<u>**Synthesis**</u>

From Grünwald to Paris : Why media education ?

The objective of the first working session was to come back to the question of the basic principles of media education as they were appropriately formulated in the Grünwald Declaration, whilst at the same time trying to situate the major changes which have come about over the last 25 years. Why then media education?

- Because we live in a world where the medias are omnipresent and we have to take into consideration their increasing importance in social life, in particular as concerns the younger generation.
- Because, rather than condemn or commend the power of the medias, it is better to admit that they constitute an important element of contemporary culture and can be oriented towards encouraging citizens' active participation in society;
- Because the differences, which often separate education systems and the world which surrounds us, impair preparations for the adult life of the younger generation.

David Buckingham, from the London University Institute of Education, the first observer invited to give his views, recalled the major changes, as much technological as economic and social, which have taken place since the Grünwald Declaration, which render forever more urgent this mobilisation in favour of media education; acceleration of technological evolutions for an interactive communication offering possibilities of democratisation; simultaneously, emerging liberal economies oriented towards consumer logic which increasingly perplex relations between the public and private sectors and make governmental control over the medias more difficult; profound changes in contemporary society inciting more individualism, mobility and flexibility, the reverse of what could have been the culture of mass medias; increasing complexity of media relations between the local, national and global levels to preserve identities and the building of a trans-national culture.

He underlined the current paradoxical situation whereby new means of information and communication offer the possibility to reduce certain inequalities between members of a society and the people whilst yet creating others: hence the increasing importance of media education to combat unequal access to different medias and training for the necessary skills to master them in order to develop a critical understanding, not only of the messages they deliver but also the politico-economic forces which structure them, and to encourage the active participation of the younger generation based on an acknowledgement of their cultural and characteristic diversity. The Convention of Children's Rights – right to freedom of expression, access to information sources and to participation in cultural life – adopted by UNESCO in 1989, enables us *to make media education a basic human right.* This point having been made – incidentally, underlined several times by David Buckingham in his conclusions – it remains to pass from recommendations to actions and not to "reinvent the wheel", hence a reminder from several participants as to the agenda priorities which will be taken up again in the final recommendations.

But we, of course, know that the political, economic, social, cultural and educational situations are very different according to the regions, countries and continents and that media education is, by this very fact, a territory which must be put into context. Such were the

observations in the name of India by the second speaker, Professor Keval J. Kumar, Director of the Centre for Education and Research for the Medias in Pune.

After having given a wide panoramic view of the current media situation on the Indian scale and underlined the difficulties, nigh impossibilities, of public control in the absence of a unique and powerful regulating organisation, Keval J. Kumar insisted on the difficult situation for media education in such a context. Tackled in the 1980s by some pioneers, mostly members of the Catholic Church, and largely influenced by Australia and the United States with the backing of UNDA[1], media education in India was also propped up, as in other countries, by the nationalist and anti-imperialist claims, the Southern Regions of India being opposed to the domination of the Hindu language and the culture of the North. The satellite invasion of the 1990s, then the development, as much technological as economic and cultural, since the beginning of the new century, have completely changed our understanding and endorsed a real "communications revolution".

If, in the Southern States, the current situation of media education is very inconsistent – integrated or not in the school curricula and practiced by active groups, notably feminine, or members of SIGNS[2] - it is probable that such actions are carried out in the Northern States and the universities and private institutes in that part of the country train media professionals without any critical frame of reference. Confirmation – as given by the Chairman of the Research Division on Media education at IAMCR[3] - of the decline, on an international scale, of the movement for media education, Keval J. Kumar ended by insisting, as he did in 1990 at the Toulouse Symposium[4], on the necessity for developing countries to adopt a specific approach to media education, taking into account the local needs and resources, keeping in mind the mass medias which remain predominant and their economic dimensions, not only linguistic but also the inter-relations between the national and multi-national perspectives of former and new medias. In a word, media education requires a radical change and new research, theories not copied from developed countries, which take into account education for citizenship and tie up media education and development: the main challenge for future educators for the medias seems to be to maintain the balance between saving democratic liberties and resisting pressure groups and other lobbies; *otherwise said, to think of media education as a political action in the service of "critical autonomy" and not as an academic or professional matter.*

It is a new cultural context affirmed the following speaker, Samy Tayie, Professor at the University of Cairo and Chairman of the Association *"Mentor":* that of the Arab countries which are currently becoming aware of this type of preoccupation as was highlighted in the *"First International Congress on Media education" held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in March 2007.*

