “Turn On. Youth and Media” programme.
- Repeating the activities leading towards introducing “Media education” subject to Polish schools, or at least increasing the amount of media education in the current core curricula.
- Creation, publication and practical use of comprehensive programmes of teaching media literacy, as in Drzewiecki, P. (2010). *Media Active. Why and how to teach media literacy? Media education curriculum for secondary school, with the methodology provided* („Media Aktywni. Dlaczego i jak uczyć edukacji medialnej? Program nauczania edukacji medialnej dla gimnazjów i szkół ponadgimnazjalnych z opracowaniem metodycznym”). Publication of comprehensive textbooks for media education created through consultation with the teachers.
- Formulating a comprehensive strategy of co-operation among many sectors in developing media education, such as schools; academic environment (through regular research and educating a competent teaching personnel); non-governmental organizations, private companies, political elites.
- Recognizing the multidisciplinary of the issue, especially based on research and taking inspiration from the practices of other European countries. Working out a joint regional strategy in this area.
- Introducing professional education of media educators, or at least additional training for active teachers. Introducing subjects from the field of media literacy during pedagogy studies.



- Continuing and extending the purposeful and institutional educational activities in the field of media literacy in relation to people of different age groups (also the elderly), together with increasing the amount of financial means dedicated to reaching this goal.
- Extending the possibilities of self-education in the field of media literacy through public and free e-learning platforms that contain materials appropriate for age, intellectual capabilities and perception of diverse user groups. Running such platforms should be ultimately financed by the state, and the amount of subsidies should enable the platform's administrator to hire specialists, e.g. platforms with media education content should hire IT specialists, media pedagogues, media psychologists, media experts, experts in preparing multimedia materials, etc. The subsidies should also cover hiring instructors (teachers) who would be available to users of on-line courses, preferably at the afternoon and evening hours.
- Redefining film as a didactic aid and an element of film education.
- Increasing the involvement of practitioners and theoreticians in international syndicates and research&didactic projects in the field of media education.

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## **Slovak national report on the state of media literacy**

### **1. Media education and its position in formal education**

Media education became part of curriculum for the first time on the basis of school content reform implementation of which began in 2008–2009. In relevant school legislation it is defined as compulsory part of education and individual schools have the right to decide about the form of its implementation into curriculum. They can choose from three basic forms of integrating media education into educational programmes:

#### **1.1. Media education as a cross-cutting topic integrated into curriculum of suitable study courses**

According to the research focused on the current state of media education integration into curriculum “...primary schools integrate media education mostly into courses such as Slovak language and literature (259 schools), informatics (179 schools), civic education (140 schools), ethics (131schools) and art and culture into which we have included also courses such as music, art and aesthetics (123 schools). Other courses into which schools admitted integrating topics of media education were natural science (or basics of humanities and natural science), foreign language, history, debate lessons and religion” (Kačínová, Kolčáková, & Tinka, 2013, p. 26). A follow-up research carried out by the same research team at secondary schools showed that the schools “...integrate media education mostly into study courses such as Slovak language and literature (156 schools), civic education (153 schools), ethics (121 schools) and art and culture (103 schools)” (Kačínová & Kolčáková, 2013, p. 30). The efficiency of integrating media education as cross-cutting theme within

curriculum of individual courses is relatively low. This was proved also by the results of both above mentioned researches according to which the representatives of numerous schools did not have sufficient knowledge in the issue and they chose some topics to be part of media education even though they were not related to media education at all (teaching national anthem, my village, etc.) or they thought media education meant using overhead projector, computer or other technical devices used for didactic purposes.

## **1.2. Media education as independent subject**

A school can include media education courses into its educational programme as an independent subject. However, the subject is not compulsory but voluntary. The decision whether to offer such course or not is left up to the school management. When making the decision the most important is the fact whether there is a willing and capable teacher among the teaching staff who is able to teach the subject. According to the research on the state of media education integration into curricula, “283 primary schools teach media education as independent subject which makes 23 % out of the sample of primary schools where data collection was done” (Kačínová, Kolčáková, & Tinka, 2013, p. 18). “Media education as an independent subject is taught at 153 secondary schools which is 29 % out of the total number of 631 secondary grammar and vocational schools in the research” (Kačínová & Kolčáková, 2013, p. 22). According to the database of the Institute of Information and Prognoses of Education there were 753 secondary schools in Slovakia when the research was carried out.

## **1.3. Media education implemented in form of a project, course and other practically aimed activities**

“Within this procedure schools are allowed to include short-term course or project focused on the development of media literacy into their school educational programme. Pupils can work on a particular media project (e.g. production of a short video about a school event), organize a seminar with a journalist from a regional medium, etc.) This category includes also practical media activities of pupils, e.g. work on a school magazine, student programmes for school radio, video production for school website, etc. It is this practical form of developing media literacy among children and youth that is most common at Slovak schools and has relatively long tradition” (Vrabec, 2013. pp. 39-40).



## 2. Media education in nursery schools

In the National educational programme ISCED 0 – pre-primary education (in Slovak štátny vzdelávací program ISCED 0 – predprimárne vzdelávanie, ŠVP ISCED 0) is media education part of curriculum and it is included as one of nine cross-cutting topics within pre-primary education. The curricula for the pre-primary aged children consist of content and performance standards by the use of which the individual competencies should be developed.

