

CONSIDERING HISTORICAL (DIS) CONTINUITIES OF MEDIA (LITERACY) EDUCATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC FOR THE FUTURE APPROACH

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ABSTRACT:

Nowadays mediatised society, with significant growth of popularity of so-called new media, calls for a new or at least innovated media (literacy) education. In this study I challenge this assumption and critically approach the current state. In my text, I review the current discussion in the Czech Republic, as well as historical media-educational moments, which I consider crucial and exemplary in order to showcase the fragmentation of the whole field. I point out the elementary educational principles and their more or less explicit inclusion of media, as already formulated by Comenius in the 17th century. Further in the text I focus on the didactical use of film at schools and the aesthetically framed film education of both the 1960s and 2010 (when it was introduced to the school curricula). This leads me to a critical analysis of the curricular Media Education as it has been introduced to the whole Czech system of formal education since 2006. By discussing these three fragments, I create a momentum of continuity within the field; a continuity that provides a rich body of theoretical framing(s), terminological and practical experience and tools. This enables me to advocate for an integrated, historically rooted approach to media (literacy) education which will be not only suitable for the current situation of traditional and new media, but will also be capable to adjust educational actions with less effort and less fragmentation to the future development of media.

KEY WORDS:

Comenius, the Czech Republic, development of media education, film education, Media Education, media literacy education



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Introduction

It may appear unusual to review and discuss singular historical events (of the last 100 years) that regard the 'old' media and their educational contexts in a situation where there is considerable permeation of media, particularly the so-called new (or digital) media into everyday life and into the society as a whole; in a situation that calls for 'new media education'. For the Czech situation in 2015, Jan Jiráček, one of the 'founders' of cur-

ricular Media Education, in his lecture during a seminar at *Ota Hofman's Children's Film and TV Festival* in Ostrov nad Ohří postulated the need for a new concept as the Media Education co-prepared by him in 2004 was tailored for the situation dominated by television, with the Internet for PCs only just emerging, where there were almost no indications of smartphones and technologies, portable computers and tablets and an instant, quick, financially affordable and almost omnipresent Internet connection possibility everywhere.¹

To support the need for historical embedding, my first argument would be very general: culture, society, even science are historical *per se*. We can rarely develop something new without being aware of the historical context. Often, new discoveries are preconditioned by the previous existence of something else or by something similar.

Moreover, specifically, so-called new media are not throughout new; they are primarily of a 'convergent' character which is rather blending and integrating and, as Lev Manovich points out, it "transcodes" previous technologies and media forms.² Des Freedman calls it "remediation".³

The second argument is more specific and practical. Disregarding historical developments can cause unneeded and essentially avoidable problems, as parallels and similarities from the past could be identified in nowadays situation, and can help us shape the current and future efforts. Also, the understanding of previous events provides us with wider knowledge about the spaces to which our efforts are directed and their dynamics.

And thirdly, our cultural-historical environment is specific. We live in a post-socialist country that – only in the early 1990s – 'discovered'⁴ private as well as public service media (both print and electronic), experienced immense film supply by the Hollywood industry or got familiar with the 'real purpose' of advertising and marketing; at the same time when video fully unfolded its reign and the Internet started its way to become the worldwide media phenomenon. Back then, thoughts on school media education only started to appear in minds of few scholars, maybe some teachers. It seemed then, and for some it still seems now, that the five decades of totalitarian regimes eradicated any competent use and understanding of media (not only in the school, i.e. educational context).

But was it really so? As I will show in the following text, the Czech situation of school (or curricular) Media Education and/or the educational use of media technologies is a good example of how consideration and involvement of the historical context could have led to a more organic and complex approach. Such an approach would have conceptualised school Media Education as more open to the challenges of digital (and participatory) media, allowing it to be more capable to deal with it in a productive way.

Discussion on media education (and the related concept of media literacy) continued in the Czech Republic around the year 2004.⁵ Only two years later, it was introduced as a cross-curricular topic, obligatory for all elementary and high schools (except apprentice training schools). This is not very surprising; however there are few interesting aspects around this issue.

Firstly, the concept of school Media Education was developed mainly within the academic area of media studies, which is based mostly on the Anglo-American tradition of this discipline. According to data that I have collected during a research on this topic,⁶ this caused two types of problems after it was introduced. One

was the unpreparedness of Czech schools and teachers that had to cope with this more or less sudden situation as the discussion about media education had mostly taken place outside their sphere of knowledge.⁷ The other problem was more general and theoretical. The Czech educational sciences are an area of specific historical development that bears far more similarities with the German educational system than with the Anglo-American one.⁸ Moreover, as mentioned within the previous point, the initial discussion took place outside of educational sciences where discussions only began when this subject was introduced to the nationwide general curricula.⁹

Secondly, and this corresponds with the previous argument, the wider historical contexts, going back not only to the beginning of the 20th century but also further back to our nation's history, were avoided. Despite the fact that the development before 2004 could be defined as vastly fragmented and even separatist, it could have given the newly introduced curricular Media Education an important framework. Moreover, some of the historical contexts that could be connected to media (and media education) were somewhat present in the area of educational sciences and in the school system. In the following text, I will introduce three of such important historical media-educational moments.¹⁰

Roots of Media-Educational Thinking

Comenius and School Newspapers

The first historical moment that I will introduce is associated with two aspects. The first one is of a more general and fundamental matter, whereas the second is more specific and could be explicitly connected with media and media education. The German discipline of media education ("Medienpädagogik"), developed since the 1970s,¹¹ recognises Jan Ámos Komenský (John Amos Comenius), the philosopher and educator born in the Czech lands in the 17th century, as its 'grandfather'.¹²

Considering the broader involvement of Comenius within media education, we can see him as the acknowledged grandfather of general pedagogy/education as a specific discipline and pedagogical/educational theory not only in Germany, but also in the Czech Republic and in a considerable part of Europe as well. His core concepts that are connected with education are "pansophia" and "didactica". I will now briefly and, to a distinctly simplified extent, discuss both these concepts.

Within "didactica", the majority of Comenius's work deals with the practical aspects of education. On the other hand, it is inevitably rooted in the idea of a whole educational system and based on **universal educational principles**. The main principles could be subsumed as: teach everyone (irrespective of family wealth, gender, age or church affiliation); have an elaborate system of education (with defined methods and processes); teach about all aspects of life (not only about liturgical facts; see the concept of "pansophia" below); teach appropriately (for example, according to the pupils' age) and use modern phrases, cognitive capacities and various educational tools such as pictures, books and other objects. These could be now called **media (in the broader sense of their understanding)**. By using so diverse 'educational media', as many senses as

1 JIRÁK, J.: *Budoucnost mediální výchovy. Seminář mediální výchova v roce 2015. Full HD Video*. [online]. [2017-11-28]. Available at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iuwo0YPVLFQ>>.