The technological evolutions have affected the Arab countries just as others via satellite television watched by 90% of the population and Internet now accessible to 75% of the children. If research on relations between the younger generation and the medias started in the early 1980s, it was not really developed until the last 5 years and bears witness, as all over the world, to social and geographic differences; media practices only rarely concern destitute

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[1] International Catholic Association for Radio, Television and Audiovisual
[2] World Catholic Association for communications
[3] International Association for Research Studies on Information and Communications
[4] Media education throughout the world : new orientations, Bazalgette, C., Bevort, E., Savino, J., (coord) UNESCO/CLEMI/BFI, 1992, pp 181-184

children and do not take into consideration the role of parents. There is no tradition of surveillance or parental control and the television, like the cinema, remain the medias most appreciated, given the level of illiteracy in most of these countries. Suffice it to say that there is a necessity for media education as much for the children as for the parents and teachers: and if at the beginning of the 1990s most governments insisted on the creation of "multi-media laboratories" for the schools, no specific action in favour of media education came about before the Workshop organised in 2002 by UNESCO in Egypt, after that organised in Tunisia. It is in this context that the *Association Mentor* organised, with the support of UNESCO and the European Commission, and in the presence of Ministers of Education from the Arab countries and members of the Saudi Royal Family a *First International Congress on Media Education*[1], followed by 1500 participants who came from different continents: teachers, students, university professors and media professionals, which enabled us to open up an intercultural dialogue. Other events are envisaged: the next Congress will be held in the United Arab Emirates in March 2008, as well as a comprehensive training programme lasting 6 months for 3,000 Saudi teachers which will take place partly in Saudi Arabia and partly in Europe. This should contribute to clarifying *the great confusion which reigns in these countries as to what should be the concepts and objectives of media education.*

If, on the other hand, there exists in Europe a long tradition of critical analysis of the medias and support for juvenile media productions, this does not mean to say that the definition of media education is clear for everyone and that there are not steps to be taken to achieve a European approach. It is this objective which the European Commission has set itself, as explained by Aviva Silver, Head of a Unit for the General Directorate of the Information Society, responsible for the programme called MEDIA.

Based on three essential elements - access to the medias and their contents, critical approach, aptitude to decode media messages and expertise as to their working methods, capacities for creation and media productions – "media literacy" should concern all the medias, be a pre-requisite for juveniles and the not-so-young in order for them to take an active part in citizenship by being vectors of European cultural identity and to foster both protection against harmful media effects and involvement as producers and not only as information consumers.

Specific actions in favour of "media literacy" projects were then mentioned and concerned those carried out between 2002 and 2005, then as from 2007, and included article 26 of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMS) which requested the Commission to produce "a report on the level of media education in all Member States", the constitution of a Group of European Experts to promote "good practices", a major public consultation launched at the end of 2006, a study entrusted to the Autonomous University of Barcelona on "Tendencies and trends of media education in Europe" (http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/media_literacy/index_en.htm); finally to complete this roundup, end of 2007, a Communication on "media literacy" which will be adopted by the Commission.

In summing up, Aviva Silver recalled that it was up to the competent authorities of the Member States to decide to include "media literacy" in their school curricula and up to local authorities, closer to the citizens themselves, to support initiatives in the area of non-formal education, the role of the European Commission being to strengthen European identity: this should enable us to attain the objectives fixed at the European Council in Lisbonne in 2000, in

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[1] See the text published by the International Clearinghouse on children, youth and media :
http//www.nordicom.gu.se/clearinghouse.php

particular as concerns competitiveness in the economy of knowledge in the service of the Society of Knowledge.

After recalling the major principles on which media education was based and the current reasons for reinforcing their development in the different contexts mentioned by noteworthy speakers, the three roundtables which followed had for objective to give precise information as to progress, obstacles and trends since the Grünwald Declarion, at the same time taking into consideration practices and strategies in formal and non-formal education systems.

What pedagogical methods have been developed throughout the world?

The participants agreed to make a relatively positive intermediary inventory underlining new introductions and acquisitions, as well as the positions consolidated in media education, despite the relative "newness" of the field. Practices are many, with notable successes, but on a small scale, that of a class or a region. Changing to a higher national scale is rare and, when it takes place, is proposed mainly on an optional basis. There is a strong feeling of limited duration and of the window of opportunity which will open for a second phase concerning media education, of pedagogical experimentation for the general diffusion of practices because the social need for this expansion is made felt, aggravated by technological advances in the media world and by globalisation and new challenges from the information society, which UNESCO prefers to call "the knowledge societies". Frequent obstacles were nevertheless underlined, despite certain progress which has given rise to partial implementation of media education in many countries. Some are structural, others intellectual and cultural.

