

# Introduction

## Media Education around the World: Curriculum & Citizenship

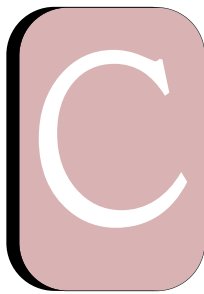
La educación en comunicación en el mundo: currículum y ciudadanía

*Guest-edited special issue:*

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Communicative competence, positioned today globally in a transverse axis for the exercise and performance of any other academic competence, marks a required pattern to recognize that it is necessary for educational environments to contribute to the process of media literacy as an essential part of it is vital in everyday life both for teachers and students, aimed primarily at the formation of responsible and critical citizenship.

The incorporation of education and media literacy in the curriculum for all levels of education, from preschool to university, has been the subject of recent discussions and analysis in several countries, the proposals also include teacher training, as is the case Curriculum for Media and Information Literacy for Teachers (Media Information Literacy, MIL), in which UNESCO points out a set of competencies, goals, activities and materials. However, in few countries, media literacy has become a part of the compulsory curriculum structure within the general education system. There are also cases when policies have been adopted to encourage, through procedures of non-formal education, which prepares citizens to be media literate, both in regard to the reception, the analysis, and production of messages in multiple formats.

Still due to inertia and resistance of educational institution system in general, and in particular in the countries with distinct and urgent political and economic priorities, it makes it difficult to pay due attention to media literacy challenge. Another possible reason for this lag, lies in the belief that the effort in training teachers and students in developing skills in managing and updating information and communication technology (ICT) or its more recent conceptualization, learning and knowledge technologies (LKT) comprises in itself media competence, with the result of poor training of educators in the recognition and mastery of the factors that make up the dimensions of media communication.

It is therefore important to document the situation in the educational structure that media literacy is in worldwide and answer questions such as: what is the current state of academic development of media literacy?, what features does a successful media literacy curriculum have (based on a specific educational level)?, what elements authorize a curriculum for media literacy education aimed at teachers?, is it necessary to introduce mandatory courses on media education in the curriculum?, what are the best strategies and methods to educate citizens about media?, etc.

The "Comunicar" Journal current issue shares the results of experience and research into the possibilities of gradual, but consistent inclusion of programs and projects aimed at the development of media literacy. In the dossier of the monograph there are important contributions of research conducted

in a wide geography. They include the analysis of a set of case studies, qualitative and quantitative research analyzed with the phocus on the implementation of civic engagement through online activities in several regions of Portugal. Data and empirical results obtained through questionnaires were used to create a scoring system capable of reflecting school participation and strategies on media literacy and civic action online of teachers and students. The article, entitled “Media education as a strategy for online civic participation in Portuguese schools” is written by Tânia Dias-Fonseca and John Potter.

Jennifer Tiede and Silke Grafe, being convinced that media pedagogy should be integrated into pre-service teacher training in order to use the media in their classrooms effectively and successfully, focus on examples of Germany and the US, reviewing different models of media of both countries and try pedagogical skills, through a study that measured the skills in media education of students from both countries, to answer the question of whether these skills are promoted by training programs. The data allow, likewise, to identify different ways of integrating media pedagogy in teacher training. In addition, conclusions can be drawn about the consequences of processes involved in teacher training and media literacy.

The Nupairoj Nudee’s article entitled “The ecosystem of media literacy: A holistic approach to media education” proposes a systematic way to spread media literacy education in Thailand following the MIL competencies of UNESCO. The ecosystem is composed of the apprenticeship scheme (students, facilitators, curriculum and pedagogy), society (community, civil sector, media and parents) and politics, the purpose of which is to bring a change of behaviour among students and to have an impact on their way of life.

The investigation and analysis on out-of-school models is illustrated with the contribution of Mônica Pegurer-Capriano and Juan-Francisco Martínez-Cerdá. This article analyzes the current status of the existing media literacy education in Brazil from the perspective of informal education. The situation is described through a sample of projects and organizations operating under the three internationally recognized dimensions of media education: access / use, critical understanding, and production of media content. From the data provided the study proposes a model of media literacy projects developed in the field of non-formal education.

Formal school media education is exemplified by research “Media competence of teachers and students of compulsory education in Spain”, reported by Antonia Ramirez-Garcia and Natalia González-



Fernández. This research uses a quantitative methodology to determine the levels of media competence of teachers and students of compulsory education in the six dimensions that comprise it. These levels provide a preliminary assessment of possible shortcomings and needs of educational intervention. Their observations and findings show that despite the existence of the curriculum that meets the needs of media literacy in the compulsory education and proliferate technology supporting policies, in practice one of the greatest weakness of the teachers- participants is that they tend to focus on the technological aspect. The authors suggest that a critical review of school curricula should prevent media literacy education from possible exclusion.

Number 49 of the Scientific Journal Comunicar with such a big scale international sampling, is aimed at researchers, teachers and others readers interested in the inclusion of media literacy education in plans and curricula, as well as its empowering strategies beneficial for broad social sectors and specific segments of the population.