2 MANOVICH, L.: *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002, p. 44-48.

3 FREEDMAN, D.: Internet Transformations: 'Old' Media Resilience in the 'New Media' Revolution. In CURRAN, J., MORLEY, D. (eds.): *Media & Cultural Theory*. London, New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 277.

4 As I will show further, the word 're-discover' should have been more appropriate. Remark by the author.

5 Czech approach(es) will be introduced later in the text. For Slovak conception and discussion see, for example: MISTRÍK, M. et al.: *Koncepcia vyučby predmetu mediálna výchova na stredných školách. Metodika*. Trnava: FMK UCM in Trnava, 2008; ŠUPŠÁKOVÁ, B.: Media Education of Children and Youth as Path to Media Literacy. In *Communication Today*, 2016, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 33-51. To find out more about the concept of media literacy, see e.g.: PETRANOVÁ, D.: Rozvíja mediálna výchova v školách kritické kompetencie žiakov? In *Communication Today*, 2011, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 66-83. For comparison of different national approaches towards media education, see e.g.: TRÜLTZSCH-WIJNEN, C.: Mezinárodní mediální pedagogika. In SLOBODA, Z. (ed.): *Pojmosloví mediální pedagogiky: Mediální pedagogika, výchova, didaktika a gramotnost*. Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého (in press); WIJNEN, C. W.: *Medien und Pädagogik international. Positionen, Ansätze und Zukunftsperspektiven in Europa und den USA*. München: Kopaed, 2006; or PETRANOVÁ, D., HOSSOVÁ, M., VELICKÝ, P.: Current Development Trends of Media Literacy in European Union Countries. In *Communication Today*, 2017, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 52-65.

6 In the last 10 years, when I have been reviewing all sources that are dealing with use of media and technology in teaching, education and the school environment – such as articles in educational or media journals (both academic and popular), books, conference proceedings, guidebooks for amateur filmmakers, and so forth. Remark by the author.

7 For more information, see: NUMERATO, D.: Mediální výchova: Oddůvěřňování důvěrného světa. In *Revue pro média*, 2004, Vol. 3, No. 8, p. 1-9; ŠEBEŠ, M.: Mediální výchova – Kontury a kontexty školního mediálního vzdělávání. In SLOBODA, Z. (ed.): *Pojmosloví mediální pedagogiky: Mediální pedagogika, výchova, didaktika a gramotnost*. Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého (in press).

8 PRŮCHA, J. et al.: *Pedagogická encyklopedie*. Praha: Portál, 2009, p. 39.

9 ŠEĐOVÁ, K.: Média jako pedagogické téma. In *Pedagogika*, 2004, Vol. 54, No. 1, p. 19-33.

10 Originally, I considered using the term "media-pedagogical" (in Czech "mediálněpedagogický"). This term should have been understood in the framework of pedagogy as it has been established and developed on the European mainland for over a century. In the English-speaking countries, it should be paralleled with educational sciences. Therefore, I have decided – in order to provide the English-speaking context – to use the term "media-educational". Remark by the author.

11 As a foundation of this discipline, the discussion in the *Merz – Medien + Erziehung* journal from 1976 is considered. Remark by the author.

12 SCHORB, B.: *Medienalltag und Handeln: Medienpädagogik in Geschichte, Forschung und Praxis*. Opladen: Leske, Budrich, 1995, p. 17-18.

possible should be stimulated;¹³ this principle is, in fact, Comenius's so-called 'golden rule'. Looking at the practical implication of his "didactica", Comenius stresses the need for teaching in a different manner that was uncommon in his time, but is more commonplace today. For the purpose of such teaching (available to everyone, informing about everything and appropriately, by using media in the process), newly conceived **educational aids and books** should be prepared. A fundamental example of this is Comenius's language book *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*,¹⁴ which *Encyclopaedia Britannica* labelled as the oldest picture book (comic book) for children already in 1887.¹⁵

Besides his educational principles and their practical application, it is worth mentioning that Comenius, in his time as a religious fugitive, was active across the whole Europe and he laid the foundations for the general educational (school) systems of the Czech lands, the Netherlands, Hungary, Germany and Sweden.¹⁶ Considering all of these aspects – practical, theoretical and system-related – of Comenius's work, his "didactica" could be understood as the discipline of pedagogy as we know it in continental Europe. In the US and UK, it could also be understood as the content and methods of educational sciences.

The second key concept proposed by Jan Amos Comenius, "pansophia", could be translated as **all-knowledge**. It transposes his thoughts on the accessibility of education to everyone, covering all spheres of knowledge. He said that not only should everyone have been educated but that they should have been educated on all subjects – language, history, geography, mathematics, arts and, of course, sports. Many encyclopaedias, schoolbooks and also books written as 'trip advisors' to the world and society have evolved from his pansophical texts. One of his earlier works is called *The Labyrinth of the World and the Eden of Heart* where a pilgrim travels around the world and, often in metaphorical depictions, encounters various social and life events and issues.¹⁷

Concentrating on the direct relationship between **Comenius and media** (or specifically mass media as we would define them today), three key concepts are to be pointed out. The first one, as I have already noted in the text above, is fundamentally didactical (pedagogical); Comenius stresses the need for graphically (visually) processed information, which should be embodied in materials and tools that will stimulate as many senses as possible. Visualisation or haptic and practical experiences are of as much pedagogical value as reading or oral explanation. For the methods of teaching he proposes that tools and aids, books with pictures, texts, stories and other elements, accompanied by explanations and other illustrations, are crucial. Today, we consider this type of school books and methods of teaching standard.

Secondly, Comenius notices the rise of newspapers in Europe in the late 16th century. In his *Labyrinth of the World*, he welcomes a pilgrim into a city full of whistlers and various sounds of their whistles. The whistling is a metaphor for various types of news and newspapers (and the 'whistlers' are paper-boys or journalists). Comenius notes that some whistling tones are pleasant and other are obtrusive; he warns the reader of this. He also warns of reception behaviour where people seem to try to listen to as many 'whistles' as possible, and mainly to the most pleasant-sounding ones. According to Comenius, this could be dangerous. On the other hand, he notes that avoiding the tones of the whistles could be harmful, too. One should know at least some of the whistling sounds. With this metaphor, Comenius formulates something that we would nowadays call **media literacy**.¹⁸ He points out the dangers of popular and pleasing depictions of news, but with the same

breath he adds that news offered by newspapers can contribute to one's wisdom about the world.¹⁹ In our words, he recommends wise and critical handling of media and news. And he also points out that media abstinence is not the best solution. He also sees newspapers as pansophical media that contribute to an individual's knowledge about the world.

