

**Innovative
educational
and media
practices for an
inclusive and
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The Institute for higher social communication studies (IHECS) organises university training (Bachelor and Masters) as well as life-long learning programmes in social communication and journalism. IHECS is a leading player in the field of action-research, aiming at combining new technologies and media innovation with civic and social responsibility.

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Introduction

A reflection on journalism cannot be conducted independently from a reflection on democracy, because they are strongly interlinked. At the heart of this relationship is a dual challenge: to bring the debate to life and to weave common ground. The media therefore play a key role in the “conflictual building of the political community” (Muhlmann 2004, p.11), in other words pluralism.

In Europe, traditional media are increasingly weakened and criticised by citizens as being incapable of fostering this pluralism (Verfaillie 2013; European Commission 2016). The press is suffering from a financial crisis, which is fuelling a more general crisis in the socio-political and cultural representation of our societies.

Many researchers have focused on the media coverage of disadvantaged urban areas. This includes the suburbs or central neighbourhoods, by urban configuration (Lochard, 2002; Gandonnière 2002; Garcin-Marrou 2005; Vieillard-Baron 2011); identity construction in the media (Lacalle 2008; 2012; Lochard & Popelard 2012; Simelio 2015); and in particular the stereotypes that have led to the construction of an urban mythology of ‘youth’ (Longhi 2011; Lacalle 2013). Some of these researchers have highlighted the performativity of media discourses, making reference to a “mediapolis” (Deuze 2009; Silverstone 2007; de Jong and Schuilenburg 2006): this has been defined as “a comprehensively mediated public space where media underpin and overarch the experiences and expressions of everyday life” (Deuze 2009). According to Deuze, “a

perspective on life lived in, rather than with, media can and perhaps should be the ontological benchmark for 21st-century media studies” (Ibid. p.137).

Diversity policies promoted by the European Union, Member States or the media companies themselves are essentially quantitative and translated by quotas. These policies have not initiated any real change (Macé 2009) in media representations, because they are not easy to integrate into organisational and journalistic culture. The target audiences of these policies are still media topics (Zerouala 2015, p.31); although these audiences are more visible, they are trapped in dominant heteronomous representations.

The media are therefore “at the center of a balance of power, a game of interactional forces bringing together information professionals, public authorities and inhabitants of peripheral urban areas, developing autonomous strategies that oppose them” (Lochard 2002, p.31-32).

According to Jacinthe Mazzerachi, young people living in a city adopt four (non-exclusive) types of behaviour: withdrawal, individual affirmation, the logic of gangs and territories, and religious logic (Mazzocchetti 2012). We can summarise them as two opposing movements: either disengagement/disinvestment, or commitment/appropriation.

With these movements, which can be seen more widely among citizens of all ages, it is possible to distinguish different conceptions of media and education. In particular, these conceptions raise questions about the common role of media and education in fostering pluralism and democracy:

this role is the focus of different strands of media research, for instance on constructive and solutions journalism (Wenzel, Gerson and Moreno 2016).

Higher education's role in fostering social inclusion has typically been addressed by researchers in terms of individual access and academic success (Gidley, Hampson, Wheeler and Bereded-Samuel 2010; Brundenius, Göransson and Carvalho de Mello 2017). However, higher education can also be seen as a driving force for local social projects. Interlinked with non-formal education in a holistic perspective of lifelong learning (La Belle 1982), higher education institutions develop innovative projects in partnership with civil society to foster emancipation. The development of digital media and ICTs are useful tools to support projects like this.

This publication is part of just such a project, INsPIrE, which aims at developing “innovative educational and media practices for an inclusive and participatory Europe and bridging the gap between university and non-formal education.” This research-action project has been developed by a consortium of six European higher education institutions in journalism, thanks to the co-funding of the EU's Erasmus+ programme (January 2017- December 2018). INsPIrE organised an academic conference to share its results with other researchers and academia, as well as to open a wider discussion on the links between media, education and citizenship.

Our publication, which is aimed at feeding and continuing the exchanges on this subject, is divided into three parts. Part one looks at the challenges of using (new) media and their

impact on public opinion. Carolina Are, from City, University of London, calls on a case-based approach to analyse how social media facilitate the spreading of fake news and conspiracy theories. She therefore contributes to creating a framework to outline social media's impact on news and news organisations. Dennis Lichtenstein, researcher at the Center of Political Communication of Zeppelin University Friedrichshafen and Chair for Communication in a global context, proposes YouTube 'politainment' as a new tool for stimulating the engagement of youth in society. Oana Ometa, PhD Lecturer from Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, examines the Romanian media outlet 'Corruption Kills'; she uses it as a case study to analyse the role played by online platforms in disseminating self-produced media content that challenges dominant discourses and how traditional media reflect this information.

The second part shares INsPIrE's findings. After a brief presentation of the project, Kiron Patka and Pia Fruth, PhD researchers from the Institute of media studies of Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, analyse the use of sound and radio in media literacy projects involving young children. Barbara Schofield, Senior lecturer from City, University of London, shares some key competencies that were achieved by the participants through the common workshops. The other papers all focus on INsPIrE's impact on the relations between higher education institutions and civil society. Charo Lacalle and Cristina Pujol, Chair of the journalism department and PhD lecturer from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, analyse the way INsPIrE

contributed to creating new relations between students in journalism and young citizens at risk of social exclusion, stimulating their mutual engagement in the development of a common public sphere. Highlighting results regarding the impact of INSPiRE on its participants, Laura Leprêtre and Esther Durin, lecturers from Brussels Institute for Higher Social Communication Studies (IHECS), focus on the challenges raised by the project's implementation - in light of the current European higher education system, as well as the unbalanced relationship developed between this higher education system and non-formal education organisations. Frank Pierobon, Philosopher and PhD (HDR) lecturer at IHECS, uses the 'mediology' approach to offer a wider perspective on this apparent gap between university and non-formal education, analysing this gap's cultural transmission.

The last part of the publication features a broader reflection on how higher education can adjust its curriculum to societal issues. Cristina Nistor and Rares Beuran, PhD lecturers from Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, analyse the empowering role that media education can play in developing an active European citizenship, through the UBB radio online case study. Elena Abrudan, Chair of the journalism department of Babes-Bolyai University, offers an analysis on the department's efforts to respond to societal demands in the digital era.

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I. Citizens and media uses: forming public opinion

How do social media facilitate the spreading of conspiracy theories and fake news? A case study of flaming and #McCann

Carolina Are¹

This paper examines existing research work on #McCann (Madeleine McCann, a British child missing since May 2007, and the subject of extensive international media coverage), using it as a case study to create a framework to outline social media's impact on news and news organisations. The aim is to fill a gap in research, whereby the McCann case has simply been examined as a traditional media or criminological phenomenon. This paper also showcases how the convergence of a variety of factors – such as the birth and rise of social media, the decline in newspaper advertising revenues and a decline in journalistic reporting standards, plus the fact this is a case that has resonated with the public – has turned engagement and communication spreading tools such as social networks into a weapon that can damage public discourse.

Social media has been described as “the new public square” (Smith et al. 2012). Social networks are a space to connect with friends, family, and potential employers; a tool to spread news when journalists cannot access certain areas due to security or speed issues; a medium to express opinion on political matters, organise protests such as the #OccupyWallStreet movement or take part in campaigns

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such as Barack Obama's 2012 race to the United States presidency (Sloan and Quan-Haase 2017; Smith et al. 2012). However, social networks are also being used to spread less accurate and, at times, false or damaging claims. This recently prompted Tim Berners-Lee, the World Wide Web's founder, to write: "In recent years, we've seen conspiracy theories trend on social media platforms, fake Twitter and Facebook accounts stoke social tensions, external actors interfere in elections, and criminals steal troves of personal data" (Solon 2018). This paper focuses on #McCann, the hashtag used all across Twitter to discuss matters related to the disappearance of Madeleine McCann.

Already singled out as a hashtag that attracts a variety of toxic trolling behaviour online (Synnott, Coulias and Ioannou in 2017), #McCann sees users comment on Madeleine's disappearance, potential kidnapping and/or murder almost daily in an attempt to solve the case, and often to accuse the missing child's parents of some form of wrongdoing, using language not unlike that of conspiracy theories (Kennedy 2010).

Social media's impact on the press

The advent of the Internet resulted in a wave of technology optimism and enthusiasm about the variety of possibilities the medium offered. Two decades ago, Wired columnist Negroponte (1998) predicted the digital age would improve equality and make territorial divisions meaningless. Social media became part of that optimism, also thanks to movements such as the Arab Spring and #OccupyWallStreet (Smith et al. 2012; Sloan and Quan-Haase 2017; Schofield Clark and Marchi 2017).

However, although the journalism industry was one of the earliest adopters of the Internet and social media, these platforms appear to have thrown traditional media into disarray. Rodgers (2016) mentions a general feeling amongst journalists that their profession was better when the Internet did not exist. A study by Weaver and Willnat (2016) connects the rise of social media with a section of the news industry's employees saying they are not happy about their job, partly due to the fact that reporters are expected "to write a story, shoot still pictures or video, and then edit their own work for multiple media platforms" (ibid., p.847). The same study found that 46.8% reporters thought that "user-generated content threatens the integrity of journalism", in a time when the birth of social media coincided with a recession, staff reductions, layoffs and the tendency to increase journalism's marketing value (ibid., p.852).

For Schofield Clark and Marchi (2017) too, the shift in advertising from print newspapers to online websites has dramatically impacted the business of news. They argue that the decline in the news industry's fortunes can be attributed to three factors: the emergence of classifieds sites, which transferred space for these ads from the papers to the Internet; the rise in online reading and social media advertising; and the decline in newspaper subscriptions (Schofield Clark and Marchi 2017, p.68).

A challenging market and the McCann case

To examine unethical online behaviour connected to high-profile media cases, we need to examine the press coverage that partly fuelled it. Research has argued that the press are, first and foremost, a business and that they have acted as

such since the dawn of the newspaper age (Greer and McLaughlin 2012; Petley 2012).

Extensive interest in the McCann case developed against that background. On 3 May 2007, three-year-old Madeleine McCann disappeared from an apartment her parents Kate and Gerry McCann were renting while on holiday in Portugal and her fate has yet to be discovered (Greer and McLaughlin 2012). The case received “unprecedented” media attention, with Madeline becoming the centre of traditional media reports as well as discussion through the developing new media, from websites to YouTube documentaries (ibid., p.396). It reached the top of the news agenda partly due to the idea of missing children as a “mediagenic image of innocence and a lucrative story,” and partly due to the suspicion that her parents might have been involved in her disappearance, which shifted media and new media attitudes towards them from unanimous support to “trial by media” (ibid., p.395).

Following a scandal which included phone hacking and defamation, in 2011 and 2012, the then David Cameron government started the Leveson Inquiry into the “culture, practices and ethics of the press” in the UK; the aim was to investigate press misconduct and “make recommendations for a new, more effective way of regulating the press” promoting both press freedom and professionalism (Leveson 2012, p.4). Among other rulings, the Inquiry deemed the treatment received by the McCanns at the hands of the press as unethical and worthy of scrutiny (Greer and McLaughlin 2012). Greer and McLaughlin argued that trial by media partly depended on market uncertainty, but that press

speculation was fuelled by “internet vilification” and that “the McCanns continue to be subjected to an array of online hate campaigns” (ibid., p.25).

The following sections utilise academic work on online hate campaigns featuring #McCann to examine the tendency to use social media to spread fake news and conspiracy theories.

Fake news and conspiracy theories online: a matter of timing

According to Tandoc et al., fake news includes “viral posts based on fictitious accounts made to look like news reports” (Tandoc et al. 2018, p.138). Their similarity to news reports is so uncanny that a 2016 BuzzFeed survey revealed that “fake news headlines fool American adults about 75% of the time” (Silverman and Singer-Vine 2016, para 1). Fake news like this has financial benefits, which Tandoc et al. describe as content producers earning money through clicks on their fictitious stories. Fake news stories are often also connected to an agenda, such as promoting “particular ideas or people that they favor, often by discrediting others” (Tandoc et al., 2018, p.138). Unlike in parody or satire, fake news is characterised by the lack of understanding between authors and readers that the story is false. The stories are published on social media or blogs, created in the style of news articles “to create legitimacy” and with “the intention of misinforming” (ibid., p.143). Tandoc et al. argue that to be successful, a fabricated news item needs to draw “on pre-existing memes or partialities. It weaves these into a narrative, often with a political bias, that the reader accepts as legitimate” and relies upon “pre-existing social tension”

(ibid). Sometimes, fake news producers also utilize bots (automated Internet computers) in the process (ibid.).

Another characteristic of the Internet age is the tendency of conspiracy theorists to see the world as a pawn manoeuvred by covert forces. Wood and Douglas (2015) argue that conspiracy theories have become ubiquitous because the Internet has made available free publishing and given a monumental reach to publishers. Believers of conspiracy theories view them as correlated to one another, and this correlation is often connected to “prone to boredom” and “political cynicism” (ibid., p.3).

However, to understand the rise of fake news and conspiracy theories online, it is necessary to focus on the change in online news distribution. A 2016 Pew Research Center report found that nearly half (44%) of Americans received their news from Facebook and Instagram (Gottfried and Shearer 2016). Yet Schofield Clark and Marchi (2017) argue that once Facebook changed its algorithms in mid-2016, prioritising posts from users’ friends and families instead of media articles on news feeds, mainstream media took a major loss in terms of online views. For the authors, this resulted in an unexpected success for “several relative newcomers to news publishing”, such as more niche websites like YoungCons and FiveThirtyEight (ibid., p.29). This algorithm change appears to have coincided with the rise of the ‘fake news’ phenomenon in 2016.

#McCann: a case study

This paper hypothesises that the change in social media algorithms, together with the anonymity and share ability

allowed by social media, have allowed people who use such platforms to do harm and to spread false information; they have also helped conspiracy theories to thrive. This hypothesis will be tested utilising the social media engagement around #McCann, the hashtag used across Twitter to discuss matters related to the disappearance of Madeleine McCann in 2007, while a framework for this analysis will be created through this paper.

The Leveson Inquiry considered press speculation to be unethical. So why have the authorities not yet punished or questioned those who peddle online hate campaigns, fake news or conspiracy theories about the McCanns or the social media harassment to which they have been subjected?. It is argued that the second instalment of the Leveson Inquiry, Leveson 2, would have dealt with social media if it had been approved by the UK Parliament (Greenslade 2018).

#McCann is a useful case study because it generated and still generates a wealth of Twitter engagement. In Kennedy's words, it sits at "the intersection between news, technology, and community surrounding mediated crime" (Kennedy 2010, p.225). The "internet vilification" (Greer and McLaughlin 2012, p.25) of the McCanns can be described as falling under the umbrella term of 'flame trolling' or 'flaming'. This is a worse form of trolling, which involves online harassment, threats, and repeated abuse (often grouped) going beyond mere conversation disruption. Often affecting protected categories in the realms of gender, sexual orientation, religion, race and the like, flame trolling is a specific type of harassment designed to do harm (Lumsden & Morgan 2017; Bartlett 2016; Bishop 2013a).

For Kennedy, everyday Internet users' take on the McCann case ended up giving birth to YouTube videos. This created a situation where "[d]educated news forums sat alongside independent forums and blogs, missing posters of Madeleine appeared in the virtual streets of Second Life, and a plethora of user-generated content was uploaded" (Kennedy 2010, p.225). In their paper, Synnott, Coulias and Ioannou (2017) examined 400 tweets from 37 accounts actively commenting on #McCann over a six-week period. They found the conversation was split between two camps: the pro-McCanns (defending Madeleine's parents) and anti-McCanns (arguing the child's parents were either responsible for or taking advantage of Madeleine's disappearance for their own economic gains). By choosing this case study, the researchers were able to isolate behaviours and types of speech that veered into flaming (ibid). In her research, Kennedy (2010) found users took to social media to comment on the case with theories, make insults towards the parents and/or potential suspects, and enact "an imaginary collective intimacy with the child" (Kennedy 2010, p.232).

A theoretical framework

Arguably, social media opened the floor to different authors, thus challenging mainstream media on how a news story should look. For Tandoc et al., "social media offered a wider platform for non-journalists to engage in journalism," changing news distribution and "traditional beliefs of how news should look" (Tandoc et al. 2018, p.139). Social media gave a voice to various users who felt unrepresented, in particular young people who felt disillusioned with the state

of affairs in the mainstream media in terms of power and influence (Beran 2017; Ronson 2016). Furthermore, Wood and Douglas (2015) found feelings of powerlessness to be rife among conspiracists – even if these people were not willing to admit it.

For all the reasons noted above, we should view conspiracy theories, fake news fabrication and flame trolling not only as deviance and ruthlessness at the hands of single individuals, but also as a social phenomenon. As suggested by Warde, trolling is not merely a “product of individuals’ attitudes, values, and decisions,” but rather a behaviour “embedded within and occurring as part of social practices” (Warde 2005).

So whatever agenda may be, conspiracy theorists, trolls and fake news creators are apparently everyday users of social media. Cruz et al. suggests that “trolls are not distinct from normal users, but that the two can be, and often are, one and the same” (Cruz et al. 2018, p.24). They argue that “trolling is perhaps not best understood as simply an anti-social behaviour, but rather as a type of online interaction that must be examined in its particular context” – the context of the post-mainstream news era (ibid.).

This paper argues that the convergence of in-real-life events – such as the recession, the creation and increased popularity of social media, the loss in newspaper revenues and the change in social media algorithms – has led to a sentiment of disillusionment with the main authorities and therefore with mainstream media. This in turn has facilitated the spreading of fake news and conspiracy theories.

Given that people are engaging with the media in this way, Cruz et al. have argued that trolling and so on should be the focus of attention for online managers, as these practices have “implications for the management and governance of online communities” (ibid., p.15). As these practices hinder the sociability and trustworthiness of online spaces, various authors argue it is up to online platforms to intervene (Cruz et al. 2018; Mantilla 2015; Keats Citron 2014).

Conclusion

This paper briefly introduced the case study of #McCann to highlight one of the negative effects on online discourse stemming from the rise of citizen media and user-generated content. It spotlighted a framework connecting the timely convergence of various factors – such as the recession, the creation and increased popularity of social media, the loss in newspaper revenues and the change in social media algorithms – with a feeling of disillusionment with the main authorities (including mainstream media): this facilitated the spread of fake news and conspiracy theories. This framework will be tested in future research through a content analysis of existing tweets featuring #McCann, to showcase these negative consequences and to provide a framework for social media companies and the state to intervene.

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Political information on YouTube. An analysis of four political YouTube channels in Germany

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This article deals with the depiction of politics on YouTube channels that publish videos on current affairs and politics for a younger audience, in order to engage youth in political life. Building on research on ‘politainment’ (politics and entertainment), it looks at how YouTube information channels portray politics and how they link political information to entertainment.

Quantitative content analysis of four prominent German YouTube channels (LeFloid, MrWissen2Go, Rayk Anders, Deutschland3000) will focus on issue selection, the framing of politics, as well as personalisation in the depiction of politics. Results show that all these channels implement elements of politainment by frequently addressing soft news, framing politics as a strategic game and focussing on individual political actors. Although the inclusion of these elements varies between channels, it is clear that politainment certainly does not dominate over substantial information. Politainment is used rather complementarily to attract a younger audience. As such, these channels have the potential to promote political awareness and to provide youth with information and orientation on political issues.

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In democratic societies, the public sphere functions as a communication system linking politics with society as well as integrating all levels of the population (Ferree et al. 2002; Gerhards & Neidhardt 1991; Kiefer 2010). As a “[n]etwork for the communication of content and political stances” (Habermas, 1998: 435-436), the public sphere fosters transparency in political issues and processes as well as debate and discussion of opinions. In so doing, the public sphere provides information and orientation to the members of civil society (Neidhardt 2005).

Even though the public sphere isn’t bound to a specific forum, its communicative functions are attributed first and foremost to political journalism in newspapers, news magazines and television newscasts (i.e. Blumler & Gurevitch 1995; Donsbach & Patterson 2004). However, in the age of the Internet and in the context of a diversified media landscape, these conventional news outlets come nowhere near to reaching all communities in a given society. This is particularly true for younger audiences below the legal voting age, for whom important issues rarely come to the fore in traditional media and who are hardly perceived as a relevant target audience (Bennett, Wells, & Freelon 2011; Dahlgreen 2006; Williams & Delli Carpini 2011).

Political content today increasingly reaches youth via entertaining media formats, such as political comedy and satire shows (Baumgartner & Morris, 2006), and especially all through online media, such as blogs, social networks and video platforms (Engel & Rühle 2017; Hölig & Hasebrink 2017). As a result, both, politicians and

journalists, make use of social media strategies in their work (Hinz 2017; Steindl, Lauerer, & Hanitzsch 2017).

Furthermore, many online information platforms which inform on current affairs are particularly geared towards youth as their target audience. As such, they are often sponsored by public institutions; in Germany, for example, they receive support from the Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung or the Funk Network, a joint project of public broadcasters ARD and ZDF. On the video sharing platform YouTube, informative video channels such as LeFloid or MrWissen2Go obtain a high number of views. This platform is easily accessible to producers, and YouTube users can view, upload, rate and comment on practically an unlimited amount of television and film content, music videos or even self-made or user-made content for free (Burgess & Green, 2009). In order to raise attention among youth amidst the large amount of content on offer, producers of political and informative content need to be authentic and approachable to their young viewers; they also need to present their content in an entertaining and suitable way for their target audience (Berrocal, Campos-Domínguez, & Redondo 2014; Geier & Meier 2017).

The conflation of politics and entertainment (politainment) has been the subject of controversy since the 1990s. While some see politainment as the root cause of political indifference and cynicism (Cappella & Jamieson 1997; Hart & Hartelius 2007), others emphasise that presenting politics in an entertaining fashion contributes to the assimilation of information and encourages interest in politics, especially for a younger target audience

(Baumgartner & Morris 2006; Iyengar, Norpoth, & Hahn 2004).

With regard to the conveyance of political information online, the question of how YouTube information channels and other new media influence political attitudes and participation is being asked anew (Keyling, Kümpel, & Brosius 2015; Skoric et al. 2016; Swigger 2013). However, the answer to this question requires research on the depiction of political content on YouTube. While politainment has indeed been the subject of sufficient research in the context of newspapers (Bernhard, 2012) and television formats, such as talk shows (Tenscher 2014), satirical shows (Lichtenstein & Nitsch, 2018) or even news programmes (Donsbach & Büttner, 2005), there is currently hardly any available research on presentation of political content on YouTube.

This article therefore deals with the presentation of politics on YouTube information channels, as well as these channels' potential to engage youth in the political sphere. Based on four YouTube channels, that correspond to the appropriate criteria, the article gives examples of how political topics are presented to a young audience as well as how politics and entertainment are combined in this context.

Politainment and stylistic devices of entertaining political presentation

Dörner (2001: 31) defines politainment as “a certain form of mass media communication in which political topics, actors, processes, patterns of interpretation, identities and

‘blueprints of meaning’ are assembled so as to create a new political reality through entertainment.” On the one hand, politainment encompasses ways of self-portrayal of politicians, who increasingly gear their actions and attitudes towards a media mind-set and who, among other things, are showcased in entertainment formats, such as talk shows and satirical shows (entertaining politics). On the other hand, the term also refers to strategies for the depiction of politics in the media (political entertainment). As such, political figures, topics and events are presented in an entertaining manner in order to render media appealing to the public. The orientation of this media content does not primarily follow political objectives, but rather market strategies of said media, as well as the entertainment needs of viewers (Dörner 2001). Taken as a media strategy to present politics as entertainment, politainment can be criticised for at least three dominant stylistic devices: 1) the emphasis on/pre-eminence of soft news in the selection of topics, 2) the depiction of politics as a strategic game, as well as 3) a high degree of personalisation of political content.

1) While ‘hard news’ refers to current, professionally researched and relevant factual information, ‘soft news’ often includes topics related to sports, society, media and human interest topics, which can be covered without the need to rush. Soft news caters to the needs of escapism instead of to the need for information (Baum 2007; Reinemann, Stanyer, & Scherr 2012; Shoemaker & Cohen 2006). All topics with a political dimension are often assigned hard news. However, a distinction can also be

made here between political topics that – as actual political hard news – focus on current and politically relevant information, and political soft news (e.g. conflicts, human interest topics or commemoration ceremonies).

2) Presenting politics as a strategic game is about the framing of politics. Such framing selectively emphasises aspects of reality while neglecting others (Entman, 1993). It reduces complexity and provides a framework for interpretation of topics that suggests particular views. In terms of content, political issues can be substantially interpreted via fundamental societal conflicts such as sustainability versus profitability or an orientation towards the common good versus personal responsibility, each of which implies either progressive or conservative stances (Eilders, 2002). As opposed to content-based political framing, strategic game framing refers to political competition (Aalberg, Strömbäck, & de Vreese 2011; Lawrence 2000). Strategic game frames promote an entertaining depiction of politics; by highlight strategies, power struggles and competition in politics.