The weaknesses in the system come from the insufficiency of media education in the initial training of teachers, despite lobbying by certain sectors of civil society. In contrast, lifelong education for teachers is more developed and more efficient. The reality shows that "teachers are recycled rather than specialised" according to Thierry de Smedt (Belgium). An absence of the subject matter in universities contributes to this stagnating structural situation because the field has difficulty in asserting itself. The result is a lack of general conceptual framework which is needed to consolidate practices as well as a lack of theoretical models transformed into methods.

Other weaknesses vary according to the educational contexts and the understanding of the role of the school in a given society. They arise from a lack of availability of media education on the part of the teachers, seen as the weak link in the chain of scholastic transmissions. The majority of teachers expect formulas and a "ready to teach" model according to Jacques Piette (Canada). They suffer also from a lack of coordination and priorities from their governing and evaluating bodies (ministries, rectorates, inspectorates). A lack of diffusion of research can lead to confusion between education *with* medias and education *about* medias, between effects and treatment, without speaking of a kind of "ingenuity" of technology about which judgement remains strong in certain mentalities, according to Roxana Morduchowicz (Argentina).

Major advances have nevertheless been made if we take into consideration the fact that media education is relatively recent. The most promising avenue is that of pedagogical innovation which has the potential to modernise schools, even to "modify the medias" according to Toshiko Miyazaki (Japan), because it changes apprentices into active, critical and demanding users. Media education is seen as a transversal skill which has for objective to develop critical

and analytical thinking and, as such, should become part of the foundation of basic skills, common to all school curricula.

Another promising advance comes from media teaching aids themselves. Initiatives can be taken by hybrid bodies outside school, such as the National Audiovisual Institute (Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA)), which develops media tools "conceived according to pedagogical demands" according to Xavier Lemarchand (France). The digital materials are calculable and dynamic and allow for the segmentation of data, on the one hand, and "intelligent" research on the other. It is thus now possible to put at the disposal of teachers and apprentices tools for annotating, segmenting and recomposing audiovisual and multi-media materials. The advantage is that they can be put back into their context, we can reintroduce elements of production in their original form, and modify them afterwards. However, it has to be noted that sometimes the offer proposed by these efficient tools is too sophisticated and disproportionate in comparison with what a school can undertake in its everyday existence, which opens the possibilities for self-training, as much for the teacher as for the apprentice.

The challenges for the future stem from the initial diagnosis. They consist especially in finding more room for media education in initial teacher-training (where it competes with other subjects, such as education and sexuality, citizenship, etc.). It would seem urgent to work in close harmony with teachers, taking into account contributions from apprentices as soon as teaching materials and methods have been worked out. The articulation between critical analysis and production of media contents is vital here. It is most important to avoid formulas but to propose, for the foundation of basic skills, a real legibility and visibility of media education. The implementation of a curriculum which openly declares its priorities, the teaching methods and their evaluation would seem to be the cornerstone of this process. A modular approach, used in the kit on media education and published by UNESCO (2007) is adhered to by most of the participants, the case of Russia, presented by Alexander Fedorov, being exemplary for its feasibility approach and its capacity for localisation.

Taking up such a challenge would imply an investigation into the nature and role of media education for the standard school, with a need to debate interests at stake and the resources. In the face of challenges from the information society, universities and other standard training places are not the only ones to have curricula with a media and technological component, and to counteract the onslaught from the private sector, the incursions of which are evermore numerous in media education, it would be necessary to adopt "an integrating policy" to use the expression of Javier Arevalo Zamudio (Mexico). International exchanges and the comparison of practices would seem to be worthwhile ways to share expertise and an opportunity to take stock of cultural diversity, as much for the school as for the medias.

What actions have been taken to integrate media education in educational policies throughout the world?

If we are all in agreement in considering that Grünwald has made decisive steps forward for the study on media education, this roundtable feels it necessary to ask two questions. What was the actual follow-up for education systems? In the future, what will be the principal guidelines for media education and their impact on educational policies?

After expression, creativity, participation, training, research ....what will be the new key words for this education?

Such were the questions of Susane Krucsay (Austria) to the participants in this roundtable.
With regard to the history of schools and their branches of study, the history of media education is very short. Between the current situation and future prospects, the question of a change in status for school practices will henceforth have to be made. This question should, of course, be relativised and viewed differently according to historical, cultural and economic contexts. As the participants emphasized, it should be considered with certain precautions but without forgetting that the rapid changes in the society of information necessitate everywhere an urgent response.