The third concept is based on both previous resources and combines didactical (pedagogical) and pansophical dimensions. In his *Schola pansophica* (a writing on the curriculum of the general elementary school), Comenius proposes the **use of newspapers in schools**. On Wednesdays after the midday meal, mercantile newspapers were to be read out loud to pupils of various ages.

Thanks to newspapers and their contents, pupils would be aware of recent historical events and geography, developing their mother or foreign language skills along the way.²⁰ Here he introduces mass media as a didactical and pedagogical tool (or didactical media) that educates the pupils about other topics. They should be, having practical experience from school, also educated about media (newspapers) themselves. Comenius thus proposes a form of media education that is still recognisable in schools today.

In the 1920s, this last aspect was raised by authors of the Czech semi-academic journal *Duch novin* (*The Spirit of Newspapers*), which focused on 'news science'. The journal first appeared at the beginning of the 20th century; the authors contributed to discussions on the position of media (mainly newspapers) in political and social life and on the pedagogical reflection of this that should have been provided by schools. The authors also rearticulated Comenius's notion that newspapers should have been introduced to the school environment by being read out loud on a regular basis.²¹ They also mentioned that Comenius had advocated for the establishment of school newspapers giving the students and pupils a chance to practice journalism. According to the journal, Comenius had even recommended that schools should have possessed their own printing presses enabling them to print those school newspapers.²² However, I have not found a note on this in Comenius's own work.

In conclusion to this part, a continuity between the contemporary discussions on media education and the use of newspapers at schools (by Comenius and proposed in the 1920s discussion) could be identified as a single-sentenced note in many of contemporary research related to this topic.²³ Comenius's metaphor with 'whistlers' is not embedded in the current Czech discourse as the coining of the concept of media literacy though.²⁴ This parable is widely understood as Comenius's notification on dangers of media (negative media effects), which is rather the obsolete, but still dominant paternalistic understanding of media literacy than a contemporary emancipatory approach.

In the early 1990s, before the introduction of the cross-curricular school subject Media Education in 2006, Comenius's third media-educational input – the understanding of media as tools, aids and books that are used in day-to-day teaching and learning – was not present. Despite the – in educational sciences and schools, continuous and widespread – tradition of educational technologies (or technical didactical tools, etc.) and despite (or rather because) we use these educational tools (media) so naturally today. Let us discuss briefly this area of interest in the following paragraphs.

13 See, for example, Chapters XVII (§41/III and §42) and XIX (§19/II) in: KOMENSKÝ, J. A.: *Veškeré spisy Jana Amosa Komenského. Svazek IV. Didaktika a Informatorium*. Brno: Ústřední spolek jednot učitelů na Moravě, 1913, p. 230, 272.

14 For example, see: KOMENSKÝ, J. A.: *Orbis pictus = Swět w obrazích = Die Welt in Bildern = Le monde en tableaux*. Praha: Tisk a sklad Jaroslava Pospíšila, 1845.

15 As noted, for example, in: McNAMARA, J.: *In the Image of God: John Comenius and the First Children's Picture Book*. [online]. [2017-11-28]. Available at: <<https://publicdomainreview.org/2014/05/14/in-the-image-of-god-john-comenius-and-the-first-childrens-picture-book/>>.

16 For more information, see e.g.: KVÁČALA, J.: *Die pädagogische Reform des Comenius in Deutschland bis zum Anfange des 17. Jahrhunderts. Teil I. Monumenta Germaniae Pedagogica. Bd. 26*. Berlin: A. Hofmann, 1903.

17 See also: KOMENSKÝ, J. A.: *Labyrint světa a ráj srdce*. Praha: Naše vojsko, 1958.

18 On the topic of "media literacy" see, for example, definitions and discussions in: POTTER, J. W.: State of Media Literacy. In *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 2010, Vol. 54, No. 4, p. 675-696; HOBBS, R.: Media Literacy. In LEMISH, D. (ed.): *The Routledge International Handbook of Children, Adolescents and Media*. London: Routledge, 2015, p. 417-424; BAACKE, D. et al.: *Handbuch Medien: Medienkompetenz*. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1999; or see the Interview with David Buckingham and Alexander Fedorov, in: VRABEC, N.: Is Media Literacy Still One of the Priorities for Policy Makers? In *Communication Today*, 2016,

Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 100-107.

19 See Chapter XXII in: KOMENSKÝ, J. A.: *Labyrint světa a ráj srdce*. Praha: Naše vojsko, 1958, p. 93-94.

20 Paragraph 77 in: KOMENSKÝ, J. A.: *Škola pansofická*. Praha: Beseda učitelů v Praze, 1875, p. 29.

21 For more information, see: BUTTER, O.: Věda o novinách a školy pro novináře. In *Duch novin*, 1928, Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 105-108; BUTTER, O.: Noviny do škol! Výzva k diskusi. In *Duch novin*, 1930, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 1-5.

22 VELEMINSKÝ, K.: Škola novin. In *Duch novin*, 1930, Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 110-112.

23 Among others: JIRÁK, J., KUCHAR, P.: Mediální výchova čili o jedné dítě v našem všeobecném vzdělávání. In *Kmit*, 1997, Vol. 4, No. 12, p. 17-18; SLOBODA, Z.: Mediální pedagogika: Integrovaný přístup k chápání a uchopování role médií ve společnosti. In *Miscelanea Sociologica 2006: Sborník příspěvků z 2. doktorandské sociologické konference pořádané FSV UK a FF UK. Conference Proceedings*. Praha: FSV UK, 2006, p. 27-48; JIRÁK, J., ŠTASTNÁ, L.: K periodizaci vývoje mediální výchovy a mediálního vzdělávání v českém prostředí v evropském kontextu. In *Sborník Národního muzea v Praze. Řada C – Literární historie. Conference Proceedings*. Praha: Národní muzeum, 2012, p. 67-72.

24 Except my own work. See: SLOBODA, Z.: Mediální pedagogika: Integrovaný přístup k chápání a uchopování role médií ve společnosti. In *Miscelanea Sociologica 2006: Sborník příspěvků z 2. doktorandské sociologické konference pořádané FSV UK a FF UK. Conference Proceedings*. Praha: FSV UK, 2006, p. 27-48; SLOBODA, Z.: Diskurs mediální gramotnosti v ČR po roce 1989. In MLČOCH, M., STRÁNSKÁ, E. (eds.): *Komunikační výchova v teorii a praxi*. Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého, 2012, p. 116-125.