3) Personalisation refers first of all to a depiction of political topics that is geared towards individual actors. This stylistic device links a topic with emotions and a personal story or fate, and it allows viewers to relate to the actor. In a personalized depiction of political topics, individuals come to the fore as opposed to collective actors such as parties or political institutions (van Aelst, Sheafer & Stanyer, 2012). In addition, a personalized coverage frequently highlights aspects such as private life, habits and appearance instead of to politically related characteristics

such as leadership qualities or political beliefs (Lichtenstein & Nitsch 2018).

By assessing these three critical aspects of politainment, this article examines how YouTube information channels portray politics and to what extent elements of politainment can be found in the depiction of politics. Three research questions are formulated, referring to the inclusion of soft news, strategic game frames and personalisation in the depiction of politics:

RQ1: Which topics are covered on YouTube channels and how high is the share of political soft news among the topics addressed on the channels?

RQ2: To what extent is political content framed as a strategic game on YouTube?

RQ3: To what extent do YouTube channels concentrate on individual actors and on these actors' non-political characteristics?

More generally, to what extent do YouTube channels use aspects of politainment to depict politics in an entertaining manner?

Methodology

For this study on the depiction of politics on YouTube, a quantitative content analysis of prominent German-language YouTube channels was carried out. Four channels that deal with current political and social issues were chosen: LeFloid, MrWissen2Go, Rayk Anders and Deutschland3000. LeFloid is Florian Dietrich's YouTube channel. With over 3 million subscribers, it's the most

popular channel sampled here. Active since 2007, the channel is made up of the LeNews series as well as side projects FlipFloid and DoktorFroid. Channel MrWissen2Go by Mirko Drotschmann has around 766,500 subscribers and has been active since 2012. Rayk Anders, YouTuber Rayk Neubauer's channel, has existed since 2016 and has over 100,000 subscribers. It is made up of video series Armes Deutschland and HEADLINEZ. Eva Schulz's Deutschland3000 channel was founded only in June 2017, during the period of research. It nonetheless boasts just over 9,000 subscribers. The YouTubers from MrWissen2Go, Rayk Anders and Deutschland3000 have a background in journalism and are sponsored by the Funk Network, a public service organisation. LeFloid is managed by Studio71, which is part of the ProSiebenSat.1 group. While the LeFloid channel usually deals with several highly different topics per video, videos on the remaining channels are monothematic; however these do tend to tackle several particular aspects of a single overarching topic. All selected channels post their videos at irregular intervals, the shortest periodicity being LeFloid, which generally publishes two videos per week.

All of the videos published by these four channels throughout 2017 were included in the sample. Given the varying periodicity of video posts for each channel, out of a total of 216 videos, the number of videos published varies greatly from channel to channel (Table 1). The lowest number of videos in the sample was published by Deutschland3000, which only began posting videos in June 2017.

The coding units consisted of the different topics that make up the main subject matter of the videos, as well as the political actors featured in these. Each individual topic was demarcated from the others by looking at form and content. It was also possible to code several topics within monothematic videos, where several successive and clearly distinguishable sub-topics could be identified within a global umbrella topic. In all, a total of 912 topics were coded in this way.

	LeFlooid	MrWissen-2Go	Rayk Anders	Deutschland 3000	Total
Coded Videos	92	48	56	20	216
Coded Topics	468	232	157	55	912
Topics per Video	5.1	4.8	2.8	2.8	4.2

Table 1. Amount of coded videos and topics addressed for each YouTube channel.

The topics addressed in the videos have been classified into different categories: politics, economics, social issues and media. The ‘politics’ category was further sub-divided into hard news and soft news classifications. For each political topic, it was also determined whether the topic was addressed via a content frame and whether a strategic game frame was used – either in addition to or instead of the content frame. Ultimately, for each political topic, up to four featured political actors were also coded. For each of these, it was noted whether they were individual or

collective actors, as well as what proportion of their featured traits were related or unrelated to politics.

The coding was carried out by six students from the Zeppelin University in Friedrichshafen, Germany. 20 videos were processed. The reliability of the key variables ranges from good to sufficient (Krippendorff's α is between .79 and .71).

Findings

RQ1: Topic selection and political soft news

The first research question referred to the topics broached by YouTube channels, as well as to the share of political soft news within the spectrum of topics addressed by those channels. Results show that politics is the focus of reporting on all analysed channels (Table 2). The actual share of political topics per channel fluctuates from 78.2% on Deutschland3000 to 38% for LeFloid. Furthermore, all channels frequently address social and media topics, which are more strongly represented on LeFloid than on the other channels. LeFloid is thus able to present a broader spectrum of topics, in which soft news topics (such as crime, social media and the work of influencers) garner the attention of and entertain the channel's audience. When dealing with political topics, all channels surveyed addressed political hard news more often than political soft news. They thus dealt overwhelmingly with relevant and current political topics – such as elections, electoral campaigns, and coalition negotiations, as well as domestic and social policy. Among political soft news, the most common topics were internal conflicts within parties and

political scandals. The LeFloid channel, in much the same way as the spectrum of topics it covered, presented overall a relatively higher percentage of political soft news. LeFloid thus gears its political topics towards the entertainment needs of its audience more than the rest of the sampled YouTube channels.

	LeFloid N=468	MrWissen2G0o (N=232)	Rayk Anders (N=157)	Deutschland 3000 (N=55)
Politics	38.0	55.6	64.3	78.2
<i>Political Hard News</i>	52.2	71.3	82.2	60.5
<i>Political Soft News</i>	47.8	28.7	17.8	39.5
Economy	4.7	11.2	4.5	1.8
Media	19.7	5.6	5.1	
Society	35.9	27.2	26.1	20.0
Other Topics	1.7	0.4		

Table 2. Spectrum of topics and the share of Political Hard and Soft News (in %).

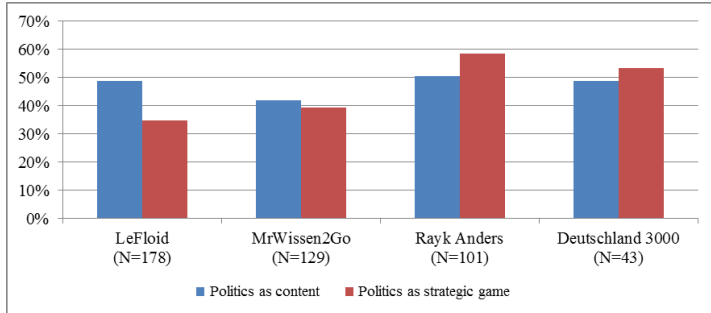
In terms of the geographical focus of topics, the channels as a whole clearly concentrate on Germany (51.4%). They only address a few other countries in their choice of topics with some frequency: USA (18.8%), Turkey (5.7%), UK (3.1%) and France (3.0%). These countries were mainly referenced because of frequent coverage of US President Donald Trump, the human rights situation in Turkey, the

election of President Emmanuel Macron in France, and the conflict around Brexit in the UK. Other countries are seldom mentioned as part of the coded topics.

RQ2: Strategic Game Frames

The second research question deals with the framing of politics within political topics. A distinction is also made between the framing of politics as content and the framing of politics as a strategic game. On the whole, the share of presented topics with a framing of politics as content fluctuates only slightly among the different channels (between 41.9% and 50.5%; Graph 1). All analysed channels thus present a substantial share of content that is political in nature, such as different policy options and their respective consequences. Nonetheless, the share of content that makes up entertaining strategic game frames – emphasising political strategies and competition between politicians and parties – varies greatly among the channels (between 34.8% and 58.4%).

A high percentage of strategic game frames is especially evident for the channels Rayk Anders and Deutschland3000. These channels therefore include the most incentives in terms of entertainment. However, the framing of politics as content is clearly predominant for LeFlويد. When compared to the other channels analysed, LeFlويد's relatively greater focus on soft news topics is offset by its framing of politics in terms of content as well as by the smaller share of strategic game frames.



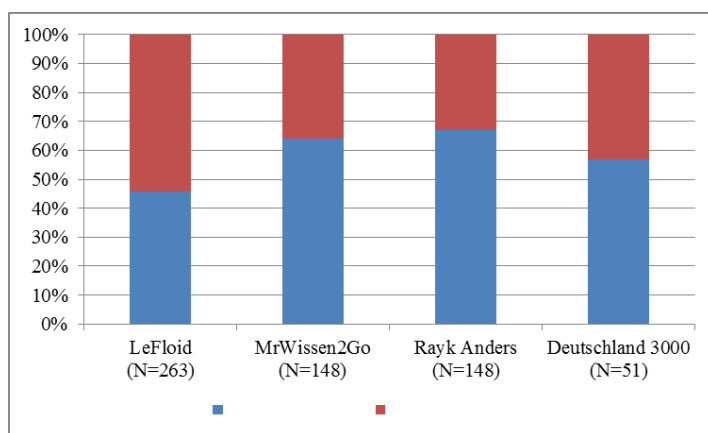
Graph 1. Framing of politics in political topics presented on the channels (in %).

However, regarding the positions linked to the content frames, all channels show an evident lack of balance in reporting. On all analysed channels, progressive positions predominate by far (LeFloid: 52.9%; MrWissen2Go: 59.3%; Rayk Anders: 78.4%; Deutschland3000: 61.9%). It can be assumed that these channels cater to the political opinions that are likely to be shared by their young target audience.

RQ3: Personalisation

Finally, the third research question focused on the politainment aspect of personalisation. Personalisation was 1) based on the proportion of individual and collective actors featured, and 2) based on the focus on the traits of featured actors and whether they are related or unrelated to politics. For all political topics, 610 political actors were coded. Overall, the findings point to a low degree of personalisation in the depiction of politics on the YouTube channels analysed.

The channels MrWissen2Go, Rayk Anders and Deutschland3000 focus on individual actors in 33.1% to 43.1% of the references to actors and they mainly focus on collective actors (Graph 2). Hence, abstract actors, such as political parties or the Bundestag (the lower house of the German parliament), are focused. However, the opposite picture emerges for the LeFloid channel, as it focuses mainly on individual actors (54.4%). This entertaining stylistic device is used on LeFloid more than on the other channels, with the aim of emotional and approachable depiction of political topics which allows the audience to identify or relate.



Graph 2. Proportion of collective (blue) and individual actors (red) in references to actors in political topics presented (in %).

For the second indicator for personalisation, i.e. addressing actors' traits that are unrelated to politics, the findings show a homogeneous picture. All of analysed YouTube

channels only emphasised a small proportion of predominantly politics-unrelated traits, such as appearance or private life, in their references to actors (LeFlويد: 6.1%; MrWissen2Go: 6.8%; Rayk Anders: 4.7%; Deutschland3000: 11.8%). Instead, the majority of references to political actors consistently highlights predominantly politics-related traits, such as the convictions and beliefs of politicians or their leadership skills (LeFlويد: 85.2%; MrWissen2Go: 86.5%; Rayk Anders: 89.9%; Deutschland3000: 70.6%).

Conclusion

This study's analysis of the depiction of politics on YouTube channels in Germany has shown that, generally speaking, the channels analysed do incorporate elements of politainment in their coverage, but actual information still predominates. Overall, the channels place a strong focus on hard news or political hard news. When presenting political topics, they combine a substantial framing of politics as content with an entertaining framing of politics as a strategic game in a balanced way. In terms of political actors, they place a strong emphasis on collective actors and rarely deal with non-political traits of political actors. It is true that elements of politainment are used to address a young audience – but these elements mostly play a supportive role. Substantial political information is the main focus of these YouTube channels.

Yet, there are occasional differences between the channels in the way they use politainment. While LeFlويد uses more entertaining elements with regard to topic selection and references to actors than the other channels, Rayk Anders

and Deutschland3000 use strategic game frames comparatively frequently. These differences point to the channels' different strategies for catering to the entertainment needs of their respective audiences. Moreover, it could be assumed that the publicly funded channels MrWissen2Go, Rayk Anders and Deutschland3000 – whose creators have a journalistic background – strive for a higher degree of quality and information value and thus integrate fewer aspects of politainment into their videos than LeFloid, which is a privately-funded channel.

Furthermore, the analysis lays bare weaknesses in the geographical scope of the information on these channels, as well as in their political even-handedness. The channels' reporting concentrates overwhelmingly on Germany. With the exception of news from the USA, information from abroad is practically insignificant. The content framing of politics also focuses on progressive positions within political topics while neglecting conservative views. The reporting thus provides orientation by highlighting opinions, but emphasises positions that are likely to meet with approval, especially among a young audience. This can be understood as a target group strategy, but contradicts the principles of neutral and balanced reporting.

Are the findings of this study representative of the broad spectrum of YouTube channels dealing with politics? That will have to be clarified by further studies. One limitation of the study is the chosen period of investigation, which covered all of 2017. After the Bundestag elections took place in September 2017, coalition negotiations between

the parties continued beyond the end of the year. So it can be assumed that political issues played a stronger role on YouTube channels than in other (non-electoral) periods of the political cycle.

Apart from these limitations, the study showed that the analysed YouTube channels do indeed provide substantial information on politics, even though many videos are not longer than a few minutes. Thus, the channels have the potential to contribute productively to the political public sphere, as well as to provide information and orientation on political issues to the young population. Instead of political cynicism and indifference, these YouTube channels can introduce young people to political issues and encourage them to engage in politics through news media. It therefore comes as no surprise that politicians also use relevant YouTube channels to reach out to a young audience. Examples of this are German Chancellor Angela Merkel's 2015 YouTube interview by LeFloid, as well as further interviews by other YouTubers of candidates in the 2017 German Bundestag elections. Politicians should maybe take advantage of such opportunities more often, and use YouTube channels as relevant intermediaries between politics and young audiences.

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How ‘citizen media’ works in Romania: the case of ‘Corruption Kills’

Dr Oana Ometa¹

Introduction

More and more Romanians are taking the initiative to make their lives better and to participate in politics, especially through social movements like protests (Tătar 2015; Margarit 2016; Kideckel 2009; Adi 2017). On the international scene, Ewalt, Ohl, and Pfister (2013) argue that 2011 was a peak year for the rise of public protests. In 2011, Time Magazine named the ‘Protester’ as its annual ‘Person of the Year’, whereas in 2015 Adevărul newspaper named ‘The Street’ as person of the year (Delcea 2015). There are many ways in which people can get involved in public life, but it seems they do it often through online platforms. These online platforms (blogs, forums, social networks) help citizens disseminate self-produced media content that sometimes challenges dominant discourses and tell a reality that may not be always trustworthy because the author of the article can sometimes be bias.

Civil groups like Corruption Kills, in our case, are playing an important role in informing and educating the public. Our focus was to analyse the social forums and also the events created on social networks by Corruption Kills. The page was founded after the tragedy at Colectiv nightclub. The resignation of the Prime Minister of Romania, Victor

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Ponta, was linked to the mass protests over corruption after the 2015 tragedy that resulted in the loss of 64 lives and the injury of 147 people at Colectiv club in Bucharest. The fire was one of the worst incidents in Romania. Just after losing a friend in this tragedy, Florin Bădiță founded the civil group ‘Corupția ucide’ (Corruption Kills) to fight against corruption.

Romanians very quickly began to recognise this group as an ‘authority’. Its founder managed to create an identity for all those who were discontented with politics and politicians. He created a public space for what Romanians are calling the “voice of the street” and he managed to create an identity for Romanian activists in general by publishing a guide for activists and creating a house for them and so on. In a word he created a counter-public, as it is defined by Fraser (1992:122), which is a place “where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs.”

Initially, Corruption Kills organised different Facebook events, inviting people to protest. The next step was to inform and unite people by creating different activities.

This paper reflects on the ways that citizen media works in Romania. What roles do activist groups play in disseminating self-produced media content that challenges dominant discourse? In Romania, the phenomenon of citizen journalism is creating new challenges and opportunities for mainstream media, but it also faces some risks. These sometimes dangerous transformations raise several questions: Who are the people behind all the

groups? Do they really serve the public interest? Are they supported by people with hidden interests?

These are real and valid issues, which require real research. In Romania, traditional news media as well as online newspapers tend to show increasing interest in the ways in which user-generated content can be integrated into the professional news-making process. Nowadays user-generated content in the newsroom is more actively involved in the creation of content; that is why we can admit that journalism in Romania has shifted from a top-down lecture to an open conversation (Paulussen et al. 2007).

Based on my experience as a web editor at some of the top newsrooms in Romania, I can confirm that most of the articles published in mainstream media are just copy-pasted from the Facebook pages of different groups. The so-called authority of that information is therefore doubtful. Mainstream media and citizen journalists have a “symbiotic relationship” (Singer 2007). The social-political context in Romania is what encouraged citizen journalism, which has found the opportunity to rise (Turner 2010).

In the context of massive protests in Romania and the involvement of citizens in creating news, this research tries to identify and describe discursive patterns of successful citizen media. Our theory is that activists engage in practices for constructing more democratic media environments by educating citizens and creating a community.

We analysed the events created by Corruption Kills on the group's Facebook pages and the material it posted on YouTube. Given our primary focus on practices that can lead to user generated content, we began by analysing all those topics related to educating and informing people. By restricting ourselves to Romania's most popular news websites, we attempt to make some generalisations about the sites' practices. We also analysed mainstream media's articles and interviews with and about the founder of Corruption Kills. The following discussions aim to theoretically pave the way for these research questions:

RQ1: What are the practices used by this activist group in Romania, that can convert them into an authority for disseminating user generated content?

RQ2: How do Romania's mainstream media reflect Corruption Kills in their stories?

Context

In Romania and other countries, young people are often accused of political apathy. A growing number of academics in recent years have contradicted this theory (Marsh, O'Toole, & Jones 2007). The recent waves of demonstrations in Romania underlined that this generation of citizens is involved and cares about their country. Young people are turning away from mainstream politics, but participate in social movements. Their attitudes as young citizens seem to be shaped by the manner in which they participate and interact through social networks.

This model of "networked individualism" (Rainie & Wellman 2012) is shaped by the contribution of the

Internet and network communication technologies. So the primary focus of any related study should be on the potential of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube for civic engagement. Nowadays the Internet enables everyone to become a producer of content. According to Croteau (2006, p.341), “The Internet’s unique significance is that it provides the infrastructure necessary to facilitate the distribution of all forms of self-produced media to a potentially far-flung audience.” Today, the borderline that separates professional journalists and their audience seems to be blurring (Bruns 2005; Jenkins 2006). Given these facts, some experts suggest that news should be a conversation rather than a lecture (Kunelius 2001; Gillmor 2004). Social media empowers citizen news-making.

Participatory culture

The ‘democratic participant’ theory was introduced in 1983 by Denis McQuail. He wanted to capture the ideas of the “alternative, grass-roots media that expressed and looked after the needs of citizens” (2000, p.160). On the other hand, Henry Jenkins (2006, p.3) defined the term ‘participatory culture’ as “contrasts with older notions of passive media spectatorship”. In his view, “Rather than talking about media producers and consumers occupying separate roles, we might now see them as participants who interact with each other according to a new set of rules that none of us fully understands” (Ibid.). Journalists have new roles, according to Dan Gillmor (2004) and Axel Bruns (2005). They are now “facilitators” and “moderators” and not just “storytellers”. Citizen media or public journalism

seems to have been a form of salvation (Rosen 1999). Massey & Haas (2002) said that public journalism set the discussion on the role of journalism in democracy and its commitment to the public. However, the impact of public journalism on mainstream journalistic practice should not be overestimated, as it is the case in Romania.

Citizen media

Citizen journalism has been called an “act of citizens playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information” (Bowman & Willis 2003, p.9). Defined by Gillmor (2004) as “grassroots journalism”, citizen journalism enables people to do the news-making process: they become the producers and users of the news. Citizen media was defined by Clemencia Rodriguez as “the transformative processes they bring about within participants and their communities” (Meikle 2005, p.73). For her, citizen media is a concept that implies a collective embracing of new media and interaction, in a way that contests social codes, legitimised identities, and institutionalised social relations, through a means of empowering the community (Meikle 2005).

A citizen journalist, according to Gillmor, can be a main actor. It can be someone who does not have a formal journalistic training, but who is equipped with simple tools like a cell phone camera or a digital camera and who has access to the Internet, through which information is distributed, in order to contribute to or provide sensational news (Gillmor 2006). This means that media produced by private citizens can be as factual, satirical, neutral or biased

as any other form of media – but it has no political, social or corporate affiliation. People who produce this kind of material typically have no training or understanding of professional concepts. The term ‘citizen journalism’ has also been used to describe the wide variety of initiatives undertaken by mainstream media to enhance the integration of all kinds of user contributions in the making of news (Paulussen et al. 2007).

Because of the development of technology, citizen media is today a subject of increasing interest. Several studies talk about citizen media and their impact on professional journalism (Lowrey & Anderson 2005; Lowrey 2005). According to them, there is evidence that mainstream news organisations are redefining, or co-opting, the blogging movement (Singer 2004; Smolkin 2004). Researchers have started to pay more attention to how mainstream media is adopting user-generated content in the process of news production.

Citizen media practices

Interest in studying citizen media revealed that certain practices develop around citizen media (Lasica 2003; Couldry 2004; Stephansen 2016). For example, Lasica (2003) provides a list of citizen journalism practices: citizens can comment on an existing news item, they can blog about it, they can contribute to it by adding photos and videos, they can open up independent news and information sites, they can open up sites in which news can be collaboratively produced, they can set up email lists to disseminate news or they can set up sites to broadcast their own news.

Furthermore, Couldry understands media “not as texts or structures of production, but as practice” (Couldry, 2004, p.115). The principles of citizen media, according to Terry Flew (2008), are: open access, collective, collaborative production and content dissemination. On the other hand, Stephansen (2016) believes that citizen media practices can be seen as practices of ‘public-making’: “practices that support the formation of publics”.

Public sphere and counter-publics

A public sphere is “a sphere that mediates between society and state, in which the public organizes itself as bearer of public opinion and accords with the principle of the public sphere” (Habermas 1964, p.115). It is also a realm in which people may freely engage in debates about issues that concern them, and where “access is guaranteed to all citizens” (ibid., p.114). Through this, Habermas favours mass media, as it forms the cornerstone of democracy and citizens can bring issues to public attention, participate in public debates, and hold state authority to account.

In addition to the concept of public sphere, Nancy Fraser highlights the concept of counter-publics, which are “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (1990, p.67). Counter-publics help to expand the space of democratic discourse by providing spaces where subordinate groups can formulate alternative discourses and interpretations of social reality, and they force issues that previously were considered private or beyond

contestation into the public realm (Fraser 1990); citizen media can be seen as central to these processes (Stephansen 2016).

History of Corruption Kills

As previously mentioned, the Web widens public discourse to include more oppositional voices and to “subaltern counter-publics” (Fraser 1992). Moreover, mainstream media have apparently lost their monopoly over the production of images and ideas (Owens and Palmer 2003, p.339).

As a result, the Web has lifted activists to an equal level as other media outlets when waging the battle over public relations (Atton 1996; Kellner 1997). *Corupția ucide* was Romania’s most active Facebook page during the protests of 2015. This page was launched during the street protests in Piața Universității in 2015-2016, following the *Colectiv* tragedy, which led to the fall of the Victor Ponta Government. It was created in November 2016 by a young and enthusiastic IT specialist from Cluj, Florin Bădiță. The initial goal of the page was to offer a platform for online debates, and to create events and funny banners/slogans for the protesters.

In the meantime, the group has become militant for citizens’ rights in Romania, in an explicitly democratic manner: it published a joint Proclamation, and encouraged the participation in debates of broad sections of society. “The change comes from each of us when we no longer tolerate things made by the principle ‘it works like this’. Currently we are over 350 citizens involved,” wrote the

group's founder, Florin Bădiță on Facebook. He said his motivation was the corruption in Romania: "The page was made immediately after the Colectiv tragedy, when 'the corruption killed, because a corrupt clerk accepted and closed his eyes. That's what I wanted to show: that Corruption Kills,'" he said on Reddit.

In its "mission statement", Corupția ucide emphasises that its Facebook community is committed to educating, informing and making citizens responsible for their "freedom and rights", as well as for "the less healthy things" that happen on Romania's political and social stage. They want to "live in a better Romania... a Romania which should respect its citizens and their rights." Likewise, in a later post, on 12 February, under the same name of the FB page, Bădiță summarises the contribution of this group to the anti-corruption protests in January and February. He posted that, apart from the first spontaneous protests on 31 January, the "street actions had been announced through Corupția ucide in conjunction with other groups in Romania or in the diaspora." Today, Corupția ucide has 129,564 followers on Facebook: these include some outstanding intellectuals and well-respected university professors, such as Brîndușa Armanca, Mircea Kivu and Mariana Neț.