The goals of media education are included in the profile of pre-primary education graduate in particular in communicative competencies – he is able to listen actively and comprehend ideas and information from various media, in learning competencies – he learns how to work with toys, book, teaching aids and in information competencies – he shows joy about independently acquired information; he uses various sources of acquiring and collecting information also outside nursery school (from books, magazines and encyclopaedia for children, people round him, from various media, by means of ICT). Individual components of media education are included in various thematic and educational areas (Paleschová, 2014, p.15).

More and more attention is focused on media education in nursery schools mainly thanks to the Methodology and Pedagogy Centre that implements an extensive national project called Activating methods in education. A wide set of interactive didactic aids designed for various types of schools (primary art schools, special schools, school clubs, etc.) has been created within this project. Nursery schools were one of the target groups. Teachers attended the educational programme focused on media education as well as other cross-cutting themes. Participating nursery schools obtained interactive boards and interactive didactic aids, methodologies and other materials that could be used when working with children (available at: <http://www.amvprojekt.sk>).

## 3. Media education at 1<sup>st</sup> grade of basic schools

In National Educational programme ISCED 1 – primary education (ŠVP ISCED 1) is media education included in curricula and it is one of the cross-cutting themes. Within the school educational programme it can be integrated as

part of curricula in selected areas (e.g. language and communication, art and culture, mathematics and work with information, etc.) as an individual subject or course (mainly in upper classes at the first grade of primary school). When implementing media education the National educational programme recommends us to build up on pupils' personal experience with individual types of media. When formulating the aims of the subject it is recommended to focus on following abilities:

- “Basic knowledge about media types, functions and their products and their impact upon child recipient (listener, viewer, reader...). A pupil should be aware of the media he comes into daily contact with, their impact upon him – be aware of their positive effects but dangers as well (manipulation, excessive violence, etc.);
- Shaping one's own opinion about media and their messages (based on knowledge, interpretation, assessment and production of simple media products)” (Štátny vzdelávací program – Mediálna výchova, 2011, p. 2).

To illustrate this approach we could mention a lesson including a topic called: What is a medium. According to the performance standard defined in relevant national educational programme a pupil should be able to:

- “Identify basic types of media he is in contact with daily;
- Distinguish between a medium and mass medium;
- Characterize individual types of media;
- Describe which spheres of life interfere with media and how media can shape us;
- Understand how media influence everyday life (individual, family, social life, etc.);
- Be aware of media impact upon structure and organization of daily activities and the day as such;
- Assess favourite film or book;
- Communicate, answer questions (developing communication abilities)” (Štátny vzdelávací program – Mediálna výchova, 2011, p. 3).

A problem in teaching media education at the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of primary schools is in the lack of suitable methodological materials and teaching aids that would

take into consideration development specificities of the children age group. We only have a brief methodical guide elaborated by the National Institute of Pedagogy at our disposal. Teachers who would like to deal with media literacy development have to rely mainly upon own creativity when preparing for a lesson or materials from abroad or they share methodical materials with other teachers via the Internet.

#### **4. Media education at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary schools**

Media education at this grade is implemented in form of a cross-cutting theme, individual voluntary (optional) subject or projects, courses or other practically focused activities (e.g. work on a school magazine).

According to relevant educational documents media education as cross-cutting theme aims to develop:

- “the ability to apply strategies of a competent approach to various types of media and their products;
- the ability to purposefully, critically and selectively use media and their products (i.e. teach pupils to understand and know the principles by which “media world” is run, have general overview and selectively use media and their products depending on how well they carry out their functions, mainly the educational and moral);
- the ability to have own opinion about media based on received information;
- the ability to critically assess media messages disseminated by media, look for the valuable and positive that shapes their personal and professional growth and also the ability to be aware of the negative media impact on one’s personality a try to eliminate them by a responsible approach” (Štátny vzdelávací program pre 2. stupeň základnej školy v Slovenskej republike, 2008, p. 21).

The above mentioned objectives of media education may be reached by several ways and methodology. One of them is work with existing media products with various specializations which pupils analyze and interpret. Various activating methods in teaching are used (discussion, role plays, etc.). Another option is to engage pupils in practical production of media products (short videos, sound recordings, photographs, blogs, preparing school magazine, school radio

broadcasting, etc.). Media education as a cross-cutting theme can be applied also by less time-consuming forms such as short-term activities – e.g. visiting regional TV, discussion with a journalist, discussion with a professional about safer Internet use, etc.

The National educational programme and its appendices for teachers at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary schools states that media education as a cross-cutting theme should develop mainly media competencies improving three levels of pupil's personality development – cognitive, psychomotor and affective.

The course content of media education as a cross-cutting theme at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of primary schools covers five basic thematic areas. Their performance standards are precisely defined in relevant national educational programme, i.e. it describes the abilities that a pupil should have after completing educational activities.

In case a school includes media education into school educational programme as optional and voluntary subject, it can use experimentally verified curricula for the 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade at primary schools and 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade at 8-year secondary grammar schools (Kačínová, 2008).