Educating about and by Film

Even more striking than the obvious reluctance to consider historical factors in the current discourse on media education, is the absence of an interconnection between media education and the ongoing presence of film and other audio-visual and computer-based media technologies in classrooms. This is really interesting if we consider the continuous appearance of Comenius and his thoughts within publications in the field of educational sciences, mainly in the area of so-called educational technologies, informatics or ICT at schools,²⁵ i.e. within the sphere that can be subsumed to “media didactics” (“mediální didaktika” in Czech; “Mediendidaktik” in German).

There are two problems here that should be considered. The first is the interest in and educational use of film in the form of its introduction as a specific school subject (or at least activities) on film history and ‘learning of film language’ and aesthetics.²⁶ The second is the use of media technologies (video or presentation media and computers) within the teaching (and learning) process. These two areas appear to be separate; however, there is a common historical development that can be traced back to the 1930s. Film as an audio-visual medium does not require specific alphabetical literacy, which makes it more accessible than books or newspapers. This accessibility leads to pedagogical interest in film in two ways: (1) to use it as a teaching tool, following Comenius’s thoughts on exposing study materials to the pupils’ senses in a new and more effective way. This last aspect was based on (2), i.e. to use film in order to protect the viewers from its negative effects, including portrayals of reality that scare people, pornography or horrors, arguing that people who do not have any experience with the affective and appealing ‘language’ of film are more prone to being manipulated.²⁷

In Czechoslovakia, there was a strong emphasis on so-called ‘national identity construction’ during the 1920s and 1930s. Awareness-raising films containing geography, history, folklore and news were used to help create a common Czechoslovak identity that had been non-existent before the dissolution of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire after the World War I. The identity of the newly established Czechoslovak state consisted of five major nationalities or identities (Czech, German, Slovak, Jewish and Ruthenian). Film was a medium of wider political, cultural and, of course, educational interest. As already stated in the two paragraphs above, this led to two development lines that are relevant – but largely overlooked – in the current discussion on media education and media literacy.

The first aspect – besides the efforts to fully restrict access of children to film – led to the efforts to limit the operation of cinemas; the aim was to preserve only cinemas providing educational or quality screenings or even screenings for schools.²⁸ After a few decades the **aesthetic aspect of film** led to the recognition of film as a form of art. Of the five arts – music, fine arts (i.e. painting, drawing, sculpturing and architecture), literature, theatre and film, four have more or less their own subject within the curricula – Czech and Literature Education (including drama/theatre), Music Education (including opera from the field of drama/theatre) and Art Education. Following this logic, serious efforts have been made to introduce **Film Education** as a compulsory subject at the high school level. Similar efforts were made in Hungary, leading to the introduction of Film Studies as a subject in 1964. Czech endeavours to achieve the same (scheduled for 1969 or 1970) were prevented by the Soviet invasion in 1968.²⁹ Although Film Education was covered in Czechoslovakia under the ‘umbrella’ of arts and aesthetics education, an elitist perspective on film remained.³⁰ However, the increased understanding of film as a popular culture/popular (mass) medium during the 20th century was crucial for the establish-

ment of media and cultural studies in Western countries. Paradoxically, the foundation of media studies in the Czech Republic in the 1990s, though based on the Anglo-American conception, was rather parallel to (or even disregarding) the tradition of Czech film studies. This was precisely because of the prevailing perception of film as an art, whereas the focus of the 1990s media studies was on television, newspapers and magazines that had changed the most during the post 1989 transformation of the society, becoming pluralised and commercialised.

Even more paradoxically, the legacy of the not-successful historical effort regarding Film Education in the 1960s and the elitist conception of film have led to recent efforts to introduce Film – adding the ‘and Audio-visual’ – Education (FAV) as a possible optional curricular subject. Where some authors offered the concept of the school subject as a combination of the history of (quality) film, film production, and ‘film language’ analysis,³¹ the subject of this name, recognised by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport within the RVP (the General Educational Programme) in 2010, focuses mostly on audio-visual/film language understanding (mainly on its technical aspects) and analysis.³² The acknowledgement of such a form of FAV contributes to the current discontinuous state. Moreover, if we point out that FAV was introduced over 5 years after the general introduction of Media Education to schools, and it does not mention any relationship of FAV to Media Education, it would appear that film is not regarded as a (mass) medium.

The second historical aspect regarding film leads us again to the 1930s when the sphere of education coined out the potential of using **film as a didactical tool** – seeing film as a medium that stimulated pupils in new ways (in comparison with written texts or static images) and that could be used for educational purposes. This means that although not taught as a subject of education itself (teaching about film), film was used as a tool for education – a medium of learning/teaching about other topics. The efforts were crowned in 1936 when film was officially acknowledged by the Czech Government as a didactic instrument. In the 1930s and following decades, a few introductory books and many articles in professional journals were published which discussed how to use film within the educational process.³³ It is worth noting that these texts went beyond just plain technical description of how to use film in a classroom or when and how to use it.

For example, Dohnal (but other authors as well) quite naturally discusses the characteristics of content of films made for school education. One of the characteristic traits is appropriate content regarding the cognitive and emotional development and age of the pupils.³⁴ Such a notion can be understood as an initial discussion on certain aspects of media literacy. Similarly, reading of film aesthetics and its (critical) evaluation in the 1950s can be seen as a reflection of the development of evaluation and analytical (media) skills. The 1930s discussion about the introduction of school newspapers thus might be understood as a participatory, creative aspect of media literacy.³⁵

And whereas the Czech Media Education in 2006 (very much like media studies since the early 1990s) started from the scratch, only mentioning Comenius and the discussion about newspapers in schools from the 1930s, the media-didactical discourse, based on Comenius’s opinions and school newspapers, took off with film as a didactical tool, included the technologies of television and later video in its scope, refocusing on computing machines, computers and multi-media learning environments. It is currently dealing with mobile, convergent and participatory media, seeing them as technical aids for the learning and teaching processes. This media-didactical continuity was not only ignored by the media scholars that were preparing the concept of Media Education (before 2006), it was also rarely taken into account by education scientists and teachers

25 Comenius’s ‘golden rule’ of exposing stuff being learned to as much relevant senses as possible is noted in: RAMBOUSEK, V. et al.: *Technické výukové prostředky*. Praha: SPN, 1989, p. 21, 32; MAŇÁK, J.: Mediální didaktické prostředky. In PRŮCHA, P. (ed.): *Pedagogická encyklopedie*. Praha: Portál, 2006, p. 261.