According to Florin Bădiță, the idea behind Corruption Kills is very simple: they use protests to apply pressure on the government. The group also puts to good use the tools it has made available to every citizen – for investigating the extent of corruption in Romania. "Activism doesn't have to be full time, it can be a small hobby," he said. In an

interview with Euronews' Sophie Claudet, The movement got its name following the deaths from the fire that was caused by Colectiv's state-sanctioned non-compliance with health and safety regulations: “the authorities knew about it and did nothing.” Despite his huge Internet following, Bădiță has no ambition to become a politician himself. “The opposition will always protest because it is the opposition,” he said in his Euronews interview. He feels that, by remaining on the outside, he can legitimately represent the interests of the general public in an authentic way. Not becoming a politician also means that Bădiță is unpaid. “We do it because we think it's the right thing to do, to create a better society for the future,” he added.

Florin Bădiță is currently one of the most active facilitators in Romanian protests, and at the age of 29 was nominated in London for the Forbes 30 Under 30 list Europe list. Moreover, he was recently awarded the distinction of ‘The European Personality of the Year’ by Euronews in the European Leadership Awards (May 2018). Having already been involved in civic activism for some years, Bădiță became a very important facilitator and activist in 2015, after the tragedy at the Colectiv night club in Bucharest. Just afterwards, he founded the civic platform Corupția Ucide (Corruption Kills), a platform which has been fighting against corruption ever since. Thanks to the 600,000 people supporting the platform and protesting, it has stopped several attempts by the government to decriminalise corruption and official misconduct.

Florin Bădiță describes himself as “a logical thinker, a realistic optimist, creative person. I have a different

mindset than other people, and except psychology, everything that I have learned was self-taught,” referring to photography, journalism, programming, Big Data analysis, global education, GIS, creating maps, Linux, and Photoshop, etc.. He introduced the notion of ‘maptivism’ and is creating maps and digital tools for activists. To that end, he also created live tactical mapping for protest swarming and ‘mappilary’ as a revolutionary tool for activism and journalism. He has also implemented tools that target fake news.

Although he was not a well-known activist before, Bădiță became very popular. In an article published in Cotidianul, he was described as being a hipster with no academic background: “How many hipsters have access to the Justice Minister database without studies in this field and establish strategic connections with NGOs like RISE, Expert forum and so on?”

A lot of conspiracy theories about Bădiță have since appeared in online newspapers. No one seems to understand how this young man managed to become so popular. In an article published in Adevărul newspaper in 2015, ‘The man of the year is the street’, journalist Cristian Delcea paints an interesting portrait of him. “On October 31, Florin Bădiță (27 years old) created the first events on Facebook after the Colectiv tragedy. He gets people out in the street. And to move them from their armchairs, Florin put together the toughest words of this year's end: Corruption kills people! The events he created in Cluj and Bucharest gathered thousands of people under the same idea.” But the same journalist also criticised Bădiță in

another article, ‘Romanians in underwear for fun and for jobs’.

Researching Corruption Kills

After the Colectiv tragedy and after Corruption Kills was founded, many studies were published and various aspects were analysed. Most of them covered the Colectiv case from Romania and the way people reacted in social media. For example, the article ‘Mirrors of anger: The Colectiv case reflected in a Romanian Virtual Community’ analysed the way newspaper readers showed their social engagement and connected through their online comments to news articles.

The main idea of the article was that – despite the strength of its social engagement, involvement, and online interactions – this community is still a ‘virtual’ one, and therefore “weak” sense, in terms of the concept. The research identified five main topics of debate. Although varied, they expressed the Romanians’ feelings of anger and frustration after the ’89 Revolution: 1. human solidarity and compassion; 2. the Orthodox Church and its position in society; 3. the ‘restart’ of Romanian politics; 4. nationalism, xenophobia, and the people’s heroes; 5. public policies: smoking in closed areas, emergencies, and natural disasters.

Another article (Pătruț 2017) covered the role played by social media, especially Facebook, in the events that followed the tragedy at Colectiv’ Club. To answer the question, "What protest frames did organizers use?", the author looked at all the posts made by Corupția ucide -

#Colectiv (<https://www.facebook.com/ucide.coruptia/>) between 31 October and 4 December 2015. The fall of the Ponta Government was examined through a constructivist analysis about the persuasive effects that media can generate in the public space, by reinterpreting and reconstructing social events. The analysis focused on the effects that framing and priming of the means of mass communication have had on the coverage of events on this collective drama. Some of the authors showed interest in just the Colectiv tragedy and made no reference to the activist group.

Corruption Kills practices and their presence in mainstream media

This study focuses on the practices used by this activist group in Romania, that can convert them into an authority for disseminating user generated content, as well as how mainstream media reflects Corruption Kills in their stories.

We identified some practices used by this group:

- ✓ Conferences and training
- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Social movements
- ✓ Creating an identity: rules and guides for citizens

The activists have worked hard to encourage grassroots groups to do their own communication. We should mention that a key aspect of their activity is their concern with training, as well as collaboration with professionals. Florin Bădiță, as the international press noted, has succeeded in doing what many NGOs have failed to achieve: he has made the link between tragedies such as the Colectiv fire

and the culture of bribery in Romania; he has made corruption more tangible, and therefore more immediately objectionable, to the general public.

Bădiță has been training people through social media, workshops and conferences. For example, the group organised a hands-on conference for Romanian civic activists, teaching people useful skills such as public speaking, and how to fill out Freedom of Information requests. “We have to be really practical,” explained Bădiță in his interview with Euronews (Commander 2018). Corruption Kills activists also developed dedicated platforms for shared communication projects – Facebook, Twitter, blogs – reuniting journalists, specialists and activists, with the main goal of facilitating mutual learning. The group organised workshops, conferences and announced all the events through social media. So the group became a promoter of network building (with the other civil groups that it developed projects) and it encouraged citizen involvement in governance. Though it initially emerged out of a need to change something in Romania or to raise a flag calling people to protest, the group ended up educating the public. It also provided an opportunity for communicators – like journalists, bloggers, and professionals from around the country – to come together.

Social media, particularly Facebook, has challenged news agendas in Romania. Citizens have shaped Facebook trending topics and thus the news agenda (Kwak et al. 2010) and mainstream media have reacted. All Corruption Kills events were highly promoted in online newspapers.

For example, the online publication Hotnews has published 129 articles about Florin Bădiță and over 5,000 news items about Corruption Kills since 2015. Most of the articles were about the protests and their initiatives.

Activists set up dedicated online groups, especially on Facebook, for shared communication projects with the explicit aim of bringing together citizens to facilitate mutual learning. For example, Bădiță is now setting up the premises to organise and host the European Activists Conference (EAC) in Romania, a co-created space for 1,000 civic society activists from the EU and neighbouring countries. As civic activists, the aim is to identify active participants who could gather, learn and share knowledge and know-how (e.g. investigative journalism, fighting against corruption, a cross-border collaboration among NGOs across Europe and beyond, etc.), and to challenge and envision a better way forward for the future of the EU. Bădiță was invited to take part in the European Youth Event 2018 (EYE 2018) in Strasbourg, and to be a speaker on the panel ‘Corruption Index: Why countries fail or prosper.’

The group’s activists engage in practices aimed at constructing more democratic media environments, in order to provide space for a greater diversity of actors and voices. Their goal is to discuss issues such as access to information technology and media literacy. To that end, Bădiță and Corruption Kills started a programme of high-level civic education through an incubator of civic entrepreneurship, CIVISTARTER. It aims to educate young people on to how to get involved in their

communities through practical skills (investigative journalism, judicial education, civic campaigns and writing petitions, etc.).

The first edition of CIVISTARTER was organised in January 2018 in Bucharest. During these workshops, participants received training in principles of journalistic practice and how to use a range of equipment. They also discussed the significance of communication for social movements, began to produce media content, and discussed the organisation strategy of the event itself. This incubator also organises a series of practical workshops and meetings with leading Romanian personalities, on a theme relevant to the current situation in the country. These include investigative journalism, how do you control the questions, guerrilla marketing, or writing a petition. All these topics are linked to civic involvement and change that goes beyond the basic civic form of street protest that has dominated Romanian society and shaped the nation's conscience over the last year.

Until now, all the debates have been posted online on the group's Facebook page; the guest speakers were professional journalists. The videos were uploaded to the social network and can be viewed by all citizens. Corruption Kills is therefore mobilising people to participate in shared communication practices. It is also building networks of solidarity among citizens, journalists and social movement communicators.

The community now has a home. "We want to rent a house that will become a physical space for activism, where we can meet and work, train, and have a library of civic

materials,” announced Corruption Kills. The aim is to have organisational practices for creating collaborative production processes that stimulate the exchange of ideas, skills and experience. This project has seen some criticism. In an article published on inpolitics.ro, the author called the group’s home a “joke”, adding that Romania would become the first country in history where spontaneous protesters get their own headquarters.

The group’s activists also engage in capacity-building practices, to equip grassroots activists with the skills they need to produce their own media. These practices have been consolidated through a range of movement-building practices, which aim to tackle the struggles faced by media democratisation and to develop a sense of collective identity among communication activists.

Florin Bădiță explained in an interview that his aim is informal pedagogy. Learning can empower marginalised groups to develop and disseminate their own interpretation of social reality. This is not just a matter of acquiring technical skills. Citizen media practices – at their best – can also enable people, collectively and individually, to voice and develop new discourses that challenge established truths (Rodríguez 2001). This way, citizen media can support the democratic news production, but at the same time, I reiterate the theory that this faces the previously mentioned risks, i.e. the emergence of bias news in mainstream media. Bădiță’s group has also written a guide for activists. It’s noteworthy that this guide’s most important rules are the rules of professional journalism: to argue and have at least three sources. The Internet is

“giving activists new opportunities to share their views with others” (Kellner 1997:41-42). Activists can then build the foundation for a more democratic public sphere (Downing et al. 2001; Poster 1995). Social forums offer key opportunities to do this.

In 2017, Florin Bădiță organised an AMA (Ask Me Anything) session on Reddit, the social news site. People discussed issues like religion, media, and crowd-funding and encouraged the exchange of ideas, skills and experiences. Activists debated strategies for media democratisation or shared experiences. There were 179 comments and the founder of Corruption Kills explained how the group works and defined its goals. After the protests, he tried to identify the needs of the protesters and to attract them to join in civic life. He posted this on Facebook: “We want to remain facilitators for those who have gone out to protest and now want to become more involved in civic life in Romania, by finding people who already do things in their areas of expertise and people who want to learn new things, so that they can also be active community citizens.”

Corruption Kills has also made significant efforts to create a comprehensive definition of free media, one that includes the widest possible variety of actors and media forms. For example, the group has published a video recording from a protest in which participants prove that police used pepper spray against peaceful protesters. “In these images, you can see a gendarme shaking a spray. They called for the dismissal of the gendarme who used the spray and an investigation of the Military Prosecutor's Office. At the

same time, they created a web page where video footage with abuses by police can be uploaded” (Hotnews 2018). One of the themes was transparency and discussions on this subject touched on “a brilliant law in Romania, Law 544/2001, the Law on access to information of public interest.” Bădiță made a Facebook page to support those who make use of this law.

Conclusion

The activist group Corruption Kills is a catalyst. It forms and educates people, and enables individuals and groups to develop new capabilities, by motivating them not only to protest but also to take other actions. All in all, the group creates bonds of solidarity. The community tries to form professionals: have rules, a platform to interact, and professional guests. But there are some problems, as citizen media can be biased – whereas for example traditional journalists must take multiple steps before reporting a story.

Unfortunately, these steps do not always carry over to citizen media, because their publications are not affiliated with any entity that would have additional editors. This can result in a lack of accountability and a strong presence of personal bias.

Citizen journalism plays an important role in the formation of contemporary protest movements in Romania, with a particular emphasis on media struggles in raising awareness, building alliances, organising movements, and creating virtual communities. Citizens become news producers individually or collectively. As Rosen (2006)

states, massive numbers of citizens who happened to be called “audiences” would go on to become media producers and some of that has led to news-making. Even before the rise of social media, citizens/activists demonstrated the power of the Internet not only in organisational matters, but also in news-making.

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II. Case study: INsPIrE project and its findings

INsPIrE project in a nutshell

INsPIrE aims at using journalism as a powerful tool to enhance self-esteem, critical thinking, and civic and social engagement among young Europeans, as well as fostering mutual understanding, addressing stereotypes and promoting intercultural dialogue. In six European cities (Brussels, Barcelona, Cluj-Napoca, London, Mechelen and Tübingen), higher education institutions in journalism have created partnerships with non-formal educational programmes working with young people from disadvantaged areas and/or at risk of social exclusion.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, INsPIrE was a two-year pilot project. It was divided into three levels of action that have been feeding each other.

The first level of the project is the local level. Each higher education institution has developed a local partnership with civil society organisation(s) involved with disadvantaged young people. Youth (students and young people) have worked in tandem and co-produced journalistic pieces, combining citizens' free expression and journalistic ethics with a mutual peer-to-peer training approach. The resulting content has been broadcast on six local online media.

The project's second level corresponded to the European exchange of practices and retrospective analysis associating practitioners and experts. Four itinerant workshops allowed local networks to meet and compare their views and practices. The innovation and cross-fertilisation effects of these workshops were at the heart of the project. This level

also had a strong intercultural dimension at European level. The annual Summer School widened the circle of participating stakeholders and aimed at developing open educational tools as well as recommendations to encourage more inclusive learning environments. Media literacy was seen as an important strand within the project. This literacy was not as an end in itself, but a means for young people to acquire critical thinking, particularly on the Internet, so as to develop resistance to discrimination and indoctrination.

The third level of the project was the support to decision-makers in order to prevent violent radicalisation, and to promote active citizenship and media pluralism. These recommendations are not intended to be a ‘hand-over’ of responsibility. Instead, they aim to ensure enabling environments for the further upscaling of local best practices. A toolkit was also developed, to help teachers and educators searching methodological tools and educational content with a view to replicating the experience in their local context.

By integrating this experience gained in INSPiRE within higher education curricula and by creating new synergies with non-formal education, the partners aimed at training a new generation of journalists to do participatory journalism. A further goal is to ensure the project’s sustainability. By giving a voice to young people who are usually under-represented in mainstream media, the project also sought to promote media pluralism in Europe.

Listen! On the role of sound in media education

Drs Kiron Patka and Pia Fruth¹

In this article we reflect on our work for the INsPIrE project in Tübingen. During the project (2017-2018), especially in the second year, we worked with different groups of children and young people between the ages of five and 25: they come from different cultural backgrounds, environments and often even different countries. They formed teams with students of media studies (with a focus on journalism) to test different forms of joint media production.

The aim of the individual subprojects was to encourage young people and children to express themselves in the media as a form of empowerment and to learn that they do not have to rely on being represented by others. Based on Bernd Schorb's 'media skills' model (2017), our initial aim was to train children and young people in the different aspects of independent media activity and knowledge, so they could later attempt to obtain results in media assessment. To that end, we took a peculiar path: we mainly worked with sound. Our academic concern was also to test the strengths that working with sound can develop for pedagogical projects on media, against the background outlined above — especially for mixed-age, multicultural and multinational groups. We included in our considerations the fact that media skills are an important

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component of communicative and thus social skills, and might therefore also play a role in integration.

1. Radio, voice and sound

1.1 Written media and spoken media

Radio is a very accessible medium, for the public at large and for producers of content (Häusermann 1998). This is because production costs are comparatively low, and crucially because radio as a medium is not written, but spoken: “The primary code of radio [...] is at bottom verbal” (Crisell 1985, p.56).

Neither speakers nor listeners need an extensive formal education; the medium of radio is accessible regardless of proficiency in reading and/or writing, or even when one cannot read or write at all. Radio has therefore long proved to be a medium that can be ideally used for grassroots democratic goals — in societies with low literacy rates and emerging countries, as well as in the form of independent radio stations, citizen radio stations or pirate radio stations in European countries and in similar industrialised nations. In Germany, for instance, this non-commercial broadcasting forms an important third pillar of the broadcasting system alongside publicly funded and private/commercial broadcasting.

According to Bertolt Brecht’s concept of radio as a communication apparatus, which he explains in his radio theory of 1932, this rather low-threshold access gives the medium of radio the potential not only to distribute information, opinions and the insights of individuals, but also to create an actual communication platform with a flat

organisation in terms of hierarchy between all actors. He said: “Broadcasting would be the greatest conceivable communication apparatus in public life [...] if it could [...] not only allow the listener to hear, but also to speak and not isolate him, but rather bring him into a relationship.”

This conception of media participation dates back to pre-Internet days. Yet although today we have completely different radio reception and broadcasting equipment at our disposal, the basic idea is still valid. To speak with voice and sound, to hear with the ear – instead of writing or reading – reduces the hurdles to participation in the media, whether in terms of broadcasting or receiving. The possibility of participation is thus already anchored in the aesthetic basis of audio media.

The aforementioned hurdle of illiteracy may no longer be a central problem in many societies of the ‘Western World’. But in many other parts of the world, including crisis or war zones, many people are still unable to either read or write. Other people – for example those who are or have been refugees – may still only manage the rudiments of the language of their new host country, in spoken or written form. Children and young people with such backgrounds have been involved in our projects, among others, in addition to pre-school children – who will learn reading and writing as part of their development only in the near future.

For this target group, working with audio media is therefore an appropriate option. It’s a way of getting over the hurdle of written language: so in Brecht’s sense, as actors, members of this group can communicate with each

other on an equal footing. In so doing, they can experience media self-efficacy. However, very young children and adolescents from other cultural listening spheres, as it were, have generally already come into contact with audio media, e.g. radio, radio dramas, music, sound books or similar media. In general, working with audio media can therefore follow on from or tie into an individual's previous media experience in everyday life. There is apparently also a genuine interest in turning to such media, which is necessary for making it one's own and thus for the development of media skills: "When children turn to media, it is facilitated by their interests and the issues that compel them to act (Theunert, Lenssen & Schorb 1995). Thus the demands and experiences of everyday life, as well as the current emotional state of children, frame every appropriation of the media" (Fleischer, Greischer & Schorb 1995; Fleischer & Grebe 2014).

1.2 From voice to sound

In the context of INsPIrE, we carried out various media education subprojects with university-level students in Tübingen. For example, we organised a radio workshop lasting several weeks for a group of 13 pre-school children from Tübingen. We also developed and produced a radio play jointly with the 18-member media working group of a community school (Gemeinschaftsschule) in the city of Reutlingen, in which most of the children were native speakers of several foreign languages instead of German. Lastly, with a class from Aalen consisting of about 20 refugees, we produced short audio biographies, to name just a few projects.

On the basis of the above considerations, we limited these projects to audio media as far as possible. We took the idea that the voice is more accessible than written language even further. This greatly reduced the scope of our project to working with sounds: the sounds of the human voice, and the sounds of everyday life or the soundscape surrounding the human experience were the focus of our work. We designated all these sounds and sonic imagery simply as “sound”.

In order to pursue our academic concerns, questions such as the following were posed: What universal components does sound possess as opposed to language as a symbolic system? What specific characteristics can be used, so as to be particularly advantageous to such work on media education? What avenues for work with sound are particularly decisive for the specific characteristics of multinational and multicultural groups? How can the features and characteristics of sound be applied as part of concrete approaches?

For example, in order to identify the universal components of sound, it is important to delineate this hard-to-define term both practically and theoretically. Originally an English term, ‘sound’ is now also used in other languages as well as in the jargon of different fields. The term is also used in German, but with a different meaning than in English.

In English, ‘sound’ can be defined very broadly, e.g. as “that which is or may be heard” — found in the Oxford English Dictionary (Novak & Sakakeeny 2015, p.1). This definition draws closely on a physical and psychoacoustic

understanding of sonic phenomena, a specific form of fluctuation in air pressure that we can perceive through our hearing.

Sound also refers to what can be called ‘Klang’ in German (i.e. ‘how something sounds’; Translator’s Note), thus referring to the perceptual qualities of sonic phenomena. According to this cultural conception, ‘sound’ can also mean the individual musical style of musicians (‘the sound of Miles Davis’) or the specific sound of instruments, spaces or even places (‘the sound of New York City’). But these meanings go even further, ranging from the soundtrack of a film (‘sound’ as ‘sound track’) to the recording of acoustic events (as in ‘sound collections’). Obviously then, ‘sound’ is not just a phenomenon or object. In the words of Novak and Sakakeeny, it’s also “a topic so vast and familiar” (2015, p.3). What exactly is meant by ‘sound’ must therefore be constantly debated and determined again and again (Schätzlein 2005).

Many of these very different aspects of sound play a role in this article and in our projects. For example, we work with noise and recorded ‘soundscapes’, but as previously stated above we also explore the sound of voice in speech. What all these approaches have in common is the act of listening that is always associated with it. Listening to the sound is something completely different from hearing someone speak (hearing). Following on from Michel Chion's concept of “Three Listening Modes” (2012, p.48 ff.), we leave aside “semantic listening” (i.e. hearing what someone says) and concentrate instead on “causal listening” (i.e. listening to how someone speaks, to how something sounds) and

even feel our way towards “reduced listening” (listening to sounds themselves and their acoustic characteristics).

Working with sound, i.e. focusing on sounds, can be very productive and valuable in terms of media pedagogy. This is especially true in groups, where it is impossible to assume with certainty a homogeneous level of proficiency for a common language in which everyone can communicate and work. For example, information (something important has happened, we are supposed to buy something, music is about to come, etc.) and emotions (rage, anger, sadness, joy, etc.) are often conveyed at least as effectively by the sound, timbre and impression of the voice or speaking posture itself as by the content of the actually spoken word. At the same time, sounds and soundscapes – or ‘atmospheres’ as they are called in radio work – are usually very directly capable of conjuring up images in the imagination of listeners, regardless of their mother tongue.

2. Sound in media education: local projects

2.1 Subprojects

Our subprojects in Tübingen were based on different concepts and different timeframes, ranging from one-day workshops to seminars spread over several weeks.

There were also differences in group size, in the age of the participants, in the social composition of groups, as well as in the concrete practical goals of the respective workshops. These differences stemmed organically from our cooperation with our respective institutional partner (e.g. schools or pre-schools/nurseries). All the partners that

cooperated with us contributed their own goals and ideas, which we also implemented in part. We briefly present the subprojects below and describe their characteristics.

Subproject 1: The Stiftung Zuhören Foundation/Eduard-Spranger-School in Reutlingen

For this project, INsPIrE teamed up with the long-standing ‘Klang.Forscher!’ project of the Stiftung Zuhören Foundation, the PwC Stiftung Foundation and filmmaker Chunderksen. Essentially, the Klang.Forscher sound research project is a call for bids to an audio competition plus the monitoring and evaluation of entries. In all, 10 schools throughout Germany can qualify to take part in this competition.

For our project, schools could apply by submitting a proposal. The theme of the competition was determined beforehand, as ‘Audio-Selfies — So klingt unser Leben’ (i.e. ‘This is how our life sounds’) for 2018. The media and audiovisual club of the Eduard-Spranger-Gemeinschaftsschule in Reutlingen is made up of 18 children and adolescents aged 10 to 15, with varying educational backgrounds; they speak a total of 10 different first or second languages. This highly heterogeneous group clinched its invitation to the competition with the creation of a dystopian radio play. The group was then paired with a professional media coach, as was the case with all other participating schools. For the Reutlingen group, Pia Fruth, the co-author of this paper, was designated as coach. As part of INsPIrE, she integrated five students from the Tübingen Bachelor’s programme in Media Studies into the project. The decision to provide a coach stemmed from the

fact that working with media education in a community school was a new and diverse task for students. They thus had to adjust to this task as they got involved. Moreover, media education work – especially in large and heterogeneous groups – always benefits from fixed structures as well as from a good and stable relationship between teachers and students. This is especially the case in smaller work-groups.

The aim of the coaching process, which lasted several days, was to work with the pupils to create their own audio elements for the proposed radio play, to develop stories and characters starting from improvisation, and finally to produce the piece in a professional recording studio (in this case the SWR radio drama studio in Tübingen). A further aim was to learn the basic technical functions of recording devices and editing programs, plus the basics for dealing with one's own voice. In addition, it was important for the pupils to critically listen to and evaluate their own finished audio elements (sound effects, music, foreign-language tongue twisters, etc.). Only particularly successful elements — both technically and emotionally — could then make it into the finished radio play, which was to be their entry to the competition. For the students, the process of determining how the recordings could be used, as well as the development and verbalisation of their own opinions on the subject, were important new experiences. In addition to independent media activities and relevant knowledge, the ethical and normative evaluation of acoustic media products also played a decisive role in the project.

Conversely, the students were also tasked with observing, analysing and assessing the possibilities of working together during the project phase. They had to try to determine whether or not – and if so, under what circumstances – it was possible to bring the idea of co-creation to fruition. Our academic analysis aims to determine in particular what role the work with sound played in the project.

Subproject 2: The Stiftung Zuhören Foundation/Schillerschule in Aalen

This subproject was developed in parallel to subproject 1 and had the same basic structure. The International Preparatory Class of the Schillerschule in Aalen qualified for the same competition of the Stiftung Zuhören foundation; an experienced radio journalist was assigned to their students as media coach. The group consisted of 20 students between the ages of 11 and 16. They came from 13 different countries and spoke several different languages. The biggest challenge in the project was communication; most of the young people speak little or no German, and although our student INsPIrE team of five people speak seven languages in all, communication remained difficult even with the simplest statements.