The curricula for schools are recommendatory. Considering that the curricula date back to 2008, teachers preparing for their classes can adapt, modify and supplement them according to current needs and latest trends in media sphere development.

Curricula result from the project of experimental verification *Media education as optional and voluntary subject at primary schools and 8-year secondary grammar schools* implemented by the National Institute of Pedagogy in Bratislava in 2005–2007. Teaching texts and methodical materials were part of experimental verification. They represent teaching aids for media education considerably used by teachers also in present days (Kačínová, 2007a, 2007 b).

Curricula for media education as individual subject “...are processed on the principle of the priority medium in each year. However, not exclusively. In the 5<sup>th</sup> year it is television, in the 6<sup>th</sup> film and video, in the 7<sup>th</sup> audio media (radio, CD), in the 8<sup>th</sup> year print media (newspaper, magazines), in the 9<sup>th</sup> year digital media (the Internet, CD-ROM, DVD, digital TV). The advantage of such content organization is the possibility to focus on one medium. During five years of study (four years in case of 8-year secondary grammar schools) pupils should acquire the competence to deal with all types of media provided they

choose the subject in each year of their study. Curriculum is organized in a way allowing its continuity in individual years considering the priority content and set objectives respecting the principle of periodical returns to basic topics on a higher, more elaborated level" (Mediálna výchova – Voliteľný predmet, 2009, pp. 2-3). The curriculum continuity – even if it is presumed, is not so strong that a year could not be seen as a separate sample. Pupils do not have to choose the subject in every year. Thus each year includes topics, sub-topics and specific goals representing a planned, relatively independent set of knowledge, intellectual abilities, skills and attitudes.

## 5. Media education at secondary schools

Media education is integrated into the secondary school curricula (those of primary schools as well) in the form of cross-cutting theme, independent optional subject or as a course, project or other practically focused educational activities based on the learning-by-doing principle. The aim of media education at secondary grammar schools is to "enable pupils to acquire strategies of competent dealing with various types of media and their products at the same time develop their ability – media competence, i.e. purposefully, critically and selectively use media and their products. That should make pupils understand and be aware of the principles by which 'media world' is run, have general overview and use media and their products selectively considering the fact how they fulfil the functions, mainly educational one. It strives to: educate pupils as citizens with own opinions based on received information, work on the ability of children and youth to assess critically messages disseminated by media, discover the valuable and positive aspects with impact on both personal and professional development and also the ability to be aware of negative media impact on own personality and try hard to eliminate them by a responsible approach" (Štátny vzdelávací program pre gymnáziá v Slovenskej republike, 2008, p. 22).

Media education – either as cross-cutting theme or independent subject – is in Slovakia taught at secondary vocational schools even though it is not explicitly included in relevant educational programmes as compulsory curriculum. However, issues of media education are included in relevant educational documents for this type of schools in subjects such as informatics, Slovak language, civic education and some specialized subjects. „It is a fact that

secondary vocational schools include media education into curricula similarly to secondary grammar schools, within defined specialization of a school or more precisely to complete curricula in school educational programmes. As we know they also rely on binding educational legislation for secondary education and react to current social need to include media education into curricula. In some cases they respond directly to requirements of school authority (e.g. Secondary vocational school of St. Jozef Robotník in Žilina) or teachers of selected subjects are initiative in this area (they react to educational offers of selected institutions, participate in courses on media education and later teach the issue within their classes – e.g. Secondary nursing school in Považská Bystrica where media education is integrated with Slovak language and literature)” (Kačínová, Kolčáková, & Tinka, 2013, p. 22).

## 6. Media education at universities

One of many problems that media education in Slovakia has is the insufficient capacities for preparation of future media education teachers. The reality is that not a single faculty of education offers the possibility of either bachelor or master study of this subject. Some faculties of education included media education into their study programmes (e.g. The Faculty of Education at the Constantine, The Philosopher University in Nitra). However, it is only an individual optional course. The Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava tries to improve this unfavourable situation in the preparation of professionals for media literacy development. The faculty gained accreditation for a new study programmed called applied media studies in 2012. During bachelor and master studies students acquire complex knowledge about media literacy issues, development of media competencies and theoretical and practical aspects of mass media communication. Student has also the possibility to complete so called pedagogical minimum which allows him to work as a qualified media education teacher after graduating from the university. The graduate from the study programme is a professional and can prepare a wide range of media messages, mainly with public and educational nature, programmes for children and youth and educational materials and aids focused on the development of media and information literacy. The faculty offers a two-term course called media education also to the students of the 1<sup>st</sup> year of master studies in the study programme mass media communication

The Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava is engaged in preparing teachers who are already in educational practice and are interested in improving their qualification. In 2010 the faculty gained accreditation by the Slovak Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport in the area of educating teachers of media education. The faculty offers an accredited educational programme of continuous learning for teachers called *Qualifying study of media education for secondary school teachers*. The mentioned educational project is the only one in Slovakia allowing the secondary school teachers to acquire full qualification for teaching individual subject – media education.

One or two-term course focused on media literacy development among graduates is included also in the study plans of other universities, e.g. *Greek-Catholic Theological Faculty at Prešov University, Faculty of Philosophy at Catholic University in Ružomberok, Pan-European University in Bratislava* and others.