26 For more information, see: VÚP: *Filmová a audiovizuální výchova – RVP*. Praha: Výzkumný ústav pedagogický, 2010; KRÁTKÁ, J., VACEK, P.: *Audiovizuální edukace jako součást mediální výchovy*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita v Brně, 2008.

27 HÜTHER, J.: Medienpädagogik in der Vorkriegszeit. In VON GROSS, F., MEISTER, D. (eds.): *Die Geschichte der Medienpädagogik in Deutschland*. Weinheim, Basel: Betz Juventa, 2015; KLIMEŠ, I.: Děti v brlohu aneb Kino jako škola zločinu. In *Vzdělání a osvěta v české kultuře 19. století*. Praha: ÚČLAV ČR, 2004.

28 For more information, see: ČESÁLKOVÁ, L.: *Film před tabulí. Idea školního filmu v prvorepublikovém Československu*. Praha: Národohospodářský ústav Josefa Hlávky, 2010.

29 See the whole monothematic issue of the journal *Cinepur*: *Cinepur*, 2007, Vol. 16, No. 49.

30 Film is seen as a form of high(er) culture, whereas the general understanding of media is that they are forms of popular culture, which implies lowbrow cultural spheres. Remark by the author.

31 KRÁTKÁ, J., VACEK, P.: *Audiovizuální edukace jako součást mediální výchovy*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita v Brně, 2008.

32 VÚP: *Filmová a audiovizuální výchova – RVP*. Praha: Výzkumný ústav pedagogický, 2010.

33 See, for example: DOHNAL, A.: *Pedagogika školního filmu*. Praha: Česká grafická unie, 1939; HAPALA, D.: Pedagogické problémy školského filmu. In *Učební pomůcky ve škole a v osvětě*, 1963-1964, No. 7, p. 108-111; TREBIŠOVSKÝ, J.: Uvažujeme o struktuře školských filmů. In *Učební pomůcky ve škole a v osvětě*, 1962-1963, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 54-55.

34 For more information, see: DOHNAL, A.: *Pedagogika školního filmu*. Praha: Česká grafická unie, 1939; HAPALA, D.: Pedagogické problémy školského filmu. In *Učební pomůcky ve škole a v osvětě*, 1963-1964, No. 7.

35 For the following discussion about such a conception of media literacy, see the text written by Bernd Schorb: SCHORB, B.: Der medienpädagogische zeitgemäße Zeitgeist oder Medienbildung statt Medienkompetenz! In FELSMANN, K. D. (ed.): *Rezipient im Spannungsfeld von Zeit und Medien*. München: KoPaed, 2008, p. 89-98. His concept was introduced to the Czech Republic in my earlier text: SLOBODA, Z.: Diskurs mediální gramotnosti v ČR po roce 1989. In MLČOCH, M., STRÁNSKÁ, E. (eds.): *Komunikační výchova v teorii a praxi*. Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého, 2012, p. 116-125.

themselves (as an exception, see Šedřová's encyclopaedic entry about "media pedagogy" (in Czech "mediální pedagogika") in the *Pedagogic Encyclopaedia* from 2009).³⁶ On the other hand, it is fair to note that the area of didactic technologies, technical teaching aids or any other labels it carries, has not really reached forward to establishing (Mass-) Media Education;³⁷ it is, even within educational sciences, a rather locked-in-itself field focused on the very technical aspects and technology. Therefore, it rarely reflects social contexts and implications of media/technology, which is the main focus of all media-educational efforts.

Current Discourses around Curricular Media Education

The first text that dealt with Media Education as a school subject was written by the linguist and Czech language scholar Šebesta in 1995. Šebesta – together with Jiráč, a media scientist, originally an English language scholar – can be considered as the founders of the contemporary discourse on media and education. They state that just as 'man is born into language' with limited skills, attitudes and crafts, nowadays we are born into the media world, and with lack of competences and knowledge which need to be brought to us by schooling. Media Education should empower us not to "survive at minimal costs, but to use what media give us with maximal benefit for our personal development".³⁸ Therefore, in contrast to the pessimistic views on media influence of the 1990s, Media Education should lead to positive, critical and differentiated attitudes towards media that allow us to make active choices. Media Education should offer knowledge in three areas: (1) media as communication subjects or communication-mediating means, (2) media reception, (3) media content analysis. Both authors pledge for the creation of elaborate educational programmes and materials as well as for specialised training for teachers.³⁹ After a few years of collaboration, Šebesta and Jiráč parted ways and developed their thoughts on the given problems within their own disciplines.

Based on my long-term analysis of modern Czech materials on media education, I distinguished two, later three discourses on the school subject of Media Education that could be anchored within the disciplines of (a) (Czech) language education (linguistics), (b) media studies, and (c) educational sciences (pedagogy).

Within the **linguistic discourse**, Šebesta reverses his original perspective⁴⁰ and sees Media Education as an integral part of the larger "Communication Education" (in Czech "komunikační výchova"), which has recently become a part of Czech Language Education. Despite the specificity of mass communication, the argument here is that media are means of communication. Communication Education should equip the individual with 'communicative competences' in all aspects of human and social communication. Communication is not limited to just verbal aspects. We have to recognise any form of communication; including media communication. Furthermore, Communication Education should develop receptive competences.⁴¹ Here the discourse nears to the German founding stone of the "media literacy" ("Medienkompetenz"), the concept that was developed by Baacke from (amongst others) Habermas's concept of communicative competence.⁴² Scholars first discovered appropriate media for Czech Language Education in the late 1990s. The topic of media – in the form of exercises related to recognition and writing of essays stylised as journalistic texts – had already been

part of educational plans since the 1980s. Within the Czech linguistic discourse, two more authors need to be mentioned. Niklesová and Bina have tried to establish their own approaches to conceptualising media education (and/or literacy) in the intersection with Communication Education. Communication Education became a wanted reconceptualization of Czech Language Education or at least its supplement after the 2000s.⁴³ Unfortunately, their approach lacks profound elaboration and is terminologically vague. In some aspects it is not consequent, being rather underdeveloped. On the other hand, it can be seen as a modern approach towards language education and as an effort that, from the linguistic perspective, strives to bring together all three discourses on media education.