The distribution of tasks and roles of all participants was also comparable to that of subproject 1. Ultimately, this group ended up winning the Klang.Forscher competition with its entry.

Subproject 3: Horemer Children's House in Tübingen

As a seminar project within the curriculum of the BA Media Studies programme, the 'Radio Workshop for Preschool Children' took place with a group of 13 boys and girls between the ages of five and six. The seminar, which was also conducted by Pia Fruth, lasted an entire semester and included a total of four practical sessions in the Horemer Children's House. As preparation, the Media Studies students had to learn some basics of media education work, because the aim of the seminar was to allow the pre-schoolers to take their first steps towards conscious and independent experiences in dealing with (audio) media, especially during a sensitive transitional phase of the child's development between early childhood (0 to 6 years) and middle childhood (6 to 12 years) (cf. Havighurst). At pre-school age, children develop an interest in and a willingness to learn to read and write, as well as initial skills in these areas. Children at this stage also develop simple concepts in order to analyse and understand their everyday life. The development of a conscience, morality and values also begins at this age. Moreover, due to their relatively short attention spans and concentration capabilities, pre-school children only learn through playing – or they are at least particularly more likely to be motivated to learn through playing. Children of this age also require a very secure relationship with the teachers in their environment.

Against this backdrop, the idea arose of letting children and students work in fixed pairs to playfully explore the world of sound media. In the first step, children were trained in

the perception of their own hearing (e.g. volume and directional hearing). They were then introduced to recording techniques during a listening walk, and to radio-specific forms of presentation (advertising, weather forecasts, radio plays), in which sound plays an important role. Finally, they visited the studio of the Tübingen campus radio and participated in the production of a short radio play about the upcoming first day of school.

Subproject 4: News for Refugees/Französische Schule Tübingen

This subproject was an exception, as it did not focus on working with sound and hearing. It featured two young journalists, from the SWR Facebook project ‘News for Refugees’, who were also students of the Tübingen MA course in Media Studies. They organised a ‘Social Media Practical Seminar’ for a group of eight pupils aged between 14 and 16 in a one-day workshop. The pupils had been selected by a teacher and spoke German or English sufficiently despite having different native languages, so communication did not present a problem.

By setting a different focus with this project, we were able to counter-check the work with sound and verify to what extent our results actually related to the modality of sound and the practice of listening. The focus on social media corresponds, at least at first glance, much more to what today's young people are interested in when dealing with media.

Subproject 5: Paul-Klee-Gymnasium Rottenburg

In a three-day radio workshop with four young people from a preparatory high school class and three university-level students, we produced a one-hour radio show. The young people between the ages of 14 and 17 all came from different countries and spoke different languages. Communication in German was thus difficult, though possible. As opposed to the radio projects discussed up to this point, we focused instead on the content of the radio show. We also concentrated on the manual and technical work, as well as the journalistic skills that, at the same time, are also covered in this type of activity.

The radio workshop was organised as part of the school's 'project days'. So content focused on the idea of 'flight' (i.e. refugees), while the work took place under several different artistic and creative projects, thus motivating the school's students by enabling comparisons to be drawn with other groups.

Subproject 6: Music Workshop in Tübingen

At the time of writing this paper, this subproject had not yet taken place. Our goal is to work with the city to jointly offer children and young people the possibility of making music with others as part of a band. The participation of INsPIrE students should allow for an exchange between its students and adolescents through the medium of music. By improvising and composing, and through joint jam sessions, the idea is to get them to find common ground and to document this process through a radio-collage.

From an academic perspective, the media goals of each individual subproject were vehicles for exploring different ways to work with media education. The approach we will focus on when working with sound is set out below.

2.2 The concept of ‘listening’ (‘zuhören’)

As has already become clear, the most important concept in media education when working with sound is listening. Here we benefited from our previous practical experience in radio and from Pia Fruth's therapeutic experience with children.

Listening, in contrast to mere hearing, presupposes concentration and focusing on what is heard (cf. the term ‘listening’ Rice 2015, which is used in several quite different ways). Although through our ability to hear we can effectively shut out sounds and noises, the moment we concentrate on hearing, this anthropological protective mechanism is cancelled out.

Listening thus brings the acoustic environment to the fore of our consciousness; those who listen become part of their acoustic environment, and so there is a ‘sensory integration’. This sensory integration usually takes place automatically, especially in the first seven years of a child's life: the child's brain learns to recognise acoustic stimuli, to arrange them, to link them with other sensory experiences and thus to organise them. “‘Fun’ is, so to speak, the child's expression for sensory integration. Being able to classify sensory impressions is a source of satisfaction, and it is even more satisfying to be able to answer them with ever

more mature and complex reactions. This is an essential aspect of growing up" (Ayres 2016).

Working with groups of young people and children has shown that groups become calmer and quieter of their own volition through active listening. In this way, listening exercises in groups can have a balancing effect. While groups usually include 'louder' and 'quieter' children or adolescents, who draw attention to themselves to varying degrees, these differences decrease during listening exercises. Awareness of each other increases and thus sets the stage for all to participate in common group activities.

The concept of 'listening' can thus be conceived of along the lines of Bernd Schorbs' media-skills model, which has already been mentioned several times. According to this model, media-skills cover the following three dimensions: media acting, media knowledge and media evaluation. They mutually condition, affect and spur each other on. Dealing with media thus describes the conscious use and appropriation of a medium, i.e. consumption, but also the independent production of media content. Media knowledge comprises structural and content-related knowledge, e.g. about the structure, organisation or regulation of a medium. Finally, media evaluation allows people to critically analyse and evaluate a medium, its technologies, structures and content from an ethical and normative standpoint.

Listening seems to us to be an important basic skill in all three aspects of the media-skills model. Listening itself is a mode of using media, so listening is also a prerequisite for creating audio media. Only through listening can we gain

the acoustic knowledge about audio media that is indispensable for media production. Ultimately, this knowledge is also a prerequisite for evaluating and judging one's own production of audio media as well as acoustic media content from other sources. The concept of listening in media education thus refers to the very foundation of media skills.

For this reason, we have systematically placed listening exercises as the starting point of our subprojects. We also drew on the work of the Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer, among others, on audio education, namely a process which has come to be referred to as 'ear cleaning'. Schafer compiled a whole series of suitable and proven exercises in his book, *A Sound Education* (1992, German translation: 'Anstiftung zum Hören' 2002).

On the basis of three work phases, the implementation of the concept of listening, and our work with sound in the subprojects, is presented below.

2.3 Phase A: The ambiguity of sounds

The first listening exercises used 'sound effects', i.e. recordings of soundscapes. Building on the effects of listening described above, we started discussions with the different groups about the sound effects we heard. Even though the discussions began with the question of what was heard on the recording, the central question was a different one: What images came to mind when listening? What sensations arose in the process?

In the media and audiovisual club of the Eduard-Spranger-School, for instance, the sound recording of a sailboat at

sea very quickly made it clear how complex recordings from unusual or unknown listening environments can create an effect. Many children and teenagers could not identify the crackling and creaking of the rigging, or above all, relate it to a soft whistling of the wind along the bulkheads of the ship. At the same time, it turned out that most of them could nevertheless hear an abstract concept, namely that of travel and locomotion. Cognitive gaps that arise when listening closely can thus be filled by associative images.

In this context, two individual reactions may be highlighted. One boy immediately reacted positively and almost enthusiastically to the sound effects. It turned out that he had already gone sailing himself and, just like his parents, was very interested in ships. A teenager in another subproject, on the other hand, associated the sound with completely different personal experiences. He had come to Europe on a boat across the Mediterranean Sea as he made his way here from Afghanistan, and the sound effects reminded him of the background noise that had accompanied him for several weeks in this extreme and exceptional situation. At this point he began to tell the group about his experiences during the voyage. The listening exercise thus provided a starting point for the intensive exchange of very different life experiences.

Here is another example. A sound effect from Mexico, in which a situation from cowboys' everyday work could be heard (a cattle drive with hooves trampling on grass and loud shouts), could not be identified by the children and young people. Nevertheless, they were able to identify some

elements of the sound, e.g. that the events took place outdoors, and that it was a very active and lively scene with a lot of movement. This gave rise to two different sensations: some listeners associated the recording with the impression of danger and a threat, while for others it conveyed a sense of adventure.

These observations may not come as a surprise. It is well known that sounds and sound effects can be very vague, not only in terms of their origin or what they denote, but especially in terms of the feelings and impressions they make on each individual person. The fact that cultural imprints and individual life experiences have a significant influence on the perception of specific sounds is certainly no new realisation.

Nevertheless, these exercises strikingly highlighted that listening, reacting to sounds and talking about them is a practice that enables children and adolescents to reflect and verbalise cultural and individual differences. Moreover, the exercises have encouraged children and adolescents to speak more openly about their own experiences than they usually do in their everyday lives.

2.4 Phase B: Production as a media-related activity

After listening exercises, we moved on to media production in the subprojects, a more active form of media activity. The pre-school children in subprojects 3 and 5 were allowed to start interviewing each other and using the recording device themselves. But the first step of this media action for the adolescents in subproject 1 was having them produce small sound collages, which we called ‘audio

selfies’: short acoustic clips in which these adolescents dealt with their own identity and portrayed themselves. Even though there was of course no ban on expression through speech, the adolescents preferred to make use of many other possibilities in the acoustic realm: sounds, music, small scenes and also their own bodies, such as creating vocal soundscapes (e.g. portraying the wind by hissing, a threat by drumming on their chest or their head, or water, floods, etc.).

This was no easy task to implement, even for adults, and many audio selfies were not easy to interpret either. The collages included bicycle noises, water splashes, drums, ball games, and excerpts from favourite songs or loud and clearly audible breathing – the joy of experimenting with the recording device certainly contributed a great deal to the colourfulness of the results. The guided, though not restrictive, productive work with sound also gave the adolescents an opportunity to express themselves very freely. The ambiguity of many sounds in particular enabled the freedom to experiment, without anyone feeling they had to justify themselves for what was said.

During the process, it became clear that the adolescents had learned to use the microphone in a specifically targeted way, and to open themselves up to the microphone and to portray themselves. Opening up via sound snippets was an enormous emotional achievement. All the more so as these adolescents were going through (early) puberty, in which many young people develop an ambivalent relationship to the changes in their body and personality – including

changes to their actual voice – and usually do not like to show and showcase themselves.

As a result, many audio selfies also contained music. For most young people it is an essential part of their own identity, a means of self-expression as well as a means of communication between the individual and his or her surrounding environment. For some, music appeared in the form of excerpts from pop songs. Others made music themselves, and in one example a teenager recorded the sounds of a table tennis game and integrated them into his audio selfie in such a way that the clattering of the ball had a very musical effect due to its rhythm.

One of the most important lessons in this exercise was to show that audio equipment is comparatively easy to use. The use of smartphones and tablets has also greatly simplified video production, a point made abundantly clear by our fourth social media project.

2.5 Phase C: Interaction within the group

A further working phase, with which we concluded our illustrative observations, is presented below. Although the production of audio selfies is essentially an individualising task, the adolescents did not work alone on them. They were, however, able to work on their own projects. So ultimately all subprojects involved the joint production of one or more content units that were produced through work as part of a group. In the example of subproject 1, which we have already described in detail, the group production was a mini radio play. In another subproject, for example, a

magazine programme for Tübingen campus radio was produced.

The decision to produce the mini radio play preceded the entire project and came from the teacher responsible for the group. All subsequent decisions, especially on the topic of the radio play and the development of the plot, were made by the group together during the project phase. The group decided on a dystopic story about life on Earth after a global waste catastrophe. The procedure was such that everyone went in search of sounds and noises – they could directly fall back on the exercise with the audio selfies. They recorded several individual sounds created by touching and moving, by rocking or shaking every conceivable object, and used musical instruments in experimental ways to produce new and unusual sounds. In the end they even tried out the acoustics of different rooms, such as the sports hall, in order to give particular tone colours to the reverberations of the sounds.

After this ‘collection of material’, everyone met in the plenum. They listened to the best recordings and finally decided whether or not each sound bite should be included in the radio play as part of the story, and if so, how.

It was particularly interesting to observe here that there was an amazingly broad consensus about what could be expressed with which recordings. However, the setting of the audio piece, a dystopian future, hardly permitted any common points of reference with realistic noises. A melancholic melody, played on a banjo, was unanimously chosen to stand for the theme of loneliness. Everyone agreed on the drumming sound as the symbolisation of the

end of the world, the global catastrophe. The frame of a catastrophe story apparently brought with it a whole series of acoustic stereotypes, for which consensus arose within the group.

It was remarkable how in six days the adolescents underwent a development that began with the first listening exercises and led to the production of a complete mini-audio game, which in the end gave the young people a sense of achievement. They perceived themselves as self-effective and media-competent, took themselves seriously and felt they had been 'heard'. In addition to all the skills needed to work with sound, the young people also learned during these six days to discuss their achievements with each other in a spirit of mutual respect and how to give constructive feedback.

3. Results

This detailed description of the illustrative work phases in our subprojects provides a basis for evaluating the use of sound in work on media education with young people. This assessment is based on the experiences of both the participants and observers of some of the projects, as well as on the written and oral evaluations of the participating students. The students submitted a written project report for each of the subprojects, in which they drew their personal conclusions about the work with sound. At the time of writing, however, not all project reports were yet available. In addition, we conducted an evaluation of some subprojects in the form of a group discussion with students and their project leader.

With regard to the concept of listening, our experiences have been confirmed throughout. Listening exercises have proven their potential for fostering balance and focus within a group. The other key findings are summarised below, set out under three different aspects.

3.1 Use of technology

Audio technology is easy to use and can be quickly learned by children and teenagers. This is especially true for microphones and recording devices. It has even been shown that the use of the microphone can be tested through playful experimentation, thus constantly motivating children and teenagers to try new things. There is both a temporal and spatial offset between microphone and ear. The microphone, depending on how you hold it, has a different perspective: you always have to listen to the recording again afterwards in order to really grasp that. This variation contributed to the activity's playful approach; there was always a lot of curiosity to see how the recording had turned out.

Concerns that work with technology might be overshadowed by a preoccupation with the safeguarding of the equipment itself – some of the equipment, which was privately owned, was not usually insured as part of the projects – were quickly laid to rest. The children and adolescents in all projects learned to handle the equipment carefully without any problems and thus proved to be worthy of the trust that was placed in them.

Use of technology proved to be a problem only in subproject 2. Since this group faced by far the greatest

social challenges, the recording devices also turned out to be a barrier that complicated the already difficult communication even more. Some of the children were very inhibited, when asked to speak the few words of German they knew into a microphone. Here it could be concluded that the group's overall situation was not yet suitable for implementing projects with a focus on media production.

3.2 Framing

In his radio theory, Andrew Crisell assumes that sounds always need a linguistic framework that defines and explains them. The same can be observed in the work on media education with sound. The ambiguity inherent in sound makes it impossible to work with sound alone. From the explicit verbal formulation of tasks to the discursive evaluation of recordings, language always played a superordinate and structuring role during the projects. In subproject 2, where a lack of language skills was a communicative problem, the project leaders attempted in part to switch to a visual language in order to explain the work with sound.

But it is also possible to create this framework at least partly with non-linguistic means, in order to improve the work in multilingual groups. An example of this was tested in subproject 3. There the students and the children made their own hearing instruments from paper and toilet paper rolls (see Fig. 1). These very simple ear trumpets suggest their possible use, thanks to their material form and potentially useful properties. As objects, their purpose and use are self-explanatory; it is possible to understand what we can do with them without words: we can listen.



Figure 1: Self-made ear trumpets/ subproject 3.

A similar example is that of ‘Sound memories’. Small tins, containing different objects or filled with different things, each make a very distinct sound when shaken. Every other tin had the same content and the idea was to pair those identically filled tins based on their sound. This is another instance of materiality providing a useful framework, without having to rely on words.

3.3 Cultural and individual differences

It goes without saying that sounds are by no means universally perceived and understood in the same way. In different regions of the world, different cultures or contexts, the same sounds can convey very different meanings. For instance a muezzin’s calls to prayer – for some a religious sign, for others a symbol of exoticism, or even a bone of contention – are but one striking example of this. Such cultural differences, however, only rarely arose in our projects, and they never became an obstacle to communication. The same applies to differences between

social groups or individuals. Everyone understands and interprets noises and sounds in a slightly different way, but there are more similarities than differences.

Throughout the work with the groups of children and adolescents, no communication problems arose from the differences in perception of sounds. Quite the opposite is true, in fact. These differences often turned out to be the starting point for fruitful conversations and discussions. One of the project's findings is that children and adolescents are indeed able to reflect on cultural, social and individual differences. They were also crucially able to gain first-hand experience about the fact that, in media production, there is always the danger of being misunderstood and hence it is important to take into account the perspective of others as well as one's own. Hence it's so important not only to hear, to listen in general and to listen to what others actually say – but also to listen to others, just as one listens to oneself.

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Case study: #HearMeSpeak project within the framework of the INsPIrE project in London.

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The collaboration between the Pilion Trust organisation, which provides shelter and aid for homeless teenagers, and the City, University of London came about thanks to an intermediary – the activist and journalist Nicola Baird.

The three partners set up media workshop (radio podcasts and television programming) jointly with the homeless adolescents and the students, who made the editorial. Each of the participants had a role such as editing, graphic designing, acting as moderator, talk show hosting or scripting, etc. The young people and students brought their talents, skills and knowledge to the table, thus contributing to the collective programme. Each activity was then described and posted on their #HearMeSpeak joint blog.

City, University of London hosted three kinds of training workshop. The first was dedicated to radio and podcast producing. For the second series, they focused on blogging, with a look at interviewing, design and layout, using pictures effectively and having an effective social media presence. The last one was based in their TV studio, running a Question Time session with a panel, an audience and a team of technical operators in the control rooms and at the manual cameras.

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As well as imparting particular media skills, workshops were designed to help the young participants (both students and young people from the Pilion Trust) to develop, acquire and enhance important life- and social skills. The workshops were also planned to introduce the young people from the Pilion Trust to the constraints of studying journalism in a higher education environment. This included the need to complete work in a specific time, the rigour of mastering new technology within one teaching session, the need to observe the boundaries between roles in the radio and TV studios in order to achieve the successful broadcast output, and the desirability of taking instruction from the tutor as well as operating within a team.

Among the key competencies achieved during the workshops and the pan-European workshop, we observed:

- The ability to choose and refine a media message in order to relay it in an interesting and engaging format to an audience. The young people worked in teams which demanded a great deal of cooperation and collaboration, and sometimes compromise for the greater good of the final programmes.
- The ability to navigate the choice of roles within the different tasks. Some participants were very keen to learn specific skills such as vision mixing within the TV studio or driving the radio studio desk. Participants gained an understanding that the skills base in different roles is equally desirable and that the front of camera or on mic role is not necessarily the most important one.

- Respectful working in teams in which not all participants had fluent English language skills. The technical roles lent themselves to one or two participants whose English is not yet fluent. Members of the team respected their skill in, for instance, camera operation and they gave them credit and validation for this.
- How to get one's voice across: topics were either freely selected by the participants (in the local workshops) or chosen from three options (in the pan-European co-collaboration workshops). With that leeway, those taking part were given support to formulate the most effective method of getting their message across – this was ideally led by young interviewees using their own experiences, occasionally supplemented by the inclusion of 'an expert voice'.
- Respectful listening skills: participants developed the skill of being an audience as well as becoming writers or broadcasters themselves.
- How to handle/cope with audiences and self-edit: the demands of the media and journalism mean that content has to be carefully selected and edited into a format which is acceptable by viewers, readers and listeners. This process demands considerable self-discipline and an appreciation of the key factors within the topic or story.
- How to work in a team: this was one of the most important competencies developed throughout the project and during the October pan-European workshop held in London. Participants from different European countries with different skills and languages were working to a

deadline (producing the social videos within one day of the London workshop) and with limited prior knowledge of the topics.

- The ability to adapt to a range of events and situations. The experience of taking part in workshops and social events in other European partner universities and cities encouraged an appreciation of a diversity of cultures and attitudes, plus the development of a tolerant mind-set towards people not like them or of their background or nationality.

Beyond Academy: media literacy, youth and social participation

Drs Charo Lacalle¹ and Cristina Pujol²

Universities may be able to play a role as a nexus point between young students and civil society, as universities help them gain awareness of their role as social agents capable of identifying solutions and engaging with social problems (Del Basto 2007). European youth are the locus of most concerns and debates regarding what are referred to as an apathetic drift and a lack of engagement with political institutions and their representatives. Yet this drift arises against the backdrop of a systemic global crisis, which has been decisive in the emergence of a “new public sphere” in which digital technologies have become key tools of communication (Castells 2008). These digital technologies are overwhelmingly dominated by the very same youth that is turning away from traditional politics deemed to be “serious” by their elders (Collin 2015).

Though it's difficult to think of youth as a compact social group, they do share common patterns, which may be read as indicators. The most important of these are surely the generalised use of digital technologies and the key role they play in the socialisation of youth and their relationship with the rest of the world. According to Don Tapscott (2009), digital generations present the following

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characteristics: the need to combine entertainment and obligations; the speed of their actions and communications; the need for innovation in both form and content.

This new digital identity represents an educational schism, as the evolution of society and technology has outpaced that of educational institutions. This has led to division between technological and communication skills developed outside the classroom, and those employed within it; this has been dubbed the “new digital divide” by Buckingham (2009). Skills like these also require new know-how, as well as a different approach to knowledge.

Digital technologies allow youth to express their creativity through devices, platforms and software. These informal practices have created a new literacy based on casual online language, mashups, remixes, customisation of images and online identities, etc. Nonetheless, the acquisition of knowledge and skills arises in contexts far removed from the halls of formal education (Glynda Hull & Katherine Schultz 2002). These processes raise the following question: How does youth relate to culture and knowledge?

Mimi Ito. et.al. (2010) believe that there are two modes of social relation through technology: “friendship-driven” (online practices of youth in their daily interactions with friends and colleagues) and “interest-driven” (the creation of a network of colleagues with specialised interests and activities) (p.15). These practices and ways in which youth partake in society through digital technologies imply different youth cultures and learning cultures, which are far removed from the classic model of authority represented by parents or teachers.

Participation in networked publics is a site of youth-driven peer-based learning that provides important models of learning and participation that are evolving in tandem with changes in technology [...] Networked publics provide a space of relative autonomy for youth, a space where they can engage in learning and reputation building in contexts of peer-based reciprocity, largely outside the purview of teachers, parents, and other adults who have authority over them (Ibid., p. 340).

One of the challenges of current education is transferring acquired knowledge outside the classroom, aiming to work on content and skills with tools and a language that are familiar to youth. There is now more and more integration of courses and subject matters related to digital technologies into formal education. However, David Buckingham (2015) warns that media education focuses on the most technical aspects of these media, as well as on the use of hardware, software and programming. This can result in neglect of the critical aspects of media education, which are related to critically reading and analysing representations and meanings as well as to the political economy of media (p.86)

The digital skills and behavioural patterns described by Tappscott may either relate to a culture of civic values or be subject to the needs and values of the market. This dichotomy is at the very heart of debates on the state of democracy in Europe and it places youth at the epicentre of its concerns. There is a decline in trust in the current electoral system and the political class in general, and growing scepticism about common European policies as

well as the vision of the EU as a bureaucratic system that is too ineffective to solve national problems (Collins 2015). These have led youth to distance itself from its elected officials and, in some instances, to adopt nationalist and xenophobic attitudes. Nonetheless, our youth represent the social category that is most conversant with the use of digital technologies, and digital media can be key to developing a civic culture shared with our youth. Hence, the growth of political alternatives related to social movements, as well as of online activists and spontaneous debates arising online (#MeToo, Aquarius), identifies digital media with the key players in involving youth in public policy.

The real problem is that youth is also the social category most solicited and targeted by brands and tech firms, because of the way they make intensive use of technologies in their free time and as part of their entertainment. The commodification and privatisation of cultural identities, and of public spaces and communication, are a potential threat to civic and democratic participation (Banaji & Buckingham 2010).

The ability to distinguish civic participation and the social engagement of media from virtual participation is a crucial educational necessity. This is where universities can play an important role. Universities can offer society their traditions in educating in civic values and in democratising knowledge and access to it. Technology and communication can define a social group in a differentiated way. Communication studies in can be the ideal multidisciplinary field for thinking about, analysing and

taking digital skills. So instead of simply using these skills for leisure and entertainment activities, they can be harnessed for tackling urgent social issues.