## 7. Media education in informal education

The widest range of activities in the area of informal education is provided by the citizens' association eSlovensko that has implemented a long-term project aimed at raising the awareness about safer use of the Internet and mobile phones. The aim of the project is the public education, consultancy and educational activities focused on the potential risks of Internet communication and mobile devices. It has three independent target groups – children, parents and teachers. The association prepares products for each of these target groups. That they are accessible at their websites and or in form of publication, leaflets, campaigns, etc.). Besides the above mentioned eSlovensko regularly organizes seminars and workshops at primary and secondary schools across Slovakia, runs several thematic websites (e.g. [www.zodpovedne.sk](http://www.zodpovedne.sk), [www.pomoc.sk](http://www.pomoc.sk).) and has a free phone to report cyber-bullying or illegal and dangerous content on the Internet, etc. A series of animated stories [ovce.sk](http://ovce.sk) was produced within the project and new episode have been added. The series informs about the Internet dangers in an age-appropriate and entertaining way. The association published a publication called *Deti v sieti* (Children in the net). In a well arranged way it informs about individual risk factors related to the use of the Internet and mobile phones. It presents suggestions and recommendations

how to approach such phenomena (Gregussová & Drobný, 2013). Another useful website Nehejtuj.sk deals with the prevention of hateful xenophobic and racist behaviour on the Internet and everyday life of children and youth (Gregussová, Drobný, & Milo, 2013).

The educational activities in the area of informal media education have been implemented since 2009 also by citizens' association Žabky (Little Frogs). The non-accredited organization active mainly in the eastern part of Slovakia offers to schools accredited educational programmes of media education designed for teachers and pupils. With the financial support of the Orange Foundation the association has published three publications dealing with media literacy development among various target groups. The publication called *Čo všetko viem o médiách* (What I know about media) is intended as a course book for pupils at the 5<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> year of primary schools. Another publication is *Mediálna výchova hrou pre učiteľov* (Media education by playing for teachers). Its target group are teachers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at primary schools. *Mediálna výchova hrou pre rodičov* (Media education by playing for parents) is an aid for parental mediation. It presents useful tips, information and proposals about the principles and rules of using media in family life. The association Žabky run also youth Internet TV for several years. The content was created by children and youth contributors. However, the project is no longer active due to financial reasons.

Informal education in the area of media called *Mediálna škola* (Media school) for young volunteers has been prepared also by Saleziánska mediálna škola (Salesian Media School). The school was founded by monastic communities The Salesians of Don Bosco and The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. Training programme called *Mediálna výchova a ochrana pred nevhodným obsahom* (media education and protection against inappropriate content) has been prepared by Nadácia pre deti Slovenska (Children of Slovakia Foundation). Orange Slovakia, telecommunications operator, runs a useful Internet project focused on children's safety when using mobile phones and the Internet. The website called e-deti.sk offers various educative and advisory materials intended for three target groups- children and teenagers, parents and teachers. Another web portal focused on consultancy for parents and children is run by professionals from the Faculty of Philosophy at the Catholic University in Ružomberok. The website Rodina a media (Family and media) deals primarily with the issue of parental media education and presents information, tips,



recommendations and experience in this area.

To include media education successfully into social life it is necessary to engage media themselves, mainly in the area of raising the awareness and promoting the ideas of media education. It is the public and opinion shaping media that are more active in this area. In 2010 the public institution Rozhlas a televízia Slovenska (RTVS)/ Radio and Television Slovakia (RTVS) produced a 40-episode cycle of programmes for children and youth about media education. Young people themselves participated in the preparation of the programme called Mediálni špióni (Media Spies). Public opinion shaping daily SME prepared educational materials aimed at raising media literacy among school youth. In 2011 there were several TV discussions on media literacy (Vrabec & Petranová, 2014).

## **8. Recommendations for media literacy development in the conditions of the Slovak Republic**

- The results of the research focused on the level of media literacy among the adult population in the Slovak Republic (Petranová & Vrabec, 2015) show that the most distinctive distribution regarding the level of media literacy in Slovakia relates to age differences. Differences in users' abilities and critical thinking in relation to media were identified across individual age groups. In case of traditional and new media we found out that with growing age the level of media literacy competencies and critical thinking decreases.
- Due to these reasons we recommend to pay more attention and effort to the wide spectrum of informal educational activities focused on seniors and people in post-productive age. "Media education of seniors should be prevention against generation falling behind, social exclusion and protection of handicapped groups. Its objective should be to update the skills and abilities of individuals related to the development of media, new communication technologies and communication systems." (Petranová, 2013, p.17).
- It is also recommended to widen the offer of television and radio programmes focused on the improvement of media literacy. This task is a challenge mainly for public media that should provide their audience also with properly designed programmes focused on the development

of their media competencies.