Catherine Bizot, General Inspector for Language and Literature, asks herself how, bearing in mind a survey of French education concerning obstacles which have blocked progress, and despite a work of quality during 25 years on all the aspects envisaged by the Grünwald Declaration, it is possible that this field of interest has not gained in importance and visibility. These obstacles are structural, cultural, psychological or administrative in nature and remain numerous and only a strong political directive on this question would be able to bring about change. Media education also lacks, without doubt, sufficiently clear definitions as to the areas to be covered and ambiguity on their precise content remains very evident.

Mustafa Ennaïfar also spoke about obstacles which exist in Tunisia. They are probably of another dimension because media education has not been on the agenda for a long time as such and mostly in two specific fields: images and information and communications technologies. All measures talked about for other education systems (teacher-training, equipment, production tools) will probably have positive effects but he remained convinced that the compulsory character of this teaching remains the decisive factor to prompt a real evolution.

In Turkey, media education, is also in its teething stages, but it is a necessity which is clearly felt and in a revolutionary context of the medias themselves. Yasemin Inceoglu talked about the media education courses recently implemented in the upper grades of the lower secondary schools at the joint initiatives of the Ministry of Education and the regulating authorities. Of course, we are still far behind a 'media educated" country but we have not to be pessimistic because this topic demands particular attention at a moment when Turkey, wishing to enter the European Union, gives thought to this perspective in the light of respect for human rights and the development of a democratic society.

A perspective which systematically privileges the Council of Europe for which media education is part of the logic concerning the right for freedom of expression, for information, and for professional training for journalists. Apart from this, Bernard Dumond recalled that the education systems had a fundamental responsibility for their programmes, their equipment, but also for evaluating experiential learning and competencies. Moreover, they are not the only ones concerned and today the question of media education should be, like many others, accepted as part of the logic of lifelong education and training.

Roxana Morduchowicz was convinced that the groundwork undertaken with parents had given fruit because Argentina had developed a series of actions and dynamic initiatives to involve families in the work of media education. Its fundamental objective is to reinforce, in the long-term, actions undertaken to fully legitimise media education in schools. For her also, obstacles have been created, especially by the teachers, who appear to have rather negative sentiments vis-à-vis the medias and the youth culture they promote. Media education was

recently mentioned in a new law concerning education but the challenges to be taken up are still numerous.

The participants expressed the desire and the necessity to see media education ratified as part of the curricula in their education systems. But if a change of scale becomes indispensable, it should be accompanied by a change in culture which teacher-training cannot ensure alone. A strong political directive matching the social demand is necessary everywhere so that media education becomes part and parcel of teaching priorities for schools.

The richness and great diversity of operations so far conducted indicates the profusion of media education. Perhaps today we should, in order to better organise the future, determine more clearly the guidelines, give a clearer structure to this diversity, study and define this education in such a way that it can be shared more broadly.

Which actors have been mobilised outside the educational framework?

Because media education is not considered as an instruction exclusively scholastic, because it concerns and involves numerous actors outside the teaching profession and because it is designed not only for children but equally for adults, it is fundamental to show interest in activities related to media education which can be developed outside the school, to question their links with the educative system and on ways to better encourage and mobilise all actors involved outside schooling in order that they become a driving force in favour of universalising media education as a component for lifelong education.

By its very objective, media education should associate the medias, that is to say the journalists, the editors in chief, programme makers, producers, mediators, schools of journalism, etc. Now, in the same way that the school has difficulties to open up to the outside world, the medias tend to constitute a relatively closed circuit and paradoxically they are little inclined to debates and external criticism. The mediators, such as Jean-Claude Allanic, former mediator for France 2, have precisely the mission to encourage the opening up of the medias and exchanges with the public. The medias should be more alert to the expectations of the public, to their social responsibilities with regard to citizens as makers of opinion and the fourth power in democratic societies. In this regard, the training of journalists should include more in-depth instruction in legal and ethical matters.

The medias have, anyway, a commercial interest in drawing closer to their audiences in order to better appreciate their desires and to match their offers to demands, and finally to make known and stimulate the interest of a public or potential readers. This way of sharing interests has been well understood by the World Association of Newspapers (Association mondiale des journaux) which has, for a number of years now, developed an introductory programme to journals for schools. This has been used as a pedagogical tool and support for different projects. It encourages the learning of democratic values and takes part in active education for citizenship, stimulates children's performances and inspires children to become future readers, as underlined by Aralynn McMane.