INSPIrE at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona (UAB)

The goal of the INsPIrE project is to promote synergies between the different fields of informal and formal education, in order to prevent discrimination against youth that are at risk of social exclusion or face problems related to education or integration. This will help them to claim their right to participate in public debate. By exchanging their experiences and knowledge, university students and other young people participating in the project have supported one another within a process of co-creation. This has facilitated the exploration of new methods of media education and new forms of journalism that are more participative and intercultural.

In our case, the UAB is an institution that is very much committed to the creation of a university of solidarity. This means acknowledging social issues and encouraging the university community itself to get involved with society on a voluntary basis. Hence the university's quick decision to support this project. The university's department of journalism and communication sciences also contributed to the possibility of introducing different workshops and seminars in several courses of the third and fourth year of the journalism degree. Several professors facilitated the integration of such activities into the curricula of their programmes.

INsPIrE enabled the UAB to do research into how media education and communication studies can contribute to the development of an active youth that is capable of critical thinking. The first step in this process involved putting into practice an educational activity: youth with highly developed literacy skills were linked up with their peers at risk of social exclusion. The UAB signed a cooperation agreement with Amalgama7, an educational-therapeutic institution headquartered in Barcelona and specialised in the treatment of behavioural disorders and addiction in adolescents. The team leading the project (three female professors and one male counterpart) began working with adolescents who were living at a youth detention centre in the province of Tarragona in southern Catalonia. During the 2017-2018 academic year, 130 undergraduate students of journalism at the UAB (83 women and 47 men) enrolled in four different courses (three from the programme's fourth year and one from the third year). They taught 25 young people from Amalgama7 (10 women and 15 men) different skills related to producing and interpreting media content. The goal was to share experiences and activities, in a context where media and technology comprised a common element of cohesion between both groups.

The four journalism courses selected, based on their relevance to the project, were:

- Multiplatform Journalistic Production (1st semester, 4th year)
- Communication and Education (1st semester, 3rd year)

- Semiotics of Communication (1st semester, 4th year)
- Intercultural Communication (2nd semester, 4th year)

These courses were part of the final years of the bachelor's programme, so students had a high level of proficiency in managing technical and communication skills in media.

These were some of the activities they carried out:

- Critical analysis: advertisement (Semiotics of Communication)

The UAB students and the youth from Amalgama7 selected some advertisements from print media and television, and then analysed their meaning. The UAB students taught them the connotative and denotative meanings of the images according to Roland Barthes's "rhetoric of the image" (1964), and drafted a succinct analysis for each one.

- Television reporting: consumerism at Christmas time (Semiotics of Communication).

Working in groups, the UAB students prepared several news reports on consumerism at Christmas time. They chose a subject as well as a perspective and filmed some images. When the young people from Amalgama7 came to the University, they jointly selected the materials, the interview snippets to be used, and also edited, scripted and presented the report.

How to create a blog (Multiplatform Journalistic Production). The UAB students taught the young people from Amalgama7 how to create a news blog: technical

software, journalistic genres and sections, as well as how to draft professional headlines and news.

- Television report: What is a university?

The UAB students and the Amalgama7 young people prepared a report about the UAB. They selected the topics (access to the UAB Campus for people with disabilities, UAB personnel, etc.), prepared the technical material, selected scenarios and determined who would be interviewed. They subsequently edited the material.

- Critical analysis: TV reports from a gender perspective (Media Literacy)

The UAB students conceived a role-playing game on the set of the university's TV studio. This enabled the young people from Amalgama7 to learn the different tasks and roles involved in making a television programme. The Amalgama7 participants also got to be camera operators, presenters and directors. They later went to the computer room to analyse some television newscasts from a gender perspective. This involved reflecting on the different roles played by men and women and drafting a brief report of their analysis.

- Radio magazine: national television fiction and gender stereotypes (Media Literacy)

The UAB students prepared a radio magazine show on how the portrayal of television fiction influences young people. They selected 'Aquí No Hay Quien Viva' (from Tele5), a very popular comedy in Spain. In the UAB radio studio, the young people learned to structure the programme and

prepare the step outline (beat sheet), before participating in the debate on the show. They had previously recorded several interviews in the centre where they residing, during the pre-production stages, and they used excerpts during the programme.

- Interviewing: encountering the points of views of others (Intercultural Communication)

The Amalgama7 participants learned how to do a journalistic interview: choosing a topic and a person, doing research and preparing questions. They recorded and transcribed the interview. They brought the material and photographs to the UAB and learned how to structure the interview and edit it with InDesign software.

- Critical analysis: media portrayal of immigrants (Intercultural Communication)

The young people from Amalgama7 analysed news jointly with UAB students, based on the theory that media only tell ‘one single story’ on immigration.

Conclusions: participation and engagement

UAB’s experience with the INsPIrE project demonstrated that it is indeed possible to overcome ‘student inertia’. In other words, their often limited engagement with other collectives or groups off campus. This inertia typically stems from students’ lack of understanding of society and a lack of commitment to it, as they are so focused on passing exams and getting good marks. While most of the UAB students taking part in INsPIrE had no previous experience of social volunteering projects, the relationship that

developed between them and the young people from Amalgama7 proved to be very positive: it allowed these students to open up to other social realities, far removed from their own environment.

Students and the participants from Amalgama7 managed to get closer to one another through the activities and projects they carried out. These generated spaces and moments of cultural, personal and social exchange that were very stimulating for both groups. University students learned to appreciate their knowledge of journalism and media as well as to value their ability to share it with others by helping and supporting the young people throughout the learning and execution process. The Amalgama7 participants gained access to spaces and routines of higher education and discovered new ways to relate to education and vocational knowledge, in which skills such as self-discipline and responsibility are an absolute necessity. They also learned that university students aren't very different from them in terms of behaviour, appearance and preferred types of entertainment.

This personal experience between two different social groups allowed their respective members to establish an emotional connection amongst themselves. This made them all more curious and more willing to open up to other realities, through a voluntary and through participatory approach. Some of the students have volunteered for other stages of the project or asked to take part in other workshops in other universities with other underprivileged youths and groups. They have shared their impressions and experiences of the project with other students, teachers and

family members. In a nutshell, they have established analogies with other social experiences and projects to which they would like to contribute once they have completed their undergraduate studies.

The experiment carried out under this project at the UAB brings higher education closer to the theoretical proposals of Peter Dahlgreen (2015). He believes that “if participation in the public sphere is the embodiment of some action or political communication, engagement is the necessary subjective disposition that precedes participation” (p.13). From the perspective of academia and political theory, there has been a tendency to underestimate the role that affection plays in motivation and will to participation as citizens. But Dalghren believes that social engagement depends on what he models as “civic culture”, namely as a culture of integrated circuits consisting of six dimensions working on the basis of mutual reciprocity (Ibid.):

1. Knowledge (relevant, intelligible and accessible);
2. Values: minimum commitments common to democratic views and procedures;
3. Trust towards and among citizens;
4. Spaces (for communication with others, both physical and virtual);
5. Effective practices and skills, and networking, the power to call and hold meetings, managing debates;
6. Identities: seeing oneself as a political agent capable of identifying with positions within political conflicts.

If we conceive of INsPIrE in these terms, we can conclude that it has proved to be effective in initiating young people in the emotional involvement that precedes any and all forms of public participation. It has opened their eyes to an immediate reality, a direct one without intermediaries. So the project has helped to empower young people as necessary political agents, capable of benefiting from the common democratic values of an EU in the throes of political and social upheaval.

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Citizen, media and higher education in journalism: From individual performance to collective competence.

Laura Leprêtre and Esther Durin¹

I. Introduction: clarifying INsPIrE objectives

When considering the relations between citizen and media, we must reflect on the press crisis, which is linked to a more general crisis in the socio-political and cultural representation of our societies (see the introduction of this publication). For this reason, the widely used notion of ‘citizen media’ needs to be first clarified.

Citizen media is indeed a portmanteau word, a ‘formula’ which “crystallizes political and social issues that it at the same time contributes to building” (Krieg-Planque 2012, p.110). The concept thus refers to widely divergent projects. We propose here a brief analysis of these projects, based on the terms of reference developed by UNESCO to define citizen media: participation, ownership, responsibility, independence and public interest (Naji 2006), applying scientific literature review.

The most common meaning of ‘citizen media’, which is largely associated with digital development, is media produced by individuals who have disengaged from traditional media and democratic institutions. A good example is Agoravox. The key concept of this movement is

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participation, which is understood as substitution: the citizen replaces the professional. Participatory citizen journalism would therefore involve anybody "playing an active role in the processes of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news information" (Bowman and Willis 2003). Olivier Trédan, calling on the analytical grid of Cardon and Granjon (2003), shows that this journalism is part of an imagined social world:

That of a double anti-hegemonic criticism (refusal of the monopolization of the production of information by the mass media) and expressivist (concern for the liberalization of the profane word in the public space). A technical imaginary world is added, reactivating a utopia of disintermediated communication (2007, p.117, free transl.).

The legitimacy of published production is therefore dependent on its author's status: a simple citizen, freed from media conflicts of interest and commercial pressure. In this type of participatory journalism, the democratic approach is conceived as essentially aggregative, on the Schumpeterian model. However, collective identity and 'community' are absent here. Many studies have now shown how common people are rarely represented by the publishers working in these media (Trédan 2007; Aubert 2009), as well as the alignment of these publishers with the same competition drive as found in the traditional media. So it can be "very difficult to find a 'people' (in the sense of the most disadvantaged social categories)" (Pélicier and Chaudy 2009, p.92).

Another meaning of participatory journalism, also known as ‘collaborative journalism’, is using interactive technological devices to allow citizens to comment on articles, or even to become sources of information, by sending amateur videos/photos and informational alerts. In this case, participation no longer means substitution but collaboration, either upstream or downstream of journalistic production.

Downstream, analysis of the comments highlights three main pitfalls: "the overrepresentation of motivated contributors to defend opinions considered deficient, even tendentious", "the difficult co-construction of conclusions because of the lack of management of debates by the editorial staff", and the anonymity of the contributors through which "the lack of responsibility allows the lack of depth, even the aggressiveness" (Rouquette 2016, p.107). Upstream, where the citizen is a source of information, this minimal participation does not fundamentally call into question the information production processes, which remain centralised within the newsrooms. With this observation on the limits of these two faces of participatory journalism, we can now turn to two other concepts to assess the relationship between media and citizens: ownership and responsibility.

Ownership, which can be defined as "mastery through the creation of contents and content-making tools" (Naji 2006, p.9), does not mean the substitution of professional journalists by citizens; instead, it suggests a "sharing" (Ibid.). This sharing in the conception and drafting of the information is first of all a sharing of ‘responsibility’, a

sharing of "solidarity" (Ibid.) in a common objective of conflictual construction of the social cohesion (Muhlmann 2004) and the territorial development.

This brings us back to the public journalism developed primarily in the United States by Merrit and Rosen (Charity 1996; Beauchamp & Watine 1996; 2000; Merritt & Rosen 1994; Rosen 2012). According to this approach,

journalists must play a much more active part in their community and contribute, on the basis of enhanced interaction between the media and their audiences, to concrete solutions to the everyday problems of citizens: employment, education, health, safety, environment, etc. (Beauchamp and Watine 2000).

Journalism is therefore fully integrated into local social communication systems, sometimes institutionalised by various financial support programmes. The many experiences that embrace this conception of citizen media nevertheless suffer from a lack of theoretical capitalisation.

We try to achieve this capitalisation within INsPIrE project, around the concept of 'media co-creation', involving students in journalism and young Europeans under/misrepresented in the media: instead of speaking 'about', we have to speak 'with'. It builds on collective competence, with which "the dynamics of the group are deemed to be ontologically prior to the actions of individual members" (Boreham 2004, p.9). Common knowledge is thus more than an addition of the knowledge of its individuals (Lyles and Schwenck 1992). Its corollary implies the non-hierarchisation of a participant's own knowledge and is strongly linked to the French concept of

éducation permanente (the closest translation in English is ‘community education’), which influenced the development of non-formal education in Europe.

II. Analytical framework: non-formal education and its underlying principles

Formal education refers to the structured educational system. This includes primary school through to university-level higher learning institutions, within which the validation of acquired knowledge and knowhow is substantiated by the award of a diploma.

Regarding non-formal education, the Council of Europe adopts the definition contained in A manual on Human Rights Education with Young People (2015):

Non-formal education refers to planned, structured programmes and processes of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational curriculum.

It takes place in all non-formal, extracurricular venues that play a role in the socialisation of an individual.

For the purposes of our study, we will adopt this definition of non-formal education and link it to the concept of community education. According to Pascal Bavoux and Valérie Pugin, the three basic principles of community education are “the development of the ability to reason, the acquisition of moral values, as well as the acquisition of a certain way of exercising one’s citizenship” (cited by Paris, Menart and Sturla 2005, p.22). Those three principles guarantee the individuals’ possibility of exercising their

liberty, their ability to choose representatives and to put into practice, in order to experience or to 'live' democracy.

Community education is the historic heritage of labour movements of the 19th Century. At the time, massive inequality was rampant (some children worked from the age of 12, there was no paid leave, knowledge was a privilege). Against this backdrop, education emerged as the best way to combat these inequalities and as confirmed by Bavoux and Pugin "community education arose within a system of values that placed the working class at the heart of educational and social concerns of organisations that compose this system of values" (ibid., p.19).

Community education thus focused particularly on the most 'destitute' segments of society; it arose within a context of mutual learning between workers and intellectuals. Geneviève Poujol more precisely defines community education as a project of democratisation of learning spearheaded by associations and aiming to complete formal (school) education as well as to empower citizens (Poujol 2005). Community education is seen as a complement to formal education: it contributes to the reduction of inequalities in access to knowledge and culture. Access to culture is especially important, as it guarantees people's political and social emancipation.

Knowledge, being a powerful means of emancipation, is also historically the driving force of higher education. When INsPIrE project started, partners assumed that implementing a project based on collaboration with non-formal education wouldn't raise any particular challenges. So the collective research question was fully focused on the

impact of co-creation and collective knowledge building on the participants (students in journalism as well as ‘young people from disadvantaged areas’). But after 18 months of project practice, another question emerged as being important: this concerned participants’ implementation field. Based on INSPiRE experience, this paper seeks to analyse the suitability of a project like this within the higher education field.

III. Knowing the study field: European higher education in journalism

On its webpage on ‘EU activities in the field of education’, the European Commission justifies its important investment like this:

Higher education and its links with research and innovation plays a crucial role in individual and societal development and in providing the highly skilled human capital and the articulate citizens that Europe needs to create jobs, economic growth, and prosperity.

This definition actually originates from the 2011 Communication of the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe’s higher education systems (COM(2011) 567 final). By linking higher education objectives with the economy, the European Commission echoes national public and academia discourses on the necessary “systemic, sustained effort at making higher education more responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalisation of societies,

economy and labour markets” (Van der Wende 1997, p.19). This effort has become essential to the definition of higher education, in the framework of knowledge society:

Among the other producers of knowledge, universities are expected to become part of the innovation system where innovation stands for product making and the final goal is to contribute to the international competitiveness of the national economy (Häyrynen-Alestalo and Peltola 2006).

This prompts Pierre Moeglin to critically rename higher education institutions as “educational industries” (2010; 2016), comparing these institutions with the business world. We should therefore mention another strong trend seen in higher education, notably the move towards managerial functioning and, more importantly, managerial evaluation of learning and research outcomes (Barats, Bouchard and Haakenstaad 2018). These are characterised by three interlinked paradigms.

First, the productivity paradigm reinforces the competitiveness between learners as well as between lecturers and researchers. The second paradigm refers to the concept of ‘human capital’, which makes the criteria of return on investment (ROI) and employability a key aspect of higher education’s evaluation and ranking. Both ROI and employability refer to individual performance and the ability to adapt to the labour market. The European Commission webpage on ‘EU activities in the field of education’ confirms this second paradigm:

The European Commission supports EU countries and higher education institutions in modernising education

programmes to provide graduates with high-level, employable skills, as well as the transferable skills that equip graduates for a fast-changing labour market (ec.europa.eu).

The third paradigm, managerial functioning of university, brings into the field the rationalisation and control processes attached to contract. In that context, how can one understand the role of higher education in social inclusion? This role has usually and exclusively been addressed in terms of individual access and academic success (Gidley, Hampson, Wheeler and Bereded-Samuel 2010; Brundenius, Göransson and Carvalho de Mello 2017), rather than in terms of social development and collective competence at local level.

This issue becomes even more critical when training future journalists, due to the essential need for evolution of the profession. The current dominant model of multi-competence and transmedia (Rieffel 2001) certainly has a significant impact on future journalists' practices and thus on their training.

For instance, journalists must now themselves handle several tasks that were previously done by different professionals. Besides the need for modern journalists to deal with the continuous flow of information, this change has created a time compression effect. Finally, the Rieffel model leads to an individualisation of the profession and increases the pressure on individual performance. Which raises the question of how to implement a project based on collective competence building within an educational and organisational culture that promotes individual

performance and competitiveness? Our hypothesis is that implementing a project for regular citizen media (as defined earlier in this paper) is very difficult, if there is an unbalanced relationship between higher education and civil society. Because a relationship of that kind will influence the way the participants engage in the project.

IV. Methodology

The methodology used was observant participation of the INsPIrE project itself, as well as semi-structured interviews with participants (students, teachers, accompanying staff, structures of non-formal education) and a focus group organised during the Brussels summer school. A quantitative phase, calling on questionnaires, was also intended for the beneficiaries of the project (students and youth). The focus of our research is to gain an understanding of the mechanisms that act as hurdles to interaction within academic circles, higher learning and the world of non-formal education. The aim was to ascertain their impressions about several aspects of the project and its activities: working on co-creation among youth, the personal benefits afforded by the experience itself in terms of appropriation, responsibility and ownership of the built collective knowledge.

Aware of the limits of our methodology, we sought to answer the following question: how do we reconcile being the object of our research while at the same time remaining critically objective observers (Bourdieu 1978)? As teachers working in a higher learning institution, the implication of our endeavour is that we well research our own practices and our own perception of non-formal education, as well as

our ability to develop projects with actors involved in both the educational paradigms that are the subject of our research. Furthermore, the underlying goal is to understand how out-of-school-youth (taken in by structures dedicated to providing them support) perceive the idea of the university, and ultimately to measure the impact such a project can have on their lives.

But the limitations of participant observation are also its strength. Brewer (2000) characterises this method as the use of an existing role in order to undertake research in a familiar environment. Criticism can be directed at this method (Welzer-Lang 2001), for example the researcher lacks distance from the group being studied. However, since researchers are emotionally and rationally very close to the members of the studied group, this can foster a more open attitude among the actors on site. Participant observation also allows for a very high level of comprehension of the phenomenon being researched (Adler and Adler 1987). Furthermore, mastering the codes of conduct, as well as academic language, allows us to translate and decode the discourse during our interviews.

V. Our analytical sample

Our analytical sample includes the various participants in the project. Students are currently in the third year of their Bachelor course, in the first or second year of their Master's programme. So they have been attending university-level courses for at least three years. Their average age is 22. They are either from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, The City, University of London, The Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, the

University of Tübingen, Thomas More Hogeschool in Mechelen, or from the Institute of Higher learning in Social Communication in Brussels (IHECS). Our sample also includes teaching staff from each of those institutions.

The ‘at-risk’ youth come from seven non-formal organisations. Their age is generally 16 to 20, with an exception in Tübingen, where the project was also led with younger children, aged 5 or more. Our sample also included staff from the aforementioned non-formal education institutions, including teachers, educators, supervisors and sponsors.

We were able to observe and participate in some co-creation courses organised at IHECS. We also took part to paneuropean itinerant workshops organised by each higher learning institution in their respective cities, namely in Cluj-Napoca, Barcelona, Brussels, London and Tübingen. We organised and participated in the Brussels Summer School in June 2018, which we were also able to observe. As stated above, our observant participation was completed by semi-structured qualitative interviews with youth, students, teachers and professors. In all, a series of 40 qualitative interviews were carried out.

VI. Results

The results of the present research tend to confirm our hypothesis about the unbalanced relationship between participants – higher education on one side, non-formal education on the other side (VI.1). But once the project was implemented, its impact on the young participants – both students and non-students – showed a significant

modification of this relationship: it shifted towards a better mutual acknowledgement of expertise and a feeling of belonging to a community engaged in collective competence building (VI.2).

VI.1. Bridging the gap between higher education and non-formal education

Understanding the actors involved in non-formal education, as well as their actual role, can be a daunting task for higher education institutions. It is thus difficult for such institutions to conceive of themselves as potential actors in the development of projects dealing with non-formal education. We observed both the resurgence of the culture of performance indicators and a difficulty in treating equally the knowledge brought by the different groups of participants. But this unbalanced relationship, which was apparently fed by both groups, was also strongly integrated in non-students' self-representations.

The culture of performance indicators

Higher education institutions often strive to portray themselves as being 'on the cutting edge', 'the alma mater of professionals', offering 'the opportunity to acquire skills' or even 'the best university in any given field'. Epithets like these are invariably linked to professional success and advancement, as well as the acquisition of skills. Nonetheless, the INsPIrE project offers such institutions the opportunity to reflect on their place in society and their role in the integration of individuals far removed from the academic world, within the framework

of non-formal education, through the implementation of relevant projects.

The project's universities had to make a huge effort to comprehend the concepts of non-formal education. For universities geared toward the pursuit of performance objectives, comprehending the goals of non-formal education or at times even simply identifying its actors can prove extremely difficult. As one professor said, "we need a methodological guide in order to come into contact with such structures." Another recurring question during our interviews was, "How do we approach them?" We thus faced the challenge of having to deal with different levels of comprehension of the actual goal of the InsPIrE project (i.e. co-creation of a common citizen media outlet, as defined earlier). For some of those working in universities, non-formal education was basically seen as little more than 'social welfare initiatives', and these were viewed as being outside the scope of universities' objectives and skills.

It was quite difficult for our partner higher learning institutions in the InsPIrE project to find a common definition of non-formal education and to use this common definition in a language that served as a lingua franca; in this case, English. Whereas formal education has a set of clear and harmonised indicators on a European level, non-formal education is based on exchanges, experiences, emancipation and a deeper, more inclusive understanding of the world. The official European definition of non-formal education is thus rather vague and does not quantify or measure key indicators.

Higher education staff in some partner institutions hadn't all grasped the advantages offered by non-formal education or its ultimate goals, namely in terms of inter-comprehension and of co-construction processes involving (and aimed at) at-risk youth and our students. These staff typically interpreted the project as being aimed at working on social issues. This interpretation then seeped into some aspects of certain projects, with their students adopting the same attitude toward their out-of-school peers.

A project not 'for' at-risk groups, but rather 'with' them

Students had a hard time understanding that the activities carried out in the INsPIrE project meant working 'with' the youth of partner organisations and not 'on' them, so to speak. Their first reflex was often to go 'interview' or do 'reporting' on these youth, in order to 'give them a voice'. However, the project required the participants of different backgrounds to speak together, so they would work together on a given subject.

Students had a tendency to behave as 'instructors' or conveyors of knowledge, describing their own roles along the lines of "we made it possible for them to...", or "we taught them that...". The same can be said of the out-of-school youth, who often made statements akin to "they taught us that...", or "thanks to them, we are able to learn that...". The process of deconstruction thus had to be carried out by both sides, in order to bridge the divide of what Bourdieu designated as "symbolic violence":

That form of coercion, which can only be instituted through the adherence to the dominant that the

dominated cannot help but acquiesce to (thus acquiescing to domination itself) when only possessing shared, common instruments with their dominators, needed not only to conceive of the dominant, but to conceive of themselves or, more precisely, to conceive of their very relationship with the dominant (Bourdieu 1997, p.245).

Throughout our research, we observed that higher learning institutions such as universities are actually perceived as instruments of ‘domination’ by youth from underprivileged backgrounds, a perception that results in their distrust of such institutions and difficulties in approaching them. Among these youth we identified a fear of being used, as one young woman put it: “You need us for your project to work. We have the right to speak our minds. And what I’ve done here today is all wrong. If I walk out on you, that’s it for your project; it is over.”

With regard to higher learning institutions, we drew the same conclusion. One professor stated, “We feel they don’t trust us.” These attitudes meant that it was very hard to establish communication; “They wouldn’t do things like we would. We’d set up appointments but they’d never show up.” The professors we interviewed agreed and spoke of difficulties in establishing a relationship based on trust with the youth from the associations of non-formal education: “They are wary of us” or “they don’t trust us.” The establishment of joint projects was thus very difficult as well.

To ensure the successful completion of our activities, someone was often needed to be an intermediary between

youths and the students and staff from higher learning institutions. It was usually someone who worked with the youth in some capacity, either as a coordinator, educator or supervisor or even a student who happened to be ‘close’ to the targeted community. One such student said: “I grew up in the same neighbourhoods as they did, which is why I was able to get close to them and why they trusted me.” She ended up being a bridge between the university and the youth.

This challenge, of bridging the gap between what was perceived as ‘two worlds’, was nevertheless positively tackled in the project implementation and activities.