- Another important recommendation increasing media literacy is the gradual extension of the offer of informal educational activities for all age and social groups since media education is not an issue related exclusively to school educational system. It is irreplaceable also in education of parents, youth workers, third sector representatives, handicapped groups, etc.
- Educational activities must be attractive enough and respect the specificities and requirements (e.g. time, content, etc.) of individual target groups. Many of these activities do not necessarily have to be done in forms of traditional seminars and trainings. It is also possible to use modern online solutions which eliminate travelling; they are time-flexible and accessible to much wider spectrum of potential applicants.
- Critical thinking is an implicit part of media literacy. However, both in professional and non-professional discourse it is often mistaken for criticism aimed at politicians, public officers, institutions and various social abuses (e.g. corruption). Critical thinking in the context of media literacy relates mainly to media and media contents they mediate to the audience.
- Searching for information from various sources is part of critical thinking. A man must be able to compare information, consider alternative perspectives on the issue and avoid relying upon a single source, no matter how trustworthy, authentic and true it might seem.
- In this context it is recommended to support informal educational activities focused on distinguishing facts from opinions. Numerous media do not make it easy for their audience watching news and they mix verifiable facts with personal opinions, attitudes or speculations of the media content authors.
- A media literate individual should have at least basic level of knowledge about media legislature, copyrights, regulations and autoregulation in media sphere. Of course, expert knowledge is not required. It is sufficient to have a general overview mainly about copyrights, options resulting from press law, law on broadcasting and retransmission, etc. In this area we recommend the implementation of various types of activities by public television and radio and the Board on broadcasting

and retransmission, organizations protecting copyrights, etc.

- The research results have shown that it is important for families with minor children to have the television programmes properly marked according to age appropriateness. Thus, we recommend the introduction of effective innovative elements into the system of unified programme marking that would provide the broadcasters with detailed procedures and rules regulating marks for age appropriateness.
- At the same time it is recommended to consider the postponement of so called curtain time in the conditions of the Slovak Republic. Time curtain sets time periods in which it is possible to broadcast programmes not suitable for children under 15. Nowadays broadcasters can broadcast programmes classified as not suitable or for adults only for the group of minors under 15 between 8 p.m.–6 a.m. However, a relatively high percentage of Slovak population believes that such type of programmes should be broadcasted after 10 p.m. This recommendation is justified in terms of family media education as well as protection of minors against programmes including verbal aggression, vulgar or obscene speech and other types of inappropriate behaviour.

## **8.1. Recommendations for media education within the conditions of basic and secondary schools**

- Based on the valid obligatory documents basic and secondary schools in Slovakia are obliged to include media education into the content of teaching. However, they do it insufficiently. There are still schools where media education is not taught.
- In some schools the meaning of the term media education is misunderstood. It is often confused with media didactics (where media are understood as teaching tool).
- Insufficient qualification level of teachers in media education results from the lack of educational opportunities for teachers. Thus it is necessary to develop the system of graduate and post-graduate education and further education of teachers in media education.
- Slovakia has poor promotion of media education as important educational topic in the content of education. Relatively low interest

of teachers in given area relates to it. Thus it is recommended to create a consultancy system in media education.

- It is further recommended to support the production of quality materials for media education. Teachers interested in this issue should participate in their production.
- It is recommended to carry out educational researches focused on methods and content of media education teaching at schools. This is the only way how to identify the level of real knowledge of teachers about the core, aims and topics in media education.
- It is recommended to improve the offer of quality professional training for teachers. It is important to focus on short-term and continuous forms of education.
- It is recommended to raise the awareness and promote media education among teachers but also in broader public awareness.

## **8.2. Recommendation for media education in educational context**

- The user dimension in the relationship pupil – media presumes that pupils will during their lives search for media and use them purposefully. In the development of user abilities it is necessary to lead individuals to own reflection in relation to media. The function of practical activities in teaching within the possibilities of media education should be used to the utmost. Pupils see media contents from other perspective. These aspects must be used when improving critical approach.
- It is not necessary to focus merely on the media content analysis since it remains important component of media education. Media must be perceived as objects and phenomena existing in social, cultural, economic and political contexts. Media education should be flexible and adaptable to the quickly changing media environment.
- It is required to support and coordinate cooperation between family and teachers in the area of developing media literacy among children and youth and evoke interest in developing their desire for knowledge. Priorities and life style set by individuals can influence it significantly. Teacher can revive the desire for knowledge with this approach and properly chosen methods. When creating such activities we would use

features of critical thinking and methods supporting independence, creativity and develop moral attributes of every single pupil.

- It is recommended to map and analyze regularly the state of media education at basic and secondary schools on the basis of intensive cooperation with teachers. It is important to focus on the representation of media education in curriculum at basic and secondary schools, forms of media education teaching and the qualification of media education teachers.
- The nature of media education is the prerequisite for a successful implementation of critical thinking methods. This course gives pupils the opportunity to express their thoughts, discuss, and work with media contents and media. However, we are fully aware of the fact that the conditions for the implementation of media education are not ideal.
- Non-profit organizations also have an important position in informal education of teachers. They are also engaged in educating teachers in media education.
- Last but not least it is important to search for ways of raising awareness and promoting media education among teachers and reasons why it is important to integrate it into the content of education in order to increase motivation of teachers to teach given content.
- It is wise to support the production of audiovisual programmes focused on the development of media and information literacy (television and radio programmes, websites, digital games, etc.). We recommend cooperation with public media and professionals in educational, research and media practice.

### **8.3. Recommendations for the support of community media**

Community media are integral part of media system in majority of developed countries. Their position is based on individual media systems. However, in general we can say they stand somewhere between public and private media. Their position is specific for several reasons such as the way of legal adjustment, connection with recipients, content of particular medium and not to forget funding.