Local or community medias, such as Bush Radio in South Africa (known as the "mother of community radios in Africa"), which maintains closer links with their essentially participative audience, have a strong sense of their responsibility with regard to society and set up projects which enable the population to take part in their activities and, above all, interact. The very objective of Radio Bush is to allow the communities to affirm their dignity, their identity and

promote their social responsibility and critical analyses. Thus Bush Radio launched a project in 1996 destined for youngsters with a twofold objective: put at their disposal tools to understand the medias and give them a voice. This project, which has a training and evaluating component, has met with an unqualified success. For Adrian Law, freedom of expression and media education go hand in hand.

OFCOM (The Office of Communications, which is the regulator of all British commercial broadcast media) agrees with this approach and considers that media education helps to encourage self-regulation by users. When the media world is experiencing major changes and the regulating system tends to evolve towards co-regulation, the users should exercise a part of the responsibility in parallel with the traditional regulation ensured by independent authorities. With the development of high speed Internet, cell phones, etc. media offers are experiencing a phenomenal increase and adolescents have a high consumer capacity and take part actively in the development of new practices on Internet. The medias thus occupy an ever increasing place in our everyday lives. In such a context, knowledge of the medias and what they are used for becomes a useful and necessary condition for real and effective participation in society. Such knowledge constitutes an instrument to combat social exclusion and becomes indispensable in the same way as learning to read and write. With the development of Internet, we must avoid the dangers of a training which concentrates on the use of tools and which neglects critical analysis of contents, and we should also help the adult population which has not benefited from training within the school framework. Media education is a statutory objective of The Office of Communications (OFCOM), as recalled Fiona Lennox.

In 2006 OFCOM published a survey in the United Kingdom on knowledge and skills as regards media education which it uses to make the different actors aware of the hazards of media education and to help with the coordination and coherence of messages addressed to consumers and citizens. At its suggestion, the BBC and Channel 4 initiated innovative and strategic projects to alert the public to what is at stake in media education. These projects give adolescents the skills needed to enable them to produce their own programmes and present their analyses of a subject. OFCOM has also encouraged the development of actions intended for elderly people over the age of 65 who have little use for Internet because they do not understand the range of possibilities and consider that they have no utility, either through lack of confidence or lack of technical know-how to use the services on offer. OFCOM, for example, supported "the week for adult learners" covering events organised in different places (cafés, hospitals, museums, prisons, etc.). The last three programmes concentrated on media education and have mobilised more and more participants each year.

Outside the medias and regulating bodies, associations are among the key actors of media education and have often been, in many countries, the first to make people aware of the important interests at stake in media education and to campaign in favour of its development. Kathryn Montgomery from the American University contributed her experiences as co-founder and former director of an NGO, the Centre for Media education (le Centre pour l'éducation aux medias). Outside associations devoted to media education, many others work on topics closely related to this field whether they be parent-teacher associations, associations for professionals of medias, or associations defending fundamental liberties. Thus broadcasting associations or operators have seen in the promotion of media education an instrument to encourage auto-regulation and a strategic argument to combat attempts to control contents by the American government. The development of electronic medias by giving users the possibility of increased participation, creativity and inter-activity (through blogs, exchange platforms and social networks) should enable a reinforced awareness as to

the link between media education and education for citizenship. In the United States this evolution in the media world has brought about a renewed vision concerning media education, its role and functions when it was mainly centred on child protection and a guarantee as to quality of the media environment for children.

Take the example of the Inter-Associative Group for Children and Medias (collectif inter-associatif enfance et medias – CIEM) which in France groups together associations dealing with education, youth, children's parents, family matters, and research, and participates in mobilising civil society in order to bring more weight to public debates and influence political decisions. For this group of very diverse NGOs, media education is not limited to the field of education but covers the interests of democracy, society, participation, freedom of expression, citizens' rights, etc. It is the reason why it has adopted a strategic multi-actor approach and intends to bring the citizen's power to the fore next to public powers and the media enterprises in debates concerning medias which enjoy increasing commercial success. It defends the principle according to which media education should be the object of shared responsibility for all actors involved, not exclusively that of teachers, and should be considered as "education for all", that is finding a place in informal education and also for adults, in particular "resource" people. The medias should consent to make efforts to implement a policy of promotion and creation of programmes of quality for children containing a citizenship dimension, taking into account cultural diversity and receiving support from public powers. Research on relations between the medias and children should be equally developed. To each level of action and concerning each of the key actors, the public powers should play a role in which they openly declare a policy of engagement which supports the mobilisation of all partners and permits a real change in the system.

The motives which are primordial and fundamental to the generalisation of media education and which will give it another status, as pointed out by Regina de Assis, in the name of the Brazilian Association, Multirio, remain political engagement which will determine the choice of priorities and mobilisation of sufficient resources at all levels.

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