VI.2. INsPIrE: towards a change of perception

Generally speaking, students declared that the project afforded them “a new perspective on things”, or a better “understanding of our society.” They highlighted the project’s importance to their understanding of “difficulties other youths of [their] generation face.” Answers given to the question about how the project had changed its participants indicated a change in the perception of social realities.

The Project has changed the way I see other people, as people different to me and with other social status to mine. It now allows me to listen and to get to know people.

It has helped me to see some things differently.

The Engage project has allowed me to meet new people and experience new realities. Therefore I have changed as I have been positively affected by my experiences.

The Project has changed me. I have a new perspective on social and cultural areas of life and that of greater society.

As for the youth in the project, what really came through in their answers was their “desire to succeed”, and the fact that they too “have something to contribute”; “It has opened my eyes to the different upbringings and the luck that is needed in how easy it is to succeed...” Through these experiences, 100% of the youth expressed a desire to “go back to school” or “work in media”. They said they had become aware of their “talent” and their “skills”, while also highlighting the “opportunities” that this project has afforded them. These opportunities were named as “encounters” and “contact with others”, or “the positive experience and the opportunity to express themselves.”

The youth also stressed a wider open-mindedness and consciousness of societal issues:

The Project has made me more aware about issues and subjects in the country, which was great for the workshops. I think it has changed me, as not only have I become more knowledgeable on some of the topics covered in workshops, but meeting new people has changed me by becoming more open.

We also noted in both groups that this project allowed participants to open up to new perspectives for their future.

I could see myself taking photos and using photography as social comment. I could also reach a wider audience with photography, as many people around the world do not read or cannot read. It opens a new world of work and possibilities for me.

Another first-hand account from one of the youth: “The Project has been really helpful on making me see how wonderful journalism can be.” Or as another young participant put it: “This process and the Engage Project have helped me to improve the process to produce the news.” Furthermore, 75% of the participating youth and students answered positively when asked “Has the Project helped you to decide where you want to go in your future?”

Ultimately, when we asked the youth, students, teachers and professors which key terms would best describe the project, the terms that came up most often were “cooperation”, “mutual assistance”, “exchange”, “encounters”, “experiences”, “shared skills”, “open-mindedness” and “participation”. When asked if they would recommend this sort of project, students and youths unanimously (100% of them) recommended this kind of project and would like to see it carry on in the future.

In the end, the project results contradict a certain amount of stereotypes. Thanks to educational techniques of co-creation that they themselves developed, all of the trainers managed to treat all the young participants in their charge – whether out-of-school youth or university-level students – in an egalitarian and undifferentiated way. As one of the educators stated, “A certain number of stereotypes about homeless children were demolished.”

In terms of negative criticism of INsPIrE, there was a consensus that it was too short. The project was described as “too short” and all the participants were left wondering, “What happens next?”, while also expressing the will to “carry on”. The project’s short duration was also cited as an

obstacle to further commitment, as some stated that it was “an obstacle to engage more – which also gave rise to feelings of “frustration”. Indeed, the short lifespan of the project was deleterious to its successful execution. It rendered the experience “ephemeral”, according to one professor. “We thought it was a pity that all those relationships and connections could be established, only to have to pull to plug on the whole thing later because of funds running out. The project’s ephemeral nature is a source of frustration for all involved.” Most partners expressed the desire to set up this project in the long term, by finding sources of financing in order to be able to continue with the collaboration.

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Mediology, media literacy and the ‘real thing’: how research may effectively impact social reality instead of falling into the auto-referential trap of literacy researching itself.

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The INSPIRE project title reads ‘*Innovative educational and media practices for an inclusive and participatory Europe – Bridging the gap between university and non-formal education*’, hence the INsPIrE acronym, give or take a few letters. My objective in this contribution is to explore the various issues which are loosely covered by or connected to the said ‘*gap between university and non-formal education*’, which the project title mentions.

A sociological perspective together with the adequate historical perspective will help us better understand that this gap is a matter of literacy (including media literacy) simply because higher education institutions and non-formal education organisations share a territory which is partitioned in terms of literacy competences. Yet, there is more to it than meets the eye: classical literacy studies²

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² Literacy Studies are now a major field of research. Personally speaking, I would preferably emphasize the pioneering works of Jack Goody (1986, 1987) and Eric Havelock (1981, 1986), which impact on the study of classical philosophy has yet to reach Continental Europe and especially France, Walter Ong (2002), an American Jesuit scholar of foremost importance in understanding orality and writing in the context of religion. Other names should

have established that basic features of cultures in the largest sense of the word (how people perceive themselves and tackle issues of gender roles and generations, *inter alia*) are deeply conditioned by the degree of literacy, i.e. the presence or the absence thereof. But this is already an observation made from the point of view of highly literate research. The fact of the matter is that the very people concerned are themselves oblivious or unconscious of this situation. For instance, in cases of deep illiteracy, which in Europe, affects at least ten percent of the active population, evidence and statistics show a large measure of under-reporting and denial.

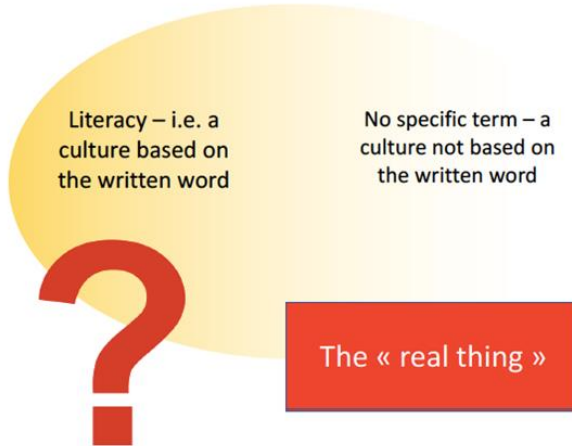
In addition to this fundamental literacy perspective, we should note that over the last fifty years, a pronounced shift has occurred, on a massive scale, from the written media to the audiovisual media. This shift has silently reconditioned our culture and way of life, a situation which media literacy

be at least mentioned, such as Marshall McLuhan (1962) though this would lead us too far into the territory of mediology and media literacy. Major French-speaking thinkers such as Jacques Derrida, Maurice Blanchot and Jacques Lacan, whose names may come to the reader's mind are far too remote in their investigation and creative styles to be included in this very short list of references. There are thousands of books, articles, publications, etc., which should be at some point quoted here, whose ideas, thoughts, observations, demonstrations, messages, may have percolated in my already long intellectual journey and which need not be part of the bibliography, as this would then provide a very ironic counterpoint to my very critical appraisal of the protocol and decorum of "higher education". In that context, to add irony to irony, a must-read reference should be Lindsay Waters (2004), the executive director for the humanities, at the Harvard University Press.

undertakes to explore and understand. Now, the risk is that academic research may prove sensitive only to those items which further its own agenda and strengthen its legitimacy, whereas people in everyday life may steer clear from what they see as abstruse obsession with arid literacy and abide by non-written laws (akin to Antigone's famous *ta agraphia*), which they also deem self-confirming and obvious. One may detect here warning signs of a rising tide against intellectualism, which may account for the irresistible wave of premodern radicalism that we are now witnessing throughout the so-called developed societies, with its premodern features – racist supremacy with a penchant for alpha-gorilla political persona – and the gradual demise of democratic culture. Yet, given the fact that science and technology require not only basic literacy skills but also a set of highly sophisticated intellectual competences, mainstream society runs the risk of schizophrenic fragmentation, idolizing high-tech machinery while despising the intellect *per se* which is a prerequisite for both science and democracy.

This is a challenge we encounter and experience in pedagogy, in the field: we must make sure that research does not end up researching itself, from the epistemological foundations to the philosophical and ideological superstructure. We must also remain wary of the immediate appeal of 'real life' (which I shun from qualifying any further) as it also features a self-confirming process by which emotionally charged attitudes and reality-show codes override any considerations which may disturb it in its constant consolidation of 'facts of life' and

cultural/empirical dogmas into a common-sensical, matter-of-fact attitude. Symmetrical blind spots may confuse the issue at hand, and perhaps we may need a diagram:



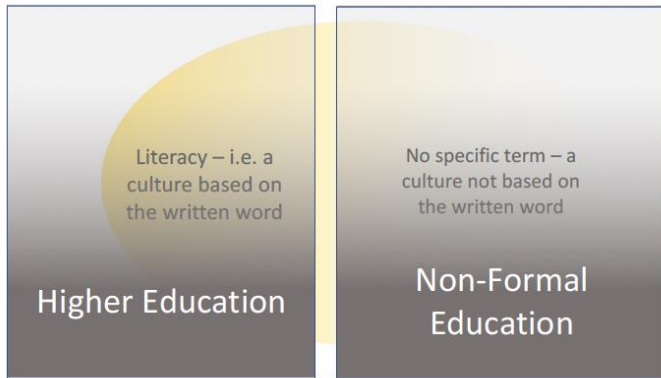
As we may not avoid holding the high ground of theoretical literacy, what plays the role of the *Other* in our discussion may elude us: there is no concept to describe a culture which carefully steers clear in today's mainstream society from specifically literate culture. Symmetrically, the *de facto* culture of everyday life, especially amongst youngsters (and in that segment of population, especially amongst boys) rests upon the intimate connection between what is experienced, perceived, understood, etc., as the 'real thing' without any further conceptualisation, and the discourse, reflexion, perception, etc., which percolate from the 'real thing' into everyday speech performances, enunciations and acts, within any given community as part of the most fundamental socialisation processes.

From that vantage point, intellectualism may seem an ominous mystery, to be measured in terms of social competences, with this very negative verdict, which is then transposed to literacy in general: bookish intellectuals have no team spirit, take no part in the gang, clan, tribe or community, put on a show of irrelevant knowledge, can hardly fight or dance, etc. *Pisa* studies (<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/>) have repeatedly established a gender imbalance, in just about all countries and all disciplines, between girls and boys as regards academic achievements: girls and women outperform boys and men to a massive degree up until the time power, not literate fluency, is at stake. This passing remark is made here to suggest that there may be material for very promising research, which would consider afresh the relationships between literacy and gender identities.

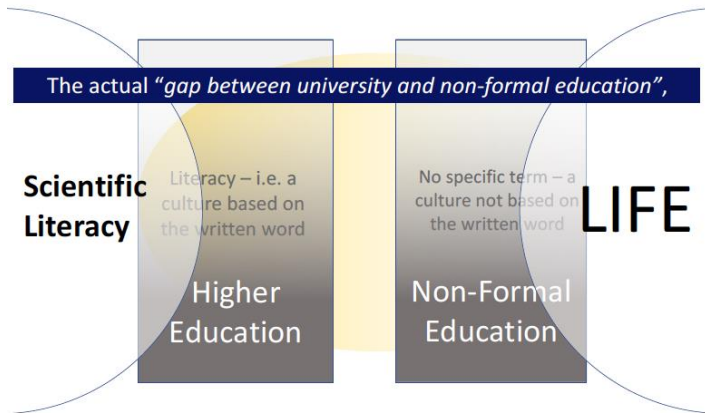
We may now look at the translation by which literacy is taken up by *academia* and the ‘real thing’ receives a second-rate positioning as ‘non-formal education’. The defining criteria – a couple of yes-and-no operators – seems to be neatly ensconced in an inconspicuous way with “formal/informal” epithets. Of course, literacy is only the basis for academic research, to say the least, and it refers otherwise to a very general feature in the population, with some direct influence upon their way of thinking and perceiving reality, including their own, and of thinking and perceiving... ..thoughts and perception. The fact of the matter is that the antonym of literacy as such – a general sociological dimension of mainstream society – is, with all due nuances, another attitude regarding the same, which is

more good-natured and easy-going: in other words, the distinction is not at all clear-cut – hence my use of fading nuances in the diagrams I use here – and “antonym” may be too grand a word to describe this situation.

To sum up, many people read and write and do not stop to reflect upon it, while actual illiterate people hide away and try to cope with the permanent threat of ridicule and shame. Anti-intellectualism is not concerned with literacy *per se*: it targets the inheritors of the Sophists from very ancient times, whether they be politicians, academics or self-proclaimed sight-seers casting prophecies upon mankind and the forthcoming end of the world. That being said, the corresponding antonyms – formal and non-formal education – are much more contrasted, with non-formal education covering a no-man’s-land, in terms of literate culture, social and cultural capital, affluence, symbolic significance, where poor workers, migrants, struggling single parents, delinquents, ex-convicts, two-job struggling single mothers, etc., require dedicated and specialised attention. The paradox is that ‘education’ requires literacy while the “non-formal” tag simply alludes to practices which differ somewhat from the standard fare of scientific (or science-like) procedures, and which, to some degree, take into account ways of thinking which do not strictly adhere to forms determined by sophisticated literacy (conceptualisation, model-based theory, etc.). This is where we connect to the significations borne by the project title, especially as it does mention “the gap between university and non-formal education”.



Such is the semantic construction whereby higher education operates as a close-circuit monitoring system while tacitly supposing literacy for all as well as presupposing an exact coincidence between ‘things’ and ‘words’ and, furthermore, between ‘words’ and ‘concepts’ – with the unescapable conclusion that nothing worth anything should ever resist conceptualisation. It has a name for what may escape its radar: “non-formal education”, which blurred contours cover indiscriminately skilled operators in the field and neutralised target populations and individuals, neatly broken down in proceduralised categories for intervention. There lies the much wanted “the gap between university and non-formal education”, which for the time being may only denote a multi-faceted problem that any readymade, academic solution may only exacerbate. We now need to decipher this gap and attempt at understanding what both terms, “higher education” and “non-formal education”, stand for, as handy vignettes.



Higher education is not a Platonic realm of ideas of which we obtain the revelation by the intercession of God or some Husserlian *Wesensschau*. With its very long and far reaching history, which secretly haunts it, higher education has been hijacked from its original, normal course – prestige education for a prestigious elite, with its offerings in Greek, Latin, poetry, rhetoric, philosophy, theology, etc. – by the sudden, explosive rise of scientific knowledge over the last two centuries. In other words, the source of authority for higher education – and we should hear clearly the symbolic overtones of anything that calls itself ‘higher’. “Higher than what?” we should always ask. Higher education is to its scientific paradigm – ‘hard sciences’ where ‘hard’ supersedes ‘high’ – what non-formal education is to higher education. Not everything in higher education is scientific and *humanities* – which is the standard translation for a more obvious coining in French: “*sciences humaines*”, “*sciences sociales*” – are still struggling to establish an impeccable epistemology,

especially in contrast to the spectacular achievements of hard science. Prestige plays a role, and in the academic pecking order, non-formal education is way down in terms of dignity and symbolic power. Now, non-formal education may at times shake the tree and vouch for that ‘real thing’ it so often encounters, with a degree of admiration and even of envy. The ‘real thing’: *life*, if you will. It would take a great many volumes of densely overwrought conceptualisation to shed some light upon the tense relationships between a culture of writing and a culture of carefree adhesion to ‘life’, whatever that means. I may only allude here to the nostalgic longing any scholar may feel for ‘life’, when retreating into a life of austere study which general spiritual horizon tends to wane as ‘life’ unfolds...

This has been somewhat of a symptomatic reading of the said “gap between university and non-formal education”, which nevertheless identifies a deeply-seated traumatic configuration which subtly haunts academia. One may fear that its value rests *prima facie* upon the seductive powers of these ideas, with nothing more than a playful use of concepts. Yet, there are tools, conceptual and philosophical instruments, references, facts and figures, which may come handy in shoring up perhaps too facile a demonstration. These instruments are presented in the next section, with the hope of opening new paths to make good on the ‘intuitions’ expounded here above.

A historical exploration – literacy studies, mediology and media literacy

Higher education used to mean education, pure and simple. Non-formal education is a later addition, nuancing the various meanings that could be conjured up to populate such a hollow concept, with its overtones of mild illiteracy. This may mean that what did not appear on the radar of academic pursuits, in the 18th and the 19th centuries, was simply not worth a minute of attention as the hierarchical substructure of prestige and affluences was also prescribing what is desirable and what is not: honour, affluence, status, etc.

To make a very long story very short... the gap between higher education and non-formal education dates back from the *Enlightenment*. It has evolved throughout the Industrial Revolution, in synch with the rapid-fire developments of technologies. Non-formal education – in French: “*éducation populaire*” or “*éducation permanente*” – started as a general societal motion to emancipate the *Lumpenproletariat*, i.e. the working poor, by means of a provision of alphabetisation courses amongst other charities. During the 18th Century, prestigious universities would be content to ensure the transmission of a refined culture of literacy for the elite while most people would remain basically illiterate - ca. 60 percent for men and 40 percent for women, with a world average of 10 to 20% (Furet & Ozouf 1977; Cressy 1980). Academia was a magnet for marginalised populations (e.g. the Jews in Central Europe) which seize whatever opportunity offered by their political emancipation throughout the 19th Century

to launch with a career in academia through hard work with a view to acquire dignity and prestige: this was, as Hannah Arendt noted herself, a very viable and enviable substitute for nobility.

The unquenchable appetite for scientific expertise on part of the industrial world, in full expansion, gave rise to a new level of ‘super’ literacy, i.e. mathematical and scientific competences. Today, we may experience this cultural divide in academia, where hard sciences take the high road while the other disciplines more or less conform to an ideology of scientifically sound epistemology, that which remains opened to debate. What I mean to point out here is that we have, within higher education, a widening gap between hard sciences and other disciplines, including liberal arts, which echoes the wider-scaled gap, in society, between higher education and the remainder of society, with non-formal education trying its best to maintain continuity between both ends of the spectrum.

The ‘social ladder’ which alphabetical literacy and scientific literacy seemed to offer in the past now seems broken and this perception is widespread in the general public. Many younger members of today’s society are sceptical about the much-touted connection between higher education and access to employment (as opposed to getting a ‘job’). Earning a living is not the only issue at hand here. Prestige and dignity are of foremost importance, as it is clearly a core issue amongst the most fragile and marginalised segments of population in all societies. Nobody is proud to be poor, apart from a few hermits perhaps. Shame is often associated to a considerable degree

with poverty, joblessness, precariousness, etc., and this is internalised as if poverty was God's punishment to lesser beings, while money, affluence and prestige was clear signs of His favour. These views are not uncommon in the USA, especially amongst working poors, but this is quite another topic. My point here is that matters of prestige and dignity, and consequently of intimidation and shame are very important components of the 'real thing' to which academia, most of the time, appears to be insensitive.

These are matters of **mediology**, i.e. the study and theory of basic forms of communication, such as the oral and the written media, the latter making room for newest forms of scientific and technological literacy, which in turn generates new cultures complete with new configurations of illiteracy and internalised shame against a backdrop of generalised denial – we all own a mobile phone and most of us do not have a clue as to what may be the underlying science that makes it work. Over two centuries, the fault lines have multiplied in society: first, you have the first layer of deeply illiterate people in society, which is usually ten percent of the population; then you have a larger layer of fairly literate people, who can reasonably read, write and do basic maths (though the use of the pocket calculator has changed all that), which accounts for about sixty percent of the population, and then you have the last layer, i.e. a remainder of ca. thirty percent, with people who possess one or more college degrees, with only a fraction being effectively competent in hard sciences.

Now comes **media literacy**, which is mainly concerned with the newest forms of communication, from the

traditional media (journalism, newspapers, news agency, political communication, etc.) to the newest (Internet, social networks, etc.) including of course the bulk of the audiovisual sphere, with mass media (cinema, television, radio) and niche markets³.

This could be fictionalized as the return of the image returning to tear down the hegemony of the written literacy. Beyond that, there are indeed a lot of fascinating observations that could be made regarding the reconditioning of the collective unconscious or psyche in terms of moving pictures, instant gratification, confusion between illusion and reality, the predominance of emotion over critical reflexion, etc.

Now, I would like to emphasise that the image and the written word have something in common: you simply absorb them and there is absolutely no room for reaction and interaction. Condemnation of idolatry by philosophers (Plato) and theologians is based on that observation, that you may speak to a piece of stone, a painted image or a

³ Yet, with the rise and hegemony of the photograph as the epitome of scientific objectivity (1839), radio with its effects on streamlining dialects and parlances into a homogeneous 'People's voice' and television as of 1945, the hegemony of literary literacy has receded on two fronts, one obvious and the other less conspicuous: the collective *Psyche* would be increasingly shaped by the audiovisual media, syntactic codes and phenomenology, while literacy *senso stricto* would recede into an antiquated and irrelevant aristocratic culture, with less and less prestige. All of these observations belong to the field of mediology with those dealing with the rising pre-eminence of the audiovisual media (television, cinema and Internet) covering the ground now associated with *media literacy*.

written text, or even a television set, it will not answer back, as it behaves like a dumb and deaf media, because it is one. Now, for the last thirty years, media have evolved into an increasingly reactive *space*, where the distinction between content providers and content users is no longer clear cut. On social networks, you may interact, leave a comment, start a newsfeed, etc. With the help of easily accessible and affordable technologies, you may photograph or film yourself, document your life and even become a star, which may be nice, even if your only audience consists of friends and family members.

This is important in terms of dignity and prestige, though it is not any more a matter of admiration prompted by the written text or scientific achievements, but a matter of visibility. Being seen and being heard, though it requires the mediation of technology, has become the ‘real thing’ and the appetite for social recognition is thus severed from its underlying motivations: it has become an end in itself. Being seen and heard is tantamount to existing, socially and even physically, to some extent, given the outreach of aesthetic canons which have become the Law of the Land. This, as I have said, is the territory of media literacy, for which much remains to be explored and researched.

A methodological backlash

We all take part, to varying degrees, in the life of our communities along the lines of our diverse affiliations. Yet, the predominance of the image, given the four to five hours of daily television viewing, is a general fact affecting all segments of population and our nice distinctions between

layers of increasingly sophisticated literacy are so to speak drowned out and dissolved into this common medium.

Researchers, in that context, must remain alert to what in effect disappears in the way the social imaginary community operates. First of all, what disappears is technology: we use it, and we use it in a way that makes us totally oblivious of its intricate complexities. Everything has been made utterly simple so as to not require much thought on part of the user. Such revolution was started by Apple, and it was a revolution because you did not need to program your computer to do basic tasks and chores (writing, sorting, computing, etc.): from then on, you would just click on the appropriate 'icon'. We are all scientific illiterates who recognize without any qualms the specifics and power of science as long as we are not bothered any further... Similar observations may be made regarding forms of activity which include literacy (such as handwriting, drawing, writing music, learning by heart as was the case in massively oral traditional cultures, etc.): we use them in simplified ways which have narrowed our skills and competences to the point where we have no idea of what they mean and entail.

That could be a description of life as a couch potato, which it is to some extent. Yet, most people do need to work, i.e. to have some kind of professional activities which pay for food, rent, clothing, etc. Postmodern societies seem to have generated a widespread schizophrenia where work values describe a world which has almost nothing to do with the fictional universe to be experienced at home, with the television set and/or the Internet-connected personal

computer taking centre stage. Major difficulties arise when the job counterpart is missing or is precarious: prestige and dignity stem from the job status and the discourse one may spin around it. The feeling of existing in the eye of any other you would wish to impress is a matter of orality: you may tell a fantastic story loosely based on spectacular features of your job, which most of the time has very few of them. When talking about your professional activities, you are required to abide by the media codes: make simple and short, strike a pose and move on to other things...

In most cases which are of interest for social workers, this schizophrenic tandem does not work. While the prestige of having a job is, with some exceptions, rather disappointing, the lack of prestige of having none may yield intense suffering. An acute feeling of disqualification may eventually be internalised and in many instances, it is compounded with discriminations (gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, etc.). In other words, the pain endured may be cruel from which a form of schizophrenia may ensue: either you remain totally silent about your condition, that which makes it disappear through denial and you stick to your crowd where there is nothing you need to explain, or you try to fictionalise it, which may eventually trigger a process of self-reinvention leading to political consciousness and self-empowerment: in other words, “when everything seems impossible, why not try that ‘impossible’ path that suits you best (e.g. art) and make it possible in the end?” At this point, non-formal education may provide decisive support under the condition of a good

measure of clear-sighted lucidity. We may now come at long last to the ‘real thing’.

Epistemology of the disappearing act

The ideology of science – its prestige and dignity – which is so pervasive in today’s society provides it with much needed canons and dogmas as regards objectivity, verifiability, methodological soundness, etc. The temptation is great to emulate it and to mimic it (or alternatively to dismiss it when inconvenient, as this seems to have become the flavour of the day). With today’s audiovisual ways of seeing the world – “what you see is what you get” – the image of anything contains all that is required to ‘feel real’ and the imitation of science may pass as science. Anyone with a degree in anything including non-formal education may be sincerely convinced that she/he has an edge, knows things, has expertise, etc., and while addressing social issues on the terrain (in the field), she/he may impersonate the visiting expert *en route* to x-ray reality and make it cough up the proper policy recommendations. In most cases, this is an unconscious behaviour, without any malice at work. Being objective is acting as if you are not there, because you may not be involved, emotionally or otherwise, and furthermore you may not stand to be challenged. It may make your job impossible, but once again, if it looks possible – through reports, executive summaries, etc. – everything is for the better.