- Community media are created by active members of various communities. Their contents are intended mainly for the community members and the general public interested in given area. The operation of community media is implemented with financial and personal support of the community. Such operation model creates a unique system closely connected with the target group. Such connection allows almost immediate reaction to changes in opinions, attitudes and needs of the audience. At the same time it is an important part in supporting the freedom of speech since each community member is offered the opportunity to express his opinion.
- These characteristic features of community media do not occur in private and public media. Thus, they cannot be perceived as competing media. On the contrary, these media should complement each other and provide recipients with the option to choose preferred information.
- The Slovak dual system of electronic media does not know the term community media. It distinguishes only public and private media that fill up the whole media space, i.e. also the space that could possibly be given to community media. The resulting situation disadvantages communities which are interested in dissemination of their opinions and attitudes by means of electronic media. Regarding the current situation in Slovakia the only option they have is to act as private media in relation to legislative environment, which inevitably involves unfavourable conditions for a community type of a medium.
- In order to support the development of communities and self-expression by means of mass media we recommend the adoption of specific legislative adjustment in Slovakia that would allow formation of community media and possibility of their co-financing by public sources.
- The relation between community media and media literacy can be assessed in the context of life-long learning in media education. One of the basic features of community media is personal staffing by community members who are not professional media producers but engaged amateurs. They voluntarily spend their time by creating media contents without any request for financial reward. It is permanent contact with media contents that develops media literacy. Thus, we

believe that the introduction of community media in Slovakia would contribute to the improvement in media literacy in the context of life-long learning.

- Community media have the potential and space to use knowledge in media education, mainly by learning-by-doing concept. That would increase the public awareness of public media in the context of freedom of speech.
- The society is not made up by non-diversified mass of people but by communities and individuals whose voices are often unheard. This situation could be solved by community media which are absent in the Slovak world of electronic media (on the contrary to neighbouring countries such as Hungary and Austria where the concept has been established and has a long tradition).

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## **Hungarian national report on the state of media literacy**

### **1. Introduction**

The living space of our 21st century society, supersaturated with digital contents, the intensive technological development, the powerfully increasing amount of information and the daily changing forms of social communication create such an environment for us, where a wise orientation is more challenging and more difficult than ever. Few months old children get acquainted with various forms of media, spend a significant amount of time in the company of screens and access a range of digital technologies and contents much more easily than ever. Just a couple of expressive data from recent researches: as Ofcom (2015) reported in last November, the amount of time British 8-11 and 12-15-year-old children spend online has more than doubled since 2005. For the 12-15-year-olds, this is nearly three and a half hours more than what they spend with watching television. Even more striking data refer to 3-4-year-old (!) British kids, over half of whom used a tablet in 2015. In Hungary, 15-17-year-olds spend almost two hours daily on the internet (DMTK, 2014); 8-14-year-old children watch television about one and a half hours during weekdays and almost three hours during weekends, while the top brand of smart phones, iPhone is one of the five most trendy brands - in other words, a status symbol - among the 8-14-year-old Hungarian kids as well (Kid.Comm2, 2012).

As research data prove, our children - the digital natives - not only use the new technologies naturally and self-confidently but these media have essential influence on their culture as well. They shape their tastes, form their value scales and affect their customs. At the same time, researches and everyday experience show that the increase and expansion of children's media use in terms of time, competencies and content does not necessarily go hand in hand with the critical, media-literate and wise use of digital tools. One of the researches confirming the above is the PISA programme (Programme for International Student Assessment), the largest research examining the level of education and student performance in an international comparison. PISA results show that

Hungarian children's performance in reading and information comprehension is much below the average of OECD countries, and tendentially worsens (PISA, 2013). Although the amount of information and stimuli that daily reach students is continually increasing, they turn out to be able to store less information in their memories, the depth of their knowledge is more shallow and they find it more and more difficult to recall what had been learnt (Hobbs & Frost, 2003). In addition, the mediatized environment fundamentally alters their attention structures as well as the pathways and modes of their information and knowledge acquirement (Baumgartner, Weeda, van der Heijden & Huizinga, 2014; Calderwood, Ackerman & Conklin, 2014; Kitta, 2012; Ollé et al., 2014; Székely, 2014).

This sets new tasks and challenges for the primary providers of knowledge, the schools and the teachers, and challenges the learning environment, which is so far lacking new and renewable methodological procedures, tools and ways of thinking. While the youth's focus of attention is unquestionably on the digital world, the impulses and features characterizing their informal social activities and everyday life rarely appear in school environments. Neither the net generations' current schoolbooks and learning resources, nor their teachers – who strive with their own competencies of digital immigrants – draw from (or at least reflect upon) the mediatized environment, in which their students feel at home. Schools seem to struggle with keeping pace with the bewildering change that students undergo beyond school. However, if the educational system is not able to build bridges between students' lifestyles and the methods of their teaching and learning, it will have to face the danger of becoming irrelevant since the acquaintance of knowledge in this mediatized environment requires new learning and attention keeping skills from students (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2003). This, however, can only be achieved if first teachers learn how to master this new learning environment.