The second, but for sure the strongest is **the discourse of media studies**. Jan Jiráč, very quickly after his efforts to establish Media Studies as a university discipline, noticed the gigantic area of media education or the 'children and media' in Anglo-American literature. The fall of the totalitarian regime in Central Europe brought commercial media that flooded the unprepared and unexperienced audience with their entertaining products. Therefore, school Media Education should have become a tool for 'self-defence' against the ever-present commercial media. People should have learned about the media industry, the creation of media contents, the social functions of media, developing a critical approach towards them.⁴⁴ Jiráč was contracted by one of the departments of the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to prepare a cross-curricular subject "Media Education" that was introduced, along with the reform of Czech elementary and secondary schooling, within the so-called General Educational Plan (in Czech Rámcový vzdělávací plán – RVP). Media Education become one of four or five, respectively, cross-curricular areas (besides e.g. Environmental Education or Citizenship Education) and as such should have created and developed mainly skills and competences. It should have been less knowledge-oriented. Media Education in RVP had two components: receptive and creative. Practically it should have been introduced to school education as: (a) a separate school subject, (b) a cross-curricular topic that should be taught within traditional subjects (such as History, Civic Education, Social Sciences Education, Czech Language and Literature, Biology, Informatics, etc.) or (c) as a project education.⁴⁵ After the introduction of RVP the media studies discourse weakens, but still strongly shapes thinking about school Media Education as a method of learning about (mass) media⁴⁶ where media have become, almost exclusively, the only object of teaching. At this point, school Media Education is more or less a copy of media studies (see British textbook for high schools written by Burton⁴⁷ that was later rewritten by Jiráč⁴⁸ and became more a learning material for college students. For further criticism, see the chapter in my book on media education in the family).⁴⁹

The introduction of Media Education – as a compulsory area of teaching for all schools at the primary and secondary level – led to the development of **the discourse of educational sciences**. In 2004, when the implementation of RVP was inevitable, Šedřová in her article for the scholarly journal *Pedagogika* stresses that media in our contemporary world should be, and somehow already are, a topic taught at schools, and within education and educational sciences. She reflects on the discourse that was present within media studies and repeats the argument of media omnipresence in the everyday lives of all individuals and the society as a whole. Šedřová comments on the inevitability of Media Education as a school subject, and – extending the media studies discourse – mentions the existing and long-term interest in media technologies within "didactics".⁵⁰ Later, Šedřová extends the second aspect of school Media Education through the reflection on media-educational activities of parents within the family.⁵¹ Nevertheless, Šedřová was not the first to be concerned with (mass)

36 ŠEDŘOVÁ, K.: Mediální pedagogika. In PRŮCHA, P. (ed.): *Pedagogická encyklopedie*. Praha: Portál, 2009, p. 787-791.

37 Despite few efforts of, for example: MAŠEK, J.: Některé aktuální otázky vlivu technických komunikačních prostředků na vzdělávání a výchovu. In *ČAPV*. Plzeň: Pedagogická fakulta ZČU, 1997, p. 15-38; MAŠEK, J.: Mediální didaktika: Významná subdisciplína české mediální pedagogiky? In MAŠEK, J., SLOBODA, Z. (eds.): *Mediální pedagogika v teorii a praxi*. Plzeň: Západočeská univerzita v Plzni, 2010, p. 74-79; See also Švejda's "pedagogy of media" (in Czech "pedagogika médií"): ŠVEJDA, G.: Vzdělávací technologie jako součást vzdělávání a informační přípravy. In DVORÁKOVÁ, M., PROCHÁZKA, M. (eds.): *Svět výchovy a vzdělávání včera, dnes a zítra*. České Budějovice: PdF JČU v Českých Budějovicích, 1997, p. 136-139.

38 ŠEBESTA, K., JIRÁČ, J.: Mediální výchova a její výhledy. In *Učitel'ské noviny*, 1995, Vol. 98, No. 20, p. 12.

39 ŠEBESTA, K., JIRÁČ, J.: Mediální výchova a její výhledy. In *Učitel'ské noviny*, 1995, Vol. 98, No. 20, p. 12.

40 As formulated here: ŠEBESTA, K.: Výchova komunikační a výchova mediální. In *Český jazyk a literatura*, 1995-1996, Vol. 46, p. 158-162.

41 ŠEBESTA, K.: *Od jazyka ke komunikaci: Didaktika českého jazyka a komunikační výchova*. Praha: Karolinum, 1999, p. 129.

42 For more information, see: BAACKE, D.: *Kommunikation und Kompetenz: Grundlegung einer Didaktik der Kommunikation und ihrer Medien*. München: Juventa Verlag, 1973.

43 See, for example: BINA, D., NIKLESOVÁ, E.: *Mediální gramotnost a mediální výchova: Studijní texty*. Česká Budějovice: Nakladatelství Vlastimil Johanus, 2010.

44 JIRÁČ, J., KUCHAR, P.: Mediální výchova čili o jedné díře v našem všeobecném vzdělávání. In *Kmit*, 1997, Vol. 4, No. 12, p. 17-18.

45 VŮP: Mediální výchova. In *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*. Praha: Výzkumný ústav pedagogický, 2007, p. 92-94.

46 Although not a commonly used phrase, the most suitable Czech term would be "nauka o médiích". The German equivalent would be "Medienkunde" or "Medienlehre". A subject where it is taught about media (as industry, contents or technology). Remark by the author.

47 For more information, see: BURTON, G.: *More than Meets the Eye: An Introduction to Media Studies*. London: Arnold, 1997.

48 See also: BURTON, G., JIRÁČ, J.: *Úvod do studia médií*. Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2001.

49 SLOBODA, Z.: *Mediální výchova v rodině: Postoje, nástroje, výzvy*. Olomouc: Vydavatelství Univerzity Palackého, 2013, p. 38.

50 See: ŠEDŘOVÁ, K.: Média jako pedagogické téma. In *Pedagogika*, 2004, Vol. 54, No. 1, p. 19-33.

51 ŠEDŘOVÁ, K.: Mediální pedagogika. In PRŮCHA, P. (ed.): *Pedagogická encyklopedie*. Praha: Portál, 2009, p. 787-791.

media and their place within education. As early as in 1996, Mašek, quite progressively for a scholar in the area of educational technologies, conceptualises media not only as technologies that can be didactically deployed and contents that are especially prepared for teaching (about media themselves), but also points out the need for the educational and didactical use of media contents and the possibilities of media participation (also for teachers).⁵² Unfortunately, Mašek's texts did not have much impact within the educational discourse.

