Video Education, Media Education and Lifelong Learning

Summary

Alfonso Gutiérrez Martín

Media and technologies related to the creation and distribution of information have evolved significantly in the last years of the past century and the first decade of the XXI century. These technological changes, which in most cases respond to the capitalist logic of the market, have led to significant social changes. Education has also been affected by new trends and tries to adapt to the characteristics and requirements of the "Information Society" or "Digital Society".

In a society where media are part of the daily lives of individuals, where media and ICT condition interpersonal relationships and allow communication through social networks, basic education and literacy will be largely "media education" and "media literacy".

Back in 1980, Len Masterman pointed out that children were spending more time watching television than they did in school – and in fact that claim was probably true twenty years earlier. Surveys repeatedly show that, in most industrialised countries, children now spend significantly more time engaging with the media than on any other activity apart from sleeping.

This in itself might appear to suffice as a justification for including media education in school, at very least if we believe that schooling ought to be relevant to children's lives outside school. However, there are some other and more important reasons to consider media and ICT in education, or even to think of all education as "media education": their economic, social and cultural importance in modern societies.

There has always been a close relationship between education and media. Today it is virtually impossible to imagine a school without ICT, as it is also impossible to defend an educational model that does not include media literacy or some sort of preparation for life in the Information Society.

Throughout these pages we explore possible relationships between video and education, and we do so from a twofold approach which has always accompanied media in classrooms:

- **Media and ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) as resources to contribute to teaching/learning processes (educational technology).**
- **Media and ICT as a subject matter or field of study in formal and non-formal education (media education).**

The viducate authors propose a comprehensive and global model of media education applicable to any traditional or new media, and to any type of education: formal, non-formal and informal. We also consider it necessary to clarify concepts and terminology to avoid confusion as there are numerous, perhaps too many, definitions of media education, media literacy, digital literacy and other expressions in different languages.

Although in this publication we do not focus on Educational Technology and its possible uses in teaching and learning, we consider it appropriate to devote the first part of chapter I to ICT and media as resources, as teaching and learning tools. Gutiérrez points out some of the main advantages and possible drawbacks of AV media and ICT. According to him, successful integration of ICT as teaching resources should contribute to reducing the gap between school and society in information processing. Media and ICT, in their role as educational tools, must fulfill three basic functions: • represent and present both real and virtual worlds; • facilitate teaching, and • enhance student learning. These functions are mutually inseparable and relate, respectively, to the three principle elements of the teaching-learning process: content, teachers, and students.

In the second part of this publication, “European perspectives of video education”, Avgousti offers us a good example of global integration of video art into the visual arts classroom, according to the new Cyprus Visual Arts Program of Study principles. Video and ICT are not considered as mere tools to be used in Art instruction, but rather their potential to fully correspond to the active citizenship goals and content of the new Visual Arts Programme of Study are also taken into account. Video art, as Avgousti points out, also “becomes a source for exciting and inspiring new ways of art-making. Concerns of a socio-cultural nature can be approached through video art, helping learners to investigate and reconnect with issues about themselves and the world around them and to examine the way they reflect and reach conclusions”.

In the third part of this publication entitled “Video education in action”, Abril and Durrant also offer us a case study which explains the importance of multimedia resources, especially video, in education and E-learning; whereas Zulyte probes the potential of filming with mobile phones in the implementation of the art curriculum.

In another interesting case study, Weisberg relates video education to political science and shows how youth television on the internet can become an appropriate channel to help awaken attention for social issues among teenagers. The educational potential of video is also considered by Sköld, Kjellsson andf Isaksson in his contribution. They offer us an example of the use of video production in sexual education from young people's point of view.

Munsey proves the potential of animation as a tool for creative expression in a project aimed at bringing children with special educational needs into the city's long established School Cinema scheme in Malmö (Sweden). In this same section a good example of the integration of media and video as resources to help with teaching and learning is presented by Rodríguez. He calls the project "VIDEOSOCIALS 2.0", whose objectives are not only centred on curriculum content such as geography, but also try to achieve basic communication skills and "generate collaboration between the different subject areas that will use the video as a powerful means of understanding education and learning as a whole, and not as isolated and separate departments". Both Foresta and Alm take this holistic approach for the curricular integration of video education. Foresta in "Journey towards communication" shows how it is the task of educators to enable children to consciously use and develop their audiovisual language. Alm, for her part, presents media education as a way of understanding the world. According to her, understanding and interpreting the media is necessary for active citizenship.