If we now look at these configurations in terms of literacy, we may find non-formal education torn between ideals of scientific loftiness, which remains out of reach, as if they

were confiscated by 'higher education' and what I have called 'the real thing'. We are all part of that 'real thing': we interact subtly, feeling sympathy or antipathy and not knowing what to do with all this, as it must disappear to make place for the portentous objectivity we wish to establish. We may be blind to the fact that we actually put on a show of the horrendous conjunction of social prestige (upper-class) and God-given science to those who feel they do not have any of that and may never have it and, in turn, we are sensitive, in the field, to elements of overwhelming vitality, perturbing yet fascinating behaviours of transgression and knack for vibrant self-expression. Hence the success of *film noir* and genre shows based on police investigations. We may indeed be receptive to all that because we intellectuals have made a Faustian pact with Knowledge, with a capital K, as if literacy (both ordinary and scientific) meant divorcing from oneself, letting go of our own appetites for a life of dangers and transgressions, taking risks, shaking down the consensus in which we feel trapped, etc.

Many strategies, which are very diverse, may answer this challenge. Non-formal education is perceived with condescension by high education, and that condescension is internalised as a form of residual low-esteem: the same condescension is experienced in the field by people who feel outcast, lacking social capital, culture (of the dominant class), money, etc. Higher education does not fare better, but it keeps quiet about it, because issues of prestige and social recognition override in many cases the Humboldtian ideals of the perfect University because the image once

again is equivalent to the reality and is easier to stage and project. Hard sciences rule only because it is not well understood that hard sciences have nothing to contribute to the heavy burden of being a human being, to lead a meaningful life especially in unfavourable settings, which is the majority in most societies. There is a dawning perception that culture – anything but hard sciences – may just do the job or at least provide a contribution in gaining back the ownership upon one's life, that which is a tenet of non-formal education (i.e. "éducation permanente").

There are some strategies intuitively developed by scholars especially in higher education in order to address these unsettling issues of prestige and competition within the Walhalla of hard sciences, and these strategies reinvent the wheel, i.e. resuscitate the Ivory Tower of self-confirming dogma (see the Pharisees). Their legitimacy as Doctors of the Law is at stake, and as the UK pioneers of literacy studies have established, the written medium is such that the power of the Law is that of the Writing, of the Scripture, and vice-versa. Any research will thus unconsciously drift back to working towards advocating the need for ever more research: research for the sake of research.

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III. Adapting curricula in journalism to societal challenges

The role of media education in European Active Citizenship

Drs Cristina Nistor and Rareş Beuran¹

Introduction

This study explores the empowering role that media education can play in developing a sense of active European citizenship among young students. It is well known that the media could play a key role in developing the European public sphere, which would help to strengthen the public engagement of EU citizens and contribute to increasing democracy in the EU. But how can students, the next generation of professionals, be engaged in this process? This paper's case study is designed as an analysis of professional communication practices observed at UBB RADIO ONLINE. This online radio station functions as a student laboratory within a journalism academic programme, which is organised for students and coordinated by teaching staff, and focuses on European reporting.

The European Commission highlights the importance of media literacy. The Commission Recommendation on Media literacy in the digital environment for a more competitive audiovisual and content industry and an inclusive knowledge society (2009) states that 'media

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literacy plays an important role in enhancing awareness in the European audiovisual heritage and cultural identities and increasing knowledge and interest in audiovisual heritage and recent European cultural works, as well as the fact that media literacy is a matter of inclusion and citizenship in today's information society.'

Defining citizenship and European citizenship

To define citizenship in the context of young people at university, we will first refer to a study by Óscar Fernandez from 2005, *Towards European Citizenship through Higher Education?*

- King (1987) says that interest arose as the political right attempted to redefine citizenship in terms of the individual's relationship with the market.
- Hall and Jacques (1989) argue its rise in relation to the effects of 'late capitalism' and the fragmentation of national identities.
- T. H. Marshall (*Citizenship and Social Class* from 1950) designed the agenda and the framework for future discussions on the meaning of citizenship, which was generally accepted as the way forward in giving access to public assets and encouraging greater social participation and cohesion through a number of basic concepts and terms such as 'citizenship', 'youth', 'civic responsibility' and 'adult'.

Authors like Marcella Milana refer to the concept of citizenship as a fundamental aspect of the relationship between the individual and the State (citing T.H. Marshall's theory from *Class, Citizenship and Social*

Development) and are further structuring the relation between rights and obligations to (summarising Thomas Janoski's theory in *Citizenship and Civil Society: A Framework of Rights and Obligations in Liberal, Traditional, and Social Democratic Regimes*, Cambridge University Press, 1998):

- (Civic) Republicanism – which emphasises citizens' duties to secure a symbiotic relation between the individual and the State;
- Liberalism – which stresses citizens' rights, thus resulting in individuals being loosely committed to the State;
- Communitarianism – which draws attention to citizens and communities' responsibilities; it focuses on re-establishing a balance between rights and obligations, although with no better definition of the relation between the individual and the State.

Gerard Delanty, in his *Models of citizenship: Defining European identity and citizenship*, *Citizenship Studies*, first presents a four-model scheme of citizenship. Each of these models corresponds closely to the respective theoretical and ideological traditions of Liberalism, Conservatism, Democratic radicalism and Communitarianism (Delanty 1997, p.288-291):

1. The Rights Model – mainly refers to the rights that citizens hold against the State; it links citizenship with formally held rights and has traditionally been an expression of liberalism;

2. The Conservative Model – introduces the notion of duties and responsibilities of citizens in relation to the State, mentioning the classic ones like taxation, military service and education;
3. The Participatory Model – stresses the active dimension of citizenship and emphasises the socially critical aspect of citizenship, with participation perceived as an active process and something that cannot be reduced to duty;
4. The Communitarian Model – highlights the question of identity, while citizenship for communitarians is closely linked to culture and, in particular, to national identity.

Furthermore, Delanty explains the Postnational Citizenship Model, defining citizenship as a multi-levelled concept involving four dimensions: rights, responsibilities, participation and identity (Delanty 1997, p.294). His frameworks are explained by the cited author in the figure below.

Type of citizenship Historical form	Formal	Substantive
Civic citizenship	Rights	Participation
Ethnic citizenship	Duties	Identity

The core components of citizenship according to the Postnational Citizenship Model (p.292)

Delanty (p. 296) also discusses the two emerging models from his period: “a formal citizenship (based on a post-national understanding of citizenship)” and “a substantive citizenship of European nationality (based on a new communitarian ideology of European cultural identity, and is becoming the basis of a European nationality)”. All these historical investigations led to a model designed by Delanty – the Reflexive Model of European Identity, in line with the idea that “European citizenship has opened the way for a conception of citizenship based more on residence than on birth or blood, while European citizenship is still very much limited by national models of citizenship” (Delanty, p.299). Explaining his new model, Delanty suggests that its most important dimension will not strengthen the ties between individual citizens and the institutions of the European Union, such as the European Parliament; instead, it will institutionalise links between the regional authorities of the Member States and the EU while opening the EU to social movements (p.299). So according to the cited author’s conclusion, postnational citizenship could be focused on the following four concepts: “human rights, including cultural rights, environment (responsibilities), democracy, including subnational democracy (participation) and multiculturalism and reflexivity (identity)” (p.301). Referring to the main approaches of European citizenship, Marcella Milana observes that at the European level, the citizenship concept has been strongly linked from the very beginning to legal and economic principles; only later, from 1997, were democratic values and citizens’ rights considerably tied to the European education project (Milana 2008, p.208). As a result, the

cited author says: “democratic citizenship has become a central asset of supranational policies addressing reforms of national education and training systems and furthermore current discourses on this matter embedded in education policy and practice within European Member States are unavoidably intertwined in a broader, if not dominant, discourse on European active citizenship” (ibid.). As Milana explains in the cited study, the concept of citizenship of the European Union was established in 1992 with the Maastricht Treaty, in order to confer the rights for all EU citizens to move to and reside in other Member States, to vote and stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament, among others; these rights were reinforced later by other Treaties (p.209).

The European Commission’s Communication Towards a Europe of Knowledge from 1997 highlights three dimensions of the European area: knowledge, competence and citizenship. It says this citizenship is enlarged “through the sharing of common values, and the development of a sense of belonging to a common social and cultural area.” Moreover, an understanding of citizenship should be developed, “founded on active solidarity and on mutual understanding of the cultural diversities that constitute Europe’s originality and richness.” At that time, European institutions were working on several key actions to achieve the main goal of the Commission’s Communication, i.e. constructing a European educational area:

1. Physical mobility;
2. Promotion of virtual mobility;

3. Contributing to building up cooperation networks at European level in order to permit exchange of experience and good practice;
4. Promotion of language skills and the understanding of different cultures;
5. Pursuing innovation through pilot projects based on transnational partnerships to create education and training products or instruments for the accreditation of skills or to test new approaches and arrangements.

In 2006, the European Parliament and the Council signed The Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, of 18 December 2006. Competences are defined by the cited official document as “a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context; while key competences are those which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment”. “Social and civic competences” are to be found among the eight key competences identified as highly important: they are described as “including personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence, and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Civic competence equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation.” Referring to essential knowledge, skills and attitudes

related to this competence, the 2006 Recommendation mentions:

- Social competence – the core skills of this competence include (among others) the ability to communicate constructively in different environments, to express and understand different viewpoints, assertiveness and integrity, while individuals should have an interest in socio-economic developments and intercultural communication and should value diversity.

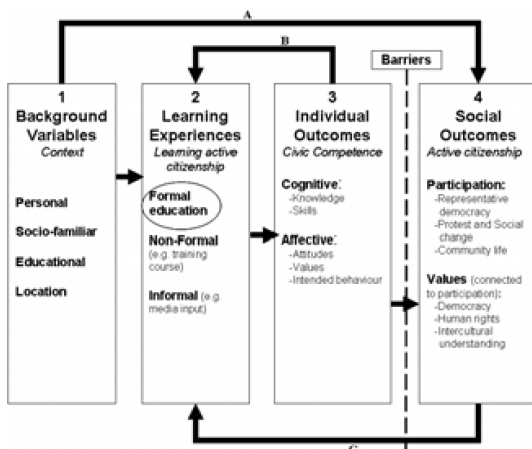
- civic competence – based on knowledge of the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, and civil rights, including how they are expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and international declarations and how they are applied by various institutions at the local, regional, national, European and international levels. It includes knowledge of contemporary events, as well as the main events and trends in national, European and world history.

The Recommendation also says that civic competence is linked to “the ability to engage effectively with others in the public domain, and to display solidarity and interest in solving problems affecting the local and wider community.”

But what does it take to sustain European active citizenship through education? Milana proposes the following educational scheme (Milana 2008, p.211-212):

- relevant knowledge of the political world;
- tolerance, peace and non-violence values, together with acknowledgment of rule of law and human rights;

- communicating skills, including both literacy skills in one's mother tongue and in foreign languages, and debating and critical thinking skills.



Taking into consideration concepts like learning inputs, civic competence and Active Citizenship, Hoskins designed a Working model of Active Citizenship. This model indicates that “through learning experiences such as formal education, civic competence (civic knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) is developed, and this enables people to become active citizens” (Hoskins, D’Hombres and Campbell 2008, p.387). Source: Working model of Active Citizenship (Hoskins 2006).

The term ‘Active Citizenship’, first used in the context when developing the proposals for the European Commission Lisbon 2010 Strategy towards developing a competitive ‘knowledge society’ and ‘greater social cohesion’, was defined “as a way of empowering citizens to have their voices heard within their communities, to

have a sense of belonging and a stake in the society in which they live, to appreciate the value of democracy, equality, and understanding different cultures and different opinions (European Commission 1998)” (Hoskins, D’Hombres and Campbell 2008, p.388-389).

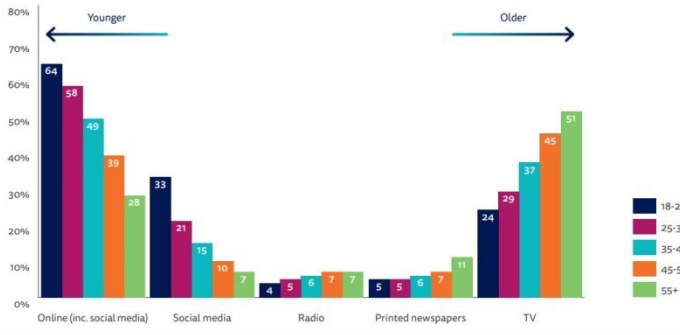
Perspectives on media industry and media education

Researchers have investigated the role of public communication in developing the European Project. “From the beginning of the European integration process, the Community realized the value of public communication in trying to achieve a solidary European civil society marked by a unity of interests and civil dispositions within its own plurality,” said Stefanie Pukallus.

“Young people have always been consistently less interested in news than their elders and news about key events in recent political history, such as the revolutions in Eastern Europe, has failed to engage the younger audience,” noted David Buckingham (2000, p.1). Media critic John Katz is referred to by Buckingham, with his theory “that young people have a very different orientation to information from that of older generations – they prefer their more ‘informal’ and ‘ironic’ style to the ‘monotonously reassuring voice’ of mainstream news journalism” (Buckingham 2000, p.5-6).

In a hypermedia environment characterised by continuous information overload, the role of media and the needs of consumers are changing accordingly (Nistor 2016, p.28). When it comes to main sources of news, consumers are divided according to their age group. As indicated in the

figure below, younger news consumers prefer online sources including social media; in the opposite corner, older segments of audiences choose traditional media content mainly delivered by television.



Source: Digital News Report 2017

In their book ‘Blur: How to Know What’s True in the Age of Information Overload’, authors Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel established eight functions that news consumers expect from “the next journalism” (The Authenticator Role – even if journalists are no longer seen as the only information providers, media must help news consumers to authenticate what facts are true and reliable. This process demands however a higher level of expertise from newsrooms. This authenticator role is a key element in the digital era, when news organizations no longer have a monopoly over information;

1. Sense Maker – journalists should put information into a larger context and link events, declarations, facts, so that media consumers can understand the meaning of the news;

2. Investigator – it is emphasised that journalists still need to function as public investigators;
3. Witness Bearer – this refers to the monitoring function of journalism;
4. Empowerer – this refers to the mutual empowerment of journalists and citizens (sharing experience and knowledge);
5. Smart Aggregator – this should save people time and steer them to trusted sources;
6. Forum Organizer – media organizations may function as public squares where citizens can monitor different voices;
7. Role Model – the new press will inevitably serve as a role model for those news consumers that want to operate as citizen journalists.

According to the scientific literature, “young people's ignorance of European affairs perhaps reflects a lack of interest in them and in politics in general” (Fernández 2005, p.64). “For them, it is obvious that they live in a climate of individualism and ‘promotion of the self’, collective groups such as youth organizations and political parties having hardly any influence; therefore they do not join them and they do not share collective opinions, and politics is quite definitely seen as irrelevant to their personal lives,” adds Fernández.

“Journalism classes need to be innovative in curricula design, if they are to impact on journalistic practices in the newsroom,” says Jānis Kārklīšs, Assistant Director-General (Communication and Information at UNESCO,

2013, Paris). According to UNESCO Model Curricula (2007), journalism education should for example teach students:

- how to identify news and recognize the story in a complex field of fact and opinion and how to conduct journalistic research;
- how to write for, illustrate, edit and produce material for various media formats (newspapers and magazines, radio and television, and online and multimedia operations) and for their particular audiences;
- to adapt to technological developments in the news media;
- how to cover political and social issues of particular importance to their own society through courses developed in co-operation with other departments in the college or university. It should ensure that they develop both a broad general knowledge and the foundation of specialized knowledge in a field important to journalism.

The main skills of a journalism graduate are, according to the UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education (ibid.):

- an ability to think critically, incorporating skill in comprehension, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of unfamiliar material, and a basic understanding of evidence and research methods;
- an ability to write clearly using narrative, descriptive, and analytical methods;
- a knowledge of national and international political, economic, cultural, religious, and social institutions;

- a knowledge of current affairs, and a general knowledge of history and geography.

Active learning for European active citizenship: UBB RADIO ONLINE

This paper's case study is designed as an analysis of professional communication practices – testimonies about practices and analysis of the conditions of the action, its justifications, and its consequences. Research methods included the collection of data through multiple data collection tools (as observation field notes together with document analysis) and interviews with alumni of the student radio team (currently media and communication professionals).

UBB RADIO ONLINE was launched at the Journalism Department in Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, in 2007, as an extra-curricular media project. This online radio station functions as a student laboratory and is aimed at journalism students who are interested in radio journalism. It is coordinated by teaching staff that also focus on EU reporting, since according to researchers “journalism about Europe is emerging as a common transnational experience”, whereas “the EU news appears restricted to the elite readerships of press” (Bee & Bozzini 2010). This radio station functions as a simulated newsroom: it enables students to put into practice the theoretical knowledge gained from the journalism courses and seminars provided by the Department, in line with similar written press, TV, photo and multimedia labs operating in this Journalism Department. Alongside the audio programme broadcasted live, the radio station has

also developed a multimedia platform (<https://radio.ubbcluj.ro/>). Here, on a daily basis, students upload their news stories, photos, interviews or features. The radio station has also developed an English service and a German service, where students periodically contribute with various news stories. Journalism students participate in the radio project according to their school schedule and the structure of the academic year – three months during the fall semester, followed by another three months during the spring semester. As part of their radio station activities, students do news gathering, participate in press conferences, produce press interviews and practise radio editing, radio programming, anchoring and more.

In our previous research, we concluded that David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory – which defines learning “as the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb 1984) – could be applied to UBB RADIO ONLINE as described below (Nistor & Beuran, 2017):

1. Concrete Experience – students face a new experience, through their exposure to specific reporting practices on a daily basis;
2. Reflective Observation – students, joined by the coordinating teaching staff, discuss, debate, and analyze the main journalistic activities during their weekly newsroom meeting or during their day-to-day meetings in the studio;
3. Abstract Conceptualization – students also reflect on issues related to EU media coverage in other courses from their curriculum (e.g. the European Journalism course);

usually, new ideas were designed after these practical reporting experience and theoretical approaches;

4. Active Experimentation – students put into practice all the knowledge and some of the alumni use these skills in their real professional activity, as earlier mentioned in this study.

The data that we have collected showed us that, since 2007, over 120 journalism students from the Journalism Department of the University have been enrolled in the team of UBB RADIO ONLINE and they have all been exposed to the values and principles of European citizenship in various ways:

- Through reporting activity (data that we collected from the news archive of UBB RADIO ONLINE): over 170 news stories, audio features or interviews mentioning the European Union; over 140 news stories, audio features, interviews mentioning the European Commission; and over 120 news stories and audio features or interviews mentioning Brussels.
- Through frequent participation in national and European journalism competitions focusing on the European Union (where the students have won numerous prizes every year). As for prizes, students won study visits to the European institutions in Brussels, and their journalistic content was disseminated by mainstream media.
- Through the practice of European reporting within the MICRO-EUROPA European student radios network, a project that was initiated by the Institut des Hautes Études des Communications Sociales (IHECS) in Brussels. Its

main objective was to train students in reporting EU and to contribute to the emergence of European journalism.

- Through participating in numerous debates with MEPs, organised in the European Parliament in Brussels within The European Radio Network Project (EURANET). This the leading radio network for EU news (at that time it included 18 radio stations all across the EU, providing news to 22 million listeners on a daily basis), and UBB RADIO ONLINE has been a member of the University Circle organised within this pan-European network.

- Through the long-term collaboration with the Transylvania EUROPE DIRECT Center, where students were attending journalism training programmes and workshops.

- Through various courses: 'European Journalism' and 'European Communication', organised for Bachelor's and Master's Programmes, which the Journalism Department has introduced into the academic programme.

In 2009, the student radio station won an award as The Most Innovative Media Project reporting the EU, from Transylvania. In 2012, it won The Young European Radio Journalist Award, a European contest focused on EU topics, with more than 80 young radio journalists from across Europe participating: the awards ceremony was held in the European Parliament in Brussels, in the presence of the former EP President Martin Schulz; it was won by one student from UBB RADIO ONLINE. Finally, students from UBB Radio ONLINE have won the majority of prizes in a national competition, Europe from the Halls of

Journalism Faculties, organised by the European Commission Representation in Romania for four years.

Moreover, we investigated the feedback of the alumni from UBB RADIO ONLINE: they are currently working as professional journalists, communicators or PhD students in Communication Sciences in Cluj-Napoca, Bucharest or abroad. The research questions verified the alumni's opinion on the role of media education in strengthening European Active Citizenship behaviour; the role that UBB RADIO ONLINE (the extra-curricular media project of the BBU Journalism Department) played in developing their level of European Active Citizenship behaviour; and the role that the radio station played in developing their knowledge about the EU. The 10 selected respondents for these interviews were former journalism students who worked on the radio station's news desk activity (for at least two academic years) and participants in the European journalism projects mentioned above.

Q1: In your opinion, what is the role that media education has in strengthening European Active Citizenship behaviour?

- Alexandra Boierean replied: "Education offers a wide range of knowledge on various areas, but media education is a niche that, once you understand its importance, you can understand better the importance of your involvement in community life, as an active citizen. This will surely make you want to change things that you find out [from media or your own initiative] do not work best."

- Beatrice Bungo said: “Media education opens up perspectives and above all it is meant to educate through information.”

- A similar perspective is shared by Călin Crețu, who said that “media education helps broaden one's views on the world around you and makes it easier to find ways in which you can use your own skillsets to be an active citizen.”

- In the words of Füstös Raymond, “Active citizenship is a strong pillar of democracy; it is the key to a healthy community, especially in new democracies like Hungary, Romania or Bulgaria. Media should definitely encourage people of all ages to get involved in different activities, even in minor ones, like cleaning up the riverside in their small towns or villages, since the European Union, as a big family, consists of small pieces from different cultures and social backgrounds. But there is one thing that keeps these pieces together: the will to succeed, the will to evolve.” Highlighting the strong power that media has, he added that “it should use this power to educate people about democratic values, about tolerance and cooperation between the nations.”

- Mădălina Hodorog said: “Media education helps individuals to better understand the world through its multiple lenses: politics, economy, education. Therefore it plays a powerful role in better understanding European Active Citizenship, helping people to better understand the role of each individual at a broader scale.”

- Andrara Lăutaru replied: “As a journalist, it is important to be aware of the EU context and to present the

bigger picture in each story, look for better ‘know-how’ and try to make the information accessible to as many people as possible.”

- Speaking about the role that media education has in strengthening European Active Citizenship behaviour, Ștefan Mako said it is “an extremely sensitive issue of our times.” In his opinion, “media education is an imperative in any democratic society.” He also said he was “puzzled it took us decades to understand just how important it is. Europe should make it a priority to educate its citizens, in order to strengthen cooperation and democracy on healthy fundamentals.”

- Delia Marinescu said: “Media education has a crucial role in strengthening European Active Citizenship behaviour, because it helps young people to be more aware of the diversity that surrounds them, to be respectful towards other cultures, religions, sexual orientations, and beliefs.”

- According to Cătălin Nunu, “The media has two roles to play in strengthening European Active Citizenship: freedom of expression and professional deontology. A fair press means well-trained journalists and a well-trained journalist can be a guarantee of a professional in public service. Correctly delivered information is a guarantee of freedom of expression as one of the values underlying the formation of the European Union. Citizen involvement can be stimulated and strengthened equally by fair media, but just as easily be demoralized and misdirected by a press whose interests are not in the public service.”

- According to Mara Rusu: “It’s not enough just to read the news or the so-called news that is shared nowadays on social media. The public needs to be educated, needs to understand that the internet is full of fake news and that they should not let themselves be influenced by information coming from unreliable sources. In 2019 there will be European elections. For this, citizens need to be fully informed, use trustworthy sources, be critical and fact-check, understand what the EU does, know the value of their vote and in the end responsibly choose their future.”

Q2: In your opinion, as an alumnus and currently a professional journalist, what role did the UBB RADIO ONLINE, the extra-curricular media project of the BBU Journalism Department, play in developing your level of European Active Citizenship behaviour?

- According to Alexandra Boierean, “UBB RADIO ONLINE helped me to develop European Active Citizenship behaviour. As a volunteer at this radio station for more than five years, I managed to develop my team spirit and to initiate debates with other volunteers on newsworthy issues which are important for the community of students in Cluj-Napoca, with the purpose of eventually covering the debated subjects on our radio station.”

- Beatrice Bungo said: “UBB RADIO sent me to the European Parliament, where debates with MEPs and the topics we discussed made me understand better what we need as active citizens of Europe. Thanks to this, my behaviour as an active citizen of Europe reached another level for my personal and professional life.”

- According to Călin Crețu, “Through UBB Radio I discovered multiple projects, mostly funded by the EU, which helped my development in a professional and personal manner. I have discovered NGOs in my local community and discovered ways I can involve myself in other projects.”

- Füstös Raymond said: “This extra-curricular project is not just a good tool for students to practice their skills in a real media environment, but also an interesting way to make students aware of the huge importance of our European citizenship. Thanks to the regular trips to the European Parliament provided for those involved in the UBB Radio Online project, you realise how much work is needed to keep the EU together, helping the poorer communities to evolve and to reach the Western standards. Volunteering, constantly gaining information and responsibility are values that UBB Radio Online clearly sustains. These values are crucial in improving the EU by actively using the gift of being a European citizen.”

- In her reply, Mădălina Hodorog said: “UBB Radio Online has a special role in developing young journalist students. As an extra-curricular media project, it first helps students to discover their passion and to work solely on the projects they believe in. Because of this freedom, numerous students have written about European topics, from basic materials such as the role of the European Union to the impact it has on a national and international level.”

- According to Andrara Lăutaru, “UBB RADIO ONLINE was the first medium through which I got the chance to go into the field and actually learn what being a

journalist means. This radio played an important role in developing my level of European Active Citizenship, because while being part of this project I got the chance to visit for the first time the EU institutions and newsrooms in Brussels.”

- Ștefan Mako said: “As a student, UBB RADIO was the first journalistic instrument made available to me, with little to no limitations. That meant an extraordinary freedom to experiment with a myriad of tools and mediums, which would have been otherwise hardly accessible. Above all, it was not a simulation. We used these tools in a real life environment – interviewing members of the academic community, fellow students, local and regional authorities, and members of the Parliament. My work had actual impact and I got a taste for being actively involved in society; it was definitely a stepping stone in my professional career.”

- Delia Marinescu replied: “UBB Radio Online literally changed my life and I don’t exaggerate when I say this. In the first and second year of university, I participated in two projects with UBB Radio, one in Spain (Swim in a digital world), and one in Brussels (Micro Europa). These experiences made me realise how little I knew about the world around me and that made me ambitious to improve my English skills and even to learn new languages.” She also mentioned that her participation in the above-mentioned two international projects with UBB Radio Online contributed to her desire to apply for an Erasmus scholarship in Spain, in her last year of study at the University.

- Cătălin Nunu said: “One component of the UBB Radio project, which has largely contributed to the knowledge of what having a European civic spirit means, is the multicultural development and involvement of the project. Developing the project in such a diverse and European media landscape was the most challenging. It helped me to develop as a journalist attentive to European issues, involved in European debates and understanding their importance for local development. UBB Radio is certainly a media vehicle that has contributed to shaping active citizenship in a European spirit. Beyond the multilingual and multicultural component, professional standards have also improved thanks to interaction with European journalists or professionals in the field. European subjects have shaped a new concept of journalism, Euro-journalism, to which UBB Radio certainly contributed.”

- Mara Rusu, from the Audiovisual Services of the European Commission, Brussels, explained the role that UBB RADIO played in developing her level of European Active Citizenship behaviour: “When I started my studies at the University, and at the same time joined UBB Radio, I got to learn more and more about the EU and read more about EU affairs in order to cover the news. UBB Radio was part of EURANET and Micro Europa – EU-financed radio networks that also gave me the possibility to work with them on different materials and to come to Brussels and participate in debates with Commissioners and MEPs in the European Parliament. Back then, I did not understand how important that was. But after starting to work at the European Commission, I saw the busy schedule that most members of the College of Commissioners have,

and how many journalists make appointments a long time ahead for interviews. So, after my experience at UBB Radio and arriving in Brussels, I realised I had a strong knowledge of EU affairs and had no problems adapting to the EU environment. I believe it is very useful for students to get involved in UBB Radio or similar projects that open the gates to other EU opportunities and make them part of European youth.”

Q3: In your opinion, as an alumnus and currently a professional journalist, what role did the UBB RADIO ONLINE, the extra-curricular media project of the BBU Journalism Department, play in developing your knowledge about the European Union?

- Alexandra Boierean said that, through UBB RADIO ONLINE, she participated in the ‘European Cinema: Why do we need (more of) it’ debate, organised by EURANET Plus in Brussels. She said this helped her to forge an overall idea about the capital of the European Union and the European institutions so important for our community. She added that her visit to Brussels helped her “to understand better how these institutions work and how important a role the media play in informing citizens from all EU Member States about what is happening within the EU institutions.”

- Beatrice Bungo replied: “The online radio station played an important role in developing my knowledge about the European Union, by sending me to Brussels and the European Parliament, where I learned a lot about the decision-making process, laws and our future as citizens of Europe.”

- Călin Crețu said: “Most of the knowledge I gained about the EU stems from the initial work I did at UBB Radio Online. Doing research for journalistic content published on UBB Radio Online was one of the main activities that led to expanding my knowledge on how the EU works and how the institutions work at a national and local level.”

- Füstös Raymond replied: “Before joining UBB Radio Online, I did not even know who was the President of the European Council or the President of the European Commission. I was not interested at all in politics, especially in EU politics.” However, he now believes “this project is clearly helping students to think out of the box; it is helping volunteers to gain significant information not just about their surroundings, but about the bigger picture as well. It takes a lot of time to understand the functionality of the EU, but UBB Radio Online for me was definitely a good project to find out about essential values like human rights, freedom of speech or human equality. These values are crucial pillars of the EU.”

- Mădălina Hodorog said: “As part of the UBB Radio Online media project, I had the possibility to attend international media projects, visit European institutions, discuss international topics with well-known journalists who specialise in European topics, and understand the role of the European Union in developing citizenship. I also had the possibility to attend youth exchanges, be part of European projects and create materials on European topics. All of these helped me gain a better knowledge of my role

in society, what I should do and how I should give back to my community.”

- According to Andrara Lăutaru, “UBB RADIO ONLINE and the European Journalism course were a way through which I learned how journalism is done in other EU countries , what EU means, how human rights can be defended at the European Court of Human Rights and how being part of an international network makes your voice, as a journalist, louder and stronger.”

- Ștefan Mako replied: “Romania and I became part of the EU exactly when the project started, in 2007. My activity at the radio began soon after and was always closely involved with several EU projects that offered me the opportunity to have first-hand contact with the Union, not only in theory,. I was also part of various programmes that strongly impacted my knowledge about the EU, through direct engagement with some of its institutions in Brussels.” Speaking about the role the radio station played in developing his knowledge of the EU, he added: “Most of all, it opened the way for cooperation with people with similar backgrounds in other European countries, through the international projects the radio was involved in and this gave me great insight about life in cultures with an older tradition in the EU and helped me understand my position in this constantly changing environment.”

- Delia Marinescu said: “The first time I entered a European institution was during a study visit in which I participated because I won, together with two colleagues and friends, a prize for a report we had produced at UBB Radio. I did a lot of research about the roles of the

European Commission and Parliament, in order to be prepared. For the project Micro-Europa, I also used to do lots of research on the topics covered in the reports, in order to have a European understanding of the subject. So UBB Radio Online definitely developed my knowledge about the EU.”

- According to Cătălin Nunu, “European Institutions themselves have had a great challenge in communicating to the citizens of the Union. Highly technical communications have led to the formation of this new type of journalist, who has to decode and convey to his audience the message of important institutions in the European landscape. The role of UBB Radio has been included in these patterns. The EU has made great efforts to reach its citizens, sometimes succeeding and at other times not. During these efforts, I actively participated in the UBB Radio project of the journalism department. Participating in the UBB RADIO ONLINE project was an opportunity that opened up this horizon to understanding the European institutions, public policies and their effects on my community, as well as how European institutions work and are organised, the role of my country in this engagement, and my advantages, my rights and obligations as a European citizen.”

- Mara Rusu replied: “UBB Radio is not an isolated project. It’s involved in different networks and EU projects, therefore students have contact with other similar projects in other EU countries, exchange knowledge with teachers and students, get to know other cultures, and improve themselves and learn more together about the EU. Thanks to UBB Radio, I took part in projects like SWIM,

EURANET and Micro-Europa. I also won, together with my colleagues, journalism competitions organised by the European Commission Representation in Bucharest. This was an important step in my career.”

In sum, we can see that UBB RADIO Online is an extra-curricular university project that making a contribution to forming future generations of active European citizens – citizens who are also enrolled in the process of professional media communication in Romania. Alongside theoretical courses that provide the necessary literature review on the EU, this media project, through its daily basis news desk activities, is developing a strong sense of European citizenship among journalism students.

Final remarks

We consider that journalism education programmes have the necessary techniques to design an environment that suitably enhances civic education. They can also educate young students, turning them into responsible and well-informed adults with a true sense of active citizenship.

In the view of researchers, “University education and training remain at the center of strategies for modernizing Europe’s economies and ensuring an inclusive society, while active citizenship demands the acquisition of cognitive and communicative competence through the social and educational process” (Fernández, 2005). Moreover, adds this author, “education for active citizenship is essentially a question of education for individual empowerment, which means, above all,

developing people's critical faculties and their ability to make considered judgements through learning."

Educational programmes, at all levels, could offer the key solution to enhancing an active sense of European citizenship among young people – who will later become professionals in various fields in European societies, whether through curricular and extra-curricular activities, as they will have the necessary training, logistics and methods.

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The relations between higher education and civil society in the digital era

Prof. Elena Abrudan¹

The article proposes a reflection on the relations between higher education and civil society. It is also a reflexive analysis based on the attempt of the Journalism Department from Babeş-Bolyai University from Cluj-Napoca to respond to society's demands in the digital era. One purpose of the paper is to discuss basic concepts about media literacy and media citizenship in the digital era, to show how digital youth co-constructs the media environment, and what the main features of contemporary media life are. Another goal of this work is to present Babeş-Bolyai University's Digital Media program as a tool to reach youth and underprivileged youth (ethnic minorities, disadvantaged youth – financial, medical, dysfunctional families) who use social media heavily. The program attempts to integrate under-represented communities and youth in the media. Taking into account the need of IT&C companies to employ young professionals dealing with content design and the abilities to manipulate this content on the Web, the Journalism and Digital Media Department of BBU Cluj initiated a new program on Digital Media. One of the objectives of this program is to support research and innovation in online and mobile communication in the newest digital media. The

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article also includes a case study about recent curricular innovations and best practices, with the goal of being on the forefront of innovation in journalism and digital media education in Romania.

I. New literacies and digital citizenship

Throughout the last two centuries, literacy and citizenship have intrinsically been interlinked to some media in modern societies. In the late twentieth century, educators and academics increasingly stressed the importance of media literacy, mainly defined as audiovisual literacy with respect to traditional media. However, as digital communication – from the Internet and World Wide Web to smartphones and apps – rapidly developed towards wide use in the past few decades, new literacies are constantly being defined and consequently new forms of engagement and digital citizenship are emerging.

I.1 New literacies

The meaning of literacy in the contemporary world changes frequently due to many factors, including technological and social changes. Some authors (Leu et al. 2017) propose defining two strands of new literacies:

1. first level: new literacies (lowercase literacies) exploring a specific area and/or a new technology;
2. second level: New Literacies (uppercase literacies) identifying broader emerging patterns. New Literacy involves not only ways of understanding, interpreting and critiquing media, but also the means for creating and social expression and new technical skills.

New Literacy is more personal, and digital technology provides individuals more opportunities for freedom in their lives, and for interacting with others and connecting with the entire world. Digital technologies allow individuals to pursue their own interests and areas of attention.

This approach allows for a more long-term approach towards curriculum development in Higher Education Institutions, by considering what should be taught in each field-specific context.

I.2 Digital Youth and Co-construction Theory

Twenty-first century youth use many digital contexts: Social Networking Sites (SNSs); text messaging blogs and microblogs; online phoning applications; Instant Messaging (IM); online gaming; chat rooms; virtual worlds; bulletin boards; music and video streaming platforms, to name just a few.

These digital communication environments are characterised by traits such as disembodied users, anonymity, text-based communication, self-disclosure and disinhibition, use of emoticons as non-verbal and para-verbal cues, media-multitasking and multitasking and so on. However, it is noteworthy that not all of these are determined by system design, as some emerge through use.

In interactive digital environments, such as chat rooms, instant messaging, text messaging, and social networking sites, users construct and co-construct their environments. Although designers may provide the platform or the tool, in actuality, users co-construct their use and use tools in ways

that the designer may have never anticipated (Subrahmanyam and Smahel 2010)

Co-construction theory thus suggests an important point: contemporary youth sometimes create their own rules and might be expected to participate in the co-construction of any digital context they engage with.

I.3 Digital citizenship

The rise of (socially) networked technology (or social media) has led to the emergence of the concept of digital citizenship within educational policy and scholarship. The use of this concept, however, is often vague and problematic (Kane et al. 2017). It may be defined around the following: the ability to participate in society online; the quality of an individual's response to the digital communities of which they are members; and the quality of habits, actions, and consumption patterns that impact the ecology of digital content and communities.

Some research documents how people act as “bad” digital citizens, trolling websites, bullying one another, and promoting extreme (often hate-filled) views. Other research laments that people in general are unable to distinguish fact from fiction online. Young adults often place responsibility on the webpage or browser to provide accurate information.

I.4 Digital literacy versus digital citizenship

Some authors however draw a clear distinction between digital literacy and digital citizenship in order to improve the focus of educational efforts. The phrase ‘digital literacy’ is commonly associated with Internet and

computer technical skills, and more specifically search strategies, privacy settings, identity theft protection, safe passwords, citing and attribution of online information, and avoiding spam and e-scams. This literacy is thus considered to require a “very specific set of educator knowledge and teaching skills compared to other goals currently under the digital citizenship umbrella” (Jones and Mitchell 2016). The same authors suggest that by separating digital citizenship education from digital literacy education, the former may be focused on “using Internet resources to have youth: 1 - practice respectful and tolerant behaviours toward others, and 2 - increase civic engagement activities” (Jones and Mitchell 2016).

II. Contemporary media life as context for Digital Media Education (in HEIs)

Mark Deuze summarises the main elements in the relationship between media and the human condition that serve to amplify and accelerate broader trends in society (Deuze 2011):

1. primacy of self-governance and self-reliance over deference to authorities such as parents, (media/education) professionals and politicians;
2. extension of community premised on simultaneous co-presence and telepresence as directed by the individual’s concerns;
3. the emergence of mass self-communication next to mass communication (the shift from survival values toward increased emphasis on self-expression values).

Digital media education curriculum and pedagogical approaches need to cope with these challenges.

II.1 Directions in Digital Media Education

Digital Media Education (either formal in Higher Education Institutions or non-formal in career centres, NGOs, etc.) may successfully attract youth who are under-represented in the traditional media (and journalism institutions). So it may subsequently serve to bridge the gap between youth and media by:

- Engaging in a co-constructivist approach in terms of production education, including USE-MODIFY-CREATE (Lee et al. 2011) or other computational thinking models;
- Balancing the rhetorical focus of digital education between production using new technologies as a way to increase empowerment and youth voices and a more future-oriented and more entrepreneurial discourse – the “21st century skills” rhetoric that better fits into contemporary discourse (“voice” vs ”entrepreneurs”) (Blum-Ross and Livingstone 2016);
- Including digital storytelling practices (guided by professional production standards) in the educational process as a means of self-expression, understanding of identity, diversity and advancement of digital citizenship, beyond the basic acquisition of technical skills (Truong-White and McLean 2015).

These directions have underlined the conception of the first Digital Media Bachelor program in a Romanian University.

III. Romanian case study: Digital Media curriculum

The Romanian media system is less consolidated than Western European media systems. So it faced difficulties in the past decade, after the economic crisis, in offering attractive jobs for journalism graduates. However, thanks to the development of the IT&C sector and increasing demand for digital communication specialists – as many businesses try to attract customers and engage with them on social media – the job market for web designers, digital content producers/managers and Internet researchers is growing. In order to stay competitive on the very dynamic market of media, journalism educators around the globe have always been under pressure to bring permanent innovation into courses and the curricula structure.

In 2016, Babeş-Bolyai University Journalism Department initiated the first Digital Media Bachelor program in Romania. This resulted from research done on the changes in the professional media and communication market. We design this program to enhance the creation of interactive multimedia content for web and mobile platforms. This way we intended to provide specialists for the new emerging professions on the information technology and communication labour market. Another goal was to encourage young people, belonging to different environments or minorities, to work together in interdisciplinary teams and build new entrepreneurial ventures. Half of the Digital Media curriculum is common with the journalism curriculum, in order to help digital media students to become content producers. The other half of the curriculum consists of specialised courses, aimed at

educating students as web designers, digital content managers or Internet researchers.

III.1 Journalism and Digital Media Education

The Digital Media program developed to align applied communication sciences education at tertiary levels with existing and emerging trends on the job market. At the core of the new program's curriculum design were educational needs linked to several career paths. These include social media management, online entrepreneurship, Web design, Web content management, multimedia production, digital media analysis and Internet/Data research.

Key concepts: information, network, interface, interactivity archive, simulation.

The key competencies defined for the Digital Media Bachelor program as a result of Babeş-Bolyai University's initiative, and subsequently adopted at national level, integrate the program in the field of Communication Sciences. However, the program's focus on content production and delivery links it more closely to journalism programs in the field.

Key competencies defined for Digital Media Bachelor programs:

- Use of language, methodologies and knowledge specific to Communication Sciences;
- Use of new communication and information technologies;

- Identification and analysis of the different types of audiences involved in communication; management of multimedia content;
- Identification and use of entrepreneurial models in digital media;
- Production of interactive multimedia content.

III.2 Digital Media Curriculum Design

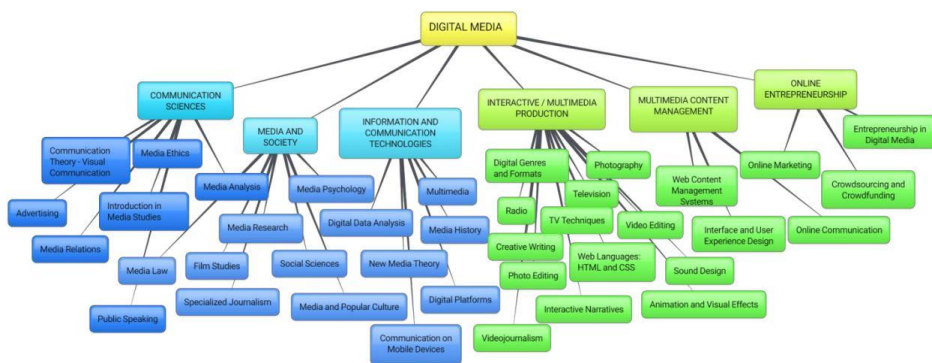


Figure 1. Concept map of Digital Media curriculum design

Figure 1 shows how broader Social Sciences, Communication Sciences and ICT courses integrate with digital content production, content management/digital publishing and entrepreneurship. The curriculum emphasises specific practical competencies through new practical workshops: Web languages: HTML and CSS; Animation and visual effects; Graphic and interface design; Data collection and analysis.

It is also supported by multimedia production courses – a majority of which were already being delivered in the Journalism Bachelor: Writing for Digital Media; Creative Writing; TV Journalism; Video-journalism; Radio Journalism; Photojournalism; Photo Editing; Video Editing; Editorial Design; Sound Design.

Although the program's primary focus is communication in the digital media through courses such as Digital Media Formats, Media and Popular Culture, Digital Platforms, Data Journalism, New Media Theory, Online PR, and Alternative Media, the program still integrates fundamental courses for social and communication sciences. These are Introduction in Social Sciences, History of Media Technologies, Media Psychology, Advertising, Film Studies, and Specialized Journalism.

Critical thinking and innovation-based entrepreneurship are key to the Digital Media Bachelor's perspective on the future. Critical-thinking focused courses such as Introduction to Media Studies, Visual Communication; Media Law, Media Research Methods, Media Communication Techniques, Media Ethics, and Media Analysis were already part of the Journalism Bachelor curriculum.

However, the focus on innovation and entrepreneurship led to the introduction of new courses such as: Web Content; Management Systems; Online Marketing; Multimedia Entrepreneurship in the Digital Media; Crowdsourcing and Crowdfunding; and Interactive and Transmedia Narratives.

The curriculum designers chose to consider a blend of both lowercase and uppercase literacies. The aim was to make the program future-oriented and relevant in the long term, and to make it attractive for youth that are unsatisfied with existing programs or who are otherwise unlikely to integrate in formal tertiary education.

III.3 The relation between higher education and civil society

The courses in the curriculum described above include topics related to media literacy and digital citizenship. Photo, radio and TV journalism, video editing, photo editing, TV techniques are common for both Journalism and Digital Media Bachelor programs. Some of the topics included would be best fit to illustrate the program's three-directional approach towards bridging the gap between youth and the media, thus contributing to supporting new digital citizenship.

- 'Co-constructivist approach & computational thinking': Digital platforms; Content communities; Media sharing platforms; Web Languages: HTML/CSS Web Content Management Systems. Digital Data Analysis Data Types, Data Structures, Web Extraction, Web Scraping, APIs, Automation Graphic and Interface Design, Media Research, Animation and Visual Effects;
- 'Empowerment, youth voices and entrepreneurship': Genres and Formats in the Digital Media; Online news formats, Publishing models, listicles, multimedia stories, galleries; Web Languages: HTML/CSS; Web Content; Management Systems. New

Media Theory New Media Business Models, Diffusion of Innovation, Media Ecology Graphic and Interface Design Online Marketing, Online PR. Entrepreneurship, Crowdfunding and Crowdsourcing, Sound Design, Animation and Visual Effects;

- ‘Digital storytelling & digital citizenship’: Genres and Formats in the Digital Media; Interactive and multimedia storytelling; Digital platforms Phishing, Trolling, Cyberbullying; Visual Communication; Introduction to Media Studies. New Media Theory, Multimedia stories, Social Media Management, Online PR, Introduction to social sciences. Transmedia and interactive narratives, Media Ethics, Media Communication Techniques.

III.4 Topics related to digital media jobs

In trying to meet the increasingly pragmatic expectations of candidates, as mentioned above, the program defines several career paths in line with job market requirements. However, some have yet to be properly defined formally at national level in the Romanian Code of Occupations:

- ‘Web Content Manager’: HTML, CSS, Web Frameworks, Web Content Management Systems, Online Communication.
- ‘Social Media Manager’: Digital Platforms, Content Writing, Online PR, Media Relations.
- ‘Multimedia Producer & Editor’: Photography, TV, Radio, Video editing, Photo editing, Sound design, Animation and visual effects.

- ‘UX and Interaction Designer’: Interface Design, Interactive Narratives, Visual Communication, Mobile Communication, Multimedia.
- ‘Internet Researcher’: Digital Data Analysis, New Media Theory, Media Analysis, Media Research.
- ‘Online Entrepreneur’: Online Entrepreneurship, Crowdfunding and Crowdsourcing, Online Marketing.

III.5 Underprivileged and under-represented youth opportunities

The Romanian Ministry of Education and Babeş-Bolyai University offer subsidies (tuition waivers) for ethnic minorities (Hungarian and German, through the BBU’s multicultural tradition, and Roma ethnics), high-school graduates from rural environment, Romanian ethnics living abroad, and social scholarships (for youth from low-income families/with medical disabilities).

The Department of Journalism provides the necessary media logistics and teaching staff assistance, so that these youth can produce their own media content and therefore express the voice of their communities (UBB Radio online, UBB TV, Media Projects, Studentpress online). We encourage youth, no matter the environment or minorities they belong to, to explore the digital applications of digital media and technology. We invite them interconnect with each-other, cooperate, work in small or larger groups, learn from each other, respect others’ opinions, be in touch and find new and innovative solutions for their common projects and try to build entrepreneurial ventures.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

In the 2018 Babeş-Bolyai University admissions, the Digital Media Bachelor program was the most successful in attracting candidates. Other than the regular state-subsidised seats (with an average of 26 candidates competing for each seat), several state-subsidised seats were offered to Romanian Ethnicities living abroad, minority ethnicities and candidates with a rural background. The success of the program may be due to the candidates' perception of it being more aligned with both emerging job market requirements and the digital media contexts within which contemporary youth lead their lives. Beyond curriculum design, the didactic approach guiding the development of this and other digital media education programs, in both formal and non-formal contexts, should be informed by combining both lowercase and uppercase digital literacies, adopting co-constructivist approaches, balancing between the 'voice' and 'entrepreneurship' rhetoric, and using digital storytelling multilaterally to contribute to the development of digital citizenship.

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In Europe, traditional media are increasingly weakened and criticised by citizens as being incapable of representing societal diversity. Many researchers have focused on the media coverage of disadvantaged urban areas and in particular on the stereotypes that have led to the construction of an urban mythology of 'youth'. Media crisis goes along with a raising distrust and withdrawal of young Europeans from institutions. Interlinked with non-formal education in a holistic perspective of lifelong learning, higher education institutions develop innovative projects in partnership with civil society to change this dual relation and foster emancipation. As part of such a project, this publication aims at feeding exchanges on innovative educational and media practices for an inclusive and participatory Europe.

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