I will now explain why I previously wrote 'quite progressively for a scholar in the area of educational technologies'. Although this area, which Mašek accordingly refers to as media didactics,⁵³ acknowledges its historical continuity in using film and television, later video and computer for teaching purposes, it neither adopted, nor took into account the academic discussion on mass media (organisations and contents). Therefore, the way in which both Mašek and Šedová were able to (very briefly) interconnect school Media Education and school "media didactics" together was related to the German discipline of "media pedagogy" ("Medienpädagogik"), which subsumes "media (educational) research", "media didactics" and "media education/socialisation" as three areas of media pedagogy.⁵⁴

Such notions and attempts lead to a **more complex approach** that tries to take into account various aspects of the media-education dialectics. As mentioned above, such attempts can be seen in publications written by Niklesová, Bína, Šedová and Mašek. Also, my previous works have had the same goal.⁵⁵

Before closing the discussion on the contemporary discourse on media education, we need to briefly discuss the interconnection between school Media Education (introduced to RVP as compulsory in 2006) and Film and Audio-visual Education (FAV; introduced to RVP as voluntary in 2010). Without wishing to exaggerate, the relation between these two concepts and their implementation into school education is symptomatic for the whole Czech discourse. FAV is not included in the conception of Media Education, which barely reflects on film. And vice versa; the conceptualization of FAV does not consider FAV Education as a possible realisation of Media Education; moreover, it does not include any notion of Media Education at all (despite the fact that it was introduced four years later).

Conclusion – New Media Education or Integrated Media Education?

In the title of this study the word 'discontinuities' is used to describe the dynamics in the historical and current discourse around the area of media-at-school (or media-and-education). It is fragmented and lacks coherence in terminology, theory or even application. Yet, there are – from my point of view, and based on my analysis – traceable developments within single fields or disciplines which I have marked as discourse-lines of:

- didactical technologies (or media didactics),
- film studies (and media aesthetics),
- linguistics / Czech Language or Communication Education,
- media studies,
- educational sciences (in the continental European tradition "pedagogics/pedagogika").

52 For more information, see: MAŠEK, J.: Některé aktuální otázky vlivu technických komunikačních prostředků na vzdělávání a výchovu. In *ČAPV*. Plzeň: Pedagogická fakulta ZČU, 1997.

53 MAŠEK, J.: Mediální didaktika: Významná subdisciplína české mediální pedagogiky? In MAŠEK, J., SLOBODA, Z. (eds.): *Mediální pedagogika v teorii a praxi*. Plzeň: Západočeská univerzita v Plzni, 2010, p. 74-79.

54 Within the German discourse, the curricular school Media Education is an applied field that derives from all three areas of media pedagogy. Remark by the author. To find out more about my distinction between "media education" and "media socialisation", see my text: SLOBODA, Z.: Mediální socializace v rodině: Několik poznámek k její konceptualizaci. In *Mediální studia*, 2016, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 88.

55 See: SLOBODA, Z.: Mediální pedagogika: Integrovaný přístup k chápání a uchopování role médií ve společnosti. In *Miscelanea Sociologica 2006: Sborník příspěvků z 2. doktorandské sociologické konference pořádané FSV UK a FF UK. Conference Proceedings*. Praha: FSV UK, 2006, p. 27-48; SCHORB, B., SLOBODA, Z.: Teorie mediální pedagogiky. In MAŠEK, J., SLOBODA, Z. (eds.): *Mediální pedagogika v teorii a praxi*. Plzeň: ZČU v Plzni, 2010, p. 7-11; SLOBODA, Z.: *Mediální výchova v rodině: Postoje, nástroje, výzvy*. Olomouc: Vydavatelství Univerzity Palackého, 2013; SLOBODA, Z. et al.: *Mediální tvorba v kontextu vzdělávání*. Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2011. The last mentioned is a revisited version of the original German publication: KEILHAUER, J. et al.: *Themenzentrierte aktive Medienarbeit*. München: KoPaed, 2010.

Using the example of the Czech Republic, I have shown moments, concepts and overlapping arenas that rather **reveal continuities** within this area. An area that is substantially interdisciplinary.⁵⁶ To sum up these: the embedding of various media-educational and media-didactic activities in the thoughts of Jan Amos Comenius can be found in various time periods and in various field of interest. Furthermore, Comenius is also, and to a large extent, perceived as the Czech founder of educational sciences and the school system in the Czech Republic in general. Connections from Comenius to German "media pedagogics" ("Medienpädagogik") should also be seen as important and beneficial for the complexity of the Czech situation. Moreover, the presence of educational activities related to film or newspapers stretches over the last 100 years. Similarly, the didactical use of media (film, radio, television and digital media) also seems to have been present for more than a hundred years.

Let us consider **the discontinuities** (which can often appear to be paradoxical or even pointless). The current Czech discourse on school Media Education based on media studies ignores the entire didactical use of media. This is a practice based on Comenius's general educational principles, present not only in the Czech Republic but also in school systems across the world and in educational sciences *per se*; it also ignores the almost finished general introduction of Film Education in the late 1960s, which is traceable in the area of film studies worldwide even today. After all, film is treated as a highbrow phenomena; it selectively uses a fragmented practical application of the efforts to introduce reading of newspapers within school education – there is no doubt that the current school Media Education was prepared as a 'Mass Media Education' that is not only questioned by the current overflow of digital and participative media and information technologies, it is even supposed to have died, as the 'father' of the Czech curricular Media Education (and of media studies in general) Jirák mentioned during the discussion at the *Ota Hofman's Children's Film and TV Festival* in Ostrov nad Ohří in 2015 and later repeated at the *Convention of EU on Media Education and Citizen Education* that was held on the 21st of May 2017 in Prague.

I would like to argue that a conceptual approach (that would take into the account the historical development and the general educational principles) would have created a more sustainable concept of complex school Media Education, which would not only adhere to changes in both areas – media and education/pedagogy – but would be rather flexible, multi-layered and adaptable to such changes. This is possible because the aim nowadays, and historically, is to achieve an effective development of "media literacy" (also known today as "media and information literacy").⁵⁷

Following Schorb's conceptualisation of media literacy as a triangle of mutually influencing, supporting and conditioning points of knowledge, evaluation and action that is rooted in the concept of acting subject⁵⁸ as a peak of the 'learning by doing' principle, reflecting the approach of teaching about media (i.e. as the introduction of media studies to British high schools) and the approach of the development of critical thinking that dwells in the semiotic and literary tradition of media studies and communicative competence (based on Habermas's rethinking of Chomsky, further developed and summed up by Baacke in 1973), it might be useful to create a curricular Media Education that develops all three areas using diverse, but relevant didactical and educational tools – tools that already exist or could be adapted from the existing ones.⁵⁹

56 At this point, I will leave open the discussion about the "media pedagogics" (in Czech "mediální pedagogika"), strongly influenced by the German "Medienpädagogik", as it can be understood as a separate discourse-line, as a part of the discourse of educational sciences, or even media studies or linguistics. However, I would propose even more ambitious approach that will perceive "media pedagogics" as an interdisciplinary field that comprehends all other discourse-lines, creating a useful, complex and integrated approach. I will discuss this in my future work. Thus, the conclusion of this text focuses on media education as a rather applied, nonetheless interdisciplinary area. Remark by the author.