As we can see with all these examples, in addition to studying and learning "with" media, studying and analysing the world of computers, videogames, television, Internet, etc. are also necessary. In media education, while the instrumental use of video to facilitate learning is taken into account, the medium as a field of study is also of particular interest. In a desirable global and integrated approach using media as a teaching and learning tool should also imply some sort of media education. That is what Krucsay deals with in "Media in art education: more than learning through media. In the second part of chapter II this author analyses media and ICT as subject matter or field of study in formal education. She departs from the statement that "there is no education without media", and focuses on media education on three levels: - the role media education plays as a transcurricular element; - the way some disciplines of the curriculum share overlapping areas of subject specific and media related contents, and - how media education is a link in cross-curricular teaching.

Chapter II is devoted to the relationship between media education and digital competence. Digital competence is closely linked to information: how to search, collect, process and transmit it to communicate, and how to use the most popular computer programmes: word processors, spreadsheets, databases, email and the Internet. Although there are brief references to learning, research and knowledge, it seems that the priority in this competence is devoted mostly to purely instrumental and technological contents and procedures.

In our model of media education and digital literacy the instrumental contents fade into the background and priority is given to critical-reflexive contents. These contents are also covered by the European Commission proposal when addressing the essential knowledge, attitudes and

skills related to digital competence: “Use of IST requires a critical and reflective attitude towards available information and a responsible use of interactive media; an interest in engaging in communities and networks for cultural, social and/or professional purposes also supports competence”.

In part II of this publication we include some European perspectives on video education. Christodoulou presents us the new literacy curriculum of Cyprus, and how media is included in it. He points out the relevance of the emphasis shifting from the acquisition of important skills and knowledge to the development of children’s critical literacy. He cites the ultimate goal of literacy and education as “the development of critical and, consequently, media literacy skills among the young generation, who will then apply these skills to important social, political, cultural issues as a means for developing a better, more democratic world”.

Media education must transcend the walls of the school and be present in society in general, as Kozàk proves with her contribution about the nature of the subject “Moving Image and Media Studies” (compulsory in all Hungarian elementary and high schools) and the relevance of the National Competition in Media Literacy (NCML) for secondary schools.

It is clear that digital competence goes beyond the use of software and hardware and even the use of information. In education this information has value to the extent that the student is able to transform it into knowledge. To do this the student will require a basic command of specific languages (textual, iconic, visual, graphic and sound) and also of their decoding and transfer patterns. He/she will also have to be able to apply the knowledge of the different types of information in different situations and contexts.

The viducate project advances digital and media literacies that share with general education the clear objectives of self-improvement and social transformation through a critical citizenry - and gives priority to education over teaching.

In Chapter III, Ferguson and Hottmann introduce us to the principles and practice of viducate and prove how critical-reflexive approaches in media education are still valid and necessary for digital literacy in the 21st century.

The main principles of viducate can be stated quite simply: ‘viducate is concerned with the development of active citizenship in intercultural contexts at all levels of formal and informal education. Video and multimedia form the core of this non-prescriptive pedagogy of production in the information society.’

We decided it would be most productive for the project if we grouped our activities around three broad, overlapping and dynamic themes: Creativity, Active Citizenship and Intercultural Communication. We felt the choice of these themes allowed us to develop our work across a wide range of contexts and age groups and did not restrict us to any one part of formal or informal curricula. This conceptual underpinning also allowed us to consider the social and aesthetic approaches which might be possible and, in its proper sense, to raise and foster political awareness as part of our work.

Linke also offers some considerations on the theme of “active citizenship” in the third part of this publication devoted to VIDEO EDUCATION IN ACTION. Through this topic he makes it clear that media education is serving a purpose: the development of civil society structures in a democratic society. In a similar way, in part II of the book, Holubek and Schipek address the issue of media education and active citizenship in Austria showing how “the point of view determines the perspective”.

As we can see, viducate is a cross curricular project and the themes and examples in this publication show some of the developments in which we are involved. Our work is something which we conceive as developmental and participatory and the development of networking is crucial in this respect.

No education proposal would be complete without a clear and explicit reference to teacher training. Gutiérrez in chapter IV considers three dimensions in teacher training in media and ICT**:** training of the person as a **teacher**, training of the teacher as an **educator**, training of the educator as a person or **citizen** in the Information society. The examples given by Hottmann in part III show us this global and integrative approach of teacher training in ICT and media. They are based on extensive experience with European teacher training courses in video education over the last decade, which has a great impact and potential on the professional development of teachers. For Hottmann video education and teacher training cannot be considered isolated activities, “but involves a mix of different learning methods - communication competence, team work, intercultural learning and evaluation. Our aim is also to integrate it across the curriculum and use it as a contribution to transform education into media education”.