We believe that, in order to achieve the above named goals and map the hiatuses of educational policy and practice, first of all a clear overview of the state of media literacy in each country is needed. This report aims at mapping the state of media literacy in the Hungarian public education and, based on the findings, it formulates national recommendations on the improvement of the educational system as well as the role of media literacy in it.

## **2. The problematics of conceptualizing media literacy**

Although the concept of media literacy has got in the limelight of scientific

discourses and literature mainly with the emergence of digital media, its roots reach much further back in the past. Experts of communication recognized the importance of wise and conscious use of media already with the expansion of the first electronic mass media. As a result, literature at the beginning started to refer to media literacy in the context of media messages involving television aggression and violence, political and ideological overtone, manipulative effects (specifically in the case of advertisements) and media content dangerous for children. This means that, at the onset, media literacy was viewed as a critical attitude providing support against the negative effects of harmful media content (Martin & Grudziecki, 2006; Mlinarics & Horváth, 2010).

With the development and expansion of the media scene, however, media literacy was put in a new light, making the definition of the concept fairly pliable and problematic to define (Herzog, 2007; Livingstone, 2004a). The first problem is the lack of unified and consensual denomination both in English and in Hungarian terminology (Pelle, 2012; 2015). In English, the term of *media literacy* is often exchanged with its related concepts of *information literacy*, *digital literacy*, *computer literacy*, etc., sometimes referring to a specific and limited segment of media literacy but very often mentioned without giving an explanation or making any distinction between the terms. While English varies the first part of the term, Hungarian terminology (including translations) typically uses alternative denominations for the second part of the compound. Thus, besides the most commonly used term of *médiatudatosság*, the concepts of *médiaműveltség* (e.g., Herzog, 2007; Herzog & Racsko, 2011; Koltay, 2009; Mlinarics & Horváth, 2010; Pócsik, 2008; Potter, 2015), *médiajártasság* (e.g., Macedo-Steinberg, 2011), *médiaértés* (e.g., Bűvösvölgy, n.d.) and *médiaírástudás* (e.g., Buckingham, 2005; Koltay, 2009; Kósa, 2008) are equally used as synonyms for media literacy, again, typically without making a distinction or explaining what exactly is meant under the terminology used.

The difficulties of language use arise partly from the second problematic issue around the concept of media literacy, namely that there is no consensus in the literature concerning the referent (the meaning), either (Pelle, 2012; 2015). Different authors and sources look at media literacy from differing perspectives. For some of them, media literacy means having the competencies necessary for using media. These experts embody the *action-oriented approach* to media literacy, focusing on the operational skills related to media use. Others, such as the representatives of the *idealistic approach* look at a media-literate person as a well-informed and conscious citizen, who recognizes the political-ideological

manipulation of the media and participates actively in democracy. The *cognitive approach* views at media literacy as the sum of cognitive skills that make us capable of activating our media-related knowledge. Finally, the *critical approach* describes media literacy as the ability to critically evaluate media content and messages (Buckingham, 2005; Vanwynsberghe, Boudry & Verdegem, 2011). As the above show, when talking about media literacy, experts have very diverse interpretations of the same term, highlighting different aspects of the concept, often without clarification. The different approaches, likewise present in the Hungarian literature, not only demonstrate the lack of a consensual meaning, but they also clearly foreshadow the difficulties of defining and researching the subject.

The next problematic issue around the concept of media literacy is that the definitions offered by the literature (including the definitions of critical approaches) are rather vague: they are not specific and practical enough (Pelle, 2012; 2015). With the exception of a couple of sources (e.g., Hoechsmann & Poyntz, 2012), they generally do not name the components or skills of media literacy, do not explain what it is that makes a person media-literate, neither they propose a set of aspects based on which the level of media literacy could be empirically measured (Vanwynsberghe, Boudry & Verdegem, 2011). This can be well illustrated by the (still!) most often cited definition of media literacy (e.g., Anghel, 2008, p. 26; Koltay, 2009, p. 111; Livingstone, 2004a, p. 3., 2004b, p. 18.; Thoman & Jolls, 2005, p. 21) – of the Aspen Media Literacy Leadership Institute in 1992 –, which defines the concept as broadly as follows: “Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create media in a variety of forms”.

In addition, when researching media literacy at the current 21<sup>st</sup> century media sphere, dominated by new media, one finds that the definitions of media literacy are rather out-dated. As the above example also shows, literature is still heavily overwhelmed by old definitions, worded in the time of the dominance of electronic mass media, while there is very little mention of new technologies of communication and their influence on the changing concepts of media literacy generally does not appear in the definitions, either. Again, the lack of specific and timely elements in the definitions of media literacy, including the Hungarian sources, makes the examination of the subject as well as the comparison and interpretation of results more difficult.

Finally, after reviewing dozens of definitions and researches on media literacy,

one can also notice the excessive scientific discussion followed by a substantial amount of results on the use and access of media and digital tools, i.e., the dominance of action-oriented approach within the examination of media literacy. On the other hand, there is a clear hiatus of researches and discussions on the cognitive aspects of media literacy (e.g., critical thinking). In other words, the media literacy research field is dominated by examinations on the usage of media (e.g., which media tools children use, what access they have to the tools, how much time they spend with using them, etc.), whilst researches generally do not examine what these children understand from media content they encounter, what thoughts, ideas, values they relate to that content, and how critically they receive and interpret it.

While the above spotted conceptual problematic issues are present in the international literature of media literacy in general, they are increasingly true for the Hungarian literature of the subject, which lags behind the international scene. Just having a look at the closer region, while, for example, Polish literature has its own catalogue of digital competences, making the interpretation of the concept more tangible, such a document is missing from the Hungarian sources. Instead, there is a wide range of interpretations of media literacy, lacking a consensual basis of scientific discussion and research.

### 3. Media literacy in Hungarian literature and research

Media literacy research does not have a long history in Hungary. However, there have been some projects done specifically in this field in the last couple of years. It has to be added that because of the incongruences of how media literacy is defined, there might have been researches dealing with one or some of the concepts connected to media literacy (digital literacy, visual literacy, etc.). For this report, we will only focus on projects specifically naming media literacy as such. One of the first projects was carried out by Imre Szíjártó (2007). In his PhD dissertation, he grouped the history of media education (serving as the curricular frame for media literacy) into five periods in Hungary, from 1957 until 2000. He identified mass media appearing in schools in 1957 with the foundation of the first film clubs. Then in 1965 film aesthetics was introduced for the first time into the national core curriculum. Aesthetics was introduced as a topic into the Hungarian language and literature curriculum. Szíjártó (2007) argues that because of the lack of teacher training in film aesthetics, in the third

period (1978 to 1980) the curriculum was not followed in everyday teaching, and aesthetics slowly disappeared from schools. With a gradual opening of the communist regime, some schools started experimenting with alternative teaching methods. This fourth section (1980 to 1995) was thus characterized by a revival of interest in films for some schools across the country. Szíjártó argued that a fifth period started in 1996 with the introduction of an elective media class (Culture of the Moving Image and Media Education).

Another interesting research project was carried out by Csilla Herczog and Réka Racsó (2012). The researchers were interested in measuring Hungarian teenagers' media literacy skills first through quantitative, and then through qualitative measures. The project was carried out with the involvement of 2954 pupils, aged 14 to 18. The researchers then added findings from classroom observation, interviews, focus groups and narrative analysis. Among the most interesting findings of the project, one can find one result saying that during media literacy classes frontal teaching is the most common. This is alarming, to say the least, since media literacy as a concept and field of study uses participatory methods.

While there are not many projects carried out by Hungarian researchers on their own in this field, it is important to mention that there have been some international comparative research projects carried out lately. For instance, the European Media Literacy Education Study (2014) aimed to point out the main difficulties of teaching media literacy and to develop policy recommendations (Gabinete de Comunicación y Educación, 2014). In the case of Hungary, the researchers identified a number of problems, such as the lack of media trainings for teachers, the strong lobby of ICT over media literacy and the latest changes introduced in the national core curriculum of 2012 (Gabinete de Comunicación y Educación, 2014).

The Transforming Audiences/Transforming Societies international comparative report, the ANR Translit and COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) offers a relevant overview of media literacy education in Hungary. It presents the history of the field, the legal framework and it discusses problems such as teacher training and the lack of updated educational materials (Schleicher & Rétfalvi, 2014).

In sum, we can state that media literacy as a research field can be considered somewhat underdeveloped in Hungary. While there are a few highly relevant

studies, one cannot overlook the fact that this field needs further research projects to be fully acknowledged in the academic arena.

## 4. A brief overview of media education in Hungary

In Hungary, the government, local authorities and various educational institutions administer education. The Ministry of Human Resources (Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma, EMMI) with Klebersberg Institution Maintenance Centre (Klebersberg Intézményfenntartó Központ, KLIK) oversees primary and secondary education, with education currently compulsory from ages 3 to 16. The public educational system is structured as follows: primary level (grades 1 to 4), lower secondary level (grades 5 to 8) and upper secondary level (grades 9 to 12). The latest offers three branches: academic secondary, professional secondary and vocational training. The first level of regulation in Hungarian education is the National Core Curriculum, the second are the framework curricula and the third is the local curricula.

In international comparison, the Hungarian educational system has soon recognized the importance of audio-visual culture in education. Although we cannot talk about an established date when media education first appeared in schools, it was the appearance of the film in education where media education in Hungary can be traced back to. Already at the end of the 1950s, film clubs as extra-curricular activities were organized. Then in 1962, before the institutional grounding of media education, the topic of “The role of the film (radio, television) in arousing artistic experience and in promoting literary works” has appeared among the final examination (the so-called “érettségi”) topics of the subject of Hungarian language and literature. In 1965, film aesthetics was introduced in the Hungarian curriculum of secondary-school literature classes, with four hours per year assigned for this topic. However, according to Hungarian media literacy experts, literature teachers did not receive proper training on film aesthetics, and thus those who were not drawn to this field, simply left out aesthetics from their everyday teaching (Neag, 2015). However, film as a medium did not disappear from all schools. Besides these classes, students had to attend compulsory movie screenings in cinemas. This regulation was introduced by the National Core Curriculum (Nat) of 1978, which, though gradually losing its legitimacy, officially stayed in force until 1995 (Szíjártó, 2001).