57 For more information, see: UNESCO: *Conceptual Relationship of Information Literacy and Media Literacy in Knowledge Societies*. Paris: UNESCO, 2013.

58 See articles in: HARTUNG, A. et al.: *Das handelnde Subjekt und die Medienpädagogik*. München: KoPaed, 2013.

59 My use of Schorb's conceptualisation of media literacy is arbitrary and is based on my previous academic study and work. Nevertheless, his concept is all-encompassing; it covers many other conceptualisations. Therefore my point here could be applied to any other complex conceptualisation of "media literacy", such as Hobbs's, Potter's or Buckingham's. See: HOBBS, R.: Expanding the Concept of Literacy. In KUBEY, R. (ed.): *Media Literacy in the Information Age*. New York: Transaction, 1996, p. 163-183; HOBBS, R.: Media Literacy. In LEMISH, D. (ed.): *The Routledge International Handbook of Children, Adolescents and Media*. London: Routledge, 2015, p. 417-424; POTTER, J. W.: State of Media Literacy. In *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 2010, Vol. 54, No. 4, p. 675-696; BUCKINGHAM, D.: *Media Education Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture*. London: Polity Press, 2011, p. 35.

In this respect, digital and participatory media are not really new – almost all of their specifics can be handled by already existing pedagogical, educational and didactical instruments. Moreover, these instruments were already used in the historical context of media (including newspapers, film, television or computer) education and didactics. To give a more precise example: creating a video via your web camera is not that dissimilar to making a film; posting it to an online-based communication platform (i.e. YouTube) is not that dissimilar to presenting school film to your peers, parents or at an amateur film festival that also provide feedback. The activating component of the existing media-educational activities focusing on creation of children's, classroom's or school's media (magazines, radio broadcasting, films, photo exhibitions, etc.), which has led to the disruption of the traditional frontal and hierarchical composition of the learning situation, is not dissimilar to the use of today's new media. Moreover, the unpreparedness and lack of literacy, knowledge and skills (mainly technical) of educators is nothing new, either.

What was and still is valid for every introduction of various media technologies to the contents and system of education and schools, is a 'technooptimistic' approach that has foreseen every new medium as either salvation of the whole rigid education or at least as a radical change of it, a change usually connected with the vision of technology replacing teachers. This technooptimism always sobered very soon and the media became a sometimes more, sometimes less useful didactical tool or a partial or distinguished object of study/education (e.g. education about literature, newspapers, film, computers, the Internet, etc.).

What is new for today's new media,⁶⁰ and thus needs to be discussed separately, is (A) the 'speed' of the technological changes and speed and amount of information that can be disseminated by media and (B) the 'convergent character' of today's media, which not only encompass various ways of mass media communication, but combine the mass media, the group communication forms and the interpersonal communication in their both synchronic (online) and asynchronic (offline) forms.

The first characteristic – **the speed** – is crucial when contemplating how the society appears today. On the other hand, is the consideration of all the societal, technological, geo-political and other changes of the last 150 years that extraordinary? If we go back to McLuhan's thoughts, as he is the classic of technological determinism, how dis/similar is the impact of (what we call now) new media on society comparing to the introduction of alphabet, printing press, post, electricity or telegraph in their own time? The introduction of these ground-breaking media (technologies) brought speed to the distribution of information and increased the amount of information being distributed, stored or created. So – going back to the example of the Czech Republic – if we bear in mind that Comenius taught media literacy in the era of 17th century newspapers and educators reacted to the introduction of film, radio and television, we may note that they all also reacted to the forms (image, sound, text, etc.) in which the information was brought, as well as to the speed and amount of it. Is the situation today really that different from the previous decades and centuries? In this situation, is the concept of "media literacy" with its knowledge, evaluation and application components obsolete? I would like to argue that it is not.

Regarding the second aspect – **the convergent character** – on the one hand, the complexity of such convergence is immense; on the other hand, it is nothing completely new if we look at the interconnectedness of regular mail, telegraph and e-mail or asynchronic messaging, or at radio, film, television and the current screen platforms and on-demand contents. Again, are the new media that 'new' to us?

As a conclusion, I would like to argue that an approach reflecting historical developments presents a platform (or an environment) for both theoretical conceptualisations and practical applications of media education and media literacy (in all their aspects – pedagogy, didactics, research, critical thinking, both regarding media as technology, contents, etc.) that is and will be sustainable irrespective of societal and technological changes and will be relevant to elaborate both theory and application that will be appropriate and has a potential to be effective. On the other hand, if we claim that to create a new (media) education and literacy with every new medium/technology we will have to more or less 'invent the wheel' again and again, we will lose valuable

60 For characteristics, see, for example: MANOVICH, L.: *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge : MIT Press, 2002, p. 49; FREEDMAN, D.: Internet Transformations: 'Old' Media Resilience in the 'New Media' Revolution. In CURRAN, J., MORLEY, D. (eds.): *Media & Cultural Theory*. London, New York : Routledge, 2006, p. 275-290; TOFFLER, A.: *The Third Wave*. New York : Bantam Books, 1990.

theoretical as well as practical knowledge and experience. This will be a waste of both time and skills. Therefore, I favour an integrated or (to be more specific) **convergent media education/media literacy education** over developing new media educations on and on.

It might appear as buck-passing now, but if we had the two Comenius's major principles in mind, i.e. if we took into consideration the "pansophia" and the "didactica", we would have the key for such kind of media education /media literacy education; at least a philosophical and systematic one. We should teach about everything, not forgetting that learning is a life-long process. We should teach everybody and everybody should be taught the way that is the most appropriate, individually, by reaching all senses that are available, in ways that are appropriate socially and relevant for today's society.

To succeed in it, we need 'media'. The teaching media are then everything; they are not only tools, aids and media which we create for the teaching purposes or media technologies adapted specially for the purposes of teaching and learning. Products of everyday use and (mass) media contents created for information dissemination and/or entertainment should be didactically used as well; for teaching about media as organisations (and thus about their functions related to entertainment, news, promotion, etc.), technologies (in order to know how to use them) and contents they bring (e.g. the media construction of reality). To Comenius, this seemed to be valid in as early as in the 17th century. I would like to argue that the same is equally valid now – in our mediatised, networked, information-oriented, (media) participatory and convergent society/